



The

LIGHTHOUSE

Helping People | Changing Lives

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Love + Teamwork = Lives Changed

by Yao Dan Cao and Tabitha Peiris



The Lighthouse was very busy this past summer, especially in hosting our three summer camps: the Chinese children's summer camp, the Hispanic family camp and the Vietnamese family camp. Each summer camp is unique with respect to the community it serves, how it is run and its key goals. Although each camp is distinctive from the others, the three camps often share in their philosophies, strategies and resources. For example, while the art therapy program was initially introduced as a sort of pilot project for the Hispanic family summer camp, for the first time this year, due to the success of art therapy in identifying and addressing certain emotional and social difficulties, the Vietnamese family camp augmented its programming by hosting an art therapy workshop. All three camps

also share the *holistic* philosophy of The Lighthouse in the planning and implementation of their programs, that is to say, the programs seek to resolve underlying problems experienced by camp participants by addressing not only their more immediate physical needs but also their social, emotional and spiritual needs.

For this newsletter, we've interviewed a selection of our volunteers and participants to share with you their observations and experiences in how The Lighthouse's summer camps have impacted the lives of their participants, including themselves. We had the pleasure of interviewing Tracy, a long-time volunteer of the Vietnamese family camp, Maira, a participant in the Hispanic camp, and Anita, a volunteer of the Chinese camp. Here is what they had to say:

How did you come into contact with The Lighthouse?

Tracy - I was asked by a friend to help out with the Lighthouse in 2011. They needed someone to do arts and crafts with the kids, so they asked me to do it,

and I volunteered. So I've been helping at the Lighthouse with Tabitha [Tabitha Peiris, summer student and regular volunteer] and Tracy [Tracy Dang, Vietnamese Administrative Assistant] whenever they asked me to.

Maira - A long time ago, fifteen years ago, my friend invited me to one of The Lighthouse's Christmas parties, and that's where I first met Samia [Samia Saad, Hispanic Counsellor and Program Coordinator].

How has The Lighthouse assisted you?

Maira - The Lighthouse has helped me a lot. I came to Canada from Guatemala with my whole family, knowing no English at all, and it was very hard back then. One day, I was given deportation notice of 48 hours back to Guatemala, but Samia helped me through it. I have now been in Canada for 25 years, and am a Canadian citizen. Another time, my apartment was on fire back in 2000, and The Lighthouse and Samia helped me a lot. I have also finished the manicure class, am currently part of the make-up class, and hope to take the haircut class in the future. I also come to the food bank once in a while. I've received very good help from The Lighthouse.

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We Have Two New Board Members!

Daisy Wai

- Skills in strategic planning, marketing and communication
- Passionate for sharing my testimonies of what Jesus has done in my life to encourage the new immigrants
- Degrees in Graphic Design and Production Practitioner of Canadian Advertising Agencies
- Member of Richmond Hill Christian Community Church; deacon for 8 years
- Married to a missionary developer; mother of four; grandmother of three
- Chinese-Canadian
- "Let us love one another, for love comes from God."



Zaur Gassanov

- Principal at *Equilibrium Financial*
- Designated Accountant and finance professional with extensive non-for-profit experience
- ITIL, MBA, CMA, CPA
- Canadian: ex-pat from the former Soviet Union
- "I am delighted to contribute to Lighthouse and to support its vision."



**Want to see
summer camp
pictures?
Check them out on
our website
today!**

Leadership that Heals the Leader while it Builds God's Kingdom

by Samia Saad



The summer time was a busy time at The Lighthouse: full of children and adults participating in laughter and fun as they came for various summer programs. For its Spanish-speaking clients, The Lighthouse offers during the summer months a leadership training program, a summer family camp, and a seniors program. These programs are connected in that the participants of the leadership training program use their training to effectively volunteer as leaders in the other programs. Leaders are thus ordinary people who participate as clients (low income immigrant and refugee women and men who rely on The Lighthouse's services) and as volunteers.

I offer the leadership training to anyone who wants to serve and is committed and willing to do the work. One important lesson I have learned in the organizing and coordinating of these programs is that people who suffer can improve by using their gifts to serve others. For most of the

volunteers in the leadership training program, serving acts as therapy while they learn important leadership skills.

This year I had eighteen committed trainees who came on time for the training (5 full days in total) and completed their practicum in the family camp or with the seniors. At the end of their practicum, they each had to write a paper answering specific questions about participatory leadership, how it was experienced in their respective practicum, and what they learned. Time and again, I have read and heard the same types of responses: "the leadership training changed my life"; "it gave me the tools to be a better leader with my family and with my community"; "it made me forget all my suffering"; "we are most happy when we came to The Lighthouse"; "it was too short"; "this is the best training I have ever been to"; "it was real therapy for me"; "my children love it when they come"; "this was a holiday for us".

The Lighthouse makes this training accessible by making it free of charge and including lunch, snacks and care for participants' children. As a result of this training, we fulfilled the objectives of the family camp beyond our expectations (23 families participated), and Spanish-speaking seniors continue to come to a wonderful place where all the activities are run by well-trained volunteers. We have full knowledge now that healing can happen as we build God's kingdom on earth. How encouraging!

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Anita - The Lighthouse had assisted me in filing my income tax returns. Rita helped me out for a few years until I could find someone else to help.

What is one thing you would tell others about The Lighthouse / its summer camps?

Tracy - [regarding summer camps] It's a wonderful experience, whether you're a parent, kid, or volunteer. You learn to connect to others and help make a difference in someone's life or see something different in your own life. It may not be the most extravagant thing in the world, but it still touches you in a way.



Anita - [regarding summer camps] I would say that the spiritual support given to families is more effective and long lasting, because follow-up activities are conducted to maintain the relationship with "clients." Also, usually the focus is just not on the adults or the children, but the whole family. I must say, what I know and experience is largely confined within my involvement in the Chinese community.

Maida - [regarding The Lighthouse] Es un centro que ayuda bastante a las personas, especialmente a los recién llegados. Tambien nos da una buena orientacion a donde encontrar ayuda. Tambien es un lugar muy confidencial. *(It is a centre that offers great help, especially to new immigrants. It also points us in a good direction to where we can find help. It's also a very safe and confidential place.)*

Full interview: lighthousecentre.ca/lives-changed/

A Big Lighthouse Thank You!



The generosity of many, together with the gifts of time and commitment from a group of volunteer callers, made our PHON-A-THON campaign a success. Your donations contributed \$46,882 to The Lighthouse's ministries and programs.

Together, we are impacting the lives of people by offering community, food, healing and hope in the name of Jesus.

Thank you for sharing in this ministry!

Upcoming Events:

October 4th - Ride for Refuge



Ride for Refuge is a family-friendly cycling fundraiser that partners with various charities to raise needed operating funding for their work with the displaced, vulnerable and exploited.

Ride for The Lighthouse by registering a team or registering as an individual rider. Check for a location near you and register today at www.rideforrefuge.org to ride for The Lighthouse!

November 8th - Annual Dinner & Silent Auction
Held at Toronto District Christian High in Woodbridge

December 6th - Benefit Concert at Woodstock
Maranatha Christian Reformed Church
beginning at 7:30 pm.

February 28th, 2015 - Coldest Night of the Year
A wintery walking fundraiser that raises money for the hungry, homeless and hurting.

From Rob's Desk

I am sitting at my desk reflecting on my time at The Lighthouse and all the changes that have occurred here. The time has gone by quickly and the work has been valuable. I am so proud of all The Lighthouse has done and is doing!

In all this time one thing has been constant: four amazing staff persons. Janet, Rita, Samia and Thuy have directed our ministries with strong leadership, insightful planning, deep empathy, and visible passion for many years.

While there were no changes in the full-time staff, we have had different summer students, part-time staff, volunteers and interns who have helped us over the years. We have also seen different clients come and go through our doors, leaving stronger and healthier.

Beginning September of this year Janet Elliott, our Administration/Food Bank Coordinator, is retiring. She has work for The Lighthouse since 2001 and will be deeply missed by staff, clients and volunteers. She was usually the first one to work each day and welcomed everyone who walked through the doors. She was loved and appreciated by all. Through her work, she demonstrated God's love every day.

As a community, we want to thank Janet for all the work she did for The Lighthouse and sharing her skills. It is hard to imagine this place without her!

Janet, on behalf of the Board, staff, volunteers and clients, we thank you for making The Lighthouse a better place.



Board of Directors

Zaur Gassanov
Adrian Helleman
Jane Moore
Kasiah Nguyen
Juan Rojo
Jeanette Romkema (Chair)
Fadi Sharaiha
Roger Visser
Daisy Wai

Staff

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Rita Wong
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Samia Saad
Hispanic Program Coordinator

Madeley Perez
Hispanic Assistant

Thuy Tran
Vietnamese Program Coordinator

Tracy Dang
Vietnamese Assistant

Tiffany Kwok
Administration Coordinator

Helping People Changing Lives

Thank you for being partners with us in this ministry.



Yes, I would like to help with a donation of \$ _____

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Name _____

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Other Ways to Help - Contact us for details

- ☐ PAR PreAuthorized Remittance
- ☐ Monthly Visa or MasterCard donation - makes it easy for you and for us
- ☐ Canada Helps on line at www.canadahelps.org
- ☐ Giving through Christian Stewardship Service
- ☐ United Way Payroll Deduction-just provide our CRA # and address
- ☐ Matched Corporate Giving - many companies match employee donations

Please mail your contribution to:

The Lighthouse
1008 Bathurst Street
Toronto, ON M5R 3G7

Receipts will be issued in the New Year.
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