

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM

of

Franco Gucciardo

Until 1970

- Active member and council member of the youth group “Juventus” at Notre-Dame de la Défense.
- Secretary for the Saint Vincent of Paul Society at Notre-Dame de la Défense.
- Tutor in English and French for Italian immigrants already in the work force.
- Collaborator in school and parochial publications and conferences.

1971

- At the request of the Ministère de l'immigration du Québec (M.I.Q.), was solicited by the Commission des écoles catholiques de Montréal (CECM) to organize and offer courses on family economics to the Italian community.
- Taught Italian language classes, organized by the P.I.C.A.I., Saturday mornings to elementary grade students.
- Conceived a plan to set-up a structure / entity that would provide, in Italian language, centralized, multi-service assistance for the Italian community in Montreal.

1972

- Convened a group and presented the concept of a multi-service center. The Centro Italiano di Assistenza (C.I.D.A.) was to provide front-line support for legal, social, work relations and medical needs to the community. Representatives from several associations participated at the orientation meetings. Received moral and financial support from various, established organizations and individuals.
- Drafted a blueprint for the centralization and management of community services O.C.C.I.M. (Organismo Centrale della Comunità Italiana di Montreal).
- In May presented the C.I.D.A. project to Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau. The project activity was to begin in the autumn of 1972.
- Laid the grounds for an operating committee to promote community development.
- Established COPRAS (Comité promoteur pour l'assistance aux italo-canadiens) as the entity that would promote community development.
- Prepared and executed a questionnaire answered by 795 families in the Italian community. The answers provided guidance for community development.
- Put together a team (Franco Gucciardo, Giovanni Triacca, Mary Ann Eycken, Adela Todd, Mario Chieffo, Sergio Mengarelli, with Franco Iezzoni as legal advisor) to develop programs that would serve the needs of the Italian community in health, social assistance, legal information, and work related matters. A project for financial assistance was discussed with representatives from the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism. By introducing COPRAS, we established strong political and social contacts.

1973

- Initiated formal relations with other organizations that supported COPRAS initiatives. (e.g. Société de service social aux familles; Fédération des associations italiennes du Québec, Commission des services juridiques, Allied Jewish Community Services, Ministère des affaires sociales, Centre de référence du grand Montréal, and many others).
- In January, negotiated with Me. P. Meunier, to have representation from the Italian community in the Board of Administration for Legal Aid and participation in initiatives to set up legal aid centers.
- Participated in the preparation of a document projecting to set up a CLSC that would serve an area largely populated by Italians. The proposal was submitted to the Minister of Social Affairs on January 22nd.
- Promoted activities within the Italian community to be funded by the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism, Opportunities for youth and Local initiative programs and by the Ministère de l'immigration du Québec.
- Request for COPRAS incorporation was submitted February 7th; Letters Patent granted on February 26th 1973. Requesters were Franco Gucciardo, Giovanni Triacca, Sergio Mengarelli.
- The objectives of COPRAS were:
 - To promote and develop services for the community
 - To collaborate with the ministries to improve social program planning
 - To collaborate with ethnic groups having similar objectives
 - To manage and co-ordinate programs established by COPRAS
- Was elected President of COPRAS.

The following were some of the activities carried out by COPRAS:

1 – Project N.O.I. (Nuovo Orizzonte Italiano) – first program that organized initiatives for the elderly offering a variety of activities for them to choose from and a center where they could meet. A group was formed at Notre-Dame de Pompei Church. This group became the first within the Italian community to benefit from the Federal grants program 'New Horizons'. A second group was later set up at Notre-Dame de la Consolata Church. Mireille Lemasson coordinated these clubs for seniors.

2 – COPRAS on-line – an agreement was reached in collaboration with the president of radio CFMB to present programs of information on Bill 65 and Bill 10 as well as one-half hour programs dealing with social problems.

3 – Operation Integration – This "Local Initiatives Program" accumulated statistics concerning the integration problems of Italo-Canadians in Quebec.

4 – P.A.S. I-II (Program for social assistance) – objective of this project was to provide social assistance to two disadvantaged districts on the island of Montreal.

5 – L.I.A.S.O.N. – Using the template of the Centro Italiano di Assistenza, this Opportunities for Youth project offered information and reference services to the Italian community. The project became the object of a study conducted by the planning department of the Ministère des Affaires Sociales whose aim was to integrate an information and referral team into a social services center (C.S.S.). However, the F.A.I.Q. through the C.I.B.P.A. moved to integrate the service within their structure allowing them to tangibly open their doors to the Italian community by providing a variety of direct services.

6 – CLSC - Collaboration to promote Local Community Service Centers in Montreal-North, Villeray, Ahuntsic and Rosemont.

7 – Collaboration with organizations and agencies to improve participation of the Italian community within the already existing services:

Centraide, Centres de services sociaux, CLSC, F.A.I.Q., Parishes, League des droits de l'homme, C.E.G.E.P.'s, S.A.V.I., A.J.C.S., Ministère des affaires sociales, Ministère de justice, Ministère de l'immigration du Québec, etc.

- For the Quebec Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (QACLD), supported and promoted their objectives within the francophone community. Identified and evaluated potential resources that would support the initiative. Organized meetings with the director of the Conseil du Québec et l'Enfance Exceptionnelle, the people in charge of Special Projects at the Commission des Ecoles Catholiques de Montréal (C.E.C.M.), representatives of the Ministère des Affaires Sociales and the C.E.G.E.P.'s. Presented a report that dealt with procedures for publishing texts on learning disabilities, how to organize meetings for involved parents throughout the jurisdiction of the CECM and drawing up an information program for the CLSC's to carry out.

1974

- Worked out a plan for fundraising and publicity in the Italian community for Centraide, formerly named Campagne des Fédérations.
- Participated as a resource person in establishing a permanent structure that would house services for the Italian community. This entity became the NCIC-Foundation. Was involved at several levels of support:
 - Member of the programs committee
 - Responsible for the youth committee
 - Member of the structure committee

1975 – 1980

- Invited to present an exposé to the House of Commons and Senate Special Committee on the Green Book on Immigration.
- Prepared a project for the creation of a public Cultural Center within the Italian community. Presented plans to the NCIC Foundation. Carried out a personal initiative project to accumulate books through public donations in collaboration with Italian parishes. The objective was to set up a library for the Italian community.
- Was a member of the Development Committee for the CLSC in Ahuntsic-Sud.
- Elected leader of the Comité pour des subvention à long terme, composed of representatives from various community organizations. This committee promoted a policy for long-term grants to be applied by the various ministries of the Québec Government when subsidizing association activities or evaluating projects presented by the cultural communities.
- Trinacria Association - Founding member and a member of the first board of directors (1979). Regional association with socio-culture aims.
- Siculiana Association - Founding member and coordinator of the structure committee (1978); member of the Council, vice-president and responsible for the cultural committee (1981), secretary (1989), elected President in 1990. Local association with socio-cultural aims.

- Thalassemia Society - Collaborated in the setting up of this association as well as in the organization of related activities within the Italian community such as conferences and screening sessions.
- Founder and first president of the Italian Centre of Popular Culture. It was the first library and archives center for the Italian community of Quebec. This Center began with a book collection drive in 1975 and was incorporated in 1980 maintaining links with the Italian Canadian Community Services of Quebec. The Centre operated from the Casa d'Italia. A take-over of the assets brought the Centre a new name and a new administration backed by the National Congress of Italian Canadians.
- Member of the permanent Committee for the participation of cultural (ethnic) groups at the Fêtes Nationales du Québec.
- Responsible for the Pro-Development Committee. Promoted the following activities:
 - Colloquium and symposium at the Université du Québec à Montréal – under the theme: Let's Talk - Parlons-nous - Parliamoci.
 - Compilation of statistics and a scientific study on the Italian community.
 - Drawing contest within the Italian school classes on the history of the Italian community in Canada. This initiative realized a colour storybook. Subsidy totaled more than \$300,000.
- Conceived and planned an event to award the best homemade wines in Montreal. Organized the first event of the 'Festival del Vino' with the collaboration of individuals from several Italian associations. Later, the National Congress of Italo-Canadians organized yearly events of the Festival.

Employed by the N.C.I.C. Foundation as Director General for four (4) years.

1980 to 1999

- Speaker at a conference for university professors at S.U.N.N.Y. Platsburgh – on the Evolution of the Italian Community.
- Founder and coordinator of the ham radio network "Rete Eco d'Oltre Mare". Communication was carried out by short waves between Italy and Quebec. Supported a 3rd party reciprocity treaty between Canada and Italy presented to the CRTC.
- 2806 Pointe-Claire Cadet Corps (RMR) - Member of the parents committee; member of the council in 1988-1989. President in 1990-1991.
- Founder and first president of the CC 2806 RMR Foundation in 1991.

2000 and after

- Founder of the Antonio Meucci Centre. A virtual organization, linking people across Canada, promoting socio-cultural activities. See <http://meucci.consultameta.com>
- Organized a Media conference and exhibition on the works of the inventor and discoverer Antonio Meucci. Later, organized mini conferences for Italian language students.
- Planned, organized and executed a series of Conferences in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto on the invention of the telephone: a new truth.
- Proposed a "due diligence" of the Italian community organizations across Canada to strengthen their objectives within the community and establish internal protocols for development programs.