

Tenants Rights Action Coalition: *Multilingual Housing Information Project*

The project's purpose is to make legal information about the *Residential Tenancy Act* more accessible to tenants who speak languages other than English.

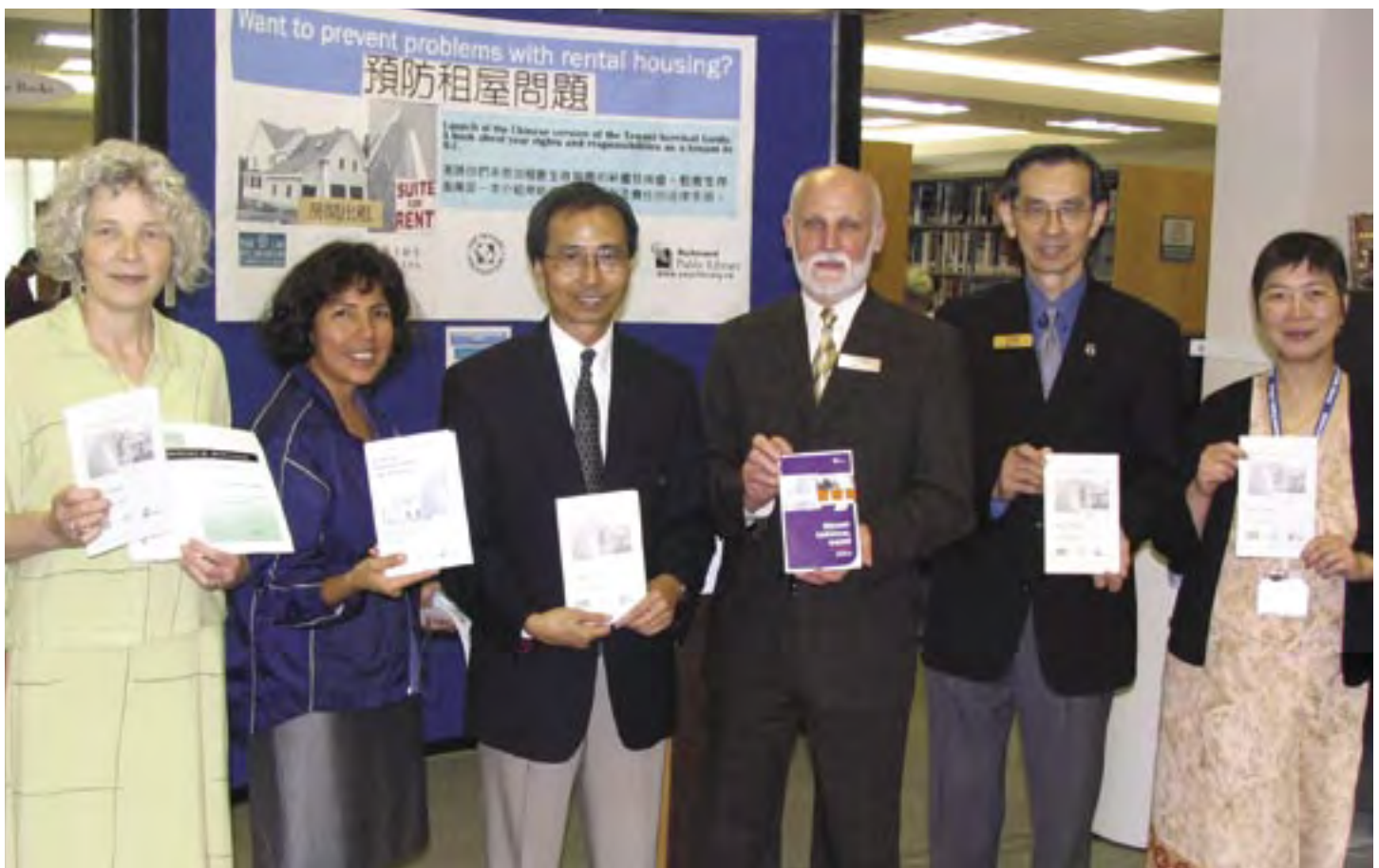
Its broad goals are to prevent and reduce the number of landlord/tenant

disputes arising from language barriers and newcomers' lack of knowledge about our residential tenancy laws.

In the past two years, 42 agencies have been involved in presenting 72 workshops attended by 1421 participants from 13 communities. For the first time in 20 years, the *Tenant Survival Guide* has been translated into Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

This project is funded by the Notary Foundation and Law Foundation of British Columbia.

The person responsible for this venture is Wayne Braid, Executive Officer of the Notary Foundation. Wayne fought fiercely for this project, because he believes that equal access to legal information is key to maintaining healthy communities and that multicultural communities can work together to overcome barriers.



From left: Daphne Morrison, Law Foundation; Sadia Ramirez, Project Coordinator, TRAC; Francis Chan, Acting CEO, SUCCESS; Greg Buss, Chief Librarian, Richmond Public Library; Henry Beh, Trustee, Richmond Public Library; Wendy Jang, Coordinator, Multilingual Services, Richmond Public Library.

Photo courtesy of World Journal

Providing immigrants with information about our legal system will help prevent unscrupulous people from taking advantage of them.

Wayne inspired another ally of the multicultural community to support this project. This year, Daphne Morrison of the Law Foundation ensured that as many recent immigrants as possible accessed legal information in their own language. Providing immigrants with information about our legal system will help prevent unscrupulous people from taking advantage of them.

I am proud of this project and hope that members of the community are, too. We identified problems faced by our communities, discussed challenges, and worked toward solutions. This project illustrates how we as communities can work together to achieve a more equitable society.

I encourage you to learn more about our legal system and to share your knowledge with neighbours and friends.

Remember: knowledge is power. The more we learn about our rights and responsibilities as landlords and tenants, the less likely it is that people will be able to take advantage of us. ▲

TENANT INFORMATION LINE

Lower Mainland: 604 255-3099

Toll Free: 1-800 665-1185

www.tenants.bc.ca

BC Government Residential Tenancy Office

Lower Mainland: 604 660-3456

Toll Free: 1-800 665-8779

www.gov.bc.ca; type "RTO" in search bar.

Sadia Ramirez, BA, is a community legal worker for the Tenants Rights Action Coalition (TRAC). She holds an ESL teaching diploma from the University of El Salvador and has worked as a teacher, researcher, and interpreter/settlement worker.