

GRATITUDE REPORT

2025 April–March 2026

40 YEARS



LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

This year marks 40 years of Migrant Workers Centre standing in solidarity with migrant workers in BC. We have come a long way since a group of domestic workers and Kyong-ae Kim and Janet Patterson, two law students at the University of British Columbia, created the West Coast Domestic Workers' Association (WCDWA). We also have a long way to go in ensuring that all workers have access to justice.

Ottawa's 2026–2028 Immigration Levels Plan abruptly cut new temporary resident arrivals from roughly 673,650 in 2025 to 385,000 in 2026, while lowering permanent resident admissions to 380,000 — drastically narrowing the paths to regularization that many workers have planned their lives around. With over 900,000 work permits set to expire in 2026 and no matching growth in PR spaces, immigration analysts project Canada's undocumented population could approach 2 million by mid-year. Canada's immigration program continues to be based around closed work permits which create conditions ripe for labour trafficking and other contemporary forms of slavery.

When I joined MWC in 2024, I did so with the mandate to expand our services and advocacy to better respond to the needs of migrant workers in a political climate that increasingly scapegoated them for political gain and marginalized them. In response, at MWC we have increased our collaborations with other grassroots organizations defending the rights of migrants in BC, Canada, and the Americas.

We have also expanded our outreach activity in various regions of BC as well as launched our Counselling and Legal Education for Outreach programs. This year, we began supporting the health and system navigation needs of Workers with Precarious Status in the Lower Mainland.

Forty years in, MWC continues to stand in solidarity with all migrant workers. We will continue centering the voices of migrant workers as they fight for the dignity that every worker deserves. We are grateful to the workers, volunteers, donors, and allies who have helped us grow to meet this challenging moment.

In solidarity,

Ingrid Méndez, Executive Director

Jonathon Braun, Legal Director

Daniel Silveyra, Director of Operations

40 YEARS OF MWC

As I reflect on my time at the Migrant Workers Centre (MWC), from starting as a Legal Advocate, to becoming a Staff Lawyer, and eventually the Legal Director, I think about how much the organization has grown. I am also reminded that who we are today is rooted in the workers, staff, volunteers, and allies who have helped build MWC over the past 40 years.

MWC began with people coming together to respond to the injustices faced by migrant care workers and to create a place where workers could find support, advocacy, and a collective voice. From the founders of MWC, to those who have served on our Board, to past and present staff, each generation has helped carry that vision forward.

At the heart of MWC have always been the workers who have trusted us, shared their experiences and knowledge with us, and helped shape the direction of our work. We are deeply grateful to the thousands of workers who have turned to MWC throughout the years. Their courage and trust continue to guide us and remind us of why this work matters.

Forty years later, the vision that began in Vancouver has grown into an organization supporting migrant workers across BC through legal support, education, wellness services, and outreach. While MWC has changed and grown, our commitment to migrant justice remains at the centre of everything we do.

The challenges facing migrant workers remain urgent. Deportations, shrinking pathways to permanent residence, and a growing climate of anti-immigrant racism remind us that the need for this work is as strong as ever. But these challenges also remind us of the strength that comes from standing together.

As we celebrate 40 years of MWC, I am grateful to everyone who has been part of this journey, and especially to the workers whose trust and experiences have shaped the organization we are today. Whatever challenges come next, I am confident that together we can continue the work that began 40 years ago.

Sincerely,

Jonathon Braun, Legal Director

OUR HISTORY

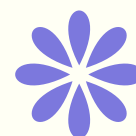
40 YEARS OF THE ORGANIZATION

**1986**

West Coast Domestic Workers' Association (WCDWA), was started by Kyong-ae Kim and Janet Patterson, two law students at the University of British Columbia, and a group of domestic workers.

**1993**

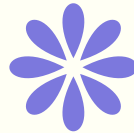
BC's Employment Standards Act was substantially amended to extend important protections to live-in caregivers, including minimum-wage and overtime protections.

**2005**

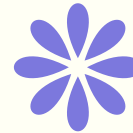
WCDWA won a precedent-setting case establishing that live-in caregivers could qualify for Employment Insurance (EI) when laid off.

**2018-19**

MWC expanded anti-exploitation/trafficking support.

**2017-18**

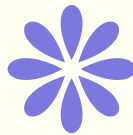
Members unanimously voted in 2017 to **change the organization's name to Migrant Workers Centre**. The change reflected the organization's expanded work with migrant workers beyond domestic caregivers.

**2015-16**

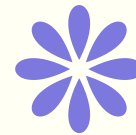
WCDWA increasingly worked with migrant workers beyond caregivers, including workers in agriculture, hospitality, construction, manufacturing and other low-wage industries.

**2020**

MWC continued working on immigration and employment rights, legal advocacy, research and public education.

**2024**

Ingrid Mendez joined as our current Executive Director, with this change a variety of support services launched, including our Wellness & LEO program.

**2026**

We launched Support Services for Workers with Precarious Status, providing diverse support to migrants and their families, regardless of status.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: 2025-2028

Over the past year, we worked collectively to identify the key areas that will guide our organization's work and strengthen our capacity to support migrant workers, as well as their families and communities. These priorities form part of our strategic plan for **2025–2028**:

- Strengthen and streamline legal support
- Expand community supports
- Nurture migrant workers' agency through education
- Strengthen relationships and solidarity to shift public opinion
- Ensure organizational sustainability and efficiency





Legal Education & Outreach (LEO) Program

Coming up on one full year of operating this program, we have seen growing interest among migrant workers in becoming part of LEO. This knowledge exchange program brings migrant workers together to learn about legal rights, employment information, and other available resources, while also learning from each other and sharing the challenges they face.



During this year we had

1

ANNUAL
GATHERING

5

LEO
TRAININGS

104

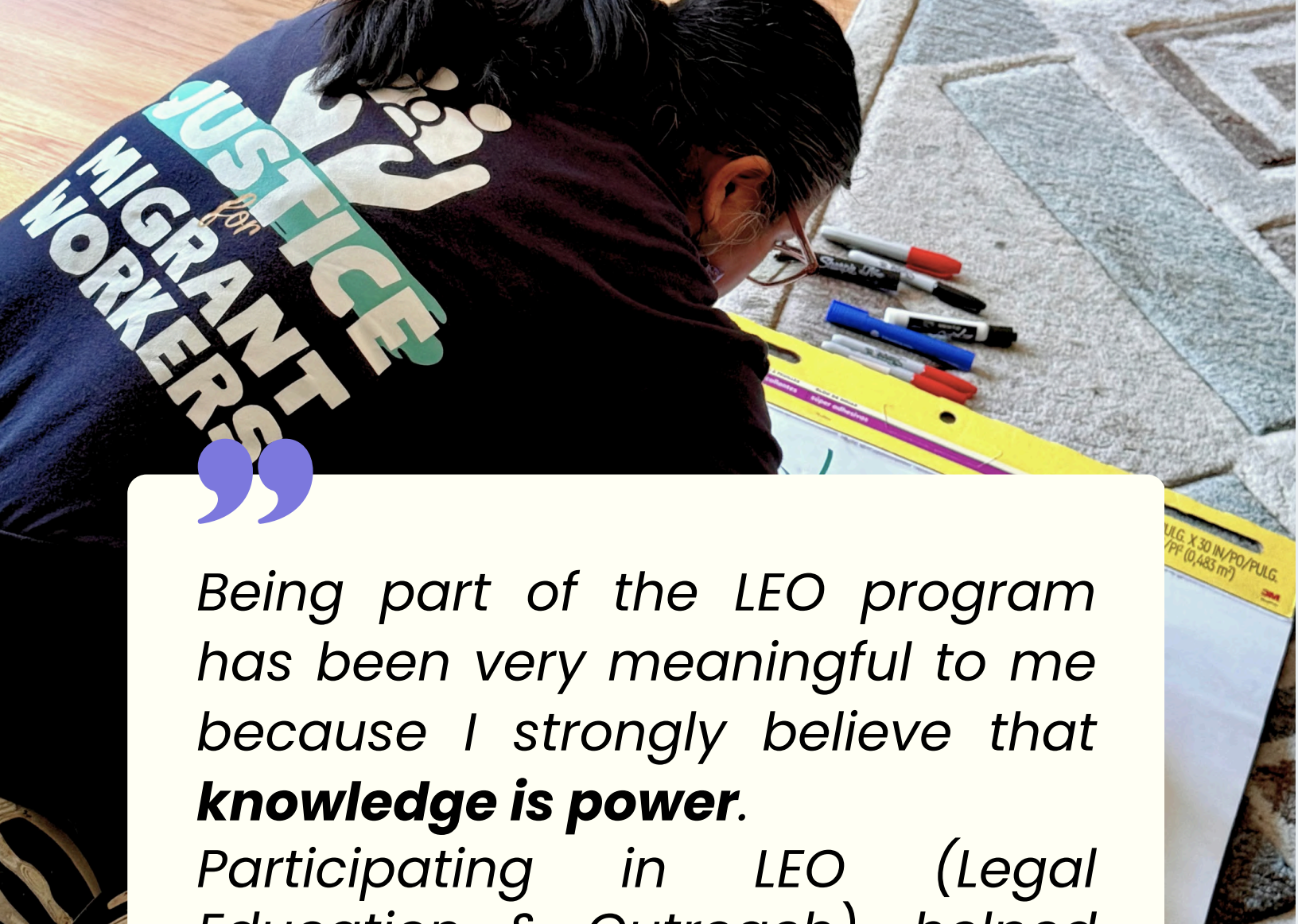
WORKERS IN
TRAINING

Spanish, English, Hindi, Punjabi

WORKSHOPS FACILITATED IN

In 2026 we also created our first run of Planners for migrant workers, more than 100 workers received the agendas where they can learn more about their rights and keep track of their work hours and important events.

MIGRANT WORKERS CENTRE



Being part of the LEO program has been very meaningful to me because I strongly believe that **knowledge is power.**

Participating in LEO (Legal Education & Outreach). helped me learn more about my rights and how to **stand up for myself.** It opened my eyes and helped me realize that **I am not insignificant, even though I have been made to feel that way.**

– A migrant worker, participant of LEO

Wellness for Migrants Program

During this term we held collective workshops as well as one-on-one sessions guided by our staff counsellor Jairo Garcia.

Migrant workers in our counselling program often describe feeling empowered by the safe, supportive space provided by the counsellor. They value being welcomed with respect and dignity.

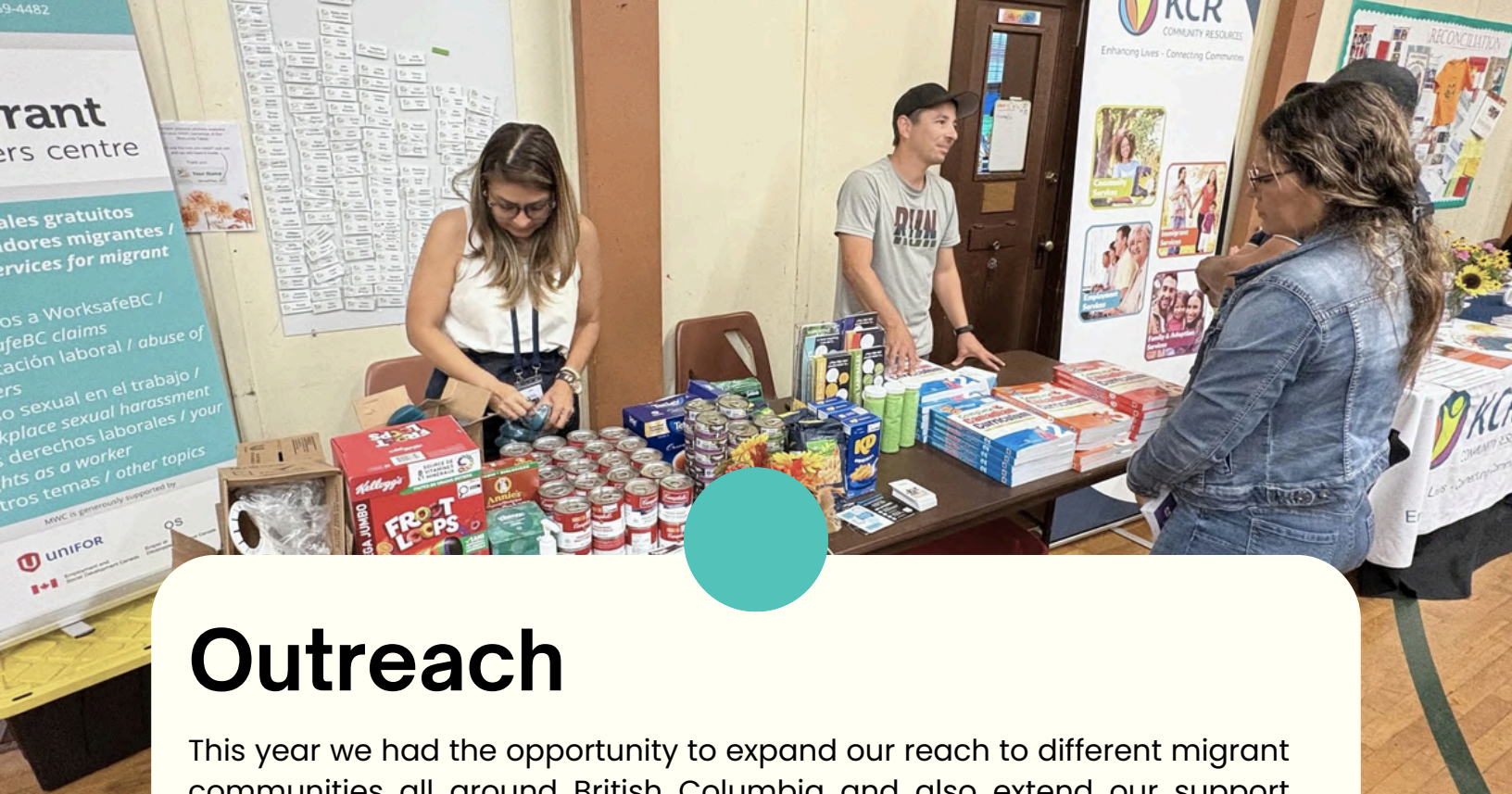
During this year we had

10NARRATIVE
WORKSHOPS**681**SESSIONS &
FOLLOW-UPS**69**WORKERS
SUPPORTED**4**MENTAL
HEALTH FAIRS**3**MENTAL HEALTH
WORKSHOPS

“What a relief it is to hear the voices of others who are living what I’m living, and in my language. It’s like music; it’s healing. I’m not alone..”

– A migrant worker after a group session on migration narratives.





Outreach

This year we had the opportunity to expand our reach to different migrant communities all around British Columbia and also extend our support services to not only migrant workers but their families.

Workers supported



Workers reached



Areas in BC

South Okanagan (Oliver, Cawston, Keremeos, Penticton, Naramata, Summerland, Okanagan Falls) and **Kootenays** (Creston, Grand Forks); also **Cache Creek** and **Victoria** (health fairs); **Lower Mainland** (supporting families with precarious status).

Highlight

Two "Community Day of Access to Health without Barriers" clinics reached **61 uninsured and individuals with precarious status with vaccinations**, HPV/STI screening, and massage therapy — including a five-year-old receiving his first-ever vaccinations. MWC also helped four families access MSP for Canadian-born children, recovering medical expenses for two families who had paid out-of-pocket while awaiting coverage.

Direct Legal Support

This year we had the opportunity to expand our reach to different migrant communities all around British Columbia and also extend our support services to not only migrant workers but their families.

Workers supported

1793
MATTERS
SUPPORTED

77
HEARINGS

Cases represented

161
FULL
REPRESENTATION

SUPPORT ON:
Vulnerable Worker Open
Work Permits, Temporary
Resident Permits, and
judicial reviews for unfair
refusals, as well as
employment law cases.

Legal Outreach

24
WALK-IN LEGAL
CLINICS

8
FAIRS
ATTENDED

12+
SEMINARS
& WORKSHOPS

Highlight

A worker who was considered medically admissible recently received her permanent residence after years of facing significant obstacles. We also supported her with receiving access to healthcare after she was originally denied because of her immigration issues.

Looking ahead

We recently received funding to conduct a **mobile legal clinic with presentations and one-on-one meetings** in smaller BC communities. We already did the first few iterations of this during fall 2026. We will continue to conduct these sessions into March 2027.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

In 2026, we made great progress in diversifying our sources of funding by securing important grants from new organizations. We also laid the foundation for raising more revenue via individual donations. In collaboration with different partner organizations we raised more than \$6,000 in individual donations! We expect this upward trajectory to continue as we strive to meet the growing needs of migrant workers.

\$1,559,734

REVENUE

\$1,566,571

EXPENSES



Highlight

Since 2025, MWC has become a certified living wage employer! We also obtained our charitable status in January 2026.

THANK YOU

Donations

www.mwcbc.ca/donate

Charitable Registration

Number: 892132440RR0002

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