

Yvonne Chiu

B.Sc, Honorary Doctorate Degree in Law

Yvonne was born in Burma and raised in Hong Kong before immigrating with her family to Canada when she was 16 years old. She learned first hand what it is like to be minority youth grow up in and struggle with ones cultural identity.

Upon graduating from the University of Alberta, one of her first jobs was working as a Settlement Practitioner in Chinatown, serving newcomer families from Hong Kong, Vietnam and other parts of Asia.

She then joined the Provincial Government's Multiculturalism Commission as a Social Development officer to support community-based organizations and public institutions to pursue meaningful initiatives around promoting multiculturalism and systemic changes towards social inclusion.

The job that lead her to current work at the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative was being one of the Health Promotion Practitioners with the Health Promotion team at the former Edmonton Board of Health (the regional public health department in the 90's). In that role, Yvonne learned about the principles of health equity and social justice as they relate to marginalized population (such as the indigenous and immigrant/refugee/ other newcomers populations).

Through that work, she ended up meeting and developing life long relationships the founding members of the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative in early 1990's and eventually joined them in creating this organization. The MCHB Co-op has over the interceding 20 years became a unique immigrant-led and awarded wining workers co-operative.

Since then, Yvonne's work has focused on revealing the realities, struggles, strengths and aspirations of immigrants, refugees and other newcomer for the purpose of affecting program, policy and practice shifts. She has also worked on promoting cultural brokering practice as illustrated by the MCHB's.

Within the context of the MCHB's, cultural brokering aims to nurture the relationship between our community members with service provides and policy makers. The goal of which is to catalyze positive changes both in the life circumstances of the community members they serve, as well as in the practice of our colleagues within systems and public institutions.

Yvonne continues to be passionate about making visible and sharing with others the tacit knowledge generated at the grassroots by immigrant/refugee and newcomer families, natural leaders and the MCHB's regarding the true nature of social inclusion and inter-culturalism.



Candidate Statement:

My name is Yvonne Chiu, and I am seeking to represent the Prairie / NWT / NU Region on the Board of Directors of the CWCF. As an active worker-owner and the Executive Director of the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative in Edmonton, I have gained over 20 years of experience co-creating, growing and sustaining an immigrant-led workers co-operative.

In the process, I learned along with my colleagues at the MCHB Co-op first hand, the potency of the workers co-operative model in addressing issues of social justice and health equity.

We see our success in catalyzing systemic changes and advancing the health and wellbeing of immigrant, refugee and other newcomer communities connected directly to the core principles, operational processes and governance structure of a workers co-operative. We have each attain personal growth in becoming a better human being by in living the role of an active member of a workers co-operative.

I am firm supporter and advocate in the workers co-operative model and view CWCF as pivotal and essential to the growth and advancement of worker co-operative in this country. I have been involved over the years with CWCF in many regards and initiatives.

I look forward to the opportunity of being on the Board to achieve CWCF's vision of "a growing, cohesive network of democratically controlled workers co-operatives that provide a high quality of work life and support the development of healthy, just and sustainable local economies".