A Message from the President and the Executive Director

Midaynta management, staff and volunteers are pleased to celebrate their successes and accomplishments in providing quality settlement and community development services to our community. We have intensified our outreach efforts, expanded our programs and services, established new collaborations, networking and partnerships with both mainstream and ethno-cultural organizations in the city and more importantly substantially increased our funding base. This year's accomplishments would not have been possible without the commitment, hard work and outstanding governance of our Board of Directors.

Major Program & Services – 2005/2006 Highlights

Immigrant and settlement & Adaptation Program (ISAP)

Through our settlement program, more than 900 eligible newcomer clients and their families received services at Midaynta to meet their personal needs or help them in finding solution to issues related to legal matters, education, housing, counseling, transportation or information.

Multilingual settlement counselors assist newly arrived refugees and immigrants. During the year, the staff provided over 12,900 settlement and integration related services to our community across the GTA. These services include but are not limited to the following:

- Providing information and orientation about life in Canada, including cultural norms, housing, health, banking, legal rights and responsibilities, civic participation, etc. Periodically Midaynta conducts group information sessions on a variety of settlement related issues to educate clients about changes in policies and procedural matters;
- Raising awareness around cultural diversity and racism;
- Assisting with various government applications;
- Offering linguistic and cultural interpretation and advocacy in order to facilitate access to vital services;
- Free legal advice and document certifications;
- Free statutory declarations to establish personal identity by a licensed legal practitioner;
- Youth and seniors services;
- Employment and job search sessions;
- Mental health awareness;
- Referrals to other appropriate agencies;
- Translation of personal documents, certified by a commissioner for oath.

… '' thank you very much to Midaynta for giving us the support to reach our goals"

……. "Being a newcomer, it was really a tough experience for me and the rest of my family. Your support and encouragement made our experience in Canada easier……

….Your counselor earned my trust. He kept me informed and assisted me to reunite my family. Thank you…

We extend our thanks and appreciation to the Settlement Directorate of the CIC for their continued support to Midaynta. This support is a graphic testimony of the department's belief in our commitment to provide professional settlement and integration services to the newcomer community.

Family Support and Crises Intervention Program

Midaynta Community service has been providing free and confidential counseling and services to families, who have experienced or are still experiencing violence in their daily lives. This program is designed to eradicate all forms of family violence by providing individual counseling and support in shelter, legal, and immigration issues.

The primary goal of this program is to promote preventative measures to combat family violence and breakdown. The program provides practical and emotional support to victims of family violence through crises prevention and safety planning. The program provides services mainly to the East African communities in Toronto who are victims of domestic violence such as wife abuse, child abuse, and elder abuse. Substantial positive results were achieved during the year in the areas of community outreach and education, workshops and information sessions, direct services, and parenting education. This program is generously supported by the Community Service Grants Program (CSGP) of the City of Toronto. The family violence prevention program provided over 4,650 services to the clients in the designed community during 2005/06.

Participants' feedback provided encouragement and motivation for the project staff. Some of the comments from the clients included:

"Thank you Midaynta for your intervention and understanding. You have lowered my stress, and given me room to breathe- May God bless you all".

..... "I thought I was alone with no support in sight. Through this program, I realized I have a community organization that provides the necessary support, unlimited".....

Somali Women Mutual Aid Group

Midaynta continued to support the Somali Women Mutual Aid Group, which provided outreach and connected socially isolated women to each other and to services/programs in their community and/or neighborhoods. The program is a self-help group where participants learn from each other. The goal is to reduce isolation faced by Somali newcomer women and increase peer support and access to community services and resources. The services include family conflict resolution, cultural counseling, and support for new mothers, parenting, as well as support for women in crisis. More than 60 socially isolated women were reached during the year. Some of the women's comments were as follows:

"…….I met other mothers who have similar issues like me….."

".....Through the program, I developed support networks. I do not feel alone any more..."

Bridging Child Welfare

The goal of the program is to raise awareness within the Somali community about child welfare legislation in Canada and to educate the staff of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto about the culture of the Somali and other east African communities in the context of child welfare. The program also provides education to the community members to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Although the funding for Bridging Child Welfare program ended on June 30, 2003, Midaynta still continues to provide this service to the community since some members of the community expressed the need for the continuation of the services.

Family Mental Health Support Program

The purpose of this program is to increase community awareness and understanding of mental health issues and concerns. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of Somali-Canadian families by providing culturally & linguistically appropriate mental health services based on recovery model. Our ultimate goal is to develop a sustainable program delivery plan, which involves training of staff, volunteers and family members on the Recovery Model. Great emphasis is given to the foundation of Somali culture and spiritual healing by creating hope. Key objectives of the program included the following:

- Promote awareness and understanding of the mental health by the community.
- Establish outreach program to provide guidance with families living with persons battling with mental health illness.
- Respond and develop community-based educational program
- Initiate effective outreach strategies to inform about recovery training program
- The primary focus is on families with members diagnosed with mental health issues.

"I want to thank you all for the work you are doing in helping people understand mental health issues in our community"

"I enjoyed previous year's conference. You all did great job and I am looking forward to more information about mental health which is extremely helpful to our community"

"Thank you so much for informing me about depression. I have struggled with past three years, and still dealing with this problem every day. Knowing that I'm not alone supports me!"

We thank our partners, Somaliland Canadian Society and Family Outreach and Support Program. We also thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their financial assistance to this initiative.

Housing and Homeless Support Services

In this program, we supported clients who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. We helped these clients either to find housing or, wherever possible, to maintain their existing housing and avoid being evicted. In this regard, Midaynta Community Services offered a variety

of services, including information, referral, outreach, eviction prevention, housing stabilization, mentoring programs and peer support initiatives as well as provided culturally appropriate counseling.

Following is a summary of the services during the year of 2005/2006:

- 584 people were provided information,
- 172 new clients.
- 150 repeat clients.
- 207 clients were housed.
- 81 clients were stabilized.
- 35 families were prevented from eviction.

Job Search and Employment Services

Midaynta Job Search & Employment program provides employment assessment, referral, pre-employment training, employability skill enhancement, resume writing and other appropriate job search tools for unemployed/underemployed newcomers with limited English language skills, lack of Canadian experience, lack of knowledge about the Canadian work culture and labor market information, or those who are targets for discrimination in the workplace.

In partnership with Culture link, Midaynta has successfully delivered Job Search and Employment workshops for the job-ready newcomers. Together we conducted over 12 workshops during the year. This program has exceeded target expectations and outcomes in all of its component measurements. Clients attended a three-day intensive job search workshop at Midaynta. With assistance of follow-up support from the counselors, over 70 percent of newcomer clients found employment. The workshops provided relevant and up to date information and tips to the newcomers.

Clients of the Job Search and Employment Services unit have enjoyed access to our computer lab, which provides free usage of computers with high speed internet in order to search for jobs, get valuable information, prepare their resumes, and develop skills.

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Tenant and community Development Services

Midaynta continued to work with Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) in two locations in downtown Toronto, providing tenant and community development services. This project is funded by TCHC. We are in partnership with Culture link, to provide community development services to residents of 1,700 units in St. Jamestown community. Similarly, we continued to work in the Etobicoke area with the Centre for Spanish speaking peoples. Midaynta continues to actively contribute to community capacity building by working with the residents in identifying emerging needs and in implementing strategies to be addressed with TCHC or other authorities to create safe and healthy communities.

Services provided during the year under these contracts included community engagement & mobilization, tenant support services, tenant education, creating linkages and networks with location service providers, advocacy for tenants, youth recreation, senior's socialization and support, after school assistance, and working with local tenant council representatives in developing safe, healthy, and secure environments. Periodically, we host community consultations to monitor the progress of the program.

Problem Gambling Project

The Problem Gambling research with the Toronto Somali community was completed in February 2003. Based on the findings, we have developed an Action Plan which articulates specific intervention, preventative and educational programs for problem gamblers in the community.

Our work with the Centre of Addiction and Mental health (CAMH) and COSTI Immigrant Services continued during the year to focus on reaching and providing limited clinical counseling to problem gamblers.

Youth Services and Programs

Midaynta has achieved a great success in expanding the youth services and programs during the past year. We have served the communities in Regent Park, Rexdale, Falstaff and Lawrence Heights with services ranging from community kitchen, homework club, sport & recreation, pre-employment preparation, and leadership/life skills development.

1. Our Jamestown Youth Leadership Development program, a partnership with Horn of Africa Community Development & Thistletown Community Services, continued successfully to provide our youth with after school tutoring, basketball, and life skills as well as leadership and social recreation programs.
2. The Somali Youth Support program, in partnership with Somali Youth Association of Toronto (SOYAT) worked with the Somali community as well as the mainstream institutions to reduce the risk factors causing a number of Somali youth to either drop out of school, or join gangs or simply get into trouble with the law. It is the goal of the project to adopt an early prevention approach by promoting staying in school, getting

involved in community recreation and sporting events and developing youth leaders who can act as role models for other Somali youth.

3. The community kitchen and a homework club program at Central Neighborhood House (CNH) for the Somali youth in Regent Park area continued to achieve positive results. Interest in the program is so high that we are forced to tighten the enrollment, leaving a long waiting list most of the time. It is run by a qualified teacher to tutor/mentor youth in Reagent Park, prepare a weekly session to improve grades and motivate students to stay in school. Based on the feedback from the parents, there is a substantial reduction of absenteeism and drop-out rates among the participants.
4. Midaynta, in partnership with the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA) & the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples (CSSP) initiated the Falstaff Youth Leadership Development project, which was financially supported by the Toronto Community Housing Corp. (TCHC). This program also support the youth in the Falstaff neighbourhood with outreach services, including after-schools tutoring, mentoring, recreation and youth leadership development.

5. Midaynta has developed an extremely successful working collaboration with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) which houses a large number of our clients (newcomer and low-income families). This relationship has resulted in TCHC's decision to sole-source Midaynta to manage their Youth Employment Initiative last fall. 40 youth from the Lawrence Heights and York/Weston areas participated and successfully completed the program.

Seniors Program

During the past year, Midaynta continued to be part of the Breaking Down the Barriers to Seniors Services project for seniors under the Mullti-Agency Partnership Project (MAPP) with the lead of the St. Clair West Seniors. This service is run at Weston and Lawrence area and has become quite popular among the Somali senior population. Its services include seniors' recreational and educational programs, congregate dining, various health-related services, meals on wheels, transportation and escort, home help/homemaking, respite care, adult day programs and seniors' case management (information and referral, crisis intervention and assistance).

Legal Clinic

Legal Aid Ontario generously continued to assign an advice lawyer to Midaynta in order to help the community in resolving some of their legal concerns. With an average of over 60 clients a month, the Free Legal Clinic remained to be extremely busy during the year. One of the most important services to the community during the year was the provision of free legal services. An advice lawyer was always available to prepare statutory declarations and to offer advice on other legal topics such as small court cases, schools, employment, housing, domestic violence, immigration, etc.

Board of Directors

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Staff

1. Ibrahim Absiye	-	Executive Director
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3. Mohamed Ismail	-	Accountant
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5. Abdulkadir Ali	-	Settlement Counsellor
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7. Camille Lee	-	Advice Lawyer (Legal Aid Ontario)
8. Nima Omar	-	Intake Worker
9. Farhia M. Abdi	-	Intake Worker
10. Faisal Hassan	-	Housing Support Counsellor
11. Amina Warfa	-	Family Support Counsellor
12. Shakira Quraishi/Ruth Antwiwaa	-	JSW/Employment Counsellor
13. Muna Mohamud	-	Mental Health Support Counsellor
14. Fawzia Ali	-	Mental Health Support Counsellor
15. Seinab Ibrahim	-	Seniors Support Counsellor
16. Mohamed Ali “Nugal”	-	Youth Worker (Regent Park)
17. Ali-Bahsi Farah	-	Youth Worker (Rexdale)
18. Malyun Afrah	-	Youth Worker (Jamestown)
19. Ali Abdillahi	-	Youth Worker (Jamestown)
20. Fraklin (Sojica) John	-	Youth Worker (Lawrence Heights)
21. Liban Hussein	-	Youth Worker (Falstaff)
22. Gellaine Clark	-	Youth Worker (Falstaff)
23. Jennifer	-	Youth Worker (Falstaff)
24. Farhia A. Abdi	-	Community Development Counsellor
25. Cindy Louie	-	Community Development Counsellor
26. Asili Jama	-	Community Development Counsellor

Volunteers:

Volunteers continue to be vital to the work of Midaynta. During the year, over 85 volunteers donated their skills, time and talent to the programs of Midaynta. In return, Midaynta remains committed to providing opportunities for the volunteers in gaining new skills as well as Canadian experience.

Without the participation and dedication of our volunteers, it would be impossible to deliver and accomplish high quality services to the community. There are always ways to help and we are thankful for those who came forward and made a difference.

Summary of the Finances

REVENUE		**2006**	**2005**
Federal:	Citizenship and Immigration Canada	$ 309,067	309,637
	COSTI/Culturelink (JSW)	9,179	10,248
Municipality:	City of Toronto	158,667	95,966
	Toronto Community Housing Corp (TCHC)	380,777	42,098
Foundations:	United Way of Greater Toronto	26,800	27,150
	Ontario Trillium Foundation	58,100	89,700
Other:	COSTI – Family Violence Prevention	5,800	4,300
	CAMH – Problem Gambling	3,729	17,693
	General Revenue/Fees for Service/Fundraising	103,381	83,638
	Total Revenue	**$ 1,055,500**	**680,430**
	Total Expenses	**$ 850,409**	**714,633**
	Excess of Revenue over Expenses	**$ 205,091**	**(34,203)**