



馮翁惜卿公民法官
Judge Mina Yung-Fung

經歷移民路 幫助新移民

公民法官馮翁惜卿插柳成蔭

20多年前初初移民時，曾經幫別人照顧過小孩，在郵局打過散工，在密市華人社團做過義工的馮翁惜卿(Mina Yung-Fung)，當她於2006年11月被聯邦政府任命為公民入籍法官時，她覺得十分意外，因為她的人生規劃中，從來就沒有想到會出現這一段。也許這就是佛家所說的「福報」吧。

兄弟姊妹多 生活不易

籍貫廣東潮州的馮翁惜卿，父母在香港淪陷期間舉家來到，出生於一個兄弟姐妹眾多的普通家庭，母親生了13個孩子，8女5男，Mina排行第8。

如今回憶起童年的那一段，雖然辛酸，但亦好玩。父親在上環往深水埗碼頭開了一間雜貨舖，賣些煙酒之類的貨品賺錢養家，碼頭經常有運糧船停靠，苦力通常是用大鐵鈎鉤住裝滿糧的麻布袋卸貨，經常有米粒從掛鈎處漏出來，掉在地上，母親就叫孩子們去撿回來，雖然不多，也夠煲粥食。

舊時代重男輕女的落伍觀念，在潮州人的圈子裡相當普遍，她的母親也不能免俗，自小並不鼓勵女孩子讀太多的書，認為讀完小學就可以到普通工廠做工。她說，母親有這種想法，她雖然不同意，但亦感到相當無奈，幸好她的父親比較開通。Mina說，她的母親完全不認識字，父親也沒有進過正式的學堂，只看懂報上一些淺近的文字，但她父親極力主張男女都應該進學校讀書，還認為最好進英文學校學習英文，這給她很大的鼓勵，對她一生影響甚大。

巾幗不讓鬚眉 全憑自己努力

孩子進學校讀書，尤其進英文學校是要花學費的，由於母親不想違逆父親的主張，遂定了一個「家規」，規定女孩子如果在學校的學習成績不好，升不了班的話，就不要讀了，只好到工廠做女工。「我小學畢業後，進入聖保祿女子中學(St. Paul Secondary School)，這是一所英文中學，基於渴望求學的心願，同時我擔心升不了班，被迫輟學，所以我非常用功，成績相當好。」中學畢業後，申請進入油麻地小輪公司，做過電話接線生，也做過文員，當時電腦已漸普及，公司鼓勵基層員工電腦培訓，但她的上司建議她不妨走行政秘書人員的路，鼓勵她到夜校進修有關課程，她一方面工作，利用晚上到夜校讀了六年，終於通過特許秘書及行政人員(Chartered Secretary and Administrator)的考試，成為油麻地小輪上市公司的特許秘書，因為工資高，福利好，假期多，她一直做到1987年移民加拿大之前為止，超過廿年。

1987年雖然離香港回歸中國還有10年之久，但是許多香港人已被移民潮所感染，平日同事之間所談的總離不開「移民」話題，而港人首選的移民國家就是加拿大，其次才是澳洲，但十有八九的人都是申請移民加拿大。她回憶起那一段，覺得當時多數香港人都對九七之後的香港沒有信心，她本人當時有些茫然，捨不得好的工作，而且根本沒想到來了加拿大之後該做什麼，能夠做什麼。

辭去高薪厚職 移民加國

當時港人申請移民加拿大的案子，似乎很少人被拒絕的，「我自己並沒有羊群心態，但是我詢問一些已移民加拿大的朋友，他們都提供許多正面的意見。他們之中有的人英文程度並不

好，但仍能找到待遇不錯的工作，而且安置得相當好，給了我不少找工作的信心。」Mina說，她的英文有基礎，固然得力於中學讀的是英文學校，但是後期在油麻地小輪公司擔任特許秘書所接受的磨練相當有用，「我的老闆是大律師，是留學英國的華人，要求嚴格，我經常要替老闆打英文書信和文件，開會使用的也是英文，從中學到不少東西。」

「從遞表申請到批准不到半年，對於是否選擇移民，內心的確經過一段時間的掙扎，辭職前的收入相當不錯，實在有些不捨，我參加了加拿大駐港專員公署所辦的移民講座，最終仍走上移民的不歸路，1987年9月原本計劃到落腳地安省溫莎市，當時我懷有七個月的身孕。」由於腹大便便，又逐漸入冬，Mina沒有找工作，先生在香港是做貿易的，來到這兒在不挑剔的情況下，找到一份差事。當時住在多倫多的一位白人好友老太太叫她留在多市，不要前往溫莎小鎮，同時叫她不必急著找房子，不必急著找工作，可以暫住老太太家，等年底把孩子生下來以後再說。講到移民連根拔起這一段，她說自己當年樓價最低潮賣掉香港的住家，而來到這兒又正逢地產旺市，她於1988年置業時，漲風正熾，但為了早日安頓生活，居住問題必須優先解決，第二年，她們終於在密西沙加市買了房子，有了自己的家。

做褓姆 做義工 教英文

她說：「女兒凱玲Christina還小，我在家帶孩子，沒有出去找工作，鄰居知道了之後，也把小孩托給我照顧，我成了臨時保姆，我有時候亦幫忙替鄰居朋友填寫或解釋一些英文表格文件，陪有需要翻譯傳話的人看醫生，每年聖誕節前後還應聘到郵局打散工。」

1989年開始，她在皮爾區教育局擔任國際語言教師，負責

教授中文學校廣東話班，她每逢周六去教中文，平日除了照顧家庭以外，抽空在密市華人協會做義工，例如為家庭受虐者進行輔導，教授老人班學英文，協助上門求助的人報稅或申請就業保險金，回答各種問題，安排學童或老人探訪政府機構，認識加拿大歷史古蹟文物等。

由於她熱心從事許多與新移民安置有關的工作，英文的水平亦不錯，密西沙加華人協會第一年安排她做的事，主要是為那些帶孩子來上英文課的家長照顧小孩(Childminder)，第二年她轉做簿記員，第三年她擔任密西沙加華人協會Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada(簡稱為LINC)的統籌，後來因應政府的要求，她利用晚間上課，考取TESL Ontario Certificate，名正言順成為「英文為第二語文」E.S.L.和入籍英文班的教師。

擔任公民法官 全時投入

三年前被任命為公民入籍法官之後，她必需辭掉其他零星的工作，全時投入現在的職務。

這位來自社區的入籍法官經常在公民法庭上面對即將成為加國公民的人說：「加拿大是一個世界的縮影，移民來自五湖四海，聚居這裡成為一體。如果今後在國外有人問到你來自何處，你該如何回答？」法庭上幾乎眾口一詞：「我來自Canada」。馮翁惜卿說，移民超過20年，她教過老人英文班，教過移民入籍英文班，教過祖語中文班，教過E.S.L.，做過多年義工，曾經受教於她的老中青學生很多，認識的朋友也很多，在交往互動的過程中，相互學習，生活非常充實。她還說，由於她的學生多，認識的朋友多，曾有人建議她利用這個優勢打入層壓式商品直銷網絡，但她毫不考慮就推掉了，因為她自認為完全不合她的志趣，她不具備推銷員的性格，她幫助人，交朋友，是為了一種滿足

感。

當年放棄了上市公司高工資，好福利的工作，挺著大肚子來到這裡重新開始奮鬥，轉眼在這兒出生的女兒Christina都已大學畢業了。她長時期投入義工行列，也培養了女兒樂於做義工的性格，在公民法庭的入籍儀式上，在許多社區團體的活動上，經常可以看到她們一家三口穿著T-shirt做義工。她說做義工與薪水工最大的不同，在予義工替人服務或解決問題時，有高度的滿足感，好開心。

跨越舊時空 結交新朋友

問她身為公民入籍法官，有什麼贈言送給華人社會，她希望華人移民不論來自中港台哪一地，既然來了，就應該融入加拿大社會，大家團結一致，跨越舊有的時空，利用機會多結交新朋友，因為良朋益友可以帶給你許多意想不到的收穫。如果老是緬懷過去，將無法擺脫掙扎，不能面對現實，難以創立新生活。



Participating in Mississauga's multicultural activities, experiencing the unique cultures from the different countries
參與密市多元文化活動，體驗不同族裔的文化特質



Arriving in Canada in 1987, seeing the Niagara Falls with husband for the first time and pregnant with Christina
1987年初抵埗加拿大，挺著大肚子與夫婿在大瀑布前留影



There are eight daughters and five sons in the family. This picture was taken at the wedding of one of Mina's brothers
母親生了八個女兒與五個兒子，圖為其中一位兄長結婚時，全家合影留念



Celebrating July 1 with Canadian citizens
與市民一起慶祝加拿大國慶



At Christina's university graduation ceremony
愛女大學畢業，與父母親合影



Mina Yung-Fung with her immigrant English class students over ten years ago
馮翁借卿於十多年前與她教授的移民英文班學生



At the reaffirmation ceremony as a citizenship judge, picture taken with Chinese Consulate-General in Toronto, Madame Zhu Taoying and other guests
在複誓儀式上，與中國總領事朱桃英等賓客合影



2001 Mississauga's multicultural activities - posing with native dance troupe from Taiwan
2001年前在密市多元文化活動中，與來自台灣的原住民舞蹈團合影



Participating in anti-racism activity organized by Mississauga Chinese Business Association
參與密市華人協會舉辦反種族歧視活動



Citizenship Judge Mina Yung-Fung with a group of volunteers from the Philippines
入籍公民法官馮翁借卿與一批菲律賓裔義工



1993, Mina Yung-Fung with her Saturday Cantonese class
1993年，馮翁借卿和她所教授的週末中文班

JUDGE MINA YUNG-FUNG

Mina Yung-Fung immigrated to Canada over twenty years ago. When she first came, she took on various jobs such as babysitting, seasonal work at the post office, and volunteered in the Chinese community in Mississauga. When she was appointed by the Federal Government in November 2006 to be a citizenship judge, she was very surprised, because she had never thought this would happen. Perhaps this is what the Buddhists always say: one reaps what one sows.

Mina's hometown is in the Chiu Chow District of Guangdong Province. Her parents moved to Hong Kong, just when it fell to the Japanese during World War Two. She was born to a large family: eight daughters and five sons. Mina was eighth among the thirteen children.

When Mina remembers her childhood, she recalls both hardship and fun. Her father had a convenience store around the Pier of Sham Shui Po in Sheung Wan, selling cigarettes and alcohol. There were many cargo boats parked at the pier, and the porters often used large metal hooks to unload large cotton canvas bags off the boats. Sometimes rice would leak out from where the hooks made holes in the bags. Their mother would ask the children to gather the rice from the ground, and that would be enough rice to make congee for the family!

Chinese families traditionally favored sons over daughters, very common in those days. Mina's mother followed that tradition, and she did not encourage her daughters to study. She felt that when the girls finished elementary school, they could get jobs in factories nearby. While Mina did not agree with that tradition, there was not much

she could do about it. Fortunately her father was open to new ideas. Mina says her mother was illiterate, and her father was barely able to read the newspapers, never having attended school, but he was adamant that both sons and daughters should attend school. He also thinks they should attend English schools and learn English. This gave her a lot of encouragement, and it had a lot of impact on her life later.

Mina's mother did not want to oppose her father's suggestion for the children to attend English schools, but since tuition in English schools cost more money, she established a rule: if the daughters failed their classes, they would have to terminate their studies and become factory workers. Mina says, 'I attended an English high school, the St. Paul's Secondary School. I was an eager learner, and I was worried that I could fail, so I was very diligent in my studies, and I did very well'. After graduation from high school, Mina worked for Hong Kong Yaumatei Ferry Company Ltd. as a telephone operator and later as an office clerk. When computers became more common, instead of being trained in computers, her boss encouraged her to further her studies and develop administrative secretarial skills. While working during the day, Mina took night classes and successfully finished the Chartered Secretary and Administrator exams, becoming Yaumatei Ferry Company's Secretary. With a competitive salary, benefits and vacation package, she worked there for over twenty years until she immigrated to Canada.

With Hong Kong due to return to China in 1997, although it was ten years away, there was already a wave of emigration in 1987. Office discussion topics centered on emigration, and the number one choice was Canada, second one was Australia, with eighty to ninety percent of people choosing Canada. Mina remembers there was not a lot of

confidence in post-97 Hong Kong at that time. Mina herself was a little lost. She did not want to leave such a good job, and she could not fathom what she would or could do if she came to Canada.

At that time immigration applications to Canada were seldom turned down. Mina says she did not want to follow the wave of emigration like sheep, but when she asked those friends who had left for Canada, they had many positive things to say. Despite not having English skills, they were still able to find good paying jobs, and that gave her a lot of confidence in landing a job. Mina says she has a good foundation in English, having graduated from an English high school. Her administrative position at the Yaumatei Ferry also helped her practise her English skills. Mina says, 'My boss was a barrister, who had studied in England, and she had high standards. I often had to type English correspondence and documents, and meetings were conducted in English. I learned a lot there.'

It only took six months for Mina's immigration application to be approved, but her inner struggle took longer. Although it was difficult letting go, she resigned from her well-paying job. Mina says, 'I participated in a seminar for prospective immigrants organized by the Canadian Embassy, and made the final difficult decision to take the route of immigration. I was seven months pregnant at that time, and our plans were to settle down in Windsor in September 1987.'

Mina was pregnant with her baby, and with their first cold winter arriving, she did not look for a job. Her husband, with commercial trading experience from Hong Kong, was not particular about any type of work, and soon found a job. At that time she was living in Toronto with a good friend, an older lady who was Caucasian, and she advised her to stay in Toronto, rather than settle down in Windsor. She told her

not to rush into getting a house or a job, but to stay with her in her house until the baby was born. Mina lamented about how they had sold their flat in Hong Kong when prices were lowest, while coming here where property values were at the highest. Despite the high prices, they bought their house in Mississauga the following year, in order to be able to settle down finally.

Mina says, 'Our daughter Christina was small, so I stayed home to look after her. When neighbors found out, they brought their children over for me to babysit. I also helped them with filling in forms in English or explaining English documents, or accompanied them to doctors' appointments if they needed a translator. Every year around Christmas, I took on temporary jobs at the post office.'

In 1989, Mina became an international language teacher in the Region of Peel, responsible for teaching Cantonese classes every Saturday. During the week, aside from looking after her family, Mina often took time to volunteer at the Chinese Association of Mississauga, doing counseling for family abuse victims, teaching English to seniors, filling out income tax forms for those who needed help, and helping them apply for employment insurance benefits. She answered all kinds of questions, arranged children and seniors to visit Government organizations, and to become familiarized with Canadian culture, historical and heritage sites.

Since Mina was enthusiastic about doing settlement work with new immigrants, and her English was very good, Chinese Association of Mississauga arranged different kinds of volunteer jobs for her. The first year, she became a child-minder for the children of immigrant parents taking English classes. The second year, she was an accounting clerk, and the third year she became the Coordinator for the Language Instruction

for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) organized by Chinese Association of Mississauga. Later, she took evening classes to be a teacher for English as a second language (E.S.L.), and after being certified with TESL Ontario Certificate, became officially an E.S.L. and citizenship class teacher.

Three years ago Mina was appointed to be a citizenship judge, and she had to drop the myriad jobs that she was holding, so that she could throw herself into her new post. In the courtroom, as she faces the immigrants who are about to be sworn in as citizens, this citizenship judge says, 'Canada is a microcosm of the world, with immigrants coming from all corners of the world, living here in an integrated society. If anyone outside Canada asks you where did you come from, how would you reply?' Everyone in the courtroom replies unanimously, 'I came from Canada'.

Mina says that she had immigrated for over twenty years now, and she had taught heritage Chinese classes, English classes to immigrants and seniors, and worked as a volunteer for many years. She has had many students of different ages, young and old. She has made many friends also, and through exchanges with her students and friends, her life has been enriched.

Someone once suggested to her that she should leverage these connections to start a direct sales business, but she did not hesitate in turning this down. She felt that this was not something of interest to her, since making new friends and helping others were satisfying and fulfilling to her.

Mina's daughter Christina is now a university graduate, and the years since she gave up her high-paying job while pregnant with her daughter to come to Canada had passed quickly. Since she worked as a

volunteer for all these years, she was able to cultivate volunteerism in her daughter as well. At the citizenship swearing-in ceremonies, in many community activities, one can often see their family of three wearing volunteer T-shirts working. Mina says the difference between a volunteer job and a paid job is that one gets a sense of satisfaction and happiness from solving problems and working for others.

When asked as a citizenship judge, what words of wisdom she would give to the Chinese community here, Mina replies that she hopes Chinese immigrants, no matter where they come from: China, Taiwan or Hong Kong, would try to integrate into Canadian society as soon as possible, overcome the chasms of misunderstanding, and make new friends whenever possible. Good friends will bring unexpected benefits. If one is always thinking about what happened before, they would be handcuffed by the past and they would not be able to face the new world, or establish a new life for themselves.