



CASSA Newsletter - January 2019

Message from the Executive Director

Dear friends, members and supporters of CASSA,

We have started the new year with great excitement and high energy. We are looking at a busy and productive 2019. A lot is expected to happen in the new year. In a few weeks time, CASSA is going to launch a 'Civic Engagement Campaign' with the objective of creating awareness about the upcoming federal elections and the importance of voting for racialized communities. CASSA is also working actively on the Health Equity Summit. We are in the process of booking space at Ryerson University during the summer months for the 9th Annual Health Equity Summit. The summit is expected to discuss recommendations and policies for a South Asian Health Equity Strategy and how we can engage the current government in adapting and implementing this strategy.

In February and March, I will be traveling to Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond, Burnaby, Calgary, Edmonton and Montreal. I will be meeting social justice and other like minded agencies in these cities to present on CASSA's Anti-Racism initiatives in 2018. I am open to suggestions to meet with additional agencies that member agencies are working with in these cities.

In other news, we have two new staff who started work in January 2019 – Sophia Ayathurai and Madina Ajiz. Sophia will be working as the Health Equity Coordinator and Madina will be supporting ongoing projects and will act as the Membership Co-coordinator. You may have already started receiving calls and emails from Madina and Tsega in regards to your membership renewal. We look forward to continuing to represent your agencies in the coming months of 2019 as CASSA's member agencies!

In regards to grants and projects, CASSA is anticipating a few grants from the Department of Canadian Heritage to continue our work on Anti-racism and Anti-oppression. Along similar lines, CASSA recently collaborated with the Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change in organizing a consultation session on the Federal government's renewed Canada Action Plan Against Racism. Experts, academics and advocates talked about immigration, justice, social justice and economics and its relationship with racism and provided their input and proposals to Canadian Heritage. Overall, the consultation put forward strong and concrete recommendations to Honorable MP Gary Anandasangaree, Parliamentary

Secretary for the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism. CASSA looks forward to working with Canadian Heritage to ensure we have a strong action plan to combat racism in Canada.

I look forward to striving to build a more equitable, inclusive, fair and resilient country for our communities!

Best
Samya
Executive
samya@cassa.on.ca

Hasan
Director

Rohullah Naderi - Outreach Coordinator

My collaboration with CASSA's Senior Policy Analyst – Mathura Karunanithy, has ended. She is leading a community-based research project on the employment needs, barriers, and recommendations for employment equity for South Asian immigrant communities in Toronto. I had an outreach role in her project and compiled two lists for the project. One was list of media outlets owned and run by the South Asians. The second list was list of local businesses owned and run by the South Asians. I had a productive collaboration with her and learned a great deal.

Towards the end of December and on behalf of CASSA, I attended Honorable MP Salma Zahid's New Year Reception. It was a Meet & Greet event to wish her constituents happy and blissful new year.

In addition to my outreach role, CASSA has given me a project called Investment in Youth Engagement. The IYE initiative was established by Toronto Public Health to support youth engagement work in Toronto communities and provide funding to support community health promotion projects. It is intended to motivate and create opportunities for youth to develop their leadership skills and engage in and act on health issues within Toronto. This initiative is youth-driven, which means that youth are involved in all aspects of the project planning and implementation. In this regard, I had a meeting with Mathura Karunanithy – CASSA's Senior Policy Analyst, who briefed me thoroughly about the project. I also met with Christian Pack of Toronto Public Health. I was given orientation about the project by her and discussed about the challenges that lay ahead. She briefed me fully about the project and shared a few tips to help me with the project implementation. I am currently in the process of hiring volunteers to move forward on that front.

There were a couple of important events that took place in mid-January. One was a legal event organized by the Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO). The theme of the event was "Community Workers Who Help People with Legal Problems." The report of the event will be published in CASSA's newsletter. The second event was a consultation session jointly organized by Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change and CASSA. The aim of event was to put together recommendations in relation to Revised Anti-Racism

Strategy.

Rohullah Naderi
Outreach Coordinator
rohullah@cassa.on.ca

Tsega Bushkera - Membership Coordinator

CASSA's membership coordinator started the new year by communicating with the member agencies. The aim of the communication was to update the member agencies about CASSA's activities. Through emails and phone calls, I contacted the focal persons of the member organizations, responded to their emails, addressed their concerns regarding CASSA's membership terms and used the opportunity to get additional members. In addition, I participated in an event organized by Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change with CASSA's collaboration. It was a conversation on a renewed Canada Action Plan Against Racism.

The discussion of the consultation was touchy, interesting, and sensitive. What was important was that the menace of racism in different places like schools, work place, immigration and community centers came under detailed discussion. Professional and experienced individuals talked and exchanged ideas on economics, justice, immigration, and the use of disaggregated and objective data. The guests from Toronto and participants from different sectors agreed on many of the dimensions related to racism and the way forward. They presented their group discussions and put forward their proposed solutions. The proposed action plans included long term solutions for combating racism.

For the next month, I will continue on contacting the member agencies and addressing their concerns about CASSA's membership terms and conditions. This constant communication will hopefully create good understanding of CASSA and its member agencies. The approach will help target audience to know who we are, where we are at in terms of project implementation and what we do.

In regards to workshops and seminars outside of CASSA, I will continue to attend them in order to get potential members.

Tsega
Membership
tsega@cassa.on.ca

Bushkera
Coordinator

PROJECT

UPDATES

Mathura Karunanithy - Research on Employment for South Asian Immigrant Communities in Toronto

The Research on Employment Equity of South Asians in Toronto project completed several focus group sessions in partnership with North York Community House, the East Scarborough Storefront, Markham

Christian Worship Centre, and Immigrant Women Resource Centre.

To support ongoing policy work, connections were made with Hire Immigrants, Better Way Alliance, Ontario for All, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Office at the City of Toronto, and the Scarborough Economic Opportunities Planning Table (SEOPT).

To support the project and organizational goals, CASSA participated in Strategic Planning Day at Social Planning Toronto (SPT), completed an interview with OMNI TV to discuss the Research on Employment Equity of South Asians in Toronto project and employment issues South Asians face in Toronto, and supported the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF) Roundtable on Human Rights at 70.

New Recruits by CASSA

CASSA is delighted to introduce Sophia Ayathurai and Madina Ajiz. Sophia will be working as the Health Equity Coordinator and Madina will be supporting ongoing projects and will act as the Membership Co-coordinator.

Sophia Ayathurai:

I am a third year student in the Mental Health Specialist Co-op program at the University of Toronto Scarborough. I am drawn to CASSA for its unique dedication to shining a light on the various social and health issues affecting South Asian communities, a focus that I have long noticed was sorely missed from the common discourse. In fact, it is my personal goal to implement a community resource to cater to the specific mental health needs of the South Asian population in the GTA. As an organization with various connections in the community and a mission that aligns with my own, I knew having CASSA as my first co-op placement would be an incredible experience, one that I could both learn from and give to. From conducting grant research to partaking in social justice conferences, I am delving head-first into a field with many inspiring, intelligent and hard-working individuals. I am thrilled to work amongst such people who not only have views similar to mine on important issues such as women's rights, poverty, racism, and health equity, but also have the means to do something about them.

Madina Ajiz:

I am a second year Social Service Worker (SSW) student at George Brown College. With my diploma being completed in a few months, I hope to continue my studies at Ryerson University in September and earn a Bachelors of Social Work. Before CASSA I never realized there were organizations catered to empowering the South Asian community. I have always been passionate about issues surrounding immigration policy and I feel that CASSA is a very good place to start further exploring this field. Now that my placement is here, I cannot wait to see what kind of work I will not only read about but assist with as well.

Report on The Event Organized by Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO)

By Rohullah Naderi - Outreach Coordinator

The agenda of the event was based on a research done by CLEO on the subject of "Community Workers who Help People with Legal Problems."

Below are the key findings of the research:

1. Community workers continue to struggle to find legal information to help clients who have legal issues.
2. The knowledge that community workers have about legal information and resources varies widely.
3. One-on-one help to find legal resources, and assistance with referrals for clients would help workers most.

Brenda Doner, who is CLEO's project manager in connecting communities, was the moderator for the session. More than 30 legal entities and nonprofits providing legal services from across Ontario attended the session.

1. Where to Look for Information: This is probably the first step and an important one to help both community workers and the clients where to look for legal information. Most of the people are looking for brief legal information. The first step to address this gap is to create an awareness in the community centers, particularly, among the clients that legal information can be accessed. In other words, legal information is "available." In this regard, setting up **frontline services** in community centers can go a long way to provide brief, timely and correct legal information. The second step would be improving the **referral mechanism**. For example, if a community center does not happen to have the requested legal information, the center can use the referral mechanism to refer the clients to other places to get the information.

The third step is **one-on-one** session. This method can be helpful in helping the clients find legal resources. It can also help the clients with referrals. This method can be more effective for people who are new to Canada and with language barriers. In one-on-one session "live chat" can be used if the session is online. Some of the participants highlighted the problem of limited time and language barriers in one-on-one session. Sometimes, the time limit might create confusion in communicating the legal steps and resources to the clients. To address the problem of time limit, cases can be dealt with on "individual bases." And to resolve the language barrier "We Speak Translate" can be used. This project caters to the language needs of the clients whose primary language is not English or French.

2. Referrals: How to improve referrals? Participants suggested two steps that can make referrals better. One is community centers should update the list of legal clinics and legal service providers on their websites. This update will help community workers greatly to

resort to the referral mechanism without wasting much time. For example, when the name of the organization that you need to refer your client to is on the website, there is no need to look it up online or make calls. The second step to improve referral is to hire Information Referral Coordinator (IRC). This position helps make the mechanism and the process of referrals smooth and streamlined. For example, when a referral needs to be done, a community worker knows where to go and who to meet.

3. Legal Information v/s Legal Advice: This theme is tricky as the line between a legal information and a legal advice is quite blurry and unclear. The question is how to provide legal information without crossing the line of legal advice which is done by lawyers with legal licenses. The client's perception of legal information is vital. Clients might consider the legal information as an advice, hence, weakening their legal decisions. This debate can be endless, however, CLEO is working on a "Fellowship" to make community workers comfortable and competent to provide legal information. In this regard, CLEO is seeking support and advisory from the legal sector and other legal entities to help it in the Fellowship. Currently, community workers are not comfortable to provide legal information. They don't want to get in trouble as they lack resources and information. The Fellowship by CLEO will provide basic legal information training to the community workers and familiarize them with the legal process. One of the participants suggested a pre-prepared legal information script that has been prepared by a legal practitioner keeping the blurry line between legal information and advice in perspective. The script can be handed over to clients upon request.

Messages from Member Agencies and Partners

Celebrate Black-History Month - 2019



CELEBRATE BLACK - HISTORY MONTH 2019

Humber College Invites You To:

The International Caribbean Inventors & Icons Museum

The International Caribbean Inventors & Icons Museum, curated by Francis Jeffers, celebrates the contributions of the diverse peoples of the Caribbean to the world of Science, Sports, Politics, History and Religion.

The exhibit will feature Inventors, Innovators and Icons from Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, US and British Virgin Islands, Bahamas, Bermuda, Barbados, Guyana, Belize, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada and Carriacou, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Kitts & Nevis, Montserrat, Antigua & Barbuda, Surinam, Anguilla and other Caribbean islands.

Admission: No Cost

If you require an accessibility related accommodation, please contact:
Jodie.Glean@humber.ca



COME AND
MEET THE
CARIBBEAN
CONSUL
GENERALS!

Exhibition Schedule:

North Campus:

Friday, February 1, 2019

10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 2, 2019

10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Opening Ceremony:

Friday, February 1, 2019,

10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Location: E-Concourse,
Humber College North
Campus, 205 Humber
College Boulevard,
Toronto, Ontario
M9W 5L7

Location: E- Concourse,
Humber College North
Campus, 205 Humber
College Boulevard,
Toronto, Ontario
M9W 5L7

Lakeshore Campus:

Thursday, February 28, 2019

10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: L Building-L1017,
2 Colonel Samuel Smith
Park Drive, Toronto, Ontario,
Canada M8V 4B6

Scarborough 2019 City Budget Forum



SCARBOROUGH 2019 CITY BUDGET FORUM

PRESENTATION ON HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019 CITY BUDGET
COMMUNITY PANEL ON PRIORITY ISSUES
LEARN HOW TO HAVE A SAY ABOUT THE BUDGET

WED. FEB. 6, 2019

MID-SCARBOROUGH HUB 2660 EGLINTON AVE EAST

5:30 PM: DOORS OPEN - 6:00 PM: EVENT BEGINS

To register, contact:

Israt Ahmed <iahmed@socialplanningtoronto.org>

Anna Kim <kanna@agincourtcommunityservices.com> or 416-321-6912 x 409



17th Annual International Women's Day Gala

17th Annual International Women's Day Gala



Anubha Mehta
Keynote Speaker



Dilshad Burman
Emcee

FRIDAY MARCH 22, 2019 @6:30PM

Sagan Convention Centre and Banquet Hall
7180 Edwards Blvd, Mississauga ON L5S 1Z1

TICKETS

\$125/each

\$1150/table for 10

silent auction, prizes, & cash bar

PROCEEDS FROM THE EVENT WILL
GO TOWARDS THE **YOUTH
SERVICES, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,
LANGAR ON WHEELS AND
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS** AND
TO SERVE THE UNDERSERVED.

905-677-0889 | zayba@pchs4u.org | www.pchs-foundation.com | eventbrite.com



Multicultural Women's Forum - Building Equal Opportunities for Women of all Origins

Multicultural Women's Forum
Building Equal Opportunities for Women of All Origins

February 21st, 2019
9.00 am - 2.30 pm

The Founders Room
The Peoples Church
374 Sheppard Ave E.
North York, ON



Lebanese & Arab
Social Services
Agency

www.fosteringdiversity.ca
info@fosteringdiversity.ca

 Fostering Diversity while
Strengthening Inclusion

 @StrongDiversity

Are you a newcomer or marginalized woman in Canada?

- Connect with a panel of successful immigrant women and hear their stories!
- Share your strength and challenges in securing gainful employment!
- Network with employment support initiatives!
- Voice your concerns and ideas to settlement/social service agencies!
- Discuss barriers to economic advancement facing immigrant women!
- Join in a collaborative effort to build recommendations for more equitable opportunities for women of all origins!

Register at www.fosteringdiversity.ca

This project is funded in part by the
Government of Canada

Supported By:

  Centre of Learning
& Development
Strong Communities Together



In the News:

[Settlement groups fighting anti-Muslim backlash in Kingston, Ont.](#)

[Syrian newcomers to Calgary now settled, celebrating successes and looking ahead](#)

[Hundreds of nonviolent immigration detainees sent to max-security jails as part of 'abhorrent' government program](#)

[Former MPP Yasir Naqvi to head up citizenship institute](#)

[Winnipeg couple living immigration nightmare after birth of baby in India](#)

[Pride Toronto members vote to keep uniformed police officers out of parade](#)

['Dark chapter in our history': federal gov't apologizes to Ahlarmiut for forced relocations](#)

[Edmonton among Canadian communities holding 3rd annual Women's March](#)

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