



**COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH
ASIANS**

CASSA Annual Report 2020



COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

Annual General Meeting
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)

Wednesday, October 21st, 2020

Zoom Meeting

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Agenda

Annual General Meeting
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
Wednesday, October 21st, 2020
6-8 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

6:00 p.m. – 6:40 p.m.

Welcome and CASSA Business Segment

6:40 p.m. – 6:50 p.m.

Welcome Address from Special Guests

6:50 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Release of Findings from CASSA's Research on Employment Equity for South Asian Immigrant Communities in Toronto

7:15 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Panel Discussion on the Impact of COVID-19 on the Employment of South Asians in Ontario

8:00 p.m.

End of AGM

CASSA 2019 Annual General Meeting (AGM) Minutes

Date: September 16, 2019

Location: Friends House, University of Toronto – 60 Lowther Avenue, Toronto

Welcome and Call to Order:

Sanga Achakzai, Chair of the CASSA Board of Directors, called the meeting to order.

Approval of Draft Agenda:

Bharat Saini from Humber College made the motion to approve the agenda. Istvan Mucsi from UHN Kidney Health Education and Research Group seconded the motion.

Approval of 2018 AGM Minutes:

Sanga noted that members who attended the 2018 AGM were allowed to approve the minutes. Anjum Sultana, the Vice-Chair of the CASSA Board of Directors, made the motion to approve the 2018 AGM minutes. Leanne Saldanha, the Treasurer of the CASSA Board of Directors, seconded the motion.

Chair's Report:

Sanga presented the Chair's Report: 2018 was a successful year for CASSA as it was a year of innovative approaches that helped advance CASSA's strategic directions towards supporting the South Asian community through various projects:

- CASSA continues to research employment equity. The objective is to conduct a needs assessment to identify the needs and barriers of South Asian immigrant communities. Over 300 organizations and policy partners were approached, focus groups were conducted, and over 100 participants completed in-person and online surveys in various languages. Based on these outcomes, CASSA will develop recommendations for public policy changes.
- The Intercultural Collaborative Project aimed at fostering anti-racism, and anti-discrimination in communities around GTA while promoting diversity among organizations within art, recreation, and youth engagement sectors helped promote diversity and youth engagement. The objective was to create anti-oppressive training modules, and the purpose was to influence the programming of our partnering agencies.
- CASSA Launched South Asian Heritage Month and featured South Asians who championed Civic Engagement.
- CASSA also launched a campaign on anti-smoking to push young folks to develop healthy habits
- CASSA undertook the legal toolkit project and created a Guidebook on Transitional Issues for Refugee Youth which was translated into various languages and spread across multiple cities in Canada.

Executive Director's Report

- Samya Hasan introduced herself as the permanent Executive Director and noted that she aimed to take this organization forward and this past year has been reflective of that.
- Samya traveled across Canada for the Intercultural Collaborative Project to disseminate information on how other agencies can replicate similar anti-racism and anti-oppression focused

projects with their communities. Samya met with 125 agencies and exchanged ideas on working through an anti-oppressive lens.

- Last year, CASSA received funding from the United Way to research employment equity for South Asian immigrant communities. CASSA continues its commitment to bridge the unemployment gap in the community. The data collected will be used to do a needs assessment report and, once the barriers are recognized, policy recommendations will be made to the government. This project will continue until 2021.
- CASSA is also aiming to spread our research through other avenues such as online platforms to reach the youth.
- CASSA's Civic Engagement Project ran numerous workshops around the GTA to encourage South Asian communities to make informed voting decisions in the upcoming election.
- CASSA also formed an Anti-Hate Working Group comprised of more than 30 organizations and individuals, which is focusing on systemic and policy level changes to combat hate and hate crimes in Canada.
- CASSA held its annual Health Equity Summit this year, which was sold out. It was a 2-day summit held in two different locations to make sure we have representation throughout the GTA. The summit brought together equity-minded health professionals from South Asian, Black, Indigenous, and Chinese communities to discuss and develop health equity strategies.
- CASSA had its first Multicultural Storytelling Festival in September in partnership with the Hispanic Development Council and the Chinese Canadian Council. The collaboration focused on increasing solidarity and creating an intergenerational dialogue between seniors and youth. The storytelling circles shared experiences of immigration, discrimination, and integration.
- Thank you to the CASSA staff and board for their continued commitment to CASSA.

Treasurer's Remarks:

Leanne Saldanha, Treasurer of the CASSA Board of Directors, summarized the auditor report and said the financial statements presented fairly as remarked by David Burkes.

- The motion to approve the financial statements of 2018 was made by Istvan Mucsi from UHN Kidney Health Education and Research Group. It was seconded by Anju Rajan from Women for Women's Support Services. The motion to reappoint David Burkes as the auditor was moved by Anjum Sultana from the CASSA Board of Directors and seconded by Alka Verma from Women for Women's Support Services.

Nomination Report:

- Sanga Achakzai announced the current Board of Directors and proposed the new slate of Directors.
- The motion to approve Anita Singh as a Board Director was made by Anju Rajan from the Women's for Women's Support Services and seconded by Noura Hamade from the University of Toronto.

Meeting Adjournment:

- The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bharat Saini from Humber College. It was seconded by Leah Sultan-Khan from Epilepsy Toronto.

Message from the Chair of the Board

Dear members, friends, funders and partners:

On behalf of CASSA board, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ceaseless support and robust participation in our various projects and many new initiatives that took place in the year of 2019. It is without a doubt through your collaborations and whole-hearted involvement that CASSA has advanced towards its strategic directions and has maintained its determinations for social justice.

Year 2019 was exceptionally action- packed with several initiatives that were aimed at furthering CASSA's mission, vision and values. I am thrilled to report progress on CASSA's three-year community based research study on the employment needs, barriers and recommendations for employment equity for South Asian Immigrant communities in Toronto. Through this initiative, CASSA conducted a needs assessment to identify the employment needs and barriers of South Asian immigrant communities, and based on the outcomes of this research project, CASSA will develop recommendations for public policy changes.

Year 2019 also marked the end of a seven-phased project, called the Intercultural Collaborative. The project was aimed at fostering anti-racism and anti-discrimination in communities around the GTA while promoting diversity among organizations within the art, recreation, and youth engagement sectors. For the first time in CASSA's history, our work reached over the boundaries of GTA, and to other Canadian provinces and cities, including: Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey, Burnaby, Calgary, Edmonton and Montreal. CASSA very well triumphed its goal of nationally sharing knowledge and lessons learned with like-minded, social justice and sector specific agencies to influence their programming and services to include more participation from diverse communities.

Multicultural Storytelling Festival 2019 was an exhilarating event that CASSA accomplished in alliance with its valued partners: Hispanic Development Council (HDC) and Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO). The Festival flourished intergenerational conversations and provided safe space to seniors and youth to tell their stories of struggles, acceptance, survival, immigration, settlement and integration. The event entertained over 500 attendees with important dialogues and conversations, multicultural food, music, art, and a number of free activities for kids.

CASSA has always endeavored to align its projects and initiatives with community needs, and the formation of the Anti-Hate Working Group testifies to this fact. 2019 was marked by some disturbing events flamed by hate crimes around the world and that is when CASSA and its allies took a proactive approach to combating hate based crimes and racism in Canada. The Anti-Hate Working Group is comprised of 30+ leaders across the GTA who together have caught the attention of some key politicians/policy and decision makers who are now committed to advancing the operations of this initiative.

Like every year, we celebrated South Asian Heritage Month 2019 by showcasing our South Asian Heritage Month Poster, featuring eight South Asian trailblazers who championed Gender

Equity through their work in Canada. They were then invited to attend a ceremony held in their honour at Scarborough Civic Centre, where a panel discussion was hosted. Furthermore, the Health Equity Summit of 2019 brought robust conversations that took place in two different locations: Brampton and Toronto. This year's focus was on chronic health, mental health, sexual health, maternal health, and social determinants of health. With an aim to gather community input on health equity strategies in the GTA, we also explored ways to engage the current government through research and advocacy.

I have only been able to share a few highlights of our undertakings and this year, we will continue to strive towards achieving our strategic goals, strengthening our existing programs, and introducing many new projects and initiatives. We look forward to your continued support and participation, and the hard work that CASSA's ED, staff and much valued volunteers put in; without which, CASSA's goals and its success would be unattainable.

Sanga Achakzai
CASSA Board Chair

Message from the Executive Director

Dear members, supporters, friends, and funders,

It is with great pleasure that I report to you the enormous success we experienced as an organization in 2019 and the continued expansion of our mission and vision in 2020.

For the first time in CASSA's history, in 2019, CASSA was able to travel across the country and share our projects and findings with agencies in other provinces doing similar social justice and capacity building work with racialized communities. We initiated the Anti-hate Community Leaders' Group through which we have been able to work with over 30 community leaders from across the Greater Toronto Area to move on legislative, policy, and systemic level changes in addressing hate crimes and hate speech in Canada. We held the largest ever sold-out Health Equity Summit in CASSA's history that spanned over two days in Toronto and Peel Region. We held a Multicultural Storytelling Festival for the first time in partnership with our long-time allies, the Alternative Planning Group. Overall, it was a year with a lot of firsts!

The year 2020 has been a roller coaster for CASSA and our staff as I am sure it is the same case for most of our member agencies. In March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic lock down was called, CASSA shifted all of its activities remotely. We knew that our communities were struggling during these challenging times and we needed to shift gears to serve them. With flexible funding from United Way Greater Toronto, federal government, and City of Toronto we were able to fill in some service level gaps that our communities were facing. We provided food baskets with essential grocery staples to racialized seniors (including South Asian, Hispanic, and Middle Eastern) who were low-income and food insecure. We provided hygiene packages to shelters with high concentration of South Asian clients to help them protect themselves during the pandemic. In partnership with some of our member agencies we started a COVID-19 Relief Information Helpline for South Asians with live intake-specialists in Hindi, Urdu, Bangla, Tamil and Punjabi. We developed infographics on COVID-19 relief related information such as health and safety, government regulations, benefits, and myths. These infographics were shared with our members to educate clients and shared on social media and with ethnic media. CASSA also supported grassroots volunteer groups supporting vulnerable people during the pandemic by securing personal protective equipment for over 300 volunteers across the country.

CASSA continues to push forward groundbreaking projects to advance social justice and help eliminate barriers and challenges for the communities we serve. We have developed a fantastic Legal Education Toolkit for refugee women and are now in the process of disseminating this toolkit to as many refugee serving organizations as possible. We continued to host our Annual Health Equity Summit as an online forum to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on health equity for South Asian communities. After witnessing a spike in online hate speech and hate crimes in Canada, we ramped up our anti-hate work by starting a virtual conversation series on hate-related issues and how to address them. We continued to analyze data we collected for the Research in Employment Equity for South Asian Immigrant Communities in Toronto and crafted a needs assessment report and policy recommendations report rooted in community input. We are working with Black, Hispanic, Chinese, Middle Eastern and South Asian allies as the

Racialized Health Working Group to draft a proposal for the Ontario Ministry of Health to adopt an Office of Racialized Health.

CASSA continues to be committed and passionate about serving our members who serve South Asian and other racialized communities. We have been closely communicating with member agencies who are serving vulnerable communities on the ground to understand the impact this pandemic has had in their lives. We continue to present these and other evidence of negative outcomes as well as recommendations for improvement for South Asian communities to policy makers, decision makers, and funders. CASSA has been fortunate enough to sit on various advisory committees to advance the wellbeing of South Asian communities including the Ministry of Health Sociodemographic Data Consultation Group co-chaired by Dr. David Williams and Dr. Kwame McKenzie.

I would like to thank and express gratitude for all of our funders, partners, friends, and members for supporting CASSA during these unprecedented times. We have also been very fortunate to have extremely hard working and committed staff and Board of Directors who have been supporting CASSA to sail forward and reach new heights. I hope that in 2021 we are able to beat this pandemic and start reconstructing our systems, sectors, and agencies for the best interest of our communities.

In solidarity,

Samya Hasan
Executive Director

CASSA 2019 Projects

Title: Research on Employment Equity for South Asian Immigrants in Toronto

Leads: Mathura Karunanithy, Cynthia Saxena, Qudsiya Jabeen

Since 2018, Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) has been working on the Research on Employment Equity for South Asian Immigrant Communities in Toronto (REESAICT) which is funded by United Way of Greater Toronto. This initiative is a three-year community-based research project on the employment needs, barriers, and recommendations for employment equity for South Asian immigrant communities in Toronto. By conducting this needs assessment study, CASSA aimed to identify the needs and barriers that South Asian immigrant communities in Toronto face in their search for meaningful employment. The first phase of this initiative took place during its first year and focused on collecting data on the barriers that South Asian communities living in Toronto face when it comes to seeking and maintaining meaningful employment in their chosen field of work.

The second phase included developing a comprehensive policy report which highlights suggested public policy changes as well as recommendations for business process improvements to meet the needs and alleviate the barriers faced by South Asian communities. Data and input were collected from community members, subject matter experts, employers, employment equity groups, and South Asian advocacy groups on recommendations for public policy changes. In 2019 CASSA finished collection of all of the primary data for this research project and hired a policy consultant to use this data to craft recommendations for policy makers.

Title: Multicultural Storytelling Festival

Leads: Hamna Mughal, Shahnaz Hariff, Rafay Syed, Qudsiya Jabeen

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA), Hispanic Development Council (HDC) and Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTC) are hosting a Multicultural Storytelling Festival. The festival will assist in building bridges between Chinese, Hispanic and South Asian communities in the Greater Toronto Area by bringing together these communities under one roof and providing an opportunity to educate on each other's culture and struggles as racialized communities. The festival will also shine a spotlight on the stories of seniors and youth by facilitating intergenerational conversations throughout the festival. We will be providing a safe space to seniors and youth to tell their stories of struggles, acceptance, survival, immigration, settlement, and integration.

The festival was held on Saturday, September 7, 2019 at the Albert Campbell Square. Over 700 people attended the festival. The attendees enjoyed a wide array of activities. One of the most popular aspects of the festival was the Kids Corner, which had free popcorn, cotton candy, bouncy castles, and face painting. The kids also got to read multicultural books during story time. The Free Henna Stall offered beautiful designs; along with that, food vendors and food trucks provided a taste of traditional cuisine from the Chinese, South Asian, and Hispanic community. Attendees were also able to experience different cultures through dance and musical performances which featured Bhangra, Ancient Chinese Music, Bharatnatyam, Hispanic folk dance.

The festival also featured intergenerational storytelling circles. The circles had South Asian, Chinese and Hispanic elders engage with youth to share experiences of immigration,

employment, and racism. This dialogue helped capture the senior's narratives and wisdom and offered future generations advice on navigating Canadian society. The youth saw the seniors' resilience as a result of this discussion.

We had community engagement from volunteers that offered the festival their generous support. The festival also gave participants a chance to win giveaways, which featured gift cards, gift sets and Samsung Tablets. It was a huge undertaking, yet it was worthwhile as it brought three different communities to celebrate their art and culture and use it as a vehicle for social change. Participants left with an understanding of diverse cultures. Spoken-word performances discussed Islamophobia, racism, and deportations, which allowed for an understanding of the struggles faced by racialized communities.

In the future, we hope to continue carrying on such events that center the voices of racialized communities and offer time and space to celebrate each other.

Title: Health Equity Summit

Leads: Sharifa Kazi, Shamaa Haj Ahmed, Sitharsana Srithas

On August 7-8, 2019, CASSA hosted its 8th annual Health Equity Summit. For the first time, the Summit took place over two days at two different locations. The first day took place at Peel Memorial Centre (August 7, Brampton) from 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The second day took place at Ryerson University, Ted Rogers School of Management (August 8, Toronto) from 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The Health Equity Summit is a recognized event that addresses health issues and inequities, specifically ones affecting South Asians and other racialized communities. This year's Summit focused on gathering community input on a health equity strategy from South Asian and other racialized communities working on health equity strategies in the GTA. We also explored ways to engage the current government through research and advocacy. This event featured panel discussions on various topics.

On August 7 at Peel Memorial Centre, the day began with three breakout sessions on chronic health (heart health and cancer), mental health, and sexual health and was followed by a plenary session on Health Equity Policy. In the afternoon breakout sessions consisted of maternal health, chronic health (diabetes and kidney health), and social determinants of health and a plenary session on best practices in health equity. On August 8 at Ryerson University, the day began with two plenary sessions on best practices with panels on Black health and Indigenous health. In the afternoon input was sought from the community on their ideas for a South Asian Health Equity Strategy followed by a plenary session on health equity policy and advocacy.

We are thankful to our partners in Toronto and Peel Region who have supported this event including:

Ryerson University's Department of Nursing, William Osler Health System, Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS), South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO), The Neighbourhood Organization, Humber College and CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses.

Investment in Youth Engagement

Leads: Rohullah Naderi, Hamna Mughal, Ariyana Klair

The Investment in Youth Engagement (IYE) initiative was established by Toronto Public Health (TPH) 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 project planning and implementation. CASSA facilitated the creation of an enthusiastic youth group consisting of 12 members. In addition to developing leadership skills for youth group members, the project goals are to eliminate Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) in multi-unit dwellings and to prevent accumulation of butt litter. Phase 1 of the project spanned over 18 months (January 2018 to June 2019) and additional funding was secured for Phase 2 to disseminate the findings of the project in creative ways (September 2019 to December 2019). The project involved many activities, training, designing behaviour change messages along with distribution of printed materials, information booths, and meeting with stakeholders. The second phase of the project involved the youth creating infographics, videos, and advertisements for social media using the research and information they had gathered in Phase 1.

Title: South Asian Heritage Month Poster 2019

Lead: Shehnaz Hariff, Sritharsana Srithas

To commemorate May as South Asian Heritage Month, CASSA held our annual South Asian Heritage Month reception on Thursday May 23 at the Scarborough Civic Centre. The theme of this year's event was "Celebrating Champions for Gender Equity." South Asians represent the fastest growing immigrant population in Canada. The South Asian Heritage Month Reception was an excellent opportunity to connect with the South Asian community and to learn from this year's featured champions on gender equity.

This was the fourth year we are featuring this important initiative with the objective of raising awareness and celebrating the contribution of South Asian Canadians to our city and country's social fabric. We had a very successful panel discussion on gender equity with South Asian Canadian Trailblazers: Dr. Agnes Thomas, Ausma Malik, Haran Vijayanathan, Maya Roy and Dr. Rupaleem Bhuyan. They shared their experiences and the challenges of advocating for gender equity and the importance of intersectionality in their work.

Title: Anti-hate Community Leaders Group

Lead: Naima Raza

After the world-wide shock that came out of the New Zealand Mosque shooting, CASSA and its allies decided that we need to take a proactive approach to ensure this event does not replicate itself in Canada again. CASSA invited 40-50 individuals from the GTA who are leaders in the non-profit, faith/inter-faith, policy, and advocacy sectors. More than 30 community leaders attended the first meeting in April of this year. Through this meeting, the group decided they would focus on the systemic and policy level issues relating to six areas. These include legal tools/legislation, education/tools for children, social media, inter-faith supports, political engagement, and media engagement. After a series of meetings, the Anti-Hate Working Group developed six recommendations for the federal government to prevent and combat hate and hates crimes in Canada. The group aims to meet with all four major political parties ahead of the federal election to garner support for their recommendations. The group is also currently exploring strategies to combat hate content and misinformation on social media. The work of the Anti-Hate Working Group will continue through 2020 and we are happy to have even more allies on board to help us achieve our goals!

Title: Civic Engagement Campaign**Lead:** Naima Raza, Ariyana Klair, Rafay Syed

CASSA's 2019 Civic Engagement campaign focused on encouraging more South Asians to discuss issues that they care about and to make informed voting decisions in the 2019 federal election. We talked to populations who may have been disengaged or less informed about the political process, or required culturally sensitive material, such as newcomers, youth and seniors, through the campaign. The campaign involves conducting workshops at community organizations across the GTA, and chatting with residents at local community events.

CASSA coordinated a community leaders group on hate crimes, where we will be meeting with representatives of federal political parties and the government in order to provide recommendations on preventing and addressing hate crimes in Canada. We also worked with the Urban Alliance on Race Relations (UAAAR) to host an all-candidates' debate on racial justice in the riding of Scarborough-Rouge Park for the upcoming federal election.

We conducted numerous civic engagement workshops with organizations such as the Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS), East Scarborough Storefront, Stouffville Golden Years Seniors Club, and Noor Cultural Centre. We also attended Eid festivals in the Peel region to spread awareness about the upcoming election. Over the next month we will be conducting more workshops with the Punjabi Community Health Services, West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre, Social Services Network, Brampton and Regional Islamic Centre. Currently, we are planning on engaging youth in a social media campaign so that they can educate their peers about the upcoming election.

Title: APG Toronto Equity Forum on Housing**Lead:** Shehnaz Hariff

On Thursday July 11, 2019, the Alternative Planning Group (APG) hosted its annual Toronto Equity Forum. APG is a unique collaboration of three major planning organizations representing three of the most populous ethnic communities in the City of Toronto, namely, the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA), the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO), and the Hispanic Development Council (HDC). The respective histories of these communities yield commonalities and differences that both strengthen and inform the partnership. The group shares a vision of joint planning through individual experience that translates into joint events that build bridges between the four communities that focus on ethno-racial issues that are firmly grounded in anti-racist strategies/methodology. This addresses a plurality of experiences, both within and across communities simultaneously. This group is unique since it has evolved organically, coming together out of a need to do so, while negotiating differences along the way. This process itself has resulted in the emergence of theory as an outcome of practical experience that is then applied to joint planning initiatives.

What is fundamentally different in this model from traditional conceptualizations of social planning is that it recognizes the importance of the ongoing social planning activities each member agency conducts on a day-to-day basis. The partnership focuses on a process of joint planning that is informed by each community's needs and experiences as understood through the independent planning that each agency undertakes through its regular work. It alleviates silos between community development, research, and direct service delivery and views social

planning as an ongoing process with the goal of effective social development and equity.

The Toronto Equity Forum is an annual forum hosted by the APG with a focus on a pressing municipal issue. This year the focus of the forum was on Housing. It was held at the North York Civic Centre in the Members Lounge. This year we decided to focus on the barriers and needs for housing in Toronto and we encouraged agencies and members of the South Asian, Hispanic, and Chinese communities in Toronto to attend the Equity Forum. APG came together to have this forum to gain input from these communities for the new Affordable Housing Strategy currently under development at the City of Toronto. Often our marginalized communities are left out of these conversations and so we were glad that we were able to organize this diverse community consultation to have the input of our communities conveyed to influence the City's new Affordable Housing Strategy.

Title: Environmental Justice Workshop Series

Leads: Jassi Ranauta and Tanzil Islam

The Environmental Justice Workshop Series was an initiative funded by Canadian Heritage and supported by the Indigenous Environmental Justice (IEJ) Project at York University, University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC), Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS), Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA), and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). The workshops engaged with existing/potential ways of civic involvement around environmental justice as well as tracing histories of migration for South Asians from Punjab to British Columbia. This focused particularly on the relationship between Indigenous communities and South Asians, based on new research and recent historical accounts that have looked specifically at the development and dynamics of this relationship and how it can inform future partnership and solidarities.

The events promoted/highlighted existing and potential community action and civic engagement opportunities taking place relating to the environment and issues impacting Indigenous communities. It highlighted participation, learning, and exploring community building in the context of Canada to work towards greater participation in conversations taking place around the environment and climate change. Indigenous speakers connected with South Asians on community solidarity around environmental action. For many participants, this was their first time hearing first hand from Indigenous community members and learning about Indigenous issues and the connection of these issues to the environment.

South Asian diaspora members learned from Indigenous community members on their experiences, broadening their understanding on how environmental issues such as climate change impact Indigenous communities in Canada. Linking these different communities together allowed for a critical conversation around migration, environmentalism, and future civic/community action. Particularly, we were able to discuss the connection between South Asian migration to Canada in the 1900s and Indigenous issues. Over 200 participants attended these workshops.

2020 Project Highlights

Research on Employment Equity for South Asian Immigrant Communities in Toronto

Lead: Cynthia Saxena

CASSA has finalized a Needs-Assessment Report and a Policy Report. The Literature Review was conducted, prior to starting research activities for this project, to develop an understanding of current trends. The Policy Report offers the contexts for policy reforms as a pathway for decent employment for racialized immigrant workers by reviewing relevant legislations and recent policy developments. It also presents three policy goals identified in the needs assessment. The Policy Report synthesized the findings of the key informant interviews, focus group interviews, and surveys. The Report was also improved after collecting and incorporating valuable feedback from CASSA's partners. CASSA intends to utilize this report to connect with policymakers, Ministers and MPPs, as well as employers to improve the job searching experience for recent and new South Asian immigrants.

Finally, the Needs Assessment Report identifies barriers that South Asian immigrant communities face in their employment search. Although completed during phase one of the initiative, this Report was edited accordingly and finalized this year. Both the Policy Report and Needs Assessment Report advocate for removing barriers in the business sector and through public policy changes so South Asian immigrants can find meaningful and decent work in Canada. All three reports will be launched and presented at the AGM.

The third, final, and current stage is a six-month long advocacy campaign to engage communities and disseminate information of this study to advocacy groups, regulatory bodies, policy makers, and employers. In this phase, we are engaging with the South Asian immigrant communities in Toronto in advocacy efforts targeted to all three levels of government, regulatory bodies, and employers, to address public policy and business process changes to eliminate barriers to meaningful employment and to advocate for sector wide changes. CASSA will also be employing a plethora of COVID-friendly print media, ethnic media, and social media marketing to disseminate and raise awareness of this important issue.

Legal Education for Refugee Women

Lead: Yomna Omar

CASSA has created a "Legal Education for Refugee Women" Toolkit to aid refugee women in understanding more about their rights and responsibilities, as well as provide them with the resources and supports that are available to them. The ultimate goal of the toolkit is having refugee women cease to feel like they are second-level participants in the decision making processes relating to their and their children's lives. The Toolkit explores the following 11 topics: Charter of Rights and Freedom, Ontario Human Rights Code, Legal Aid, Family Law, Child Rights and Benefits, Immigration, Employment, Healthcare, Education, Housing and Financials. It is available in 4 different languages: English, Arabic, Urdu and Tamil. Short summaries for each topic in the form of infographics are accessible in 8 different languages: English, Arabic, Urdu, Tamil, Spanish, Bangla, Punjabi and Farsi. The toolkit and infographics can be accessed here: <http://cassa.on.ca/toolkit2020/>. The Legal Education Toolkit for Refugee Women project was made possible through funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario. It does not serve as legal advice.

Health Equity Forum 2020

Lead: Mahdiba Chowdhury

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) continued the momentum of previous in-person Health Equity Summits by hosting a virtual Community Forum in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. The virtual Community Forum was held using Zoom on July 15, 2020 at 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. As the circumstances surrounding COVID-19 continued to change rapidly, CASSA aimed to provide a platform for community members to hear from experts as the situation develops and take shared responsibility in reducing risks and reinforcing resilience in our communities. The Forum provided an avenue for experts to share their approach amid the crisis and provide information on available support initiatives. The overarching theme of the forum was Equitable Access to Care for All: COVID-19 Emergency and Health Care Response. Speakers were given full creative liberty on what they can present as long as they remain within the intersectional framework and address COVID-19.

Some key topics included:

- Canada’s COVID-19 emergency and health care response
- Specific intersecting identities that make people vulnerable to health inequities
- Frontline health-care workers and communities who have been hit hard by prevention measures
- Disparities in reported cases – identities within the larger community that have gone unnoticed
- Approaches communities can take to advocate for health equity in times of crisis and emergencies.
- Available federal and community support initiatives.

Anti-Hate Community Leaders’ Group

Lead: Samya Hasan

CASSA initiated the Anti-Hate Community Leaders’ Group in March 2019 after the devastating Mosque attack in New Zealand against peaceful worshippers. This event shook many racialized & religious minority communities to the core and left many who work on anti-racism issues with severe anxiety about the state of hate in this world. CASSA, currently lead by a visibly Muslim female Executive Director, decided to bring together community leaders in the Greater Toronto Area to take preliminary action in ensuring events like this never happen (again) in this country. With a call out that went to 50 different community leaders and organizational leaders in Toronto, Peel region, York region, and Durham region. Approximately 35 of these organizations came together to form the Anti-hate Community Leaders’ Group.

The Group has six mandate areas for tackling hate:

1. Legal tools and legislation
2. Social media and online strategies
3. Education tools for children
4. Inter-faith dialogue and supports
5. Political engagement
6. Media engagement

Group Activities to Date:

The Anti-hate Community Leaders’ Group has already worked together to look at the legal tools and legislation that can support anti-hate work. We have produced a set of recommendations for

the Minister of Justice and Attorney General. We have met with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, MP Arif Virani, with our proposed recommendations. We have recently been involved in consultations from the Minister's Office about some of these recommendations.

The Anti-hate Community Leaders' Group has also submitted a proposal to the federal government to create a social media strategy with tools and content for social justice agencies to use to address online hate in their professional work and in their personal lives. Over the long term, we hope the use of content developed through this project will support in curtailing the increasing trend of online hate as anti-hate messages will force people to think critically about what they are posting online and the impact it can have on others.

Anti-Hate Conversation Series:

The Anti-Hate Conversation Series is a panel-style livestream series that aims to spread awareness on current hate-related and social justice issues by inviting speakers to provide insights into the underlying causes and next steps for these issues. The series takes place biweekly on Tuesdays from 4 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. on CASSA's Facebook Live page and consists of a discussion with questions from the moderator, Samya Hasan – Executive Director of CASSA, pertaining to the topic of the week and responses from two guest speakers.

Some of the past topics in this series have included Anti-Asian Racism Amid COVID-19, State of Islamophobia, Rise of White Supremacy and the Far-Right, Anti-Black Racism in Healthcare, Sexism and Misogyny in Racialized Communities, Antisemitism, Anti-Indigenous Racism, Addressing Homophobia, and many others.

COVID-19 Relief Projects

Lead: Nikhita Dogra

COVID-19 Helpline

The Covid-19 Helpline is funded by the Government of Canada and United Way Greater Toronto. It is managed by the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) in partnership with the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO), Tamil Canadian Centre for Civic Action (TCCCA), Bangladeshi Canadian Community Services (BCS), South Asian Women's Rights Organization (SAWRO), and Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS). The Helpline provides information about health & safety during COVID-19, details on the reopening process, government benefits, and support services available to communities in English, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Bangla and Punjabi. All recorded information is available on the helpline 24/7 and live Intake Specialists are available on a set schedule every week. The Helpline went live in early September.

Food Baskets for Racialized Seniors

United Way Greater Toronto granted CASSA funding to provide 250 low-income racialized seniors with food staples and fresh produce to last them at least one month in the GTA. Food items consisted of grocery staples such as rice, flour, lentils, soap, etc. Thanks to this grant, CASSA was able to provide 250 food baskets to these seniors facing food insecurity.

CASSA is currently providing an additional 200 food baskets for low-income South Asian seniors in the GTA thanks to the grant provided by United Way Greater Toronto.

Hygiene Packages for the Homeless

United Way of Greater Toronto granted funding to CASSA earlier this year through its Local Love Fund to provide 125 hygiene packages to homeless individuals in Toronto and Peel Region.

CASSA partnered with 3 shelters to distribute these packages. As a result, 125 homeless people were able to take care of their hygiene needs and protect themselves from COVID-19!

New Horizons for Seniors Project

The New Horizons for Seniors Project is a federal grants and contributions program that funds projects supporting the wellbeing of senior citizens. CASSA modified its New Horizons for Seniors project to meet the evolving needs of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the last few months, CASSA has rolled out several infographics that provide South Asian seniors with information, awareness, and tips on staying safe and more. These infographics were made available in several languages including Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Gujarati, Bengali, and Tamil. Apart from distributing it amongst our partner agencies, Facebook and Twitter were the main platforms used to disseminate these graphics. Some examples of the infographics made included cyber safety, physical distancing, food safety, proper usage of masks & gloves, Telehealth, and more.

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 2019



David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

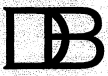
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David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians
Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of Council of Agencies Serving South Asians ("the Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2019, the statement of operations and changes in net assets, and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Council of Agencies Serving South Asians as at December 31, 2019, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of my report. I am independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in Canada, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing these financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to a going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

1.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (Continued)

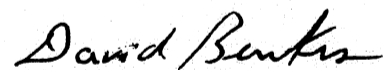
Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicated with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Richmond Hill, Ontario
March 28, 2020



Chartered Professional Accountant
Licensed Public Accountant



David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2019


ASSETS

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>CURRENT</u>		
Cash and Short-term Investments (Note 2)	\$ 151,111	\$ 85,500
Grants and Accounts Receivable	16,604	40,115
Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	6,596	6,893
	<u>174,311</u>	<u>132,508</u>
 <u>CAPITAL (Note 5)</u>	 <u>3,580</u>	 <u>3,332</u>
	<u>\$ 177,891</u>	<u>\$ 135,840</u>

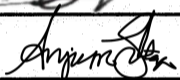
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<u>CURRENT</u>		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Charges	\$ 6,116	\$ 9,034
Deferred Contributions (Note 3)	61,285	24,106
	<u>67,401</u>	<u>33,140</u>
 <u>NET ASSETS</u>	 <u>110,490</u>	 <u>102,700</u>
	<u>\$ 177,891</u>	<u>\$ 135,840</u>

APPROVED BY THE BOARD:



Director



Director

(See Accompanying Notes)

3.



David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND MEMBERS' EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>REVENUE</u>		
Grants (Note 4)	\$ 310,829	\$ 311,718
Sponsorships, Fundraising and Workshops	20,574	943
Interest Income	286	215
Membership Fees	1,710	2,970
Workshops fees	4,470	-
	<u>337,869</u>	<u>315,846</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Salaries and Benefits	216,242	205,400
Project Expenses	43,045	31,245
Office and General	23,748	29,968
Rent and Utilities	16,265	19,504
Travel and Transportation	19,914	9,807
Professional Services	4,564	11,110
Research and Workshops	2,191	4,749
Bad Debts	-	-
Insurance	3,011	2,986
Amortization	1,099	802
	<u>330,079</u>	<u>315,571</u>
<u>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</u>	7,790	275
<u>MEMBERS' EQUITY, Beginning of Year</u>	<u>102,700</u>	<u>102,425</u>
<u>MEMBERS' EQUITY, End of Year</u>	<u>\$ 110,490</u>	<u>\$ 102,700</u>

(See Accompanying Notes)

4.



David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES</u>		
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue over Expenses	\$ 7,790	\$ 275
Amortization Expense	1,099	802
(Increase) Decrease in Accounts Receivable	23,511	(25,607)
(Increase) Decrease in Prepaid Expenses	297	831
Increase (Decrease) in Accounts Payable	(2,918)	5,349
Increase (Decrease) in Deferred Contributions	<u>37,179</u>	<u>19,124</u>
<u>CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES</u>		
Purchase of Capital Assets	<u>(1,347)</u>	<u>(2,066)</u>
<u>DECREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</u>		
	65,611	(1,292)
<u>CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS, Beginning of the Year</u>		
	<u>85,500</u>	<u>86,792</u>
<u>CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS, End of the Year</u>		
	<u>\$ 151,111</u>	<u>\$ 85,500</u>
<u>CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS REPRESENTED BY</u>		
Cash	\$ 103,062	\$ 37,738
Investment Savings	<u>48,049</u>	<u>47,762</u>
	<u>\$ 151,111</u>	<u>\$ 85,500</u>

(See Accompanying Notes)



David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION:

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians ("the Organization") is a not-for-profit organization registered as a corporation without share capital in the Province of Ontario.

The Council was established to research, identify and analyze the needs of the South Asian communities, to act as a resource centre for government and policy making organizations and to promote understanding of the diverse nature of the said communities.

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

These financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with the Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The organization's significant accounting policies are as follows:

a) Revenue Recognition

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions, which include government grants.

Government grants are recorded as revenue in the fiscal period in which the operating and/or project expenses are incurred.

Workshop, fundraising, membership and interest revenue are recorded when the funds are received.

(b) Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenditures during the reported period. Actual results could differ from management's best estimates as additional information becomes available in the future.

Significant items subject to such estimates and assumptions include the useful lives of capital assets and year-end accrued liabilities.

6.

DB

David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES: (Continued)

(c) Capital Assets

Property and equipment are recorded at cost and are being amortized over their estimated useful lives. The annual amortization rates and methods are as follows:

Furniture and Fixtures	20% Declining balance
Equipment	20% Declining balance
Computer Equipment	30% Declining balance

A capital asset is tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognized when the carrying amount of the asset exceeds the sum of the undiscounted cash flows resulting from its use and eventual disposition. The impairment loss is measured as the amount by which the carrying amount of the capital assets exceeds its fair value.

(d) Income Taxes

The organization is a not-for-profit organization under the Income Tax Act (Canada) and, as such, is exempt from income taxes.

(e) Financial Instruments

The organization initially records all financial instruments at fair market value, and subsequently records them at amortized cost.

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, short-term investments, accounts receivable, grants receivable, net HST recoverable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

2. CASH AND SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS:

The Cash balance for fiscal 2019 includes \$48,048 (2018 - \$47,762) in Guaranteed Investment Certificates maturing in December 2020 and earning interest of 1.3% per annum (2018 - 0.6%).

7.



David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

3. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS:

Deferred contributions are comprised as follows:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>OPERATING/PROGRAMMING</u>		
City of Toronto - Investment in Youth Engagement	\$ 2,942	\$ 6,805
Deferred Revenue UW	3,927	17,301
Deferred Law Foundation	31,300	-
Toronto Arts Council	19,750	-
Other	3,366	-
	<u>\$ 61,285</u>	<u>\$ 24,106</u>

In summary, changes in deferred contributions are analyzed as follows:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>BEGINNING BALANCE</u> , related to operating funding	\$ 24,106	\$ 4,982
<u>LESS:</u> Amounts recognized as revenue during year	(24,106)	(4,982)
<u>ADD:</u> Amounts received related to the following year	<u>61,285</u>	<u>24,106</u>
<u>BALANCE</u> , End of the Year	<u>\$ 61,285</u>	<u>\$ 24,106</u>

4. GRANTS:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>OPERATING/PROGRAMMING</u>		
City of Toronto	\$ 111,559	\$ 100,736
Trillium Gift of Life Network	-	16,652
Law Foundation	-	55,917
United Way	73,299	42,624
Human Resources & Skills Development Canada	34,771	4,644
Candian Heritage	89,950	91,145
Toronto Arts Council	250	-
Laidlaw Foundation	1,000	-
<u>TOTAL GRANTS</u>	<u>\$ 310,829</u>	<u>\$ 311,718</u>

8.

DB

David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

5. CAPITAL ASSETS:

Capital assets consist of the following:

	<u>2019</u>			<u>2018</u>
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Amortization</u>	<u>Net Book Value</u>	<u>Net Book Value</u>
Office Equipment	\$ 15,307	\$ 14,486	\$ 821	\$ 1,026
Computers	12,717	9,958	2,759	2,306
	<u>\$ 28,024</u>	<u>\$ 24,444</u>	<u>\$ 3,580</u>	<u>\$ 3,332</u>

6. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS - RISK MANAGEMENT:

a) Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk of potential financial loss caused by fluctuations in fair value of future cash flow of financial instruments due to changes in market interest rates. The Organization is exposed to this risk through its interest bearing investments. The Organization manages this risk through investing in fixed-rate securities of short to medium term maturity and plans to hold the securities to maturity.

b) Credit Risk

Credit risk is the potential for financial loss should a counter-party in a transaction fail to meet its obligations. The Organization is exposed to credit risk with respect to its

c) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The Organization manages this risk by preparing and monitoring detailed forecasts of cash flows from operations, anticipating investing and financing activities and holding assets that can be readily converted into cash.

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, short-term investments, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities. Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant interest, credit or liquidity risks.

The extent of the organization's exposure to the above risks did not change during 2019.

9.

DB

David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

7. CAPITAL MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE:

The Organization includes cash and short-term investments, grants and accounts receivable, prepaid expenses and deposits, accounts payable and accrued charges, and deferred contributions in its capital management consideration. The Organization objectives when managing capital are to safeguard its ability to continue as a going concern and continue to execute its mandate.

The Organization monitors these items to assess its ability to fulfill its ongoing financial obligations. The Organization relies primarily on grants and donations to fund its operations and makes adjustments to its budgeted expenditures in light of changes. The Organization is not subject to externally imposed capital requirements.

The Organization is dependent on government grants for continuing operations.

10.

DB

David Burkes, CPA, CA, CFF

CASSA Board of Directors **Slate 2020-21**

Returning Directors:

Sanga Achakzai – Chair

Graduated from York University with a Bilingual Specialized Honors in International Relations, Sanga is a champion for social justice and passionate about social equity and poverty reduction, Sanga brings with her over 10 years of experience in community development, project management, strategic planning, policy analysis, immigration and settlement, and fund development. Following her passion for gender equity, she took the role of research project manager with the Afghan Women’s Organization (AWO), to discover sustainable development opportunities for women in Afghanistan.

Sanga is currently working at CCS, creating equitable employment opportunities for IMGs. She is steering committee member of Color of Poverty-Color of Change, East Toronto Local Immigration Partnership’s Employment and Health Action groups, where she has taken part in community-based strategic planning to enhance diversity and inclusiveness, as well settlement and employment experiences of immigrants in the community. Her professional experience also includes her association with Professional Immigration Networks (PINs) where she shares her expertise in supporting the development of immigrant professionals in their careers in Canada.

Sanga engages with policy makers and key politicians for recommendations and policy advocacy in matters that affect marginalized and racialized communities. Issues she has engaged on include the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Housing Strategy and Human Rights. Sanga is excited about her recent appointment as a Grant Review Member at Ontario Trillium Foundation where she hopes to contribute to building stronger and inclusive communities in Ontario. Under her leadership, CASSA has twice been the recipient of Proclamation by the City of Toronto for “Diversity is our Strength”

Anjum Sultana – Vice Chair

Recently named the 2020 Global Woman of Distinction by the United Nations NGO Committee on the Status of Women, Anjum Sultana is an internationally-recognized advocate for progressive public policies to create a more just and equitable society.

Anjum serves on the boards of the Regent Park Community Health Centre, Toronto Environmental Alliance and the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians. Anjum is also a Founding Advisor of Progress Toronto, Strategic Advisor for KimboCare and served as Canadian Delegate at the 2019 G7 Youth Summit in Paris, France through Young Diplomats of Canada. Anjum is part of the Global Shaper Community, which is affiliated with the World Economic Forum and is a Global Shaper with the Toronto Hub. She is also part of the Ontario Council for International Cooperation’s Gender Equality and Youth Policy-Makers Hubs.

Sultana is an accomplished public speaker who has delivered keynote speeches, lectures, workshops and participated on panel discussions. Her media and policy commentary has been featured on networks and publications such as Apolitical, CBC, CityTv, CTV, First Policy Response, Healthy Debate, National Observer, New Canadian Media, Now Toronto, Public Policy Forum, The Walrus, Toronto Sun, and TVO.

Anjum holds a Masters of Public Health from the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto. Anjum is also the founder of Millennial Womxn in Policy, a grassroots organization and community of practice that connects more than 3,000 young women and non-binary people working in policy across North America and Europe.

Tanzina Islam – Secretary

Tanzina Islam is a public health planner specializing in health promotion strategies within the community health sector. She is currently the Manager of Health Promotion & Community Relations at the East Mississauga Community Health Centre. In her role, she oversees health interventions targeting priority populations, supports strategic planning, and monitors population needs and advocates for the good health of the Mississauga community. She was a former Project Coordinator at CASSA for the CapaCITY Creators Project and is a current member of CASSA's Health Equity Task Force.

Tanzina has worked in the areas of mental health, chronic health, gender-based violence, community engagement, social justice and health equity across institutions such as Humber College, Toronto Public Health, St Michael's Hospital and the Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH). Tanzina also leads two independent research projects focused on 'understanding honour killing as a form of gender-based violence' and 'identifying risk factors for global sex trafficking'. She is a University of Toronto Alumni and holds a Master of Public Health degree. Her expertise lies in applying evidence-based knowledge when developing, implementing and evaluating health interventions. Central to her focus is integrating equity-focused frameworks when planning health services for marginalized populations. She hopes to be a part of initiatives that empower communities, strengthen community action, and challenge sociopolitical structures that contribute to poor health and health disparities.

Leanne Saldanha – Treasurer

Leanne Saldanha brings a strong background in arts and cultural heritage to the board. Leanne has graduated from the University of Toronto with an HBA and an MA in Art History. Delighted by the beauty and proliferation of art production in Renaissance Italy and the Netherlands, Leanne was initially drawn to the study of religious and philosophical themes in early Renaissance visual art with a highly Eurocentric focus. It was only later, as a graduate student, that Leanne realized the necessity of exploring and celebrating the complicated and searching works of post-modern and contemporary South Asian diaspora artists and collectives.

She is currently pursuing graduate research in Immigration and Settlement Studies at Ryerson University, with a focus on supplementary art practices that can ease the strain of immigration and integration processes for recent immigrants and refugees. Her research focuses on issues of integration and belonging and the complexity of these social asks in Western societies, especially for diaspora individuals and communities who are subject to experiencing social inequities and injustices here in Canada.

Over the years, Leanne has worked with several equity-seeking groups and not-for-profit organizations with a focus on refugee integration, environmental issues, capacity building, racial equity, community engagement, and social justice. Leanne is highly attuned to the difficulties of social inclusion and equity-seeking in urban contexts and is committed to tackling social

concerns for South Asian communities through CASSA. She is also an avid policy and political campaigns enthusiast with a passion for fostering thoughtful and informed civic participation especially in South Asian communities.

Dr. Anita Singh - Director

Dr. Anita Singh is a political organizer, academic and policy lead in Toronto. Anita's PhD research focused on the Indo Canadian community's efforts to influence Canadian foreign policy towards India. Her research has been supported by SSHRC doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships, which she held at the Munk School of Global Affairs. In this area of expertise, Anita is a contributor to Canadian media outlets on Canada-India relations and has had her most recent work published in Canadian Foreign Policy Journal and Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies. During the last federal election, she worked on a piece with other CASSA Board of Director Anjum Sultana on the impact of brownface on Indo-Canadian communities.

Her passion is organizing political campaigns to ensure that we elect diverse representatives to better represent our society at all levels of government. She was a Regional Volunteer Coordinator for Toronto on Jagmeet Singh's federal leadership campaign and has recently been elected for a two-year term as Ontario Women's Representative on the NDP's Federal Council. During the municipal election, Anita organized for progressive candidates in their bids for a more representative City Council. She has been active in a number of local campaigns during the provincial and federal election cycles.

She currently works in the Ontario Public Service. Anita is excited to start her new journey as a law student at Osgoode Law School in September 2020.

CASSA Board of Directors **Proposed Slate 2020-2021**

Bharat Saini

Bharat Saini is the Advisor, Human Rights, Equity & Diversity with the Centre for Human Rights, Equity & Diversity at Humber College. In this role, Bharat conducts early interventions and human rights investigations into allegations of discrimination and harassment; provides consultation on human rights related inquiries; works closely with the Director on Humber's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Taskforce; and is the lead on Humber's Employment Equity Program.

Bharat has been working in the post-secondary sector for more than a decade in the areas of disability, accessibility, human rights and inclusion. He has completed his Bachelor of Science Honours, Bachelor of Education and Master of Education degrees from York University. Bharat is also an Ontario Certified Teacher.

Prior to joining Humber, Bharat held the position of Senior Disability Consultant & Program Supervisor with the Centre for Students with Disabilities at OCAD University. During his tenure, Bharat provided consultation and training in the areas of academic accommodations and human rights. Additionally, he participated in numerous committees covering teaching and learning, accessibility and AODA, academic accommodations, mental health, human rights, and employment equity. Bharat has a strong commitment to fostering an equitable, diverse and inclusive learning, working and living environment.

Jessica Singh

Jessica is a change agent guided by empathic accuracy; internally driven to work for issues like gender equality, art therapy, access to quality education, and child protection. As a social development professional and research consultant, she offers strategic advice to social enterprises to enable meaningful contribution and provides tools to measure their impact effectively. She works with creativity, consideration and open-mindedness that allows seeing things from unconventional perspectives. She is an author @whenlovelivedalone and an interdisciplinary artist @blueskyandlemonpie.

Jessica is a social worker and also holds a specialized degree in evidence-based research from the University of Oxford. She has 10+ years of experience impact assessment, monitoring and evaluation, multi-stakeholder relationships, qualitative research methodologies, strategic partnerships, capacity building and grant-writing both internationally and in Canada. She is currently serving on the board of North York Arts and has had the opportunity to work with organizations like the World Bank, Plan UK, Credit Suisse, GIZ, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, US Department of State, Centre for Social Innovation, Tedx Toronto and Plan Canada.

Thanuya Mohanathas

Thanuya is a Social Worker who has extensive experience in community and youth development. She attended York University for Human Rights & Equity Studies, Seneca College for Social Service Worker Diploma, and is currently pursuing a degree in Public Administration & Governance at Ryerson University. Thanuya is TESOL certified and teaches ESL. She has learned to combine her roots in Social Work with her passion for music, specifically the piano and teaches a unique curriculum to students through Ruby's School of Music. Thanuya has extensive experience in grant writing, development and facilitation of workshops, community asset building, capacity building, strategic planning, and program evaluation.

Thanuya has shared spaces with vulnerable residents and has sought community partners and stakeholders to take a more collaborative and communal approach in the drafting and implementation of meaningful and impactful programs and services to better suit the needs of the communities they serve. Her desire to improve quality of life and to create better and more meaningful human relations, bring forth a sense of connection and belonging has been the driving force that has propelled her unwavering commitment to social justice and to CASSA.

Strategic Framework for 2016-2020

Our Mission is:

To facilitate the economic, social, political, and cultural empowerment of South Asians by serving as a resource for information, research, mobilization, coordination, and leadership on social justice issues affecting our communities. Create social change by building alliances and working collaboratively with those who share a vision of empowering all communities to participate in defining Canada's future.

CASSA's Vision:

We envision and strive for a Canada free of all forms of discrimination in which all communities are free from marginalization and are fully empowered to participate in defining Canada's political, economic, social and cultural future.

CASSA's Values:

The following values serve as guidelines for our conduct as we implement our mission and work towards our vision:

- ***Social Justice***: We are committed to working within a social justice framework, which promotes equity and empowerment for marginalized peoples and communities.
- ***Anti-oppression, anti-racism, anti-homophobia***: We strive to incorporate anti oppressive, anti-racist, and anti-homophobic principles and practices in our work.
- ***Responsiveness***: We strive to work through a variety of consultative and participatory structures and practices to ensure that our work is grounded in the realities and priorities of our communities.
- ***Diversity***: We recognize and respect the diversity among and within South Asian communities and within Canadian society.
- ***Collaboration and solidarity***: We are committed to building alliances in order to work collectively towards common aims.
- ***Accountability***: We are committed to maintaining effective governance, measurement and reporting practices.

Strategic Directions 2016-2020

1. Immigration and smart settlement:

- CASSA, in the next five years, will:
- facilitate processes that aim to build more inclusive and welcoming communities in the municipalities outside of the City of Toronto
- address issues and concerns impacting refugees in Canada
- continue to focus on reducing employment barriers for newcomers and immigrants - document histories of South Asians in Canada
- support engagement of immigrants and newcomers in civic processes and civic leadership

2. Poverty Reduction:

CASSA, in the next five years, will:

- create awareness about the racialization of poverty and work towards meaningful ways to address it
- initiate a campaign to increase the availability and affordability of childcare - support movements for the promotion and protection of rights of all workers, with a focus on South Asians

3. Health Equity:

CASSA, in the next five years, will:

- develop a South Asian Health Strategy for Ontario to get it formally adopted · initiate a mental health awareness campaign in the South Asian communities · support research initiation and coordination related to topics involving South Asians and Health (including Social Determinants of Health)
- provide a mechanism for sharing and learning related to Seniors Health among South Asians
- create awareness to increase registrations for organ and tissue donations among South Asians

4. Anti-racism and Anti-oppression:

CASSA, in the next five years, will:

- facilitate development of access and equity policies and procedures for and by South Asian organizations and agencies
- continue anti-racism awareness work through Racism Free Ontario campaign - initiate and support the campaign to establish an Anti-Racism Directorate in Ontario - focus on developing youth leadership grounded in anti-racist and anti-oppressive frameworks

5. Women's Rights:

CASSA, in the next five years, will:

- build capacity for young South Asian women to develop leadership initiatives - initiate and support prevention initiatives that aim to eliminate gender-based abuse, harassment, and violence
- train the violence against women (VAW) sector to ensure that their service delivery is responsive, reflective, and respectful of the needs and challenges faced by South Asian women.

2019 Staff

Executive Director - Samya Hasan
Finance Manager - Farhat Hasan
Project Coordinators, Environmental Justice - Jassi Ranauta and Tanzil Islam
Events Coordinator - Hamna Mughal
Senior Research Analyst - Mathura Karunanithy
Outreach Coordinators - Rohullah Naderi and Rafay Syed
Membership Coordinator - Shimaa Haj Ahmed
Civic Engagement Coordinators - Naima Raza and Ariyana Klair
Digital Media Coordinator - Qudsiya Jabeen
Executive Assistant - Sitharsana Srithas
Administrative Assistant - Mukta Sreenivasa

Co-op Students/Interns:

Social Planning Coordinator - Shehnaz Hariff
Health Equity Coordinators - Sophia Ayathurai and Sharifa Kazi
Administrative Assistants - Suprava Basnett and Syeda Aksa Anzuman
Membership Assistant - Madina Ajiz
Project Assistants - Gursimran Kaur and Erma Hassan

2020 Staff

Executive Director - Samya Hasan
Finance Manager - Farhat Hasan
Project Coordinator, Legal Education for Refugee Women - Yomna Omar
Project Coordinator, Seniors and COVID-19 Relief - Nikhita Dogra
Campaign Specialist - Cynthia Saxena
Administrative Assistant - Mukta Sreenivasa
Social Planning Coordinator - Aneesah Siddiqi
Communications Coordinator - Sakshi Mehta
Muslim Community Outreach Coordinator - Eman Zahid
Membership Coordinator - Shimaa Haj Ahmed
IT Specialist - Faizan Zubair

Co-op Students/Interns:

Health Equity Coordinator - Mahdiba Chowdhury
Project Assistants - Erma Hassan, Tarana Rahimi, Aleena Darr, Nivetha Jeevanantham, Shivangi Sawh, and Amira Namasivayam

This is a list of all staff, including part time, short-term contract, summer student positions and full time staff.

List of CASSA 2019 Volunteers

Hamdan Khan	Simra Khan
Eeman Batool	Hana Mehad
Fatema Malek	Sara Rizwan
Shruthi Ks	Ayesha Abid
Jaine Jueun Kang	Devi Samlall
Ciara Dymond	Sahar Kamil
Jacob Sanchez	Maryam Rehan
Dua Elahi	Ajitha Prabha
Moska Dawoudzai	Apira Ragunathan
Ankit Chaudhari	Sophia Ayathurai
Uswa Shafaque	Rehan Nasir
Huda Jirreh	Sajane Puvaneswaran
Jothika Logeswaran	Fazila Mulla
Rohullah Naderi	Tafriha Islam
Madura Muraleetharan	Mehathie Sivakumaran
Kian Karbasi	Donna Rowshanbin
Tina Liu	Tahsin Bakht
Dhushan Kiritharan	Ferozah Nasiri
Chau Nguyen	Farzana Mulla
Aditi Saha	Kanitha Uthayakumar
Elliot Ngo	Kavach Saxena
Sahil Kamil	Chareena Varatharajan
Abdulrahman Nuur	

2019-2020 Member Agencies

1. 905 Women for Women Support Services
2. Abhinayakshetra Fine Arts Canada
3. Afghan's Women's Organization
4. Armadale Older Adults Club
5. ASAAP - Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention
6. Bangladeshi Canadian Community Services (BCS)
7. Bangladesh Centre & Community Services
8. Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Center
9. Brampton Tamil Association
10. Brampton Tamil Seniors
11. Canada Sri Sabarimala Iyappan
12. Canadian Aids Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
13. Canadian Breast Cancer Society
14. Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture
15. Canadian Tamil Chamber of Commerce
16. Canadian Tamil Congress
17. Canadian Tamil Youth alliance
18. CANTYD
19. Carefirst Foundation
20. CATIE
21. CAW Canada
22. Cedarwood Tamil Community Association Ratepayers
23. Centennial College Employment Services
24. Centre for Community Learning & Development
25. CICS - Centre for Information and Community Services of Ontario 24. Community Environment Alliance
26. Community Legal Clinic of York Region
27. Community Resource Development Organization of York Region
28. COSTI Immigrant Services
29. Crescent Village Housing Corporation (Jafari Islamic Housing Corporation)
30. Durham Tamil Association
31. Epilepsy Toronto
32. Evergreen Hospice
33. Family Inter-Generation Link (FIG Link)
34. Family Service Toronto
35. Family Services of York Region
36. Frontline Community Services
37. Golden Years Seniors Stouffville
38. Greenborough Tamil Seniors Wellness Club
39. Human Endeavour
40. Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning - Centre for Human Rights, Equity & Diversity
41. InCharge Canada
42. Indo Canadian Association of Durham
43. Interim Place

44. J.R.S. College
45. Job Skills
46. Labour Education Center
47. Loxley Foundation
48. Mannar Friendship Association
49. Markham Arts Council
50. Markham Christian Worship Centre
51. Markham Cricket Academy
52. Markham South Asian Seniors
53. Markham Tamil Organization
54. Markham Tamil Seniors
55. Markham Tamil Seniors Association Canada
56. MCIS Interpretation Services
57. Menaka Thakkar Dance Company
58. METRAC - Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children
59. Middlefield Seniors Wellness Club
60. Millennium Motorist Foundation of Canada
61. Muslim Kidney Project, UHN Kidney Health Education and Research Group 62.
Neighbourlink North York
62. Nepalese Canadian Community Services
63. Newcomer Women's Services Toronto (NEW)
64. Ontario Bengali Cultural Society
65. Ontario Seniors Tamil Center
66. Pak Seniors Forum (PSF)
67. People for Education
68. Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services
69. Progressive Action for Community Empowerment (PEACE)
70. Radio Metro Mail
71. Punjabi Community Health Services - PCHS
72. Rehma Community Services
73. Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre
74. RWDSW/UFCW
75. Sandgate Women Shelter
76. Scadding Court Community Centre
77. Scarborough Arts
78. Scarborough Women's Centre
79. Schizophrenia Society of Ontario
80. School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto
81. Service Employees International Union
82. Sheetal Sangeet
83. Sherbourne Health Centre
84. Sindhi Association of North America - Canada
85. Skills for Change
86. South Asian Autism Awareness Centre (SAAAC)
87. Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services (SAFSS)
88. South Asian Network Supporting Awareness & Research (SANSAR)
89. South Asian Heart Health Group (SAHHG)

90. South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)
91. South Asian Visual Arts Centre
92. South Asian Women's Centre (SAWC)
93. South Riverdale Community Health Centre
94. Social Planning Toronto
95. Springtide Resources Inc.
96. Social Services Network
97. Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham
98. Tamil Canadian Centre for Civic Action
99. TESOC Multicultural Settlement Services
100. Tetrault Arts Productions
101. Thamil Poonka
102. The Elizabeth Fry Society
103. The Neighbourhood Organization - TNO
104. Times Change Women's Employment Service
105. Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation
106. Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival
107. Toronto Support Services
108. Tropicana Employment Center
109. United Food and Commercial Workers
110. University Health Network - Kidney Health Education Group
111. Vasantham (Tamil Seniors Wellness Centre)
112. Villa Karuna Home for Seniors
113. We Can Win
114. Wellfort Community Health Services
115. Women's Health in Women's Hands
116. Worker's Action Centre
117. York Region Social Planning Council

Acknowledgement of Our Funders for 2019

We would like to appreciate and acknowledge the vital ongoing support for our activities by:

City of Toronto: Investing in Neighborhood Initiative
City of Toronto: Community Services Partnership
City of Toronto: Investing in Youth Engagement
Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change Steering Committee
Government of Canada: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
Government of Canada: Department of Canadian Heritage
Humber College, Centre for Human Rights, Equity & Diversity
Laidlaw Foundation
Ryerson University, Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing
United Way of Greater Toronto
University Health Network - Kidney Health Education Group

We would like to thank all of our community partners, volunteers and board members who have supported us with all of our projects. Without their help, we would not be able to achieve what we have done in the year 2019.

**Thank you all for your dedication and
for believing in CASSA.**

Thank you for attending CASSA's AGM!

**We look forward to your continued support,
guidance and involvement.**

You or your organization can become a member of CASSA, if you wish to support our mission/mandate. Please visit our website www.cassa.on.ca for details on our mission, vision, values and strategic priorities. The members will receive regular updates on various happenings in the social services/social justice field that impact Ontario's South Asian communities.

Joining as a member will also keep you informed about job opportunities, volunteer opportunities and community events. Please visit our website for more information about becoming a member of CASSA and its benefits.



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