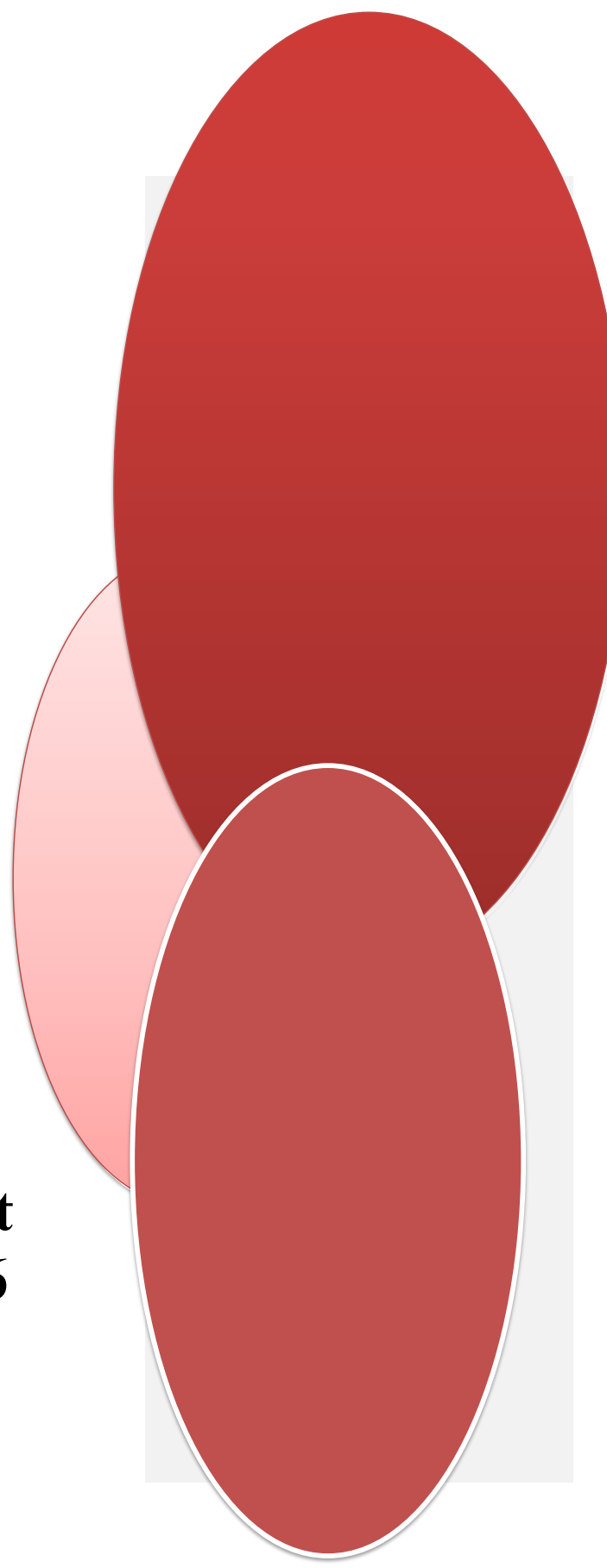




**COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS
(CASSA)**

**CASSA Annual Report
2016**



CASSA Annual General Meeting 2016



**COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS
(CASSA)**

**Annual General Meeting
Thursday, August 11th, 2016**

**Friends House
60 Lowther Ave, Toronto, M5R 1C7**

5200 Finch Ave. E., Suite 301A, Scarborough M1S 4Z5

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CASSA Annual General Meeting 2016

Agenda

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
Annual General Meeting
August 11th, 2016
Friends House

5:30pm – 6:00pm

Registration, Networking and Refreshments

6:00pm – 6:45pm

Welcome To Annual General Meeting
Approval of Draft Agenda
Approval of last AGM Minutes
President's and Executive Director's Report
Approval of Auditor's Report – Appointment of Auditor
Nomination Report and Election of New Board Members
Adjournment of Business

6:45pm – 7:05pm

Volunteer and Board Appreciation

7:05pm – 7:45pm

Panel Discussion

- Saira Ansari, Diversity & Inclusion Manager (Earth Day Canada)
- Linda Koehler, Community Recreation Supervisor (Parks & Recreation – City of Toronto)
- Parul Pandya, Community Engagement & Communications Manager (Toronto Arts Foundation)

7:45pm – 8:00pm

Q&A Session

8:00pm – 8:30pm

Dinner and Networking

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AGM Minutes of CASSA - June 17th 2015 at Friends House, Toronto

The meeting was called to order by Mohan Swaminathan, Chair of the Board.

The motion to approve the agenda was made by Jawad Bhatti and seconded by Qasir Sheikh. Anu Sharma made the motion to approve the previous AGM minutes, seconded by Shaji John.

President's Report

Mohan presented the President's report. 2014 was a very eventful year for CASSA since we worked on many initiatives, Be a Donor campaign being a major one where our focus was on donor membership and registration. In our Health Equity initiative, we continue to work with our member organizations to formulate a culturally sensitive health policy. The Annual Gala was very successful and the Brown Canada summit organized in December was attended by over 100 individuals from diverse communities. He thanked the staff, volunteers and member agencies of CASSA for their contribution and support.

Executive Director's Report

Neethan Shan presented the Executive Director's report for 2014. He acknowledged the staff and interns and thanked the Board members for their efforts in achieving CASSA's goals. CASSA's work is different from other organizations since it involves advocacy. He highlighted major project activities undertaken in 2014 e.g. Be a Donor campaign, Capacity Creators project, Steps to Justice, Health Equity Summit and Brown Canada summit etc. This year the focus on "Be a Donor" campaign is on conducting outreach through community education by training other organizations. Oct. 5 to Oct. 11th is South Asian Gift of Life week which will involve organizing activities across the GTA. The Capacity Creators project was successful in Peel and Scarborough where we outreached with mainstream players like Toronto Region Conservation Authority, Arts Museum etc. The Brown Canada and Health Equity summit were successfully held in 2014 and we will continue to organize them every year. We currently have 103 members comprising of individuals and organizations and hope to increase it even further.

Approval of the Auditor's Report

The Auditor's report was read by Anu Sharma. The motion to approve it was made by Jawad Bhatti and seconded by Anjum Sultana. The motion to appoint David Burkes as the Auditor for 2015 was made by Farhat and seconded by Antu.

Nomination report and Election of new Board members

Outgoing Board members Maya Bhullar, Ramraajh and Jalaja were thanked for their contribution to the Board. Returning Board members were Mohan Swaminathan, Anu Sharma, Bobby Singh, Shaji John, Jawad Bhatti, Nasima Akter, Seema Nadarajah and Anjum Sultana. Two new Board members inducted to the Board were Sanga Achakzai and Initha Subramaniam. The motion to approve their election was made by Anu seconded by Samya Hasan.

Adjournment of Business

The motion to adjourn the business was made by Nasima Akter and seconded by Anjum Sultana.

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**Message from the Chair - Board of Directors and Executive Director
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)**

Dear CASSA members:

On behalf of CASSA board, staff and volunteers, it is our pleasure to welcome all of you to the Annual General Meeting of your organization. Thanks to your enthusiastic participation and support, CASSA is able to fulfil its mandate of fighting for social justice and equality of opportunity as well as advocate on behalf of our diverse South Asian communities across the GTA.

Last year was an eventful one for CASSA, with several programs and initiatives undertaken. The Trillium Gift of Life Network supported South Asian Gift of Life campaign continued to roll out with great success. Over the past two years that CASSA has been stewarding this project, awareness and participation in organ and tissue donation amongst the South Asian communities has risen to new heights. A big thanks to all the CASSA staff and volunteers whose tireless efforts have made it a huge success.

Our Brown Canada Summit celebrated its second year of activities with inspiring stories of South Asians coming to Canada over the past 100 years. CASSA's civic literacy programs helped increase awareness and engagement in last year's federal elections. We also launched the Health Equity Task Force to address systemic gaps in the delivery of health programs to the South Asians, initiate discussion and debate, and make recommendations for better and equitable health outcomes through the proposed development of South Asian Health Strategy in Ontario. Our fundraising efforts continued with the successful Toronto Mela held at the Malvern Community Centre.

This year, we have and will continue to strengthen our existing programs and introduce many new projects and initiatives, and we look forward to your continued support and participation.

Thank you.

Mohan Swaminathan
Board Chair

Neethan Shan
Executive Director

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CASSA 2015 Highlights from few of Our Projects

Capacity Creators Project

2015 was the last year of the three-year long Capacity Creators project funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). The final year of the project was very successful and all of its phases were completed to well before the OTF deadlines. The year for the project began in February with the recruitment of participants as well as partnership building with organizations in the arts, recreation and environment sectors. By April 2015, more than 200 participants were recruited to receive training on three topics: Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression, Board of Governance, and Project Planning. The training sessions took place throughout Scarborough and the Region of Peel with a focus on Brampton. Once all participants completed the training sessions, participants who were interested in moving on to the next stage of the project were divided into groups of 5 to 7 people. There were approximately 40 participants in Scarborough and 30 in the Region of Peel. Each area had six project groups; two for each sector.

The projects and partners in Scarborough were:

1. City of Toronto: Parks, Forestry and Recreation – Increase civic participation of diverse residents in Scarborough for the L'Amoreaux Community Centre Advisory Council
2. Cricket Canada – Host a youth (under 19) youth tournament for Toronto residents
3. The Scarborough Museum – Create an event at the museum to showcase South Asian artists
4. Scarborough Arts – Submit stories by South Asian seniors living in Scarborough about their immigration experience
5. Toronto Environmental Alliance – Audit City of Toronto facilities on waste practices and report back to City Councillors on improving habits
6. Malvern Family Resource Centre – Start a community garden for the residents of 70 Mornelle Court in Scarborough

The projects and partners in the Region of Peel were:

1. City of Mississauga – Assist the City's Culture on a Map project by submitting South Asian cultural activities in the City of Mississauga
2. Art Gallery of Mississauga – Create a social media platform for South Asian artists to submit visual art pieces
3. City of Brampton – Bring more diversity to Brampton's annual Try it Sports Day event through marketing, promotions, and outreach
4. Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (Peel Division) – Create workshop for a Gurdwara on maintenance of community gardens
5. Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (Peel Division) – Create a play to encourage South Asian communities to adopt better recycling habits
6. Pan Am Games – Host information booth at high schools about the Pan Am Games.

Once all the projects were completed, all 70 participants were invited to an experience-sharing forum in Scarborough and Brampton during which they were given Certificates of Program Completion. Following the forums, there were a Needs Assessment report completed by CASSA staff which was distributed to all partners and is available for the community. The report addresses the barriers that diverse communities face when trying to access programs and services in the arts, recreation and environment sectors. It also includes recommendations for policy makers as well as service providers in

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order to increase the participation of diverse communities in their programming. Overall, the Capacity Creators project engaged thousands of individuals in its final year and enabled hundreds of participants with leadership development.

South Asian Gift of Life Campaign

It was a great year for the South Asian Gift of Life (SAGL) campaign in 2015, which was the third year of the campaign for CASSA. In partnership with the Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN), the campaign was extremely successful in 2015 and reached more than 2 million people in the Greater Toronto Area through media, events, social media, faith groups, and public leaders. CASSA established sixteen core partnerships during this campaign and spread awareness about the need for South Asian communities to register their consent for organ and tissue donation through these partnerships. The partners took ownership of the campaign by starting their own “Be a Donor” drives and spreading information to their own communities and groups through social media, newsletters, events, and information sessions. These partners included:

Organizations
Afghan Association of Ontario
Punjabi Community Health Services
Bangladeshi Canadian Community Services
South Asian Canadian Health and Social Services
Bangladeshi Centre and Community Services Youth Group
Markham Chapter - South Asian Gift of Life Campaign
Durham Tamil Association
Individuals
Councillor Gurpreet Dhillon (Brampton)
Irwin Nanda (VP of Ontario Federation of Labour)
Leha Panchalingam (volunteer)
Jawad Bhatti (Board of Director - CASSA)
Anujan Mahendrarajah (Malvern Youth Worker)
Media and Faith Groups
Canadian Multicultural Radio
Sheikh Alaa Elsayed - ISNA Canada Imam
Saaz O Awaz Broadcasting Ltd.
Suhaag Magazine

The Inaugural South Asian Gift of Life Week was also a great success for the campaign. It was held from October 5th to October 11th. During this week CASSA, with its partners, produced multiple public forums in Scarborough, Markham, Brampton and Ajax, which was attended by members of the public as well as community workers. The dates of the forums coincided with a “Day of Action” in each region during which CASSA staff and volunteers visited businesses, centres, schools, and places of worship with high concentration of South Asians to distribute literature and talk to people one-on-one about

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organ donation. Many organizations were contacted in advance of the SAGL week to act as ambassadors of the cause and display promotional and informational materials at their location. Other than these activities, CASSA also produced an official poster for the SAGL week; which was distributed to over 300 locations, a short film; that gained hundreds of views, a social media contest; which reached more than 9000 people, and a media campaign; that reached ethnic media as well as mainstream media including The Toronto Star.

The response from the community was extremely positive and there was high demand to continue the awareness week on an annual basis. Due to this immense success, Trillium Gift of Life Network continued to fund this campaign in 2016. This year there will be five main aspects of the campaign: faith partnerships, media partnerships, community champions, social media campaign and the 2nd Annual South Asian Gift of Life Week (to be held October 16th to 22nd, 2016). As of August 2016 here are the partnerships for 2016:

Partners	Campaign URL
Media	
Canadian Multicultural Radio	beadonor.ca/cmrr
Saaz O Awaz Radio	beadonor.ca/saazoawaz
Arifa Muzaffar Show	beadonor.ca/arifamuzaffarshow
Weekly Voice	beadonor.ca/weeklyvoice
Gujrat Weekly	beadonor.ca/gujaratweekly
Weekly Bangla Mail	beadonor.ca/banglamail
Vanna Tamil Radio	beadonor.ca/vtr
Sanjha Punjab	beadonor.ca/sanjhapunjab
Canadian Tamil Radio	beadonor.ca/ctr
The South Asian News	beadonor.ca/southasiannews
Can Asia Television Network	beadonor.ca/canasia
Faith	
Shaykh Yusuf Badat	beadonor.ca/shaykh-badat
Ontario Sikhs and Gurdwara Council	beadonor.ca/khalsaday
Vishnu Mandir	beadonor.ca/vishnumandir
Sri Varasithi Vinayagar Temple	beadonor.ca/varasithivinayagar
Sanatan Mandir Cultural Centre	beadonor.ca/sanatanmandir
The Canadian-Muslim Vote	beadonor.ca/muslimvote
Champions	
Councillor Gurpreet Dhillon	beadonor.ca/gurpreet-s-dhillon
MP Bob Saroya	beadonor.ca/bob-saroya
MP Ruby Sahota	beadonor.ca/ruby-sahota
MPP Harinder Malhi	
MP Salma Zahid	beadonor.ca/salma-zahid
Dr. Varagunan	beadonor.ca/vara-mahadevan
Dr. Devendra Mishra	beadonor.ca/devendra-mishra
Anujan Mahendrarajah	beadonor.ca/anujan-mahendrarajah

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Racism Free Ontario

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians in partnership with the Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change, hosted the annual Racism Free Ontario Forum on March 21st, 2016, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The forum was the final part of the annual Racism Free Ontario Campaign.

The Racism Free Ontario Campaign introduces a few set objectives. It set to create broader public awareness so that Ontarians accept and acknowledge that racism (structural, institutional, and individualized) continues to exist in our daily lives. The campaign also set out to support and promotes people who are working on anti-racism related initiatives so that they feel encouraged and motivated to carry on. Furthermore, it showcases and profiles initiatives addressing racism and promoting access, equity, and inclusion in order to build momentum, strength, and capacity that will ensure our collective anti-racism work in Ontario becomes sustainable, collaborative, and impactful. Lastly, the Racism Free Ontario Campaign wants to advocate for public policy changes along with institutional and structural changes to create a more racially just province of Ontario.

The Racism Free Ontario forum – which was the final part of our annual Racism Free Ontario Campaign – was attended by many passionate members of the community who had the opportunity to listen to speeches presented by NDP Leader Andrea Horwath and MPP Gila Marlow. In addition, the 110 guests in attendance took part in discussing about the Anti-Racism Directorate; specifically providing input and suggestions about the formation and function, which contributes, to being Ontario's Anti-Racism Directorate.

The following list of organizations was some of the organizations who were in attendance:

- Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services
- Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services
- Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre
- Centre for Immigrants and Community Service
- Council of Agencies Serving South Asians
- Heart and Stroke Foundation
- LAMP Community Health Centre
- Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic
- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
- Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses
- Ontario Human Rights Commission
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union
- Skills for Change
- Social Innovations
- South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
- South Asian Women's Centre
- Springtide Resources
- TAIBU Community Health Centre
- University of Toronto Mississauga Campus Student Union
- Warden Woods Community Centre

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The conclusion of a hugely successful forum is only the beginning of our work! Throughout 2016-2017, CASSA continues to run the Racism Free Ontario Campaign with the help of additional endorsing organizations. Sponsorship opportunities are still available so please feel free to contact CASSA for more information.

Toronto Mela 2015

CASSA, with the support from City of Toronto, successfully presented its 3rd annual Toronto Mela: A South Asian Summer Festival on August 22, 2015 at the Malvern Recreation Centre from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The aim of Toronto Mela was to celebrate cultural diversity and to increase public awareness about the contributions of South Asian communities to Canada and the world. CASSA made an effort to bring people of Greater Toronto Area together by celebrating diversity through South Asian art, literature, dance music and food. We were anticipating over a thousand people at the event including elected representatives, media representatives, community leaders, non-profit and business agencies, and the GTA residents. With the conclusion of the event, we were pleased to find that our goals were met and the attendees left in good spirits.

The event provided for a fun filled day with games, free gifts, food, and stage performances. One unique feature of this event was that it was a volunteer driven project. In continuation of previous years we actively recruited 100 energetic and enthusiastic volunteers to join the Toronto Mela event coordination team. We also had the help of more than 50 ethnic media outlets in promoting this event.

The activities at Toronto Mela 2015 included:

- Live Music Performances
- Classical & Folk Dances
- South Asian Cuisine
- Kids Activity Corner
- Stalls of non-profit and Business agencies about their services and products
- Stalls of South Asian products, souvenirs, jewelers, and handicrafts

Civic Literacy Campaign

The South Asian Civic Engagement Campaign was implemented from September 2015 –November 2015 by CASSA staff and interns. This project was formed and executed to engage voters in Toronto through educational activities in order to raise awareness and promote participation. It was the perfect time for this project to be implemented as the Federal Elections were held on October 19th, 2015. This project allowed us to work in various communities as we talked to individuals about the election date and helped people understand the different party platforms. To end off the campaign we executed a forum in the Malvern and Crescent Town neighborhood.

The Civic Literacy Engagement [Forums were](#) designed to deliver community-tailored civic literacy training and resources to increase levels of civic engagement, and participation rates among the South

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Asian Communities. We used information resources and educational materials, as tools to educate community members about the election process, access points for civic engagement, and the reasons as to why they should get involved in their communities. We had the 3 main Federal Candidates for each electoral district in attendance who spoke to the public. In attendance, we also had community leaders, community organizations and agencies, and community members of each neighborhood. The turnout was great, filled with many youth and seniors of South Asian background.

In this forum we provided election fact sheets on sixteen topics which include: arts, child care, environment, public transit, public education, post-secondary education, public space, social assistance, jobs, minimum wage, migrant workers, newcomers, affordable housing strategy, creating affordable housing, tenant issues, and economy. CASSA picked top five topic issues that relate most to South Asian populations and translated them into three main languages spoken in South Asian communities. The languages were Bengali, Tamil and Urdu. They were distributed during the forum and also during community outreach in the areas of Tuxedo Court, Malvern and Crescent Town.

The voter turnout was great, as it was 7 percent higher nationally than in 2011. It was shown that more Canadians exercised their democratic right this election since more initiatives were launched to increase for groups, which are usually under-represented like Canadian youth.

Health Equity Summit 2015

CASSA had its 5th Annual Health Equity Summit on November 3rd, 2015 at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) (33 Russel St.). The overall theme of the summit was “The Health of Seniors in South Asian Communities”. The summit explored different aspects of Seniors’ Health through workshops on Mental Health, Social Determinants of Health, Chronic Health, and End-of-Life/Palliative Care issues. Following the workshops, there was a Policy Panel where attendees had an opportunity to voice their questions to a panel of key stakeholders involved in health policy. In order to help prepare for the summit, there were a series of round-tables over the summer, each focusing on a different aspect of Seniors’ Health (For more information, check out CASSA’s website). Through the summit, our aim was to facilitate and create an open dialogue to address health concerns that the senior population of South Asian communities face. This information can be incorporated into our South Asian Health Strategy, which is being managed by our Health Equity Task Force, and supported by our very dedicated volunteers of the Health Equity Team. We had about 100 attendees from various health sectors and organizations and we would like to thank them all for their continuous support of our Health Equity work.

Brown Canada 2020

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) successfully hosted its second annual Brown Canada 2020 Summit on Friday, December 11th at York University. This summit aims to focus on taking a look at where we are as South Asians in Canada – our histories, cultures, and contributions - and secondly, formulating an action plan that can be implemented in the coming years to effectively address the needs in our communities.

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The 2015 Brown Canada summit was an all-day event attended by numerous social service providers, academics, students, policy makers, funders, not-for-profit organization members, and frontline workers who make a difference in South Asian communities. It was an excellent opportunity for members to mingle with and learn from those who are making great contributions to advance the interests of South Asian communities. The summit opened with opening remarks from an influential keynote speaker, Renu Mandhane, and motivational speakers followed by series of breakout sessions. The Brown Canada 2015 themes included Equitable Education, Economic Justice, Immigration & Justice, and Health Equity. Attendees had the privilege of listening to and engaging in in-depth discussions with subject matter experts. In addition, we had artists and student panel discussions that helped in providing a different outlook on South Asian culture and history.

In 2015, Brown Canada 2020 proved to be an incredibly successful summit, with attendees totaling to approximately 100 people! According to participant feedback, members in attendance found the summit to be a highly informative and entertaining event with plenty of opportunities to network and actively participate in formulating an action plan that effectively addresses the needs of South Asian communities.

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Other Upcoming Special Projects

Health Equity Summit 2016

CASSA in partnership with, Sepali Guruge, Professor and Research Chair in Urban Health at the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing and Co-Director of the Centre for Global Health and Health Equity at Ryerson University, are organizing the 6th Annual Health Equity Summit. This year's theme will be focusing on South Asian Immigrant Women's Health and Well Being through a Life Span Approach. The Summit is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, September 27th 2016 at Ryerson University from 9:00 AM- 4:30 PM in the Sears Atrium. We hope to have approximately 100 attendees ranging from healthcare providers and professionals, community based organizations and students. Along with the attendees we hope to have approximately 15 speakers to discuss and engage our audience in dialogue. We hope that this dialogue provides vital information for the South Asian Health Strategy, which is dedicated to addressing the unique health needs of South Asian community in Ontario. Please do not hesitate to contact Samir Parmar if you have any questions or comments regarding this project at 416-932-1359 ex 18 or at samir@cassa.on.ca.

We are also looking for volunteers who may be interested in helping out with the planning and organization of the Health Equity Summit. If you are looking to volunteer and to gain great networks in the health field, please email either samiha@cassa.on.ca or samir@cassa.on.ca for more information. You can also call us at 416-932-1359.

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Scarborough South Asian Film Festival

This year CASSA is putting on its inaugural Scarborough South Asian Film Festival (SSAFF), with the theme, "Through a Social Justice Lens." The festival will seek to highlight the unique experiences of South Asian diaspora communities while also looking at the common threads that unite us. Whether examining the experiences of marginalized South Asians, dissecting stories of discrimination, delving into the struggles of immigrants coming to this country, or looking at issues of poverty faced by our communities, this festival will examine South Asian identities and the way that they influence and shape our lives. SSAFF will be featuring films from Canadian filmmakers as well as filmmakers from abroad. On October 1st, 2016, SSAFF expects to draw in a crowd of 300 attendees welcoming a diverse crowd including film/ documentary directors and producers, local artists and actors, social justice activists, local professionals, sponsors and community members. The festival will serve as a fundraiser for CASSA's mobile exhibit highlighting the contributions of South Asian Canadians for the celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary in July 2017. Tickets for SSAFF are now on sale for \$10, interested individuals can contact cassa@cassa.on.ca to arrange for your ticket purchase. We are also accepting film submissions at this time, please contact naveeda@cassa.on.ca for more details.

South Asian Gift of Life Week

The South Asian Gift of Life Week this year will fall on October 16th to October 22nd. Similar to 2015, this year CASSA will organize forums all over the Greater Toronto Area, release an official poster, create a short Ad, launch a social media and ethnic media campaign, and have four "days of action". Keep checking the CASSA website for more details. The forums are scheduled as follows:

Scarborough Forum at Birkdale Community Centre – Sunday, October 16th from 2:30pm to 4:30pm
Mississauga Forum (Location TBD) – Wednesday, October 19th from 6pm to 8pm
Brampton Forum at Brampton City Hall – Friday, October 21st from 7pm to 9pm
Markham Forum at the Armadale Community Centre – Saturday, October 22nd from 1pm to 3pm

CASSA Gala Nite

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians will be hosting its 2016 Gala Nite on November 6th 2016 at the Estate Banquet Hall from 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

The night will consist of 200 attendees ranging from politicians to members from not-for-profit and government organizations, community leaders, performers, social service workers, and many more who will all come together to celebrate South Asians in Civic Leadership. In particular we look forward to awarding 6 outstanding individuals who have demonstrated excellence in the following categories: Youth Engagement, Health Equity, Migrant Justice, Economic Justice, Seniors' Well-Being, Gender Equality, and Anti-Racism.

As CASSA is a non-profit social justice organization, all proceeds from the event will help us to fight for Social and Economic Justice and to strengthen access, equity, and inclusion in Ontario. As such, if you wish to become involved as a sponsor please email cassa@cassa.on.ca for more information and access to the sponsorship package. Additionally, you can support us through purchasing a ticket for \$75/ea. or \$600 for a table of 10.

CASSA Board of Directors
Slate 2016-2017

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Returning Directors:

Mohan Swaminathan

Mohan Swaminathan is an accomplished advertising, marketing and communications professional with almost two decades of global experience in consumer goods, publishing and real estate. Mohan is a creative writer and originator of ideas and strategies to sell, persuade, communicate and market virtually anything. Currently Mohan is Creative Director at Montana Steele Advertising, a reputed ad agency in Toronto. Before moving to Canada just a few years ago, Mohan worked in Dubai with internationally renowned ad agency DDB, spinning award-winning campaigns for Volkswagen, Sony and HSBC. Prior to that, Mohan worked in the Mumbai ad world, pitching Unilever brands to the world's fastest growing consumer market. A true global citizen, Mohan is fluent in 7 languages and a passionate advocate of cultural diversity in all walks of life. At CASSA, Mohan looks forward to leveraging his diversity skills and experience, shining a spotlight on deep-rooted prejudices and working to raise the profile of newcomers to Canada.

Anjum Sultana

Anjum Sultana is a soon to be graduate of the Masters of Public Health program at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto. She is currently working at the St. Michael's Hospital focusing on qualitative research projects related to the social determinants of health. Anjum has always been interested in how upstream factors like immigrant status, gender, racial identity and racialization, and SES impact health for marginalized and vulnerable populations in Canada and abroad. She will be pursuing a Junior Fellowship at the Wellesley Institute this upcoming year where she is excited to put her passion for health equity and her skills in research, communications and advocacy, and translate that into measurable gains for health equity in Toronto and in urban health at large. To contact her, please email her at anjumsultana.mph@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter at [@anjumsultana](https://twitter.com/anjumsultana).

Sanga Achakzai

Sanga Achakzai has graduated from York University, with a Specialized Honors in International Relations, as well as a bilingual certificate in French. She took the role of research assistant with the Afghan Women's Organization (AWO) for a research proposal for CIDA. Sanga also assumed the role of community work and volunteer coordination with AWO, where she took active roles in managing events, writing proposals and participating in the strategic planning of the Agency. Currently, Sanga is undertaking the role of Enhanced Language Training Facilitator for internationally trained medical professionals, at Catholic Cross Cultural Services. . With a passion for community development, civic engagement and a vision that includes a prosperous and an inclusive Toronto where minorities are able to access leadership roles, Sanga joined CASSA. She is whole hearted in terms of seeing CASSA reaching its Strategic goals in promoting health equity, reducing poverty, supporting immigration and settlement, strengthening gender equity and building a non-racist Ontario. She is confident that she can be a great advocate of CASSA's strategic plan, and can cater to the needs of its Organizational development through her 7 years of experience in community development, civic engagement and leadership capabilities.

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Akhter Ahmed

Akhter Ahmed has more than 50 years of diverse work experiences in the field of marketing & sales management, coordination & project works, public relations, office and administrative processes, logistic services, and overseas business representation.

He has received many accolades from peers and satisfied customers for being motivated, methodical, well organized, versatile, and the ability to meet deadlines. Having retired, he is now able to spend time in work dedicated to community development, and attend seminars and workshops that help newcomers to be accepted into the Canadian Society. He is multilingual, has good English communication skills and fluency in spoken Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and Assamese.

Moreover, Mr. Ahmed holds a Bachelor in Commerce (B.Com) degree and has recently obtained a Diploma in Business Management, after successfully completing the prescribed curriculum for the program. Besides being trained in Marketing Principles & Practices, Sales Promotion & Advertising, Managerial Leadership and Human Resource Management, he is also computer literate and has a basic understanding of Information Technology.

His interaction with people from different walks of life, have greatly assisted him to broaden his views, thoughts and ideas transcending racial, regional or religious prejudices.

He is confident that his multiple qualifications coupled with my many years of diversified and useful experience in wide areas, should assist him in developing effective strategies for the planning, implementation and achievement of CASSA's goals – especially goals that include fighting oppression and racism and helping newcomers to promptly merge and blend into mainstream Canadian life.

Muneer Jam

Mr. Jam Muneer is a dedicated Development Professional and has been working in social sector since the last 15 years. He holds Masters in Social Work from University of Karachi, Pakistan and 'Certificate in Canadian Social Work Practice' from Ryerson University, Toronto.

Mr. Jam brings with him a wide range of experience and skills in a diversified social development sector, and his focus of attention has been with promotion of education, improvement of water supply and sanitation, Gender in Development, and training of NGOs to enhance their working capacity. He has been affiliated e Hh with District Government functionalities towards public private partnership with civil society organizations, and advocating for a strong voice of stakeholders in policy and decision making process.

Mr. Jam has worked with number of organizations including Government of Pakistan (provincial and district governments), USAID, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and have done consultancy services with several national and international organizations in development sector. At present, he is

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working as a 'Tenancy Support Specialist with a not for profit organization and providing services to clients having tenancy issues and mediation between landlord and tenants.



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Strategic Framework and Strategic Directions 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:

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CASSA, in the next five years, will:

- facilitate process that aim to build more inclusive and welcoming communities in the municipalities outside 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 racialization of poverty and work towards meaningful ways to address it
- initiate campaign to increase the availability and affordability of childcare
- support movements for 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 within South Asians
- create awareness to increase registrations for organ and tissue donations within 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 framework

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.

CASSA 2015-2016 Staff

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

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2015 Staff

Executive Director	Neethan Shan
Project Manager	Samya Hasan
Finance Coordinator	Farhat Hasan
Administrative Assistant	Ateeya Anwari, Rekha Sonavaria, Yuko Murakami
Fundraising Coordinator	Zulfia Zaher
Project Assistant	Saima Hussain
Project Coordinator	Antu Hossain
CapaCITY Project Coordinator	Tanzina Islam
Outreach Worker	Thurka Sri Rangan, Thusitha Suriyakumar, Guled Arale
Summer Student:	
Event Coordinator	Laxana Paskaran
Event Coordinator Assistant	Areeba Afreen
Internship:	Jilani Rajit, Arijit De, Hafeeza Patel, Hiba Hussain, Samir Parmar, Vennitta Anton, Gloria Kim, Bhagirath Patel, Samson Ravindran, Ashitava Halder, Amentha Pusparajah, Muaz Quereshi, Bijon Roy

Current Staff

Executive Director	Neethan Shan
Project Manager	Samya Hasan
Finance Coordinator	Farhat Hasan
Project Facilitator	Fatemeh Mazandarani, Kiran Khan
Outreach Coordinator	Samiha Farzana
Summer Students:	
Event Planner	Naveeda Hussain
Administrative Assistant	Rida Ikram
Internship:	Tayba Hathiyani, Laura You, Gaurav Sharma, Bhagirath Patel, Samson Ravindran, Ashitava Halder, Samir Parmar, Insiya Bhallo, Saeed Mohamed

List of CASSA Volunteers 2015-2016

A.B. Zakaria	Dimuthu Kankanamduroge	Kamlesh Joshi
Aarthy Thamoaranathan	Divya Sreejith	Karimah Rahman

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Abba Jeylani	Donya Seyrafi	Katherine
Abdul Ghani	Ehsanul Haque	Kazi Mashkura
Abeera	Elizabeth Mathew	Keerthana K
Abhelanshu Khare	Emili Saji	Keseni Sankarabalan
Abina Denistan	Evan Yang	Krishna Kumar
Ahnaf	Farhad Nouri	Krismaa Rajasuresh
Aj Marie	Farhana Rahman	Kshitiz Sharma
Ajeeta Shanmugarajaih	Farzana Badar	Kulthum Noor
Akhter Ahmed	Fatima Mohammad	Kumuthini.D. Harris
Akter Khan	Fouzia Sheikh	Leha Panchalingam
Ali Estila	Fuad Chaudhury	Lemuel Javier
Aliza Hussain	Gabriel Samra	Lily Young
Allen Walker	Gary Zhou	Lina Li
Almarie Ryan	Gaurav Sharma	Lisa Su
Altab Hossain	Geetha Bhavan	Liz Michelle Arrocha
Anand Ingle	Hala Kadis	Lookeshwari Sahadeo
Anesha	Haseba Hashimi	Loveleen Uppal
Anmaria Murgoska	Hasina Talukdar	Lucky Akter
Anupom Roy	Haris Wu	Madiha
Anwar Alie	Hina Uzair	Maeeda Tariq Khan
Arelie Freeman	Hong Nguyen	Dr. Mahabuba
Asfand Yar	Hrishov Sarker	Mahbuba Alam Khan
Ashna Imran	Ilyas Mohammad	Mahta Norouzi
Ashwani Bhardwaj	Iman Abdella	Malia Mazlomyar
Atika Dobani	Iqra	Manju Gupta
Ayesha	Irina Israt	Manjura Rehman
Aysha Irfan	Ismatara Bina	Maria Claudia Riano
Bella Wei	Jacqueline Guo	Maria Sherry Tan
Beyazit Durmus	Janavi	Mariam Mathew
Bibi Alladin	Jasveer Sidhu	Mariam Mushtaq
Biruntha	Jathursana Vasanthan	Mary Malayi
Bristi Datta	Jayeeta Biswas	Mashkura Hashun Mala
Candice Tait	Jeyanthi Sri	Matthew Tsang
Catherine Tabios	Jonathan Siviebadan	Mazibur Rahman
Celine Chen	Josee	Md. Rabiul Islam
Cheipaan Sivachandran	Josée Ryan	Meena Bhardwaj
Christina Boodhoo	Joseph Chan	Mesha Ahmed
Danielle Rife	Jot Dhillon	Mireya Rojas
Davika Deonarine	Judith Melanson	Mohamad Mubeen
Dilanthi	Kabina Ragu	Mohini Mahabir
Dilara Zaman	Kalsang Dolker	Mohit Gupta
Munira Noor	Sabrina Summer	Syeda Reshma Akhter
Mustansir Terai	Sajidshu Diwan	Tahida Choudhry
Nadira Tabasum	Saleha Farooqui	Tahira Syed

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Nanuja	Sammi Chen	Tai Nguyen
Nargis. A. Begum	Sana Nasir	Tenzin Lhadon
Nazia Rahman	Sandeep	Teresita Lacson
Nazma A. Khanam	Sanga Achakzai	Tiana Clarke
Naznin Sultana	Sanjida Akter	Tiffany Liang
Neha Ahmed	Sara Siddigui	Tinaeshan
Nigar Sultana	Sarah Miller	Tracey-Ann Gordon
Nirtsana Ranjanathan	Sarah Shahab	Umme Honey
Nithushana Ranjanathan	Saranja Erambamoorthy	Usman Jamshed
Nummra Aslam	Senthoori Sivagurunothan	Vaibah Chadha
Olga Quesada	Sreedevi Krishnan	Varleen Sasan
Oralia Olvera Henandez	Shahithya Ravindran	Venura Dasal
Posankumary Rajeswary	Shahnaila Salahuddin	Vinuja Sritharan
Poshithan	Shameem Begum	Yilei
Premanjani Thrikaran	Shameem Mohamed	
Proma Dhar Bubly	Shamima Nargis	
Puja Patel	Shamima Sultana	
Qurat-ul-ain	Shams Mehdi	
Rahat Zaman	Shanzezy Shahab	
Rahfiya Kamal	Sharifa Khatun	
Ramsha Qamar	Shazeeda	
Rana Bhyam	Shazia Arshad	
Rana Khan	Shenuja Ravichandran	
Ras Imran	Shiba Ahmadi	
Raushan Akhter	Shilpi Bhattacharje	
Reha	Shrija Shrestha	
Renée Ryan	Sidra Ali	
Rida Ikram	Sobana Tharmalingam	
Rijuta Menon	Sohail Rehman	
Rishav Sarma	Sophia	
Rishav Sarma	Sraboni Sarkar	
Roberta Infantino	Sudarni Baskaran	
Rui Li	Sultana Ahmed	
Rumana Kamal	Suniti Das	
Rushil	Sunjay Mathuria	
Saba Ansari	Surujdei Sheebilas	
Sabrina Sonu	Syed Fayz Ali	

Acknowledgement of Our Funders for 2015

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

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
City of Toronto: Community Festivals Investment Program
City of Toronto: Investing in Neighborhood Initiative
City of Toronto: Community Services Partnership
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Trillium Gift of Life Network
Law Foundation

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 2015.

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 also 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 a regular update on various happenings in the social services/social justice field in Ontario's South Asian communities.

Annual membership fee is only \$10 for individuals and \$20 for organizations. 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.



CASSA Annual General Meeting 2016

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