



December 2025 Newsletter

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CASSA's Membership!



BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

For more information contact qurat@cassa.ca or visit www.cassa.ca/membership



CASSA Project Updates

South Asian International Students Research Project

The South Asian International Students Research Project is actively seeking participants for the ongoing study. This research aims to delve into the experiences and challenges faced by South Asian international students in Ontario. The project has interviewed about 24 participants so far.

Participant Eligibility:

- South Asian international students
- 16 years or older
- Currently enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution in Ontario

Community Partners & Institutional Staff Interviews: In addition to student interviews, we are also engaging with community partners and institutional staff who work closely with international students. These interviews will provide diverse perspectives on the challenges faced by South Asian international students and help inform our research.

For more information or to participate, please contact us at tanzinatahereen@cassa.ca.

The Data for Equity 3.0

The Final Community of Practice in the Data for Change: Capacity Building Learning Series gathering, “Appreciating our Collective Journey, Reflecting on our Learnings, and Reimagining our Future Together,” brought participants together on Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025, at United Way Greater Toronto for a rich and engaging morning of learning and connection. The event featured a thought-provoking Fireside Chat and Panel Discussion with Nation Cheong (Vice President, Community Impact and Mobilization, UWGT) and Neil Price (Executive Director, Logical Outcomes), who shared their insights on using data to drive community impact. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all our speakers and facilitators—including Nation Cheong, Neil Price, Nicole and Shereen from SHIP, and Sophie and Medha from Logical Outcomes—for guiding meaningful conversations and helping us explore our collective successes, challenges, and opportunities. Special thanks to the Findhelp 211 team, especially Kosal Ky and Que-Suan, for their ongoing guidance and support throughout the series. We are also excited to announce the successful completion of Stage Four: Share and Use of the Data for Change Project—a milestone made possible through our partners’ dedication and collaboration.

Please visit and share widely with your networks: dataforchange.ca

If you have any questions, please email dataforchange@findhelp.ca.

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CASSA partnered with the South Asian Senior Support (SASS) Society and the Sikh Students' Association (SSA) to create gift baskets for seniors living in nursing homes across Calgary in honour of Gurpurab. This collaboration brought together volunteers to share the spirit of seva (selfless service) and community care. The gift baskets included thoughtful items selected to bring comfort, joy, and cultural connection to residents, many of whom may feel isolated during special occasions.

South Asian Social Justice Network Project - Quebec

On November 27th, 2025, the South Asian Women Community Centre (SAWCC) discussed the partnership between the South Asian Social Justice Network (SASJN - Quebec) and SAWCC. The meeting lasted for 30 minutes and answered all the questions they had regarding SASJN and CASSA. A member from SAWCC might be dedicated to join SASJN - Quebec's monthly meetings.

On December 2nd, 2025, SASJN - Quebec had a meeting with the Political Advisor for the MNA, Marwah Rizqy, at her office in Montreal to discuss potential collaboration. Interest was expressed in the work that the network does in Quebec and Ms. Rizqy shared contact details of relevant MNAs, who can better assist SASJN - Quebec in building a strong partnership with relevant organizations.

Taking the Honour Out of 'Honour-Based Violence' Project

CASSA successfully hosted its 14th Annual Health Equity Summit, *Equity in Focus: Sexual and Reproductive Health for South Asian Newcomer Women*, on November 18, 2025. The virtual event brought together 40 participants to explore the unique factors affecting the sexual and reproductive health of South Asian newcomer women, including cultural expectations, migration experiences, and systemic barriers within healthcare.

The program included a keynote presentation, policy discussions, and interactive breakout sessions designed to provide practical strategies for improving maternal & perinatal care, gynecological services, and sexual health education. Speakers addressed barriers such as stigma, limited culturally responsive care, and difficulties navigating health services, while highlighting solutions rooted in community needs.

The Summit fostered meaningful dialogue among policymakers, healthcare providers, researchers, and community leaders, creating opportunities to share insights and identify actionable steps for change. CASSA thanks all participants and speakers for contributing to a

Our Voices, Our Truth:

MUSLIM STORIES

ON SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION IN CANADA



Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)
Le conseil canadien des femmes musulmanes (CCFM)



Canadian
Race Relations
Foundation



We asked the Muslim community in Canada to share their experiences with systemic discrimination, and this is what we heard.

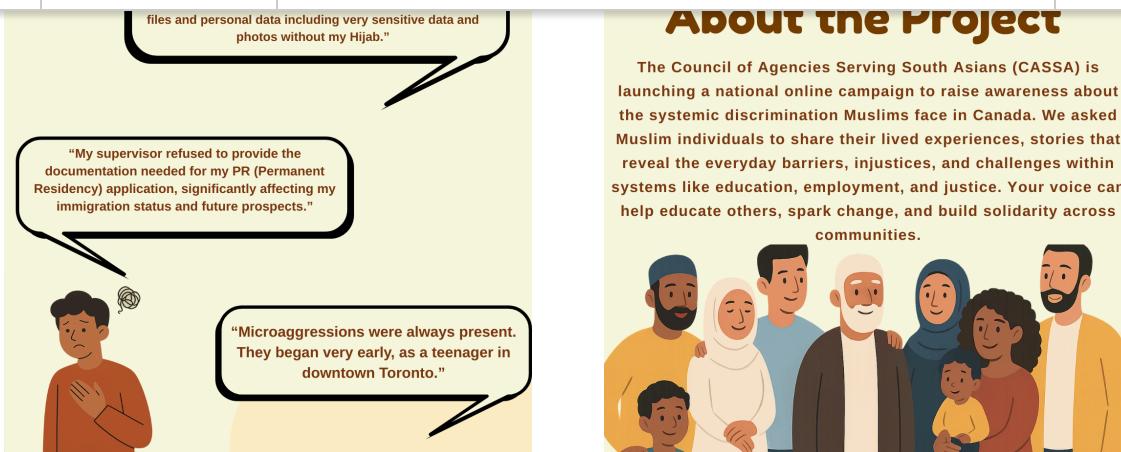


"At xxx University, a professor once told me, 'F*cking Muslim, get out of the lab or I'll call the Mossad.'

"Sometimes it's as subtle as nobody sitting beside you on the TTC, and at times, it's as overt as people suggesting you 'go back to where you came from.'

"I experienced total strangers yelling racial slurs, harassing me with violent threats, and blatant discrimination as a Black Muslim."



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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) is launching a national online campaign to raise awareness about the systemic discrimination Muslims face in Canada. We asked Muslim individuals to share their lived experiences, stories that reveal the everyday barriers, injustices, and challenges within systems like education, employment, and justice. Your voice can help educate others, spark change, and build solidarity across communities.



Call To Action!

Together, we can build safer and more just communities.

Name it when you see it. Hate is never "just a joke."



Record incidents safely to help those affected later.



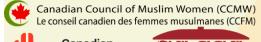
Report hate to trusted organizations and human rights channels.





To Learn More
Follow us on Our
Social Media

@CASSAOnline
@CCMWnational
@Crrf_fccr



Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)
Le conseil canadien des femmes musulmanes (CCFM)



Canadian
Race Relations
Foundation



CASSA
COUNCIL OF AGENCIES
SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

Digital Story-Telling Campaign

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) is launching a national online campaign to raise awareness about the systemic discrimination Muslims face in Canada. We asked Muslim individuals across Canada to share their lived experiences—stories that reveal the everyday barriers, injustices, and challenges within systems like education, employment, and justice. Please read the graphics above to hear about some of the experiences Muslim individuals experience in Canada every day.

Opportunities

Young South Asian Women across the GTA

This fall, the South Asian Women's Collective launched the Bold Futures Report and Documentary, a groundbreaking research project exploring the career development and employment needs of young South Asian women across the GTA. Funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, *Bold Futures* offers a culturally nuanced perspective on youth unemployment and highlights insights to inform policy, programming, and systems-level change.

Read the full report and watch the documentary [here](#).

We welcome your reflections, insights, and support in amplifying these findings. Please feel free to share the report or documentary through your LinkedIn, Instagram, newsletters, or networks. Together, we can shape more inclusive pathways for young racialized women navigating the future of work.

What's Next for South Asian Women's Collective

We're excited to announce the upcoming launch of Flourish Career Development in January 2026 in York Region — a culturally responsive career development program supporting 50 young South Asian women (ages 16–30) through:

- Career education and skill-building
- Access to mentors and sponsors
- Connections with employers and industry partners

Through *Flourish*, we're continuing our mission to advance equitable career pathways and amplify the voices of South Asian women and gender-diverse communities. We'd love to collaborate and continue the conversation on youth career development and employment equity. Please email Flourish Program Lead, Ritika Arora, at flourish@sawcollective.ca

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Epilepsy & Seizure First Aid Public Education Workshops

Offered in-person, over Zoom, teleconference and hybrid.

Please email leah@epilepsytoronto.org for further information.

Presented By



Session will cover:

✓ Myths and Misconceptions about Epilepsy	✓ Epilepsy Toronto's Services
✓ Difference Types of Seizures	✓ Client stories
✓ Treatment	✓ Seizure first aid

www.epilepsytoronto.org

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Times Change 

Getting Started with **TIMES CHANGE**

DO YOU NEED SUPPORT IN YOUR JOB SEARCH?

Join us for our orientation session where you will:

- Discover our services and programs
- Meet our team dedicated to supporting you on your career journey!
- Have some fun and shop in our free clothing boutique!
- Leave with your first appointment booked for employment supports

 Every Thursday 2:00pm - 3:30pm

 To register, contact us at 416-927-1900 or email client-support@timeschange.org

 www.timeschange.org

Funded by:



Canada 

**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**

Ontario 

WHO WE ARE

Times Change Women's Employment Service offers a variety of free services that support the professional development of women

WHAT WE OFFER

Employment counselling, comprehensive career planning, job search help, interview & resume support, educational counselling, retention support, and computer upgrading

ELIGIBILITY FOR OUR SERVICES

Valid SIN number | Canadian Citizen, Permanent Resident, or Refugee Claimant | Living in GTA

VASANTHAM - TAMIL HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTRE

Vasantham is Starting a New Program

"Trauma informed Family inclusive Counselling and Case Management"



Family Counseling & Case Management

- One Member of the Family must have Addiction
- Domestic Violence in the Family
- Family with Children/ Family with no Children

**Ongoing Intake
Referrals are Accepted**

CALL: 416-847-4172

EMAIL: INFO@VASANTHAM.CA

**VISIT: 2660 EGLINTON AVENUE EAST,
SCARBOROUGH, ON, M1K 2S3**



Funded by - SASP Program



WWW.VASANTHAM.CA



VASANTHAM-TAMIL WELLNESS



VASANTHAM



Title: Caring at the crossroads: Examining the interface between South Asian family caregivers and care systems during end-of-life care

Have you cared for a loved one at the end-of-life?

South Asian immigrants in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and Greater Hamilton-Niagara region are invited to share their caregiving experiences.

Your story can help shape more inclusive and family-centered care in Canada.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- First-generation South Asian immigrants (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Maldives) or children of first-generation South Asian immigrants
- Over 18 years of age
- Cared for an adult family member who died here within the last 3 months–4 years
- Live in the GTA or Greater Hamilton-Niagara region
- Speak English, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Bengali, Telugu, or Malayalam

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

- A brief demographic questionnaire, expected to take about 5-10 minutes, followed by a **60–90 minute interview** (Zoom or in a private location of your choice)
- **\$30 e-transfer honorarium**
- Your participation is **voluntary and confidential**

 **INTERESTED?**
Contact: **Katy Kumar**
 kumark33@mcmaster.ca
 **289-270-2879**

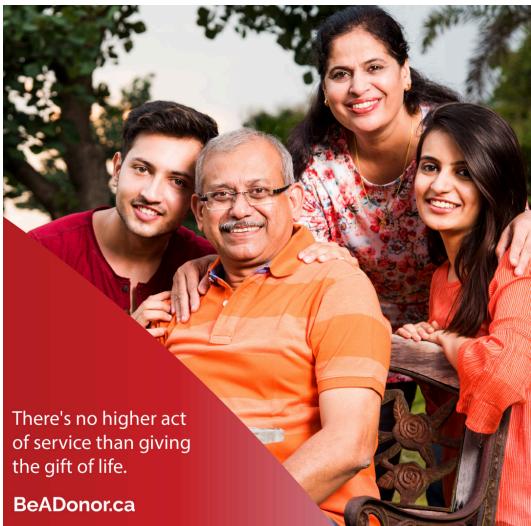
[For the full details of the study, please click on this link to the Letter of Information.](https://tinyurl.com/566t4ryh)
(<https://tinyurl.com/566t4ryh>)

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance from the McMaster Research Ethics Board [under project 7466].

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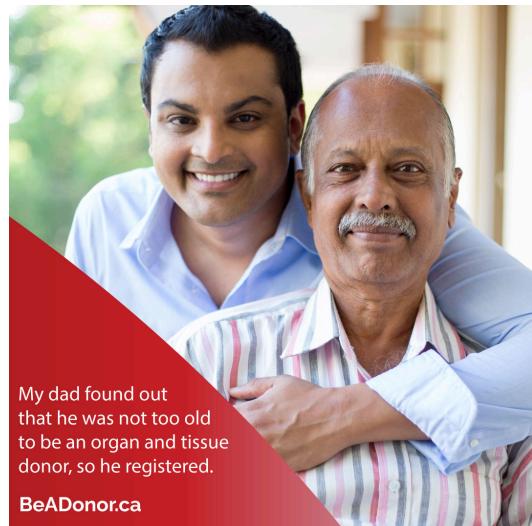
It only took me two minutes to register to save lives as an organ and tissue donor. You can do it too.

BeADonor.ca



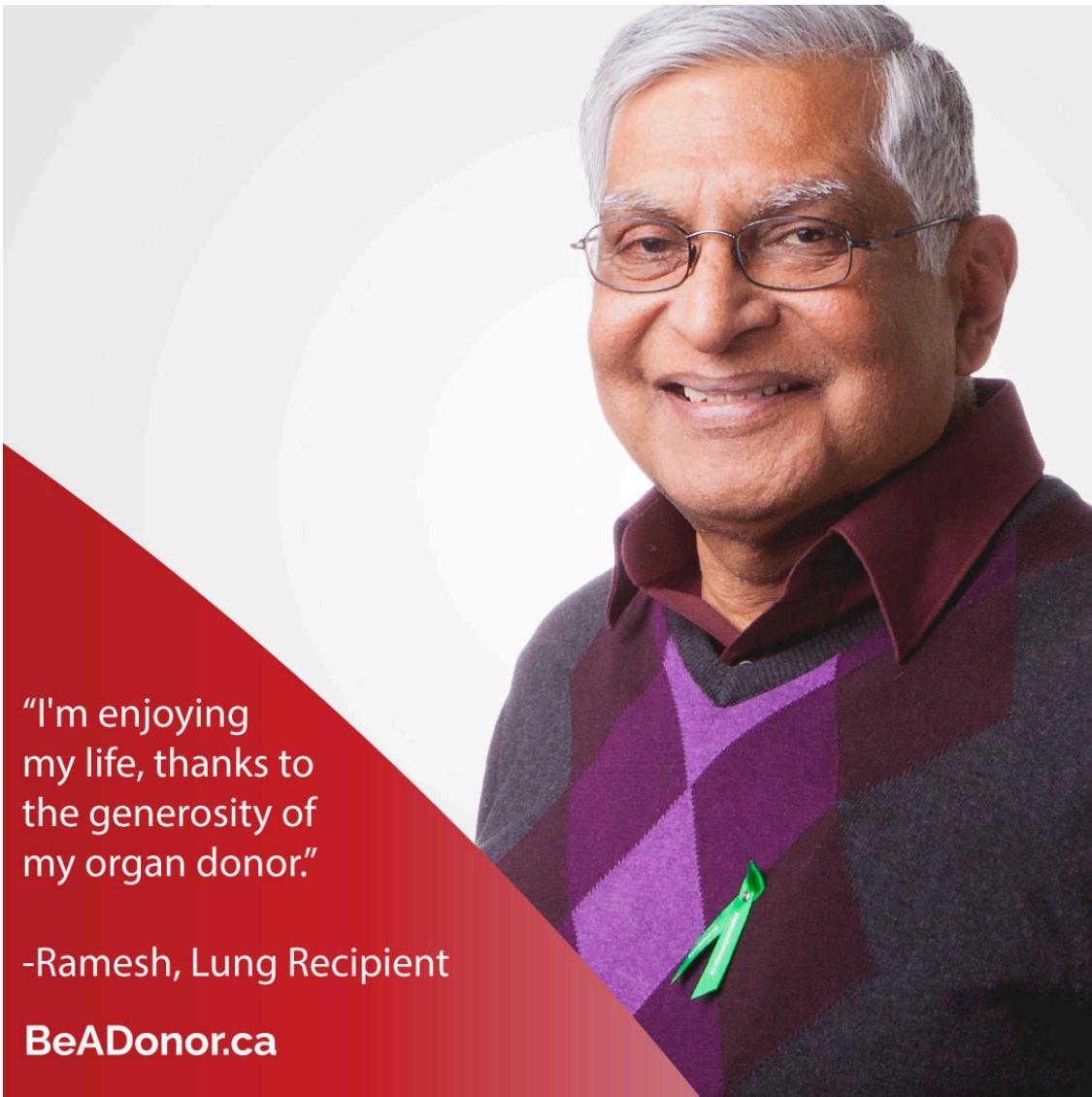
There's no higher act of service than giving the gift of life.

BeADonor.ca



My dad found out that he was not too old to be an organ and tissue donor, so he registered.

BeADonor.ca

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We registered after we found out that our religion supports organ and tissue donation.

[BeADonor.ca](#)



"The impact of one person's choice is transformative."

-Shilpa, Lung Recipient

[BeADonor.ca](#)

COMMUNITY SINGING

w/ *Vie*

Every Voice Belongs! Wellbeing & Joy Circle

Who is this for?

- for the ones who sing in the shower
- the shy ones who want to sing
- the ones who love to sing
- anyone with the ability to make sound
- all are welcome, especially "non singers!"

What will you Experience?

- Call and response style
- A place to express yourself as you are
- A sense of community and belonging
- A creative way to relieve stress and increase joy
- Hot tea and snacks
- toys and art supplies for the kids

WHERE:
Room 6 - Paul Palleschi Rec. Centre
30 Loafers Lake Lane, Brampton

Pay what is generous and affordable for you. No one is turned away.

We love when you register! A minimum of 10 registrations helps us plan and ensure we can hold the circle.

Scan the Code to Register or visit
Walk-ins are Welcome

www.communitysingingwithvie.ca



In the News

[Palestinian students admitted to Alberta universities still stuck in Gaza](#)

More than 70 students from Gaza who received full admissions and scholarships to Canadian universities have faced visa delays of 12 to 16 months since 2024, according to Palestinian

[Tim Hortons lobbied MPs for more temporary foreign workers over last 18 months](#)

For more than a year, Canadian coffee giant Tim Hortons has been pushing the federal government to lift the cap on temporary foreign workers some of its franchisees can hire, CBC News has learned.

[Montreal group releases report on dangers facing immigrant women without status](#)

The Women's Committee of the Centre for Immigrant Workers (CTTI) released a new report on Wednesday highlighting the harsh working and living conditions faced by immigrant women without legal status in Quebec.

[The missing 27 per cent: why disability is DEI's greatest opportunity](#)

The current discourse around diversity, equity, and inclusion focuses on whether such initiatives have gone too far. Disability cuts across every identity category, and disability-centred design has already given us so much.

[Somali communities say 'people feel insecure and live in fear' after Trump's tirade](#)

Many people in the Somali community say they feel fearful and angry in the aftermath of U.S. President Donald Trump's tirade against Somali communities in Minnesota.

[Liberals to open new fast track to permanent residency for 5,000 foreign doctors](#)

The federal government is promising to open up permanent residency for foreign doctors working in Canada as temporary foreign residents in order to tackle the doctor shortage across the country.

[Canada cuts target for international student admissions by half as crackdown continues](#)

On Nov. 4, the federal government announced another cut to their international student admissions target for 2026, the latest in a series of moves to bring down Canada's international student numbers.

[After death of 18-year-old Niagara woman, her family told Thorold cemetery won't accommodate Muslim burial](#)

The family of a young Niagara woman who died in a car accident has been told she won't be buried in their local cemetery because it won't accommodate Muslim burial traditions, their imam says.

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