

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014



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

**Annual General Meeting
Thursday, June 26th, 2014**

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

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CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

Agenda

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
Annual General Meeting
June 26th, 2014
Friends House

5:30pm – 6:00pm

Registration and Refreshments

6:00pm – 6:45pm

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

6:45pm – 7:20pm

Special Projects Presentation

- CapaCITY Creators Project
- South Asian Gift of Life Campaign
- Health Equity Conference

7:20pm – 7:35pm

Release of Brown Book

7:35pm – 8:00pm

Volunteer Appreciation

8:00pm – 8:30pm

Dinner and Networking

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

AGM Minutes of CASSA – June 27th, 2013 at Friends House, Toronto

The meeting was called to order by Mohan Swaminathan, Vice-Chair of the Board. The motion to approve the agenda was made by Rabindra Sabat and seconded by Seema Nadarajah. Kripa Sekhar made the motion to approve the previous AGM minutes, seconded by Ramraajh.

President's Report

Mohan Swaminathan presented the report on behalf of Maya Bhullar. Maya requested the attendees to visit the Brown Canada website and help to build this documentation project, which continues to be run by volunteers, even after the funding was over with last year. She also commended CASSA's efforts in achieving its target goal of fundraising \$30,000.00 in 2013 and hoped that we will continue to reach our goal this year too.

2013 was also CASSA's 25th anniversary year and several events had been planned to mark the occasion. The Gala dinner was successfully hosted in May, and the Toronto Mela and Health Equity conference was held in September and November respectively. She thanked the staff, volunteers and member agencies of CASSA for their contribution and support and hoped they will continue to support our work in the future.

Executive Director's Report

Neethan Shan presented the Executive Director's report for 2012. He introduced the staff and thanked them for their contributions in achieving CASSA's goals with very limited resources. He highlighted major project activities that were undertaken in 2012 (e.g. launch of SAPNO, CapaCITY Creators Project, Concert for Social Justice, Brown Canada project, Racism Free Ontario campaign, Health Equity conference, etc.), all of which received very positive feedback from the community. He also highlighted the strategic priorities which remained the same in 2013. Neethan Shan invited the attendees to participate and support the events in the 2nd half of 2013 which would include the 2nd annual South Asian Summer festival: Toronto Mela, Racism Free Ontario campaign and Health Equity conference. He then thanked for the Board, staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication and hoped that with their continued support, we will move closer to creating a more socially and economically just Ontario.

Approval of Auditor's Report

The Auditor's report was read by Mohan Swaminathan. The motion to approve was made by Rabindra Sabat and seconded by Kripa Sekhar. The motion to approve David Burkes as the Auditor for 2013 was made by Manivillie and seconded by Ramraajh.

Nomination report and Election of new Board members

Outgoing Board members Anusha Sarvanandan, Sarwar Mustafa, Rabindra Sabat and Munib Sajjad were thanked for their contribution to the Board. Returning Board members were Mohammad Hayat, Seema Nadarajah, Ramraajh and Mohan Swaminathan. Six new Board members were introduced. They were Anjum Sultana, Naseema Akhtar, Jawad Bhatti, Anu Sharma, Jalajah Jokarasa and Noor Baig. The motion to approve their election was made by Seema Nadarajah and seconded by Mohammad Hayat.

Adjournment of Business

The motion to adjourn the business was made by Anjum Sultana and seconded by Manivillie Kanagasabapathy.

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

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

In 2013, CASSA celebrated our 25th anniversary as an organization. In 2014, we continued to build this organization with the support of our members, funders, partners, staff, many volunteers and the active, dedicated and tireless involvement of our communities. This year, our staff and volunteers amazed us, stepping up to meet difficult challenges putting in extra time and tireless effort to keep CASSA going. I especially want to thank Jasmine Lobo for stepping in as acting Executive Director during the month of May and June. She did this while managing a flagship project for CASSA for this year, collaboration with the Trillium Gift of Life Foundation to increase organ donation rates in Toronto and in our communities.

In 2013-2014, CASSA developed a slew of initiatives 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. The CASSA team collaborated with member agencies on initiatives like the Alternative Planning group. The team also worked with partners on the CapaCITY Creators Project, a project aimed at increasing participation of South Asians in arts and recreation programs in Toronto and the Region of Peel. We also engaged South Asian communities in an initiative with the Trillium Gift of Life Foundation to increase organ donation rates in Toronto. All of these were successful projects and along CASSA's mission.

In May, we honoured amazing people working in our communities at CASSA Nite 2014 as a fundraising event during Asian Heritage month. CASSA staff has also been working on a resource book called the "Brown Book" and we are pleased to release it at this Annual General Meeting. We hope to continue to build this resource so it can be a useful tool for our communities.

My fellow board members and I are very appreciative of the work that the entire CASSA team, which includes our members, have put in to build this incredible organization and we hope to see it continue to flourish.

Sincerely,

Maya Bhullar
Board Chair

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

Message from the Executive Director Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)

Dear Friends of CASSA:

I am delighted to share with you the highlights of our work in 2013 and our plans for moving forward in 2014. CASSA has continued to strengthen its fight for social and economic justice in the past year. We have now officially crossed hundred in the number of our member agencies. Thank you for your amazing support and engagement in CASSA.

In 2013, we began to implement the Capacity Creators project in Scarborough and Brampton. Within a year, this project has trained and supported over 100 individuals in their efforts to engage in the arts, recreation and environmental sectors. This project is now in the second year and is reaching new heights in our efforts to make the three sectors diverse, inclusive and accessible.

Other 2013 highlights include a successful Toronto Mela with over 2000 attendees, 100 volunteers and 40 performers. Towards the end of 2013, we launched our South Asian Gift of Life campaign in collaboration with Trillium Gift of Life Network and it is now proceeding into its eight month successfully. Our Health Conference was a milestone event with a launch of the process to develop a South Asian Health Strategy for Ontario. The Generation of Change project brought together three generations of South Asian women in Scarborough to create awareness and to celebrate the resilience and achievements of South Asian women. Many more of our highlights are listed throughout this book with further details.

I would like to thank the members of our dedicated and hardworking staff team for their enormous contribution to meeting our objectives and furthering our mandate. My sincere appreciation also goes to the supportive and visionary board of directors who continue to guide and support the work being done by our team. Finally, my special thanks to over 200 volunteers who gave their time and energy to make our projects successful. CASSA is proud to be a volunteer driven organization that is supported and facilitated by a team of amazing staff members.

In 2014, we will continue our fight for social and economic justice through the many ongoing projects, special events, awareness campaigns and equity initiatives. Our Brown Canada 2020 Summit taking place at the end of this year will be momentous occasion and we hope to have both your presence and support for that initiative. We will follow up with more information to you in the upcoming weeks. We request your continued support and involvement in CASSA in the upcoming months and years, as a member and as a volunteer.

Thank you for your continued support, guidance and involvement.

In Solidarity,

Neethan Shan
Executive Director

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

CASSA Highlights

CapaCITY Creators Project

The Capacity Creators program is a 3 year project funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which aims to increase the participation of South Asians in the sectors of Arts, Recreation & Environment. Based on evidence gathered from preliminary research and by conducting a needs assessment, we found that South Asians as well as other immigrants face multifaceted barriers to actively participate and become leaders in the three sectors. As a result, the Capacity Creators project was designed to increase participation, nurture community engagement and form long-term partnerships between community members and mainstream organizations and service providers across the three sectors.

Every year, we train 60 South Asians as Capacity Creators in the City of Toronto and Region of Peel with the support of our member agencies. By providing training such as anti-oppression/anti-racism, board of governance and project planning, we hope to increase the knowledge of Capacity Creators on issues of access and equity and improve in leadership capacity to participate actively in the three sectors. Once training has been completed, Capacity Creators are connected to a mainstream organization in one of the three sectors. Our project partners include: Art Gallery of Mississauga, Scarborough Arts, Scarborough Museum, Water Docs Film Festival, Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA), Earth Day Canada (EDC), Toronto Region and Conservation Authority (TRCA), Pan-Am Games and City of Toronto Parks & Recreation. In partnership with such mainstream organizations, Capacity Creators develop and execute their own community engagement project, supported by CASSA staff and volunteers.

Currently, we are in our second year of the project, in the recruitment and training phase. With the support of Punjabi Community Health Services and the Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services we have recruited 50% of our participant target so far. Within the next few weeks, we will be training participants from the Afghan Women's Centre and the Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services to add the list of Year 2 Capacity Creators. Overall, we are recruiting 30 Capacity Creators in the City of Toronto (Scarborough area) and 30 Capacity Creators in the Region of Peel (Mississauga and Brampton area) for Year 2 of the project.

While recruiting year two participants, our year one Capacity Creators are executing 11 different projects across Toronto and the Peel Region during the summer of 2014. For example, the environmental Capacity Creators in partnership with TEA, have developed their own outreach and awareness project to support TEA's Waste-Free Campaign and by educating South Asian communities to adopt waste-free practices. While a group of senior Capacity Creators are working with TRCA to engage local seniors to participate in a planting program in Toronto and in Peel this summer. In partnership with City of Toronto Parks & Recreation, the recreation-focused Capacity Creators have created an active advisory committee called the Community Reference Group (CRG) which acts to connect local community members to free and accessible services the city has to offer. This initiative seeks to promote equity and inclusion that is long term. To promote further participation in the recreation sector, Capacity Creators are also facilitating Pan-Am information sessions to engage communities in the Pan-Am games in 2015. The Art Gallery of Mississauga have been a supportive partner for our Art-based Capacity Creators in the Peel Region, helping them to facilitate a South Asian exhibition this summer to promote local South Asian artists. While in Toronto, Scarborough Arts is

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

working with Capacity Creators from Scarborough to promote South Asian art in their Bridging Festival taking place in August 2014. There are roughly six projects in the City of Toronto and five projects in the Region of Peel that are to be executed by the Capacity Creators this summer. Each project includes a team of 5-8 dedicated Capacity Creators who work together to successfully carry out these projects.

With the support of our partners as well as the Ontario Trillium Foundation, CASSA's Capacity Creators project is working towards increasing community engagement and social inclusion in the sectors of Arts, Recreation and the Environment from a social justice framework that is long-term. We welcome you to participate in the fantastic opportunities and initiatives our Capacity Creators are facilitating. CASSA would personally like to thank all our Capacity Creators for their hard work, our member organizations and our project partners across the three sectors:

Arts:

Art Gallery of Mississauga
Scarborough Arts
Scarborough Museum
Water Docs Film Festival

Recreation:

City of Toronto Parks & Recreation
Pan-Am Games

Environment:

Toronto Environmental Alliance
Earth Day Canada
Toronto Region & Conservation

South Asian Gift of Life Campaign

CASSA has collaborated with Trillium Gift of Life Network's "Be a donor" health promotion campaign to start an initiative that would outreach towards the South Asian communities in the Greater Toronto Area encouraging them to become organ and tissue donors. Trillium Gift of Life Network is a non-profit organization of the Ontario Government and is Ontario's central organ and tissue donation agency.

To provide some insight, in Ontario, less than 25% residents have registered their consent to be donors. Within the GTA, only 15% are registered, yet we are the largest populated city in Canada. The GTA has the lowest percentage of organ and tissue donors compared to rural areas in Ontario. Currently, Toronto is ranked at 170 out of 179. It is unfortunate because there are approximately 1,500 Ontarians currently waiting for organ transplants and thousands more waiting for tissue transplants. Every 3 days, someone dies in Ontario because the life-saving transplant they need is not available.

CASSA's primary focus is on the South Asian communities residing in the GTA. The goal is to break cultural and religious barriers surrounding organ and tissue donation through education, and create awareness. The hope is to increase the donor registration in the South Asian Community, since Ontario has the most population of South Asians in Canada. To achieve this, the initiative was formulated, and

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

began on February 1st and will continue until August 31st, 2014. The focus is to raise awareness and educate through various means, such as social media, television and radio networks, holding booths at many diverse events and conducting presentations and workshops. Furthermore, Trillium Gift of Life Network has also formed a URL with the “Be a Donor website”, where it will be language specific and South Asians can find the link to register easily.

CASSA looks forward to working alongside other community organizations that share the same beliefs and concerns. Together we can work to help spread awareness, to educate and remove stigmas attached to organ and tissue donation, and work towards the betterment of our society at large.

Health Equity Conference

In 2010, CASSA held their 1st Annual Health Equity Conference at the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), stemming from the report by Sheela Subramanian, *A Diagnosis for Equity: An Initial Analysis of South Asian Health Inequalities in Ontario*. The report suggested increased knowledge exchange and transfer between key stakeholders; including community organizations, health providers, researchers, funders, health planners and decision makers. This led to the creation of the Health Equity Conference, which aimed to share and exchange knowledge regarding new research and innovative service models to address crucial health related issues within South Asian communities. Thus, the first conference focused on a broad array of topics such as chronic disease, mental health, and sexual disease, to increase awareness of the salient issues affecting the health of South Asian communities as well as to address these issues through the lens of health equity and the social determinants of health. The conference was successful, with CASSA working in collaboration with CAMH to bring 75 individuals from various organizations to exchange knowledge about these issues.

Because of the positive feedback received from the conference, we decided to hold our 2nd Health Equity Conference, again held in collaboration with CAMH, which focused primarily on marginalized youth and mental health in South Asian communities. Although CASSA has worked to steadily increase awareness on the various health issues affecting South Asians, the focus of last year’s conference was to develop an action plan to reduce this health disparity. CASSA will focus their efforts on creating the foundations of a South Asian Health Strategy; a strategy for equitable access to health care, South Asian specific health care facilities, improved standards of care, and the provision of culturally-appropriate health services. This will be the focus at CASSA’s 4th Annual Health Equity Conference, which aims to take more of an action-based approach with diversity in practice and leadership within the healthcare sector.

This year, we hope to hold the conference on November 17th, 2014, and are currently working with a team of dedicated volunteers to establish, organize and promote this conference. We aim to have more than a 100 organizations joining us to facilitate and create an open dialogue on the next steps of a South Asian Health Strategy.

CASSA Nite

CASSA’s Annual Gala was held on May 23rd, 2014 at Princess Banquet Hall. Around 200 guests, including our sponsors, CASSA’s Boards, staff, volunteers, and awardees attended at the event. The theme for this event was “Remembering Our Struggles and celebrating our Victories.” As a part of

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

South Asian Heritage month celebration, CASSA also marked the 100 years after Komagata Maru and highlighted its importance in the history of South Asians in Canada by showing a short documentary and an exhibition that displayed the event.

CASSA also acknowledged six individuals with the service excellence award in recognition of their exemplary work among vulnerable communities, particularly in and among South Asians. The award ceremony is an integral part of CASSA's annual event. Six "Excellence in Equity" awards were presented to:

- 1) Augustine Jeevananthan, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Seniors' Well-Being
- 2) Gagan Singh, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Equity & Youth Engagement
- 3) Jehan A. Chaudhry, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Gender Equity
- 4) Karin Baqi, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Migrant Justice
- 5) Motilall Sarjoo, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Labour Justice
- 6) Ritika Goel, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Health Equity

Toronto Mela

Toronto Mela is a South Asian Summer Festival. The aim of the Toronto Mela is to celebrate South Asian diversity and to increase public awareness about the contributions of the South Asian communities to Canada and the world. Therefore, CASSA takes every effort to bring the people of the Greater Toronto Area together by celebrating diversity through South Asian art, literature, dance music and food. Over a thousand of people including elected representatives, media representatives, community leaders and the GTA residents attends this event ever since it has started.

CASSA celebrated its second annual event with the support of City of Toronto on September 7th, 2013 at Albert Campbell Square in Scarborough from 2.00pm to 8.00 pm. Toronto Mela 2013 was a great success with over 2000 people in attendance and with performances by over 100 artists. Please visit www.torontomela.ca to see highlights from last year. Fun, games, free gifts, food, stage performances were provided to entertain the participants. In addition, the stalls of services, 40 non-profit agencies and businesses, set up booths to promote their product and services.

Other salient feature of the event is volunteer support, as it was and will be a volunteer driven project and as like last year we expect more than 100 energetic and enthusiastic volunteers to support our next event to be successful. The third annual Toronot Mela will be held during spring 2015. CASSA will announce the date by the end of 2014.

Activities at a Glance

Live Music Performances

Classical & Folk Dances

South Asian Cuisine

Kid's Activity Corner

Stalls of Non-profit and Business agencies about their services and products

Stalls of South Asian products, souvenirs, jewellers and handicrafts.

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

CASSA Board of Directors Slate 2013-2014

Returning Directors:

Maya Bhullar

Maya Bhullar has over 16 years of professional experience in such diverse areas as migration, labour, urban planning and community mobilization. She has a particular interest in grassroots engagement, effective representation of constituent's interests and in helping organizations to better achieve their stated goals. Her experience comes from the public sector and from working with labour unions. She has held research and policy positions with Habitat International Coalition & UN Centre for Human Settlements, American Federation of Labour- Congress of Industrial Organizations and Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Since 2010, Maya has held the position of Research Coordinator with SEIU Local 2 Canada, helping to build campaigns for the rights of low wage workers. She also has decades of experience working with coalitions for social change, including working with the Good Jobs for All Coalition in Toronto, and Neighbors Consejo, Washington D.C., a community led project to address implications of gentrification and rapid development in a neighborhood. Maya has been a speaker at many events including the World Social Forum and at the Global Labour University. She has a Masters in International Development Economics and Urban Development from American University, Washington D.C, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Anthropology and International Relations from the State University of New York at Cortland, NY. Washington D.C.

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 studied Health (Co-op) and Neuroscience at the University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus. Anjum is deeply committed to health equity issues and wishes to pursue a Masters in Public Health to equip herself with knowledge and skills to contribute to creating more equitable health care systems in Canada and abroad. She has experience working in project management and program development in Kenya and Ghana focusing on improving health outcomes and access in rural areas. She has also worked as health equity coordinator intern at the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA). Recently,

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

she represented University of Toronto on the international stage at the Emory University Global Health Case Competition. In the future she hopes to work in health policy to facilitate the necessary progress and change to impact social, political and economic determinants of health to improve life outcomes for vulnerable and marginalized populations with a special focus on women and children.

Anu Sharma

Anu Sharma began working in the nonprofit sector since 1995 with one of CASSA'S member agencies PCHS. Anu began as a youth coordinator with PCHS and within a few years became the president. Since her work with PCHS, Anu also worked as a youth settlement worker with Newcomer youth at Culturelink, as well as a Settlement counselor at COSTI.

For the past 7 years Anu has been organizing low paid workers across the country and has successfully organized workers in the Cleaning industry in Vancouver, Ottawa, Toronto and Halifax. Anu is passionate about working within the labour movement and being able to work with newcomers in a different capacity.

Jalajah Jokarasa

Jalajah Jokarasa holds a B.A in Psychology. She has been working as a Library and School Settlement Counsellor for the past 4 years at Centre for Information and Community Services. She also worked on many community based researches and contributed as a co-author for one publication for Women's health and Urban Life journal. She worked as Research Assistant, Peer Researcher and Research Analyst at Ryerson University, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Access Alliance Multicultural Health & Community Services and Community Resource Connections of Toronto. Her focus of work has been on seniors' health, health and abuse among immigrant and refugee women, recovery and cultural diversity, resiliency and youth mental health. Currently she is working on a Tamil Law Lexicon project for Ryerson Law Research Centre.

Jawad Bhatti

Jawad Bhatti is a long standing resident of the Toronto area who attended the University of Toronto receiving his Bachelor of Arts followed by a Bachelors and Master's Degree in Social Work from York University. His major area of research was the impact of the non-recognition of foreign credentials on newcomers to Canada. Jawad's experience ranges from acting as a constituency assistant for MP Olivia Chow, working as a child and family mental health therapist with the Scarborough Hospital and was a case manager for a youth residential treatment centre in York Region. Jawad currently works as a mental health therapist for the Scarborough Hospital Justice and Mental Health Program working with individuals dealing with major mental illness who are involved in the criminal justice system. Jawad also operates Positive Outcome Services offering individual and family therapy solutions for a wide range of clients.

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

Nasima Akter

Nasima Akter has her doctorate in Environmental Technology and Management. She has worked in the field of research (Environment, Health, and Social Research), evaluation, monitoring, and policy implementation for the past 18 years, 12 of those leading work at BRAC, the largest development NGO in the world with 1 million staff; She also taught at BRAC University Bangladesh for more than 5 years; after coming to Canada she was with Eng-consult LTD., Canada for two years as Environmental Specialist; Nasima is currently Executive Director of Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services, based in Toronto.

Her research area includes Informal Economy among the immigrants in Toronto, Seniors' health in Crescent Town area, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), In-door air pollution, Medical Waste Management (MWM), Alternative Energy, Climate Change, Natural Resource Conservation, Health and Livelihood, etc. Nasima is a Certified Canadian Environmental Professional (EP) in the field of Research and Development, Waste Management, Site Assessment and Reclamation, and Education and Training. She has in excess of more than 42 published papers to her credit.

Ramraajh Sharvendiran

Ramraajh is the Tamil Outreach and MSM Prevention coordinator at the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAAP), working with men who love men to educate and create a safe space for the discussion of sexuality and sexual health in South Asian communities. Born and raised in Toronto, Ram harbours a deep passion for advocacy around all human rights, especially those around race, gender, and sexual orientation. He holds Honours Degrees in Communications from York University and also volunteers his time as a radio host of a weekly queer segment at a local community radio station. Ramraajh hopes to bring his lived and learnt experience as a Queer Tamil cis-gendered male to the work at CASSA.

Seema Nadarajah

Seema Nadarajah is a social worker dedicated to the values of anti-oppressive practice with a commitment to social justice. Seema has worked in a variety of social service settings and is presently a Community Legal Worker at the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO) where she is engaged in Law Reform initiatives and improving access to justice for Low Income South Asian's. "Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean." quote by Ryunosuke Satoru, a Japanese Poet. Seema hopes to work in solidarity with other members at Asian diaspora and to create change at CASSA and the community at large to bring awareness to issues affecting the South Asian diaspora.

Slate of New Directors

Shaji John

Shaji Kangapadan is currently the Program Coordinator at Canadian Jesuits International. He is an advocate for social justice. He loves to share evidence of growing inequality and spread the word about progressive social change. Shaji has a wealth of experience in project management and worked as the manager for community partnerships at Evergreen Brick Works. Before that, he worked as a project

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

manager with various NGOs in India and Afghanistan. Shaji is an expert in coordinating public health, education and livelihood projects. In 2011, Shaji was selected as a Diversity Fellow, a leadership program of Civic Action Alliance offered to select professionals, in the GTA.



Strategic Framework and Strategic Directions for 2011-2014

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.

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

Strategic Directions 2011-2014

1. Immigration and smart settlement:

CASSA, in the next three years, will facilitate process that aim to build more inclusive communities in the municipalities outside the City of Toronto, with a specific focus on York Region, Peel Region and Durham Region. CASSA will address issues faced by specific immigrant populations including but not restricted to Internationally Trained Trades people, Refugees, LGBTQ+ communities and people with disabilities. CASSA will explore issues related to Family Reunification and assist in knowledge production that will lead to better services and policies in that area.

2. Poverty Reduction:

CASSA will promote and contribute to an analysis that recognizes the links between poverty and racialization. CASSA, through community organizing, will bring together community stakeholders to collectively create and support various strategies to reduce poverty in the South Asian and other racialized communities. CASSA will work on improving policy and practice as it related to poverty reduction. CASSA's focus in 2011-2013 will be more specifically on childcare, housing and income security programs.

3. Health Equity:

CASSA will promote and contribute to an analysis that is based on the social determinants of health. CASSA will bring together community stakeholders to collectively create and support strategies that:

- Increase South Asian communities' access to linguistically and culturally appropriate health services;
- Create equitable access to mental and sexual health services by addressing barriers that exist both internally within South Asian communities and externally in the Health Services sector
- Promote health equity and reflective governance structures within Health care institutions.
- Support sharing of information about existing research, promising practices and outstanding leadership in the field of health equity as it relates to South Asians

4. Youth Engagement and Leadership:

CASSA will bring together community stakeholders to collectively create and support opportunities for research, collaborations, sharing of best practices, professional development/training and advocacy for resources in order to address leadership, health and empowerment needs of the South Asian youth in Ontario. CASSA will utilize social media, positive role models and documentation of promising practices to support the empowerment of South Asian youth, with a focus on particular groups of youth: such as young women, newcomer youth, LGBTQ youth, South Asian youth with disabilities and learning about their rights.

5. Anti-racism and Anti-oppression:

Working in solidarity with other communities and organizations, who are working with an anti – oppression, anti-racism framework, CASSA will implement strategies to eliminate racism and oppression. CASSA will work with and in various systems of the municipalities to promote anti-racism and anti-oppression. In the next three years, CASSA will also focus on addressing racism in the media and in education. CASSA will also take additional steps to address inequities faced by racialized people with disabilities and racialized LGBTQ+ communities.

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

6. Gender Equity:

CASSA will work with other organizations, activists and other stakeholders to address various gaps related to promoting gender equity. CASSA, during the next three years, will focus on three areas: Pay and employment equity for women, leadership development for young women and elimination of Violence against Women.

7. Seniors Income Security and Well-Being:

CASSA will work with other organizations and community stakeholders to address various income and well-being needs of South Asian seniors in Ontario. CASSA, during the next three years, will focus on four areas: income security for immigrant seniors, access to transportation, access to information and access to community space. CASSA will set up an advocacy network for South Asian Seniors and will assist with training, research and policy.

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

CASSA 2013-2014 Staff

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

2013 Staff

Executive Director	Neethan Shan
Finance & Office Coordinator	Farhat Hasan
CapaCITY Project Coordinator	Dr. Mahbub Hasan
Fundraising Coordinator	Thanesh Veluppillai
Volunteer & Communications Coordinator	Raji Choudhury & Priya Dhillon
Women Engagement Coordinator	Jasmine Lobo & Nadia Wasti
Administrative Assistant	Ateeya Anwari
Health Equity Interns	Somya Grover & Jalini Jeyaraman
Toronto Mela Event Assistant	Thusitha Suriyakumar

Current Staff

Executive Director	Neethan Shan
Project Manager	Jasmine Lobo
Finance & Office Coordinator	Farhat Hasan
CapaCITY Project Coordinator	Tanzina Islam
Fundraising & Event Coordinator	Zulfia Zaher
Volunteer & Communications Coordinator	Priya Dhillon
Health Equity Intern	Aysha Butt
Outreach Worker	Aman Sharma
Outreach Worker	Cajaani Velautham
Outreach Worker	Thurka Sri Rangan

List of CASSA Volunteers 2013-2014

Abbena Ramesh	Abera Chanrakumar	Adam McCort
Affaan Bin Muqueem	Aisha Maywandi	Aiza Butt
Ali Shahbaz	Alisha Kumar	Alsya Reyes
Aman Sharma	Amit Lahar	Amrita Jaiprakash
Angelina	Anika Hazra	Anitha
Anjum Sultana	Anu Sharma	Arabi Sriranjana
Archana Ravichandradeva	Arely Cruz	Aria Popal
Arkimsha Nagulendran	Asish Rai	Athena Zhao
Avinya Uthayakumaran	Ayesha Jabbar	Banafsheh Zia
Bavetra Sivakumar	Betty Ruan	Biranavan Thavarajah
Bria John	Bushra Islam	Caterina

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

Catherine Shang	Cathy Li	Chandira Manoharan
Chantal Persad	Chantel Ho	Chantelle Walters
Chathurani P. Yaddhegige	Cjay Reyes	Connie Francis
Dakshesh Brar	Debbie Singh	Deewa Ranzooriyar
Devang Patel	Dharsha Siva	Dia Rahman
Dina Li	Divijj Y. Kumar	Dylan Bharat
Ekamjit Uppal	Enoch Ramesh	Erinne Henry
Farizma Ahmed	Feroza Mohammed	Fiona Li
Flora Deverajah	Florence Tsang	Gaajen Sivarasacumar
Gurneet Dhami	Gyanika	Hannah Saivola
Hany Zhang	Harunya Sivanesan	Hassan Khan
Helen Huang	Hiba Iqbal	Hinna Yusuf
Inthuja Selvaratnam	Isabel Zhu	Ishan Sevak
Ivana	Jaanani Sivarasacumar	Jahanvi Pandit
Jalajah Jokarasa	Jalal Ludin	Jalini Jeyaraman
Janahaan Sandrakumar	Janany Nagulan	Jawad Bhatti
Jayati Khattar	Jenny Liang	Jenieshia
Jeyachan	drakanthan	
Jessie Li	Joel Parikh	Kahina Luong
Kalai	Kamal Mollah	Kanika Debroy
Karan Sharma	Keeran Sivanesan	Kartheek
Shanmugamoorthy		
Kevisa Sivajothy	Kinza Ahmed	Kisanth Raguvarnan
Krishanthini Gopikrishna	Krystal Sukhu	Kunj Bhatt
Laamina Saravanane	Laleh Soltanian	Lavaniyah Kanthavanam
Leane Pablo	Lekan Afolabi	Lily Su
Lisette Perez	Lorenzo Fiorito	Lovleen Walia
Luxmhina Luxmykanthan	Maddy Bondy	Maenusha Raguvarnan
Maethinie Vasan	Mahnoor Muqeem	Manjot Bining
Mantr Dixit	Mark Desequeira	Mathura Anantha
Mathush Muhunthan	Maya Bhullar	Md Mehta
Meera Du	Melody	Mishal Saeed
Mohammad Hayat	Mohan Swaminathan	Narmitha Nageswaran
Narathanan Sriharan	Nasima Aktar	Nayab Butt
Neraja Thillairajah	Nicole D'Souza	Niki
Nishani Joseph	Niya Abdullahi	Noor Baig
Olaleye A.O.	Oniza Choudry	Padma Muthaly
Pavishanth Ratnakumar	Priya Iyer	Priyanga Yogalingam
Punya Bagga	Rahul Krishnakumar	Rajarupan Sampanthan
Raman	Ramraajh Sharvendiran	Ramyasugumar
Rijuta Menon	Rishi Suresh	Rizwan karmali
Robinson Jeyaratnam	Roopali Rokade	Roshannie Jeyachan
drakanthan	Gagandeep Singh	Zeba Tayabee
Saba Zehra	Sahlla	Sakina Rizvi
Salma Siddiqi	Samantha Allen	Sana Khan
Sanjay Pathmanathan	Sarah Chen	Seema Nadarajah

CASSA Annual General Meeting 2014

Shadrach	Shameela Chinoy	Shanaz Qureshi
Shashkia Rajasegaram	Shauna Khan	Shawn Xiangzhou
Shawn Nimalan	Shayani Joseph	Simin Rahman
Simran Nakra	Sitara Sharma	Siyam Shanthakumar
Smita Misra	Somya Grover	Srishti Sethi
Stephanie Kellowan	Sucy Kong	Surabhi Sethi
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Tasmmeen Imityaz	Tavina Sathish	Terri White
Theresa Haarhoff	Thibieya Arudpirayasam	Thivya Nagamuthu
Thivya Yogalingam	Thrillojaan Sritharan	Thusitha Suryakumar
Tiffany Timmins	Tiffany Kwok	Tony Tse
Urooj Shahzadi	Veda Popal	Vijitha Paramanathan
Vincent Huang	Vishvak Suthakar	Wendina Teng
Yalda Mehran	Yamini Meikandadevar	Suruthy Ragulan
Zohal Maqdoor	Zohra Ahsan	Suthakaran Ratnasingam
Ameel Mohammed	Saima. S.Hussain	Amina Saigol
Sharndeepp Natt	Rana Khan	Sayma Mairaj
Nayani Thiyagarajah	Aman Mansur	Vyshali Murukaiyah
Murukaiyah Vyshnavan	Gowri Shakthi	Rajni Dogra
Vikram Sharma	Hunyah Irfan	Anahat Punia
Jyoti Hallan	Madan Chauhan	Gupreet Singh Dipak
Tina Chu	Satvinder Singh	Gurlaljeet Singh
Mehran Sheikh	Amardeep Sarao	Gaya Nagendra
Tanzina Islam	Raji	Gowri Vishnu
Bamini Pathmanathan	Kulmeet Sandhu	Christian Valiente
Uzma Irfan	Keera	Muhammad I. Ur-Rehman
Erinne	Padma Kanagarja	Shameela Chinoy
Sumu Sathi	Caoutham	Sangeetha
Mirza Rahman	Nirogini Nalliah	Dylan Liang
Stephanie Frisina	Maham Fatima	Nahar Mirza
Sveta Kohli	Aman Mansur	Vyshali Murukaiyah
Murukaiyah Vyshnavan	Gowri Shakthi	Sunjay Mathuria
Pavishan	Adchu	Virujan
Gowrejan	Rabia	Saghana
Ajay Gupta	Atika	Dilpreet Kaur
Gurinder Kaur	Manjinder Jassal	Vikas Kalia
Shiamala	Rabiya	Hinna
Kajani Sasikumar	Gaya	Amardeep
Akshay Malhotra	Parminder Kaur	Gurvinder Gill
Samina Khan	Sumera Rasheed	Garinder Takhar
Janjot Bajwa	Bineet Bajwa	Kashfia Alam
Huma Naseri	Zulfia Zaher	

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City of Toronto: Community Safety Initiative
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Trillium Gift of Life Network

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 2013.

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.



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