

# 20 22

## ANNUAL REPORT



***Sukhmani Haven invests in the needs of Punjabi international students who are facing abuse in Canada. We aim to provide emotional, financial and housing support.***

# MESSAGE FROM CHAIR



**Baljit Sikand**  
**Chair of Sukhmani Haven**

We are very thankful for the service we have been able to provide because as much as we provided services to this community of international students, we also have learned a lot from them. Supporting a vulnerable community that has experienced trauma and hardship humbled us daily. It motivated us to learn more and expand our group to bring in more helping hands to support.

We also have immense gratitude for the ambassadors and volunteers who have dedicated their time and energy to support the management of the safe house and services.

*"It was an amazing experience with Sukhmani Haven. when I was in trouble no one was there for me to help, they helped me a lot in my difficult time with moral and financial support. Moreover she met with me once when I was feeling very down, so I am suggesting every international student who feels like in trouble they should contact Sukhmani Haven because they are always ready to help everyone."*

*-Anuradha Sharma*

Sukhmani Haven is deeply indebted to the tireless efforts of our Ambassadors and volunteers. Ambassadors are volunteers who are sponsored by Committee Chairs. They provide strategic advice and generally assist Sukhmani in achieving its goals. We would like to thank:

- Jaswinder S. Bhatti
- Upinder S. Dhanoa
- Prabhjeet Garewal
- Jannat Garewal
- Gurleen Gill
- Kulbir Gill
- Harjot Mangat
- Hardeep Mann
- Kiran Sawhney
- Gurjit Sidhu
- Sgt. Amarpreet Sohi
- Sarab Aujla
- Puneet Grewal
- Volly Grewal
- Pankaj Gupta
- Opdash Johal
- Ripika Kapoor
- Punreet Kaur
- Sarabjeet Kaur
- Deepak Monga
- Melvey Roy
- Inderveer Toor

# PURPOSE & VALUE

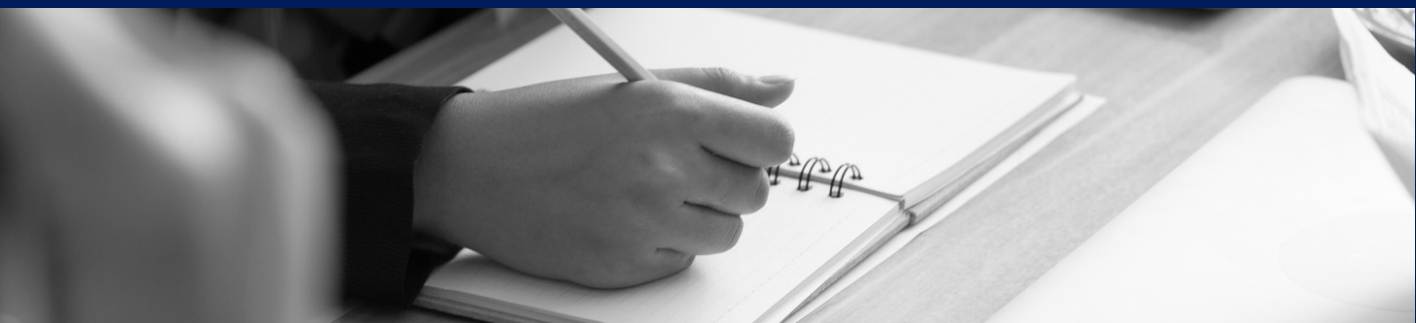
**Sukhmani Haven was formed to provide a safe space where individuals can live in dignity while pursuing their career paths. Our short term goal was to provide accommodation and social services to international students in crisis, especially 8 to 10 young Punjabi women. Their challenges became very real. Indeed Sukhmani has been very busy in its first year. What follows is a review of the trials and tribulations of our first year.**

We listened to Stakeholders by:

- Creating focus groups with students, community groups and politicians,
- Conducting TV and radio interviews,
- Attending outreach events with community colleges

From learning about the hardships of students, we:

- Produced informational brochures for international students,
- Distributed brochures at Nagar Kirtan, Gurdwaras and the Student Anti-Deportation Protests,
- Distributed Grocery Vouchers to students



*It is said that the hallmark of a civilized society is how well it treats its most vulnerable.*



# MEET THE TEAM



**Deepa Mattoo**

Deepa Mattoo is an award-winning lawyer and intersectional feminist whose work is rooted in equity and anti-oppressive and anti-racist practice. As the Executive Director of the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, Deepa provides leadership to the various departments and for the Clinic's intervention and advocacy work and has appeared before Parliamentary committees and UN civil society meetings on a wide range of social justice and human rights issues.



**Nav Mangat**

Nav is an entrepreneur who has led the growth of a successful insurance brokerage. Over the past 20 years, he has been a strong advocate for political participation as a vehicle for community activism. Nav has provided his leadership for advocacy and connects community groups, along with colleges, with international student concerns.



**Satwinder Gosal**

Sat is a seasoned commercial lawyer who has provided leadership to and advised many nonprofits. He served on the Peel Police Services Board, and was a chair of a social housing project. Sat has been a strong advocate for international students and was the first lawyer to take the Sukhmani Pledge: a Pledge he continues to champion.



**Pawanjeet Garewal**

Pawanjeet is a community leader and progressive thinker. Sikhi guides her daily intention and passion for selfless service. For over 30 years Pawanjeet has supported the settlement journey of hundreds of newcomers to Canada. She tends to the daily needs of the girls staying in the Haven, and mentors and guides the girls with love and compassion.



### **Prempaul Singh**

As a realtor, Prempaul has shown her dedication to families in her community for over sixteen years., Prempaul is grounded in her fundamental values of Sikhism. Her seva, commitment to equality, and her empathy for humanity are always at the forefront. Above all, Prempaul is passionate about access to justice and fairness concerning women. Her active engagement in Sukhmani Haven is a benefit to all.



### **Bhagwan Grewal**

Bhagwan has over 30 years of experience working in various senior management roles in IT, including 25 years at a financial services firm. He has also owned and managed commercial real estate for over 10 years. Among other volunteer positions, Bhagwan Grewal plays a crucial role in IT management of Sukhmani Haven as well as making sure all students receive information at outreach events.



### **Pam Hansra**

Pam is an entrepreneur-philanthropist and role model for women of South Asian origin. She is the first Indian Punjabi woman to venture into the financial lending industry. Over the years Pam has helped students at all points in their educational journey whether it be donating books, clothing, or teaching materials to primary schools in Punjab, India or providing scholarships to well-deserving kids to attend high-school and post-secondary education.



### **Dr Gurcharan Syan**

Dr. Syan is a passionate cardiologist, who has shown a lifelong commitment to community services. He has been a strong advocate for the health and wellbeing for international students moving to Canada. He has completed successful missions in India, educating communities about the services Sukhmani Haven can provide for their children.

# ADVOCACY

“We will advocate for:

- fair employment policies,
- protection from exploitation,
- government funding for social infrastructure,
- reduction of tuition fees, and
- reform of the roles of agents.”

**Sukhmani website**

We successfully presented to Members of Parliament. We emphasized the importance of students to have the ability to work greater than the 20 hour week limit. Significantly in October of 2022, the Government of Canada lifted this limit, announcing that effective November 15, 2022, international students will be able to work as much as they like as a temporary measure, until December 31, 2023. We shall continue to advocate to make this a permanent measure.

We educated students on asking for their rights in effective ways:

- By accessing lawyers in our *probono* network,
- Created a brochure for students to know their legal rights

We also connected with Peel Police Services to make them aware of challenges that students face.



# OPERATIONS

Sukhmani Haven has served over **123 clients** in crisis in the last year of operation commencing July 1, 2022. Our support included:

- emotional support,
- community counselling,
- financial support,
- referrals to other services, and
- ongoing community building for the students

This past year, **30** female students stayed with us at three different locations. The students' experiences were diverse, and the duration they stayed with us varied. In addition, we also supported four male students with their residential needs as well. We provided unique support like:

- payment of legal fees,
- a loan extended for paying college fees,
- supported a student in crisis to travel, and
- supported a student's entire family and children in a homelessness crisis.

Our support was significant and profound because we acted as a conduit in building community for them. We often support them in accessing the job market, connecting to employers and creating support networks. We were gratified that all the students felt they were part of the community and less isolated.





# 2022 SUMMARY

**86  
Grocery Gift  
Cards**

**150 Hr Probono  
Legal Services**

**Over 40  
Jobs Referrals**

**Over 300  
Hotline Calls**

**5 Children  
Supported**

*"My experience at Sukhmani Haven is amazing . They helped me out in my tough times and supported me emotionally as well provided basic amenities when I was in need of them . I would recommend this organisation to the international students who are in need of shelter."  
-Rajwinder Kaur.*





# OUR PROJECTS



## Sukhmani Pledge

Last year at the Inaugural Gala, we humbly asked lawyers with specialties in Criminal, Civil, Immigration, Employment and Landlord/Tenant matters to take the Sukhmani Pledge. This includes lawyers contributing 4 hours of pro bono legal services a month.

In 2023 we hope to have 20 lawyers to take the Sukhmani Haven Pledge

## Acknowledgement

**In 2022, 14 Lawyers and Paralegals took the Sukhmani Haven Pledge, we would like to thank:**

Bikram Bal  
Shawn Dandiwal  
Birdavinder Deol  
Harminder Dhillon  
Bickey Dhugga  
Sat Gosal  
Sarah Khan

Deepa Mattoo  
Gurbina Narula  
Sandev Purewal  
Naaila Sangrar  
Sonia Sidhu  
Purva Singh  
Jim Smith



*"I was given the contact to a well-known firm in Mississauga and a Senior partner took hold of the case who along with his team diligently provided advice to the students over the course of a month. The students advised that they are very happy with the service they received, and it was very helpful."*

- Gurcharan Singh, Singhahvi Luxury Homes

# OUR PROJECTS



## **Sukhmani Student Loans Interest-free**

Last year as we participated in outreach events, we acknowledged that we needed to do more than provide a safe haven for female international students. We understand the financial struggle many students face. We would like to create interest-free loans for students to receive financial aid in 2023.

In 2023, we allocated \$5000 to provide financial support to students. Students will be given a loan; repayable when they are able to get back on their feet.

Loans will be given for the following:

1. College Fees,
2. Food and Rent, and
3. Travel Support

## **Our Goal for 2024: \$15,000**

**We need your help:** Please sponsor a Student Loan in your name in 2024.

Terms: There would be no re-payment for the first two years and thereafter a re-payment schedule would be negotiated based on the needs of the student. The loans will provide important debt deferral and shall foster self-reliance.



*"My experience with Sukhmani Haven is very good, they all help me with financial support during my hard times when I have baby. They also help me emotionally. All team are very helpful so my experience is very good. They help me buy baby products. They help me for my tuition fees, because of them, right now, I am able to complete my study, thank you so much to all team."*

- Ramandeep Kaur

# OUR PROJECTS



## **Sukhmani Employment Recruit**

On New Year's Eve 2022, we hosted a Holiday Grocery Gift Program whereby we distributed Chalo Freshco Gift Cards to international students to ease the pressure of inflation. We were quick to learn that students were in need of jobs.

In 2022, we prioritized helping students find jobs and reached out to our networks to hire students.

## **Our Special Thanks to the Dhanoa Group**

The Sukhmani Haven Team would like to thank Mr. Dhanoa, who welcomed international students to apply to his company.

## **Our Goal for 2023: Practice and Spread Fair Treatment Sukhmani Haven Pledge for Employers**

We are humbly requesting **10 companies** to hire 1-5 international students per year.

We also ask that employers continuously carry on the conversation about promoting fair and ethical employment practices. We encourage employers to speak out against workplace exploitation of students and to advocate for fair wages.



# HOTLINE AND WEBSITE



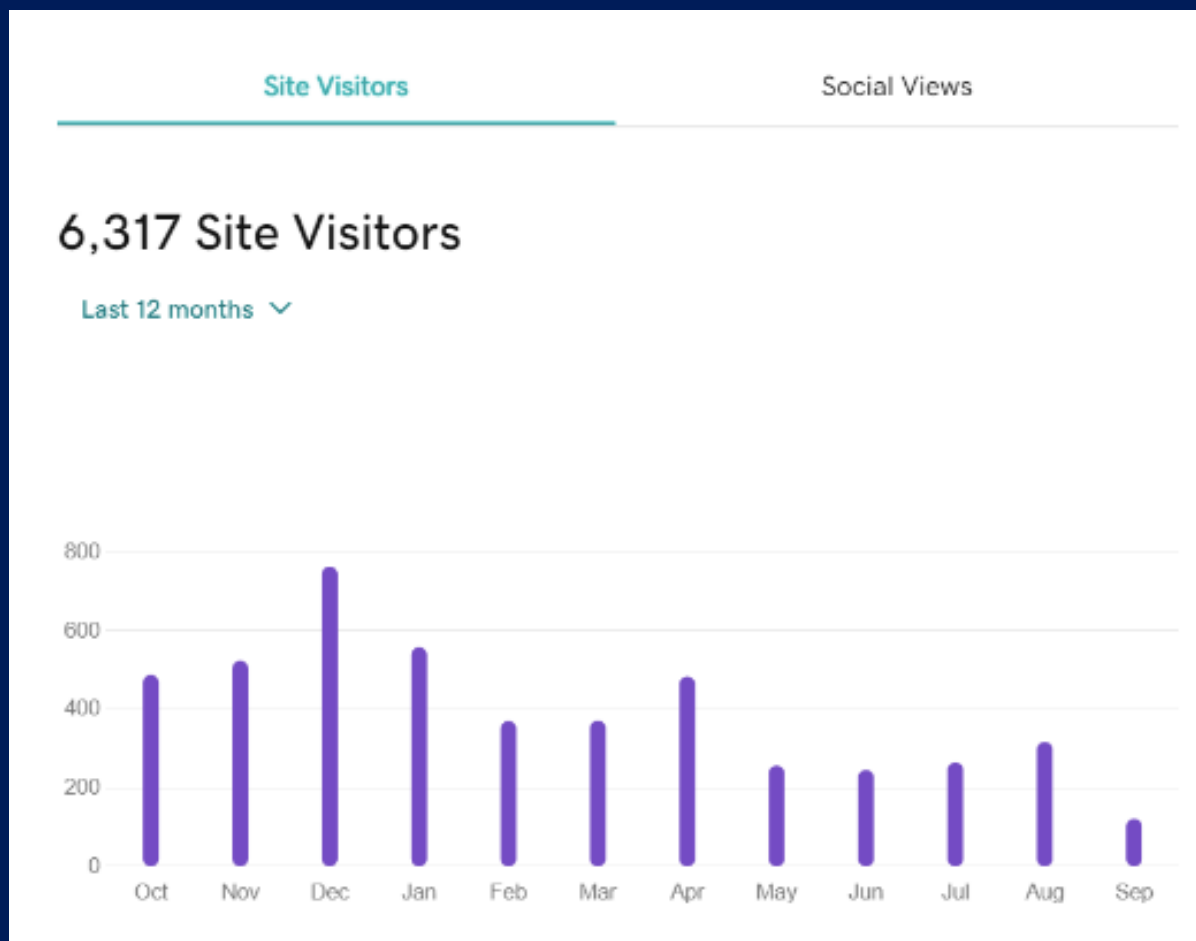
Immediately upon incorporation, Sukhmani created a website and established a 24/7 Hotline: **(289) 652-2488**. It is monitored by dedicated directors and other volunteers. Policies dealing with confidentiality matters were quickly enacted and implemented.

**Website visitors (Oct 2022–Sept 2023): 6,317**

**Social Views (Oct 2022–Sept 2023): 3,290**

**SukhmaniHaven.com – Website stats**

**(Last 12 months: October 2022 – September 2023)**



The results indicate a significant level of activity; which we hope to augment by more vigorous social media campaigns.

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2022-2023



**SUKHMANI HAVEN**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As at February 28, 2023**

<b>Assets</b>	
Current	
Cash	\$ 162,157
Prepaid expenses and deposits	3,290
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 165,447</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	
Current	
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 4,107
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>161,340</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 165,447</b>

**SUKHMANI HAVEN**  
**Statement of Revenues and Expenditures**  
**For the period from March 18, 2022 to February 28, 2023**

<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$ 261,437</b>
<b>Cost of auctioned items</b>	<b>21,679</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION MARGIN</b>	<b>239,758</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Occupancy cost	27,300
Gala expense	25,410
Advertising and promotion	8,312
Donation and donated items	7,285
Professional fees	3,500
Repairs and maintenance	2,760
Insurance	2,380
Program cost	1,300
Bank service charges	171
	<b>78,418</b>
<b>EXCESS OF OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 161,340</b>

# 2022 INAUGURAL GALA

The Sukhmani Haven of Hope Gala exceeded expectations in every way. Initially we aspired to attract 400 people on a weekday in an effort to raise \$100,000. Instead 550 people attended and thanks to the largesse of corporate sponsors we raised over \$180,000. We were regaled by dance from a Seniors Group; by an inspiring key note speech from Ramneet Brar- a student who has excelled; and a rousing fusion musical performance by Folks and Guy. Perhaps the highlight was an auction of wonderful art, ably led by evening Emcee Jannat Garewal.





# Sukhmani Haven

## Helping International Students

*"Dear Sukhmani Haven Team,*

*I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for the incredible assistance you provided to my brother during his challenging time in Canada. Your unwavering support in helping him obtain the necessary travel documents and facilitating his safe return to our home country, India, Punjab, has been nothing short of a lifesaver. It's heartwarming to know that there are organizations like yours dedicated to assisting individuals in their time of need.*

*My brother is now back with his family and loved ones, and we owe this reunion to your selfless efforts. Your kindness and compassion have left an indelible mark on our hearts, and we will forever be thankful for your generosity.*

*We will always hold your organization in high regard and support your noble mission in any way we can. Once again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being the guiding light in our darkest hour."*

*-Poonam Bassa , Ludhiana Punjab*



## LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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