



Reaching the Un-Reached

Women Empowerment Gala

July 25, 2025

Thank you for joining us this evening to
celebrate these amazing women.

1 - Shirley Wu



Shirley Wu is an award-winning beauty visionary and founder of The Beauty Concept by Shirley Wu and CEO Beauty University. With over 40 years in bridal, salon, and South Asian celebrity beauty, she blends luxury artistry with inner wellness.

Her signature approach empowers women to rise with confidence, skill, and soul.

Shirley is devoted to mentoring the next

generation of beauty leaders in her community.

2 - Yasmeen Bukhari



Community Activist, videographer,
770 TV & Radio, 20 years
experience

3- Shaista Ali



Shaista Ali is a visionary entrepreneur and Heuristic Happiness Coach with over 30 years of experience.

Creator of the Haptitude framework—Happiness + Attitude + Gratitude—she inspires purpose and transformation.

Her coaching blends strategic insight with empathy to unlock joy and lasting fulfillment.

Through her latest venture, Cookieenness, she shares happiness in its sweetest, most heartfelt form.

4 - Haleema Sadia



Haleema Sadia is a Canadian Broadcaster at TAG TV. She is working to connect Multicultural communities in Canadian Society

5 - Kokub Syed



Working in the medical field for 35 years. My passion is helping the needies working with so many different organizations as a volunteer I am a vice chairperson of Pakistani business association in GTA also a member of different organizations for orphan kids and abusive families internationally and in Canada.

6 - Ayesha Zafar



Ayesha Zafar is a dynamic community leader, accomplished media personality, and passionate advocate for social change. Professionally a Kinesiologist- a proud mother of three daughters, Ayesha has spent over two decades championing causes that uplift women, children, and marginalized communities.

Additionally armed with a postgraduate degree in Computer Science with a specialization in Logistics, Ayesha combines technical expertise with a heart for service. She has volunteered extensively with nonprofits, women's shelters, food banks, and youth programs—leading initiatives such as Ramadan toy drives, winter clothing campaigns, back-to-school supply drives, and food distribution for low-income families. Her frontline work with the Salvation Army Shelter and other charitable organizations reflects her deep commitment to social equity.

Recognized with the Government of Ontario's 20-Year Volunteer Service Award, Ayesha has also played a vital role in political mobilization—supporting community candidates, organizing voter awareness campaigns, and advocating for civic engagement in underserved groups.

In addition to her grassroots work, Ayesha is a stage artist and TV host, using her voice to represent South Asian perspectives on a leading multicultural media platform. Through this work, she amplifies stories of resilience, culture, and community across generations.

Whether behind the scenes or in front of the camera, Ayesha Zafar's mission remains clear: to empower, connect, and inspire through dedication and commitment.

7 - Nighat Buksh



Nighat immigrated to Canada 36 years ago, where she has since become a dedicated entrepreneur and an active member of the community. For the past 18 years, she has successfully run Nigi's Decor, a wedding décor business known for its creativity and commitment to excellence.

Her dedication to community service is equally longstanding. She has volunteered both independently and through local organizations, offering her time and energy to a wide range of causes. Early on, she served at Jamia Riyaz-ul-Jannah Masjid, supporting Ramadan programs and events during the mosque's formative years.

Seven years ago, she joined Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and took a leadership role in the women's wing, where she played a key part in mobilizing families and women in support of Imran Khan's vision. Her grassroots efforts helped strengthen community engagement and broaden political participation among the diaspora.

In addition to her political involvement, she has provided informal counselling to women and the elderly, and actively supported food distribution efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. She has volunteered at Al-Emaan Foundation Milaads and was involved in campaigning for Shaukat, the MPP for Brampton, when he ran for MP three years ago.

Her commitment to charitable work extends internationally. Seven years ago, she initiated a langar (community kitchen) in Pakistan, which continues to operate today with the support of overseas donors, including many from the Muslim community in Canada.

With a deep passion for service and empowerment, she continues to be a source of strength and inspiration within her community, both at home and abroad.

8 - Jean Rose Bugler



My name is Jean Rose Bugler. I am a member of the Red Pheasant Cree Nation of Saskatchewan. I live in Toronto, Ontario.

I am currently working on a few projects; a book and a documentary film.

I am passionate about bringing social awareness on the injustice and inequality of minority and vulnerable groups, primarily

children and the elderly.

On September 29, 2023 I was a keynote speaker at the National Police Convention of Canada on "Hate Crime" held in Toronto.

On May 7, 2023, I collaborated with the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and the Almalgamated Transit Union, Est.1899 (ATU) to produce a video on Residential Schools of Indigenous children.

In the video, I am being interviewed of what I experienced in those schools starting at the age of three years old. This video is available on the TTC website.

I was elected as President of the Board of Directors of Wandering Spirit School for Indigenous children. During my tenure there, I worked with the Ministry of Education of Ontario and succeeded in obtaining greater funding to ensure the future and stability of the school.

These are just a few of many accomplishments I worked tirelessly in order to build a better future.

It is my passion to help and love children as they are the ones who will build a better world for us.

That is my vision and hope for the future.

With love and grace, Jean Rose Bugler

9 - Janice Wheeler



Janice Wheeler is the President & CEO of [The Art of Management \(AMI\)](#), Canada's leading Practice Management Training and Consulting firm dedicated to helping Canadian healthcare professionals reach their full potential. They have consulted and trained more than 2,000 practice owners over the last 36 years. These include dentists, chiropractors, veterinarians, optometrists, denturists, chiropodists and physiotherapists.

As a [keynote speaker](#), Janice has enjoyed delivering seminars across Canada, England and the U.S. on a wide range of topics to many thousands of healthcare professionals at events and conventions, offering her valuable insights and wisdom to help them manage their practices more successfully. A dynamic speaker with an established reputation for enthusiastic and motivational presentations, Janice brings a wealth of Canadian practice know-how and time-tested experience that makes each presentation a truly memorable and worthwhile learning experience.

She is also an author who has written her own books called: [Practical Advice for Practice Owners](#) and [50 Ways to Lose a Patient](#). Her 700 articles on practice management appear in various professional magazines including the Canadian Chiropractor, Denturism Canada, Pulse, Dental Technology Today, [Oral Health](#), Practical Directions, and Denturo, as well as on her website.

10 - Debbie Guyatt



I love being a Scientology Volunteer Minister because I get to do what I came into this world to accomplish; genuine HELP.

In the Scientology Handbook are all the tools for life. Studying these, understanding them and applying them all around me in life makes life better for myself as well as all those in my environment.

People in general do love to help, many are still trying and others have long given up. As a Volunteer Minister I demonstrate our motto "Something Can Be Done About It".

Help is possible, there are definite ways to help and restore to yourself the confidence to help and restore to others the idea that help is possible.

During the pandemic I had several persons reach out to me from Pakistan and Bangladesh who wanted to help the citizens of their countries. I got them to do the online free tools for life courses and become Volunteer Ministers. They did this and 2 groups of volunteer ministers were formed up and now going into their communities to help in major disaster relief in their own countries. I also assisted in Turkey a couple years ago during that disaster.

My sense of worth to my fellow man has shot up higher than I could ever have expected by becoming a trained Scientology Volunteer Minister. I have confidence in my ability to help no matter the situation and this is my biggest security in life.

As a trained Scientology Volunteer Minister my life is fuller, has more value and is very adventurous. Whether it be emergency response after a traffic accident, assisting a patient in a hospital or after childbirth or assisting first responders,

I love to help people learn these skills, creating a network of people who can confident to 'Do Something About It', in any situation.

11 - Melanie Dickson-Smith



Melanie Dickson-Smith has been an active community volunteer and drug educator since 1987, providing factual drug education materials and promoting living a drug-free life in the Greater Toronto Area community since then. She's organized several hundred events originally with the Toronto Drug-Free Marshals and she's been the Director of the Toronto Chapter of the Foundation for a Drug-Free World since 2006.

Introducing the Truth About Drugs program to many communities in the Greater Toronto Area, she's organized distribution of over 100,000 drug education booklets. She's also made many community and police friends as a member of the Community Police Liaison Committee with Toronto Police Service 52 Division for 22 years. She was also the Co-Chair of the committee for 13 years.

Melanie works in sales at a computer software and hardware as her main occupation. She also teaches piano lessons and has a piano school with 5 other teachers working with her. She and her husband, Rev. Earl Smith, live in North York.

12 - Farhat Shujahat



I am a TV host on E-Awaaz TV and the chairperson for Bazme-Farhat. I am also a Poet, Writer, and Program Coordinator

13 - Shirley Hall



Shirley Hall has been an active volunteer and a drug educator since 2006. She has worked with both the Toronto Drug-Free Marshals and the Toronto Chapter of the Foundation For a Drug-Free World and has helped organize and has participated in several hundred events in the Greater Toronto Area and as far north as Manitoulin Island.

As a school teacher herself, Shirley finds it easy to talk to people, and especially the young people to help them understand the dangers of drugs and the value of living a drug-free life. She has personally handed out many thousands of The Truth About Drugs booklets and has delivered many drug education lectures and seminars to community groups, various church groups, schools and she was a regular lecturer over several years for a federally sponsored youth training program called Malvern Youth Community Employment Program.

She has also been a member of the Community Police Liason Committee with the Toronto Police Service 52 Division for 17 years.

Shirley works with her husband, Brian, in their family-owned masonry business in Toronto. She also teaches people about improving their health using herbs in a small health food shop in Scarborough.

14 - Aisha Shahid



Aisha Shahid: Blending Creativity with Purpose

Based in Mississauga, Ontario, Aisha Shahid is a multifaceted professional whose work bridges the worlds of event planning, décor, and community service. With a strong educational background that includes a Master of Arts (M.A.) and a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B), Aisha further enhanced her professional skill set by completing a Postgraduate Diploma in Event Management from the Academy of Learning Career College (AOLCC) in Canada.

Aisha has carved a niche for herself in the vibrant field of event planning, where her passion for creativity and meticulous attention to detail are evident in every project she undertakes. From intimate gatherings to large-scale celebrations, her designs are known for their elegance, cultural richness, and seamless execution.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Aisha is deeply committed to giving back to the community. She plays an active role in social work and currently serves as the Administrator of Rehmat with Lovely Friends—a community-driven initiative focused on fostering compassion, unity, and support through charitable activities and outreach programs.

With a balance of professionalism, creativity, and heart, Aisha Shahid continues to make a meaningful impact—both in her industry and in the lives of those around her.

15 - Dr. Naila Butt



Naila Butt is a physician with a Masters Degree in Public Health. She is the director and founding member of Bilal Foundation a not for profit NGO that provides health education and subsidized healthcare for poor and needy persons.

She has worked as the executive director at Social Services Network (SSN) for nearly six years. SSN is a not for profit community based

organization in Ontario, Canada with a vision to improve the health and quality of life of the multicultural diverse immigrant communities by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services. She has over 15 years of experience in program planning, implementation and evaluation; community development and community-based health care delivery.

She has international experience of working with international organizations like Save the Children, The Asia Foundation, UNFPA and WHO (World Health Organization). As a public health professional she has contributed to the development of health promotion, advocacy and public engagement strategies; worked with individuals/agencies to increase community-based activities; and coordinated with other medically based organizations, public, private and government agencies/departments for improving the quality and accessibility of reproductive health services. She has designed health promotion programs and educational material based on research findings and community needs, facilitated community awareness group sessions, workshops, and presentations to provide health awareness to improve community, maternal and child health. She has coordinated, supported and supervised community mobilization, behaviour change communication strategies and activities to promote an enabling environment for women's health and reproductive health practices, in particular for underserved and marginalized populations.

As the Chair of the Annual Impact of Family Violence- A South Asian Perspective Conference Committee, a five-year initiative across Ontario she has spoken extensively on local, national and international media as well as the Senate and Parliament Hill on the topic of honour based violence. She was on the Ontario Multicultural Health Research Advisory Committee and Newcomers Advisory Committee at the Central Local Health Integrated Network in Canada.

16 - Mokshi Virk



Mokshi is a proud Canadian, Founder Director of a non-profit organization- Indo Canadian Association (ICA), a Realtor, TV and Radio host, Community leader and a Philanthropist. Her passion lies in community service and making a difference in the lives of her fellow-citizens. Her accomplishments include:

- Founder-director of a non-profit that empowers women through programs and events
- Chairperson of MENTORx Canada that aims to

build cross-cultural bridges and promote women and youth empowerment.

- President of Central Canada India Business Council for Women Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WICCI)
- Appointed as Asia Regional Vice President of World Women Organization (WWO)

Mokshi is an expert in the areas of:

- Women empowerment
- Providing Leadership
- Support Charities and Non-profit organizations
- Building social connections
- Mentoring and helping new immigrants
- Youth Empowerment

She has been recognized with various Awards of Honour by Members of Parliament in Canada and other organizations worldwide for Community leadership and Women Empowerment initiatives.

17 - Krystle Marriott



Krystle is a passionate community leader who has devoted herself to empowering disenfranchised youth, including those living with disabilities and mental health challenges. Through her work with the **Digital Pipeline for Youth**, she has been instrumental in guiding these young individuals toward meaningful employment opportunities, breaking down barriers, and opening doors to brighter futures.

Beyond her contributions to workforce development, Krystle leads **therapeutic art workshops** that offer safe and nurturing spaces for healing and self-expression. Her commitment to fostering resilience and hope through creative outlets has provided solace and strength to many in our community.

She continues to be a beacon of light as she shares her story of overcoming her own severe mental health battle with Schizo-Affective Disorder others, drawing them into a place where they can have hope and optimism for the future.

18 - Iram Tanvir



Iram Tanvir is a proud single mother and an award-winning immigrant woman whose journey began by selling shoes and cooking biryani to support herself and her then-husband. Today, she is a Professor of Marketing, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship at Yorkville University, and the Founder of Iram Consulting. Her initiatives supporting women entrepreneurs include LaunchPad, a platform helping women turn ideas into thriving businesses. She serves on the Harvard Business Review Advisory Council and

formerly advised the Customer Experience Program at George Washington University. Her work continues to inspire and empower women, leaders, and learners across borders.

19 - Nathalea Miller



Nathalea Miller Edwards is a Registered nurse, Travel agent, and a Musician. She serves as a community ambassador and advocate serving the region of peel and the greater Toronto area. She is a peer support coordinator and phone support coordinator and trains Volunteers for persons with a disability that include the Canadian paraplegic association, Spinal cord injury association and the Canadian national institute for the blind association. She is part of the ministry of care and the loving-kindness ministry at her local church called The new life covenant centre. She is multifaceted and multi-talented serving on many boards and committees for activities and events. Currently she is writing her novels and a host for podcast interviews promoting Health advocacy and inspirational wellness to the ageing population and for persons with disabilities. Her passion and desire is to help those that need resources in supports for the surrounding communities.

20 - Sheeba Khan



Sheeba came to Canada in 1999 from England. Started teaching at Valley Park Public School and then selected as an ESL Professor at Seneca College Newnham Campus as an ESL Prof in 2003. In 2005 promoted as an EAP professor. This is my 26th year and still teaching and in various organizations. Also teaching ESL at no cost in summer vacations just as social service and mostly to new immigrants who need to learn the English language.

21 - Joana Gyimah



Joana Gyimah is the dedicated office administrator at the Ghanaian Canadian Association of Ontario (GCAO), where her unwavering commitment and perfectionist drive have made a significant impact. Her career has been marked by a strong focus on community service and engagement. Joana began her journey at the Jane and Finch Family Center (2006 to 2008), where she was involved in outreach and community work. She then worked at MicroSkills Community Development Center as a Job Developer/Employment Counsellor and Outreach Worker from 2008 to 2015. Following that, she served as a Community Engagement Worker at Action for Neighbourhood from 2015 to 2021. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Joana's dedication was evident in her involvement in various community services, including assisting seniors, supporting temporary residents, GCAO homework club, and organizing food bank drives. Her passion for connecting with people and her commitment to excellence have consistently surpassed expectations. Known for her positive attitude.

22 - Zainab Rasool



Volunteer crisis counsellor at the women centre in Sudbury
Multicultural association board of director
volunteer also as a translator
Milton Muslim association is a volunteer for the senior citizen ladies wing
Milad group in Milton is a volunteer for the past 15 to 17 years
Suffah academy parent volunteer for the past 4 years. Women's matters counselling group volunteer etc Sudbury Pakistani association Team member as well.

23 - Shazia Naheed



My name is Shazia Naheed and I am a committed community advocate with over fifteen years of service dedicated to empowering youth, fostering cross cultural understanding, and supporting underserved populations across the Greater Toronto Area.

Throughout my journey, I have contributed countless volunteer hours to the Peel Regional Police Service in Mississauga, supporting outreach initiatives that build trust between law enforcement and the diverse communities they serve. I have led and participated in numerous food drives across the GTA, worked closely with long term care facilities to provide companionship to the elderly, and actively promoted multiculturalism through community events, dialogue forums, and social integration programs.

With over eight years of involvement in the Royal Canadian Air Cadets Sponsoring Committee, I have mentored youth in leadership development, aviation studies, and character building, encouraging them to reach new heights in both personal and academic pursuits.

I have also proudly served as a community liaison for ISNA Canada, where I took part in providing ghusl services, the ritual washing and preparation of deceased individuals who had no family to carry out their final rites. This deeply spiritual and human act was more than a responsibility. It was an honour rooted in compassion and service, ensuring that every soul was given the dignity they deserved in their final moments.

Beyond these roles, I have coordinated women's empowerment circles, supported refugee resettlement initiatives, and organized mental health awareness workshops in collaboration with local organizations. My passion lies in building bridges across communities and ensuring that every individual, regardless of age, background, or circumstance, feels seen, supported, and uplifted.

In all that I do, I strive to uphold the values of compassion, collaboration, and civic responsibility.

24 - Gaya Nagendra



Gaya Nagendra is a proud Sri Lankan Tamil Canadian educator, advocate, and community leader with over 20 years of experience supporting newcomers, seniors, and vulnerable populations across Ontario. She is a full-time college instructor, currently teaching the Community Services Worker (CSW) and Developmental Services Worker (DSW) programs at two private career colleges in the Greater Toronto Area. Gaya brings a trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and student-

centred approach to her teaching, empowering adult learners—many of whom are newcomers themselves—with compassion, practical knowledge, and lived experience.

Gaya is the product of immigrant parents who moved to Canada through family sponsorship after surviving the 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Just five years old at the time, she credits her mother's courage and strength for helping their family survive one of the darkest chapters in Tamil history, while her father worked abroad. Canada offered them the chance to start over—and Gaya has devoted her life to giving back through education, advocacy, and community service.

She is the founder of the Peel Tamil Services Provider Network and serves as Director of Programs at Value Life Community & Humanitarian Services. Gaya proudly carries forward the legacy of her parents' sacrifice by building inclusive, equitable spaces where others—especially immigrants and marginalized individuals—can heal, thrive, and lead with dignity.

25 - Sadé Smith -



Born in Toronto, Ontario, Sadé Smith is the Canadian children's book author of *Julie and the Mango Tree* and *Granny's Kitchen* which was nominated for the Blue Spruce Award for the Forest of Reading 2023 and shortlisted for the 2023 Crystal Kite Award. She is of Jamaican descent and her books often involve food and recipes with colourful illustrations to capture the vibrancy and beauty of the Caribbean islands.

In addition to writing, Sadé is also a design technologist who practices the skilled trades of carpentry, flooring and home renovations. She holds a Bachelor of Interior Design (Hons.) Degree and an Advance Diploma in Architectural Technology. She also holds certificates in Creative Writing, Creative Book Publishing and a diploma in Business Marketing. Sadé loves the beach and enjoys fruits and when she is not writing, she is riding her motorcycle somewhere or off adventuring with her two boys and their dog Ziggy. She is very passionate about literature and she writes books of representation for young readers.

Granny's Kitchen is her debut children's picture book illustrated by Ken Daley. Her second book *Julie and the Mango Tree* illustrated by Sayada Ramdial has been selected for the CBC Books list of 40 Canadian kids books to read in spring 2023 and the Barnes & Noble's list of Most Anticipated Kids' Books for August 2023. It has also been selected for the 2025 TD Summer Reading Club.

26 - Chief Claire Sault



Claire Sault was elected Chief on December 9, 2023, and served on the Mississaugas of the Credit Council through a bi-election since October 22, 2022. She formerly worked as the CEO of Northwind Business Development, a company wholly owned by Caldwell First Nation. Prior, Chief Sault served as the CEO for Kettle & Stony Point First Nation Administration with a large staff. During the Covid pandemic, Ms. Sault worked in a consulting capacity and prior to that, served as

CEO of Noozhoo Nokiyan Limited Partnership owned by the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. She was the President of a non-profit in California called Divine Choices and Vice President and Director of Human Resources for a large public company and its subsidiary called First American Trust, in the USA.

She was born and raised on the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation with deep roots and strong ties to her mother's First Nation (Six Nations).

She has functioned in various consultative capacities including working with a First Nation in Saskatchewan using her experience within various Aboriginal agencies, including tourism, addictions treatment, First Nation governments and various service organizations.

As President of a non-profit and services company, from 2007 through 2013; she travelled extensively promoting the mission and cause of child sexual abuse prevention through public speaking engagements, social media, and TV commercials. She's also an author and co-author of various papers, teaching materials and a book called "The Lie That Binds". Ms. Sault received a master's degree in business administration from Simon Fraser University with her focus on Aboriginal Business and Leadership.

Her background provides a broad expertise in business and financial management and more importantly, an understanding of the Indigenous way of life. Ms. Sault is the second youngest of a large family and resides on the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

27 - Juliet Opoku



A Multifaceted Leader in Health and Community Advocacy.

Juliet Opoku, the CEO of Living A Balanced Life Inc., a health and wellness organization based in the Greater Toronto Area, is a seasoned professional with over 20 years of experience in the health sector. Her extensive experience, particularly in the realms of mental health, counselling psychology, and chronic illness prevention and management, instills confidence in her ability to provide effective solutions. As a dedicated mother of four, she integrates her personal insights into her professional practice, making her a relatable figure in the field.

Her academic credentials are extensive, holding a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) and qualifications as a Registered Nurse (RN). Additionally, she is recognized as a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) and a Certified Bariatric Educator (CBE), reflecting her commitment to specialized health education. Currently, Juliet is in the qualifying phase for a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology.

28 - Najma Yousfizai



Najma is a proud mother of 5, all pursuing multiple diverse careers. She is also the director of the family owned business and has a deep commitment to both her professional and personal life; playing a pivotal role in growing the business and raising the 5 children along side her supportive husband.

29 - Ana Hartley



Hi my name is Ana Hartley. I was born in Guatemala City and raised in Austin, Texas (USA).

With a Degree in International Business, I have always been driven by global perspectives and a deep commitment to leadership.

Moving to Canada presented its unique challenges, but my resilience and determination helped me rise above them.

I am presently working as the President of the Board of the Condominium in Malton, Ontario contributing to my society and playing the key role ensuring better life and support for the community.

I continue to seek new opportunities to grow, lead and serve the community I am a part of. This opportunity gives me tremendous pleasure and happiness to be a part of such a diverse cultures providing me with the opportunity to understand and serve.

30 - Attiya Siddiqui



Attiya Siddiqui is an Real Estate Agent serving the society arranging and holding fund raising for the betterment of seniors, diabetics and women betterment through her music programs. Husband and wife team are singers musicians par excellence.

Sahara Senior Services

Sahara Senior Services is a registered nonprofit organization formed by members of the south Asian community of the peel region of Ontario. We presently serve 350 members. Our main mission is to improve and help seniors, maintain their quality of life by providing a welcoming environment, that can reduce isolation, loneliness, and promotes interaction between seniors of all cultures.

31 - Manjit Dhuga



My Name is Manjit Dhuga. I am originally from Punjab, India where I spent the earlier years of my life in a family environment that was focused on caring and giving to the people around them. I completed Bachelors, and then moved to Canada after my marriage to my husband who was settled in Canada.

The life took on a new turn when I moved to Canada full of new challenges and adventures in the process of settling down in a new cultural and social environment. I went through skill development courses to upgrade myself, learning computers, learn to drive and communicate fluently in the new society. We both worked very hard to settle down in our new lives in Canada.

We were able to retire early to give back to our community that so generously catered for us and gave us recognition with open arms. We, my husband and myself started a social service program under the name of ' Sahara Senior Services ' in 2014 and have been running this successfully since then providing various informative sessions, seminars and awareness moots for the senior of the society to make them independent in their daily life routines. Also ensuring they get ample opportunities to mix up with people of community through picnics, get-to-gathers and entertainments programs that we host with the help of the community at large.

32 - Madhvi Nanda



I did my Senior Cambridge from Convent of Jesus & Mary, New Delhi and Bachelor of Arts (English Honours) from Delhi University.

I started my career from 1976-1990 in the Singapore High Commission in New Delhi as a Consular Assistant . I issued Singapore Passports and Visas and collected fees for this service.

From 1990-1998 – I worked for the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi as a Case Analyst. I analyzed all Family Class and Independent applications and approved or disapproved the applications. I did field visits to the villages and Universities regarding fraudulent documents.

I moved to Canada on 1st of January 1999 – 2018 and worked for the Immigration Department as a Case Analyst in the Federal and Provincial Government of Canada.

With 42 years of Working experience in the Immigration Department I have developed Superb client service orientation and superior analytic skills to work under pressure and meet high volume requirements within established timeframes, responding to fax, emails, telephone and in-person inquiries. Was Comfortable working with clients of different cultures and backgrounds. I have Advanced oral, written and interpersonal skills developed from working effectively with senior staff, colleagues, management and clients, both internally and externally.

After retirement I joined Sahara Senior Services as a volunteer (Treasurer-cum-Office Administrator). I also organize all the trips for our members and enjoy working with the Seniors and love to see a smile on their faces. I did learn in my entire working experience, whatever I do, I will do the best of my ability or will not do it.

33 - Colleen Anderson



Colleen Anderson is a licensed registered practical nurse and business owner with 25 years of experience in community and clinical healthcare and 22 years as a business owner, serving over 4000 clients as a certified advanced foot care nurse. Colleen specializes in providing comprehensive foot care services to seniors, individuals with diabetes, and clients with chronic conditions that require preventative foot care.

Colleen began her nursing career at the Toronto General Hospital where she developed a keen interest in wound care prevention and the role of proper foot care in maintaining overall health. She pursued specialized training in advanced foot care and continually updates her knowledge through ongoing professional development.

Her practice focusses on routine and advanced foot care, including nail trimming corn and callous reduction, fungal nail treatment, diabetic foot assessments, and client education. Known for her gentle touch and compassionate approach, Colleen works closely with clients and other healthcare providers to prevent complications and promote mobility and independence.

Colleen is committed to community based care and currently offers in-home foot care services to clients and retirement residences, long-term care and consultants for individuals at risk of foot related complications. She is a proud member of the college of nurses of Ontario and adheres to their standards in her practice. When she is not providing care, Colleen enjoys wellness advocacy, watching live plays with her daughters, and enjoying a barbeque with her mom, reading a good book working out at the gym and fundraising to provide school supplies for children in rural areas of Jamaica.

34 - Nadia Ansari



Born in Karachi, Pakistan; Nadia Ansari born currently lives in Canada. A compassionate and dedicated person committed to giving back to the society that has so tenderly and loving embraced her and provided her with opportunity to have better life and future for herself and family.

Through my experience in the healthcare and social service sectors

I started my life in Canada working as a Mortgage Advisor and Real Estate Agent. I Founded and successfully ran my construction company providing economical solutions in home remodelling to my clients. Later, I opened and successfully ran a spa services in Oakville.

Once stable in carrier, I entered supporting and helping in Indu's community as a volunteer social services worker providing my services for the women subjected to domestic and workplace abuse and violence by counselling them and making them financially and emotionally independent through becoming career ready and trained for job market.

Being a diploma holder, I also volunteered in remedial therapy for autistic and learning disability children utilizing my experience from working the field in Bahrain institute of special needs BISE as a mental health counsellor, providing emotional and psychological support for Alzheimer's patients and their families

I have also worked as a Registered Nurse in Psychiatry Department providing direct care to patients with mental health disorders.

I have also been awarded ' The Outstanding Woman Achievement Award ' and ' Mrs South Asia 2017 ' Award.

35 - Naila Zubair



My name is Naila Zubair, and I am a passionate volunteer with over twenty years of dedicated service in community development and women's empowerment. Throughout my journey, I have been actively involved in organizing educational workshops, leading mentoring programs, and conducting awareness campaigns aimed at uplifting and supporting women in my community. My work is focused on equipping women

with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to become self-reliant and empowered contributors to society. Whether through teaching, advocacy, or hands-on community engagement, I strive to create inclusive spaces where every woman's voice is heard, valued, and respected.

In Pakistan, I had the privilege of working with UNESCO, UNFPA, and UNICEF as a Lead Trainer for community development programs, where I played a key role in raising awareness and improving lifestyles through education and capacity-building initiatives.

Additionally, I served as the General Secretary of the Association of Administrators, where I evaluated institutional activities and organized professional development seminars to enhance leadership and management skills within the education sector.

36 - Shela Minhas



Shela Minhas has been serving the community for over 34 years operating Montessori Schools in Peel and Halton region. She is on the board of Cilld Development Resource Connection and was nominated for the RBC Women of Influence Award.



Our mission is to empower individuals through education, advocacy, and access to essential resources, while preserving cultural identity, promoting equity, and fostering self-reliance. At the heart of our work is a commitment to justice, compassion, and cultural integrity.