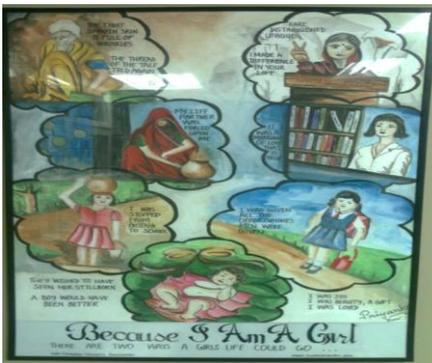


Indo Canadian Women's Association

Serving immigrants since 1984

Annual Report 2012



GIRL TALK: A PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

WHAT	WHO	WHERE
The Girl Talk program is a social and educational leadership pilot program that aims to build the self-esteem of young women ages 15-21. An honorarium and a volunteer certificate will be given for your time.	We are looking for girls between these ages from the South Asian and Middle Eastern communities to help us pilot the project and provide valuable feedback.	Indo Canadian Women's Association 9342-34 Ave To register: icwadmonton@yahoo.ca 780-960-8477 For more info on workshop dates: go to icwadmonton.com

Indo Canadian Women's Association | Status of Women Canada | Condition Féminine Canada



JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SEE IT DOESN'T MEAN IT'S NOT THERE

GIRLS ARE 4 TIMES AS LIKELY AS BOYS TO BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY FAMILY MEMBERS

#speakup
Family Violence Information Line: 310-1818
Indo Canadian Women's Association



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Highlights of 2012

- Indo Canadian Women's Association received the City of Edmonton's Human Rights Award. The ceremony was held on December 10th, 2012 and Premier Alison Redford was the keynote speaker at the event.
- Mrs Gita Das, Vice President was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in February 2013.
- Jagjeet Bhardwaj, Treasurer, was awarded the Inspiration Award which recognizes leadership in family violence prevention.
- Dr Zohra Husaini, Director at ICWA, will be receiving Minister's Senior's Service Award from the Province of Alberta on June 5th, 2013
- On February 15, 2013 ICWA held a memorial gathering for "Damini", who was brutally raped in New Delhi, India. The gathering was held to condemn this heinous crime and show solidarity against women's abuse.
- Indo Canadian Women's Association celebrated International Women's Day on March 29th with Rachel Notley as the guest speaker.
- Honour based violence project, 'Elimination of Harmful Cultural Practices', ended in March 2013. A new funding announcement was made by the Federal government for ICWA to continue this necessary work. The new project will aim to establish partnerships and collaborate with other community organizations to come up with a coordinated effort to end honour based crime. The new project began in March 2013 and will be completed in March 2015.
- The special initiative for seniors, 'New Horizons for Seniors', worked towards supporting social participation and inclusion of seniors in the community. Through this project seniors were engaged in various activities like art therapy sessions, volunteer training sessions, health information sessions and health camp. The project ended in April 2013.
- The Breast Health education project funded by Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation is continuing. The ICWA is targeting hard to reach south Asian women to create awareness about early detection of breast cancer. The project has successfully increased awareness about breast cancer. We have increased knowledge of our clients about breast cancer procedures and screening.
- In 2011-12, funds were raised for Daughter's Day celebration in collaboration with The International Association of Citizens for a Civil Society. September 1, 2012 was proclaimed by the City of Edmonton as Daughter's Day and the first celebrations were held at the City hall, Edmonton.

- The ICWA’s Settlement Services Program funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada ended with a very successful rate of exceeding number of new clients and settlement services. ICWA has gained recognition among all immigrant communities for its dedication in providing settlement services and support to domestic violence victims.
- ICWA support groups are continuing to meet throughout the year and assisting seniors, women and youth in integrating in Canadian life. These support groups serve as a platform for everyone to discuss their problems and make the transition easier.
- ICWA has entered into partnership with the Canadian Council of Muslim Women Edmonton Chapters’ Project “Making Change: leadership and Empowerment for Young Girls” supported by Status of Women Canada. The project will engage young girls in a meaningful dialogue that will help them identify the barriers and strategies for taking up leadership roles.

About ICWA

The Indo Canadian Women's Association has been supporting new immigrants and advocating for women's rights for the past 29 years. As an organization ICWA has unwaveringly ensured integration and settlement of newcomers in Canada. Our approach to prevent violence against women is by raising the status of women through dialogue and community mobilization. An attitude shift about the way women are portrayed and treated is essential. We believe small shifts in attitudes about women can create a large overall impact in raising the status of women. That is why we are proud to say, "ICWA has been changing attitudes since 1984!"

Vision

"All new Canadians will achieve a sense of fulfillment and integrate into Canadian culture and society. Everyone will have equal opportunity to participate fully in Canadian society."

Mission

Indo Canadian Women's Association works to encourage and promote participation by the new Canadians in social, economic and political life in Canada.

Values

"Indo Canadian Women's Association is dedicated to having equality, opportunity and protection of rights for everyone."

Structure and Governance

Indo Canadian Women's Association has been run by a volunteer board since its establishment. There are 9 elected Board members and 4 members at large. The Board works in three standing committees: Personnel Committee, Finance Committee and Program & Project committee.

These committees' members brief and orient new committee members review the policy and action plans and carry on the current committee work as need arises. The

Board holds 6-8 meetings in a year and spends approximately 300 hours on administrative issues. The organization has no Executive Director due to lack of funds.



Integration & Settlement Assistance Program

The fiscal year 2012-2013 was very encouraging and extremely productive in settlement in integration services. In the last quarter a new service was added to the settlement portfolio, which was tax coaching for new comers. The Counsellors had to guide newcomers about their tax responsibilities and management.

At least 45 taxes were filed by the ICWA counsellors. The clients were familiarised with the taxation system and educated on handling their returns independently for the upcoming year. They were also briefed on preparing for the tax season and managing their paperwork during the year.

The outreach workers continued to play their vital role in reaching out to clients. Outreach workers provided initial information and referred them to the Settlement Counsellors for the services. More than 20 clients were unable to come in to the center and were out of bounds for outreach workers service delivery. The clients then called in and received services over the phone. Despite hectic schedules, the counsellors and outreach workers responded to such queries and referred them to the right places, interpreted for them and provided as much service as they could.

The last quarter included a new clientele category in ISAP eligible clients. The new category was seniors in an abusive environment or facing financial challenges. The ICWA team provided services to these clients and also delivered an information session. This information session was coordinated by the Outreach workers who collected a group from the community. The settlement counsellors then provided information to this group regarding senior benefits, rights to work, financial management and senior abuse.

The ICWA's Settlement Services Program funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada ended with a very successful rate of exceeding number of new clients and settlement services. ICWA has gained recognition among all immigrant communities for its dedication in providing settlement services and support to domestic violence victims.

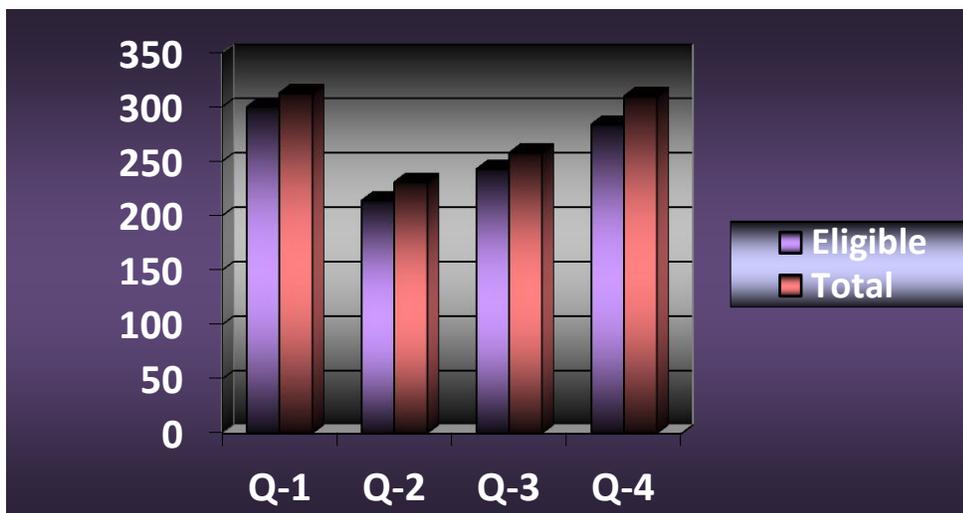
Settlement Services had estimated 660 new client intake and services but ICWA provided services to 1044 eligible clients and 1112 clients in total (eligible and ineligible) for the year 2012-2013

The following table shows the clientele breakdown for the 2012-2013 fiscal year:

ICWA Settlement Services Achievement in 2012-2013:

ISAP Clients	Q-1	Q-2	Q-3	Q-4	Total
ISAP Eligible Clients	300	214	243	284	1044
New Clients		183	184	198	
Returning Clients		31	59	86	
Non- ISAP Eligible clients (Canadian Citizens with two or more barriers)	11	8	6	19	
ISAP Eligible clients w/ incomplete intake forms	2	9	9	7	
Total Number of Clients	313	231	258	310	1112

ICWA Settlement Counsellors and Outreach Staff served 1044 eligible clients and a total of 1112 clients in 2012-2013.



Violence prevention project

Indo Canadian Women's Association began working on a two year project in 2011 titled, "*Elimination of Harmful Cultural Practices: A community centered approach to education and action.*" The project aimed to reduce violence against women and girls by mobilizing communities to have zero tolerance for harmful cultural practices. The project was completed in March 2013 and was successful in achieving its objectives.

In the name of Honour Conference:

A major accomplishment of the project was a two day conference on honour based violence. The conference took place on June 5th and 6th, 2012 at Grant McEwan University. The purpose was to raise awareness of legal community and the justice system overall (i.e. lawyers, judges, justice department executives and other legal professionals) about the incidence of honour crimes in ethnic communities in Canada. The focus of the conference was to educate on the issue for the legal sector in Edmonton and provide recommendations to deal with it in an effective manner.

On June 5th Dr. Shahrzad Mojab was the first speaker. She is a Professor of Adult Education and Counseling at the University of Toronto. She was the expert witness in the recent Shafia case in Kingston. Second speaker was Mrs. Anis Haroon, who is the

Chair of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Pakistan.



Above: Dr Shahrzad Mojab



Above: Anis Haroon

On June 6th, we had four major themes:

- addressing honour based violence,
- how can we prevent honour based violence in our own community and
- Assisting various professions and occupations to identify and stop abuse of women based on cultural practices.

The conference was intended for professionals, practitioners and students involved in the areas of justice, law, enforcement, social and settlement services, health education, faith organizations, victim advocates, and policy and research professionals. Our conference brought together 200 people working in the area. Conference Proceedings have been compiled and are available at the ICWA office.

Engaging faith based leaders:

In 2012-13 various milestones of the project were achieved. In 2011 ICWA in collaboration with Inter Faith Centre had initiated a process of consultations with faith leaders. The leaders were engaged as it was observed that victims of abuse often turn to religious and spiritual leaders for guidance in times of distress. Partial views of women have been used to justify violence and abuse towards women, thus religious leaders were called at one platform to suggest concrete steps that faith leaders can take to prevent this abuse. After the consultations, one on one interviews were conducted with the faith leaders in 2012. The leaders were asked 'What formative steps can faith – based organizations take, to prevent violence against women and to mobilize the wider community to reject misinterpretations and traditions that compromise the safety of girls and women?'. The information collected was summarized and some of the data was used, with permission from the faith leaders, in a document that can be referred to as a 'code of conduct' about harmful cultural practices and faith based responses. The faith leaders were happy to have the positive messages

from their faiths to be carried out through material that was distributed to the general public.

Skit Presentations:

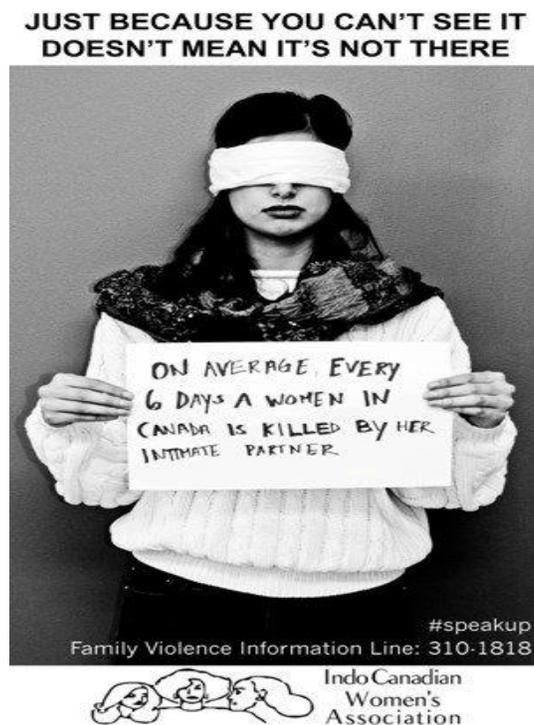
Two skits were developed for this project that were used as a tool to initiate dialogue about honour based violence. ICWA's youth group performed these on International Women's Day celebration and at University of Alberta Global Education event. Both the skits highlighted the various forms of abuse that women and young girls face. The skits highlighted the importance of educating and investing in girls so that they are better able to contribute to society. A message was also delivered to general community that we all need to collectively acknowledge the abuse and raise our voice against it.

Women's Tea Party:

In order to engage the women in our work, a women's focus group was organized in the form of a tea party where Avon cosmetics were also being sold. The purpose of the discussion was to discuss the cultural conflicts that arise in immigrant houses about raising girls. The women were shown video clips from popular hindi and Pakistani soaps and films depicting specific conflict situations. The women were then asked their views of avoiding such situations or if any of them had faced similar problems in their household. The women were then asked questions that ICWA youth group had prepared about intergenerational conflicts. These were questions that youth were scared to talk about in front of their parents for example, staying out late, wearing a hijab or not or having male friends.

Photo Campaign:

A gender based violence photo campaign was launched under this project. Young girls were engaged in this activity who wanted to do something around women's rights. This campaign aligned with 16 days of activism against gender violence. The photos showed statistics about violence against women. The group of young girls wanted to defy cultural stereotypes of young South Asian women being submissive and generally in the background of things. This campaign allowed girls to be a part of an activism campaign and speak out against violence.



Above: An image from the photo campaign

New Initiative- Working Together to reduce honour based violence

A new funding announcement has been made by the Federal government for ICWA to continue this necessary work. The new project will aim to establish partnerships and collaborate with other community organizations to come up with a coordinated effort to end honour based crime. The new project has begun in April 2013 and will be completed in March 2015

New Initiative- Making Change: leadership and Empowerment for Young Girls

ICWA has entered into partnership with the Canadian Council of Muslim Women Edmonton Chapters' Project "Making Change: leadership and Empowerment for Young Girls" supported by Status of Women Canada

As there is serious underrepresentation of women in Canadian political, civic and community life leadership, this projects aims to promote leadership among young girls of South Asian and Middle Eastern heritage. These communities are chosen because the representation of women from these communities in Canadian public life is dismal. For example, statistics show that in the House of Commons of the Canadian Parliament, these women form only 1% of total women MPs.

The project will engage young girls in a meaningful dialogue that will help them identify the barriers and strategies for taking up leadership roles.

The specific objectives of the project are to:

- Expand their understanding of these issues
- Encourage them to participate in Canada's civic-political-cultural life
- Equip them with skills to develop strategies to overcome them, and
- Empower them to respond to their marginal presence in the public life.

The project began in December 2012 and is an 18 month initiative

Prompting leadership through Five Es

Engage girls in a meaningful dialogue to help them identify barriers in taking up leadership roles and explore their needs to overcome them

Encourage them to participate in Canada's civic- political- community life

Expand their understanding of these issues

Equip them with skills to develop strategies to overcome them, and

Empower them to respond to their marginal presence in the public life

Did You Know?

The number of female MPs in the House of Commons to represent 17.2m women in Canada. **Sample this.**

▶ Females: 50.4%; Males: 49.6%

▶ Female MPs: 24%; Male MPs: 76%

To represent the women that constitute more than half of the population in Canada, **Why** is the

% of Female MPs < % of Male MPs
(24%) (76%)

New Horizons for seniors

In 2012, ICWA initiated a special project for seniors to engage them in social activities and increase volunteerism in an effort to decrease their isolation. These seniors came to Canada leaving behind their friends, relatives and familiar surroundings. Very often they are expected to take care of their grandchildren and their children's houses. These seniors are dependent on their children for everything including activities such as doctor's visits, outdoor activity or even socialising. As a result these seniors often feel isolated and depressed.



New Horizons for seniors' project aimed to end this isolation of the seniors. There were various activities and exercises planned for seniors that enhanced their social inclusion and participation. They were taken on field trips and a health camp. Art therapy workshops were organized to uplift their moods and release their tensions. A local artist engaged them in various forms of art

that taught them how to express their feelings and elevated their mental health. Seniors were also encouraged to volunteer by conducting volunteer training sessions with them. In these sessions the benefits of volunteering were discussed. They were given ideas about where they can volunteer and were connected with other organizations where they could volunteer. Health information sessions were organized to help the seniors to better manage their health conditions. They were made aware of healthy eating habits, exercises they can do and activities they should engage in considering their health conditions.



At the beginning of the project there were few seniors engaged with the project. But soon after the first activity, groups of seniors joined as news spread about the project. Seniors were enthusiastic as they met new people and developed interest in project work. They saw these opportunities as means for them to be socially active. The success of

the project was evident as more and more seniors joined in. Large number of seniors volunteered in various areas and mentored other seniors.

The project greatly promoted volunteerism as approximately 11 people volunteered to plan, organize and run the events of the project. This encouraged the senior participants' as

well to engage in volunteer activities in their community. The project targeted groups from low income families, members of visible minority, persons with disabilities, ethno cultural groups and socially or geographically isolated men or women. These targets were in accordance with the project objectives to support inclusion of isolated low income seniors.

Breast cancer awareness project

For past several years, ICWA has been working diligently to educate south Asian women on Breast Health. This initiative is funded by the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and targets women who may face various barriers in accessing the health services. The project's primary aim is to educate South Asian immigrant women on breast health issues and early detection methods of breast cancer.

The women are contacted at community functions, private gatherings, festivals, celebrations, religious gatherings and shopping malls. They are educated on breast health issues in their ethnic languages. Women are engaged in various educational activities. Some of the examples are:

- One-on-one conversations with women in various settings such as home, personal phone calls, Temples, Mosques, Gurdwaras and community centers.
- Holding workshops or informal gatherings in the home or community centers
- Approaching different associations and organizations in the community and doing displays and presentations
- Use of ethnic media to educate women on breast health issues, such as ethnic radio, community newspapers, flyers and posters in Urdu Hindi, Punjabi, Gujrati and other South Asian languages
- Use of internet for those who can access websites and email.

Project Statistics:

In this past year, the Breast health team exceeded its projected number of client outreach. It was proposed that 2000 clients would be seen in the year and 2000 resource materials will be distributed. The following table summarises the statistics of the project:

April 2012 – March 31, 2013

Total no. of Clients	2708
Resources distributed	2869
Breast Screenings done	144

Early detection of breast cancer through mammography has been determined to be an effective strategy in bringing successful treatment that could mean better chances among patients for survival. South Asian women were explained the benefits of breast screening and encouraged to get it done. Our original target was 100 to 120 women, but we exceeded by screening 144 women. This showed that south Asian women had increased awareness about the benefits of early screening as they realised that it will increase chances of survival. It also meant that project objectives were being met by increasing screening tests which can eventually ensure a future without breast cancer.

Challenges & Barriers:

At the beginning of the project, it was observed that the south Asian women had little knowledge about the disease. At

many instances harmful cultural beliefs and practices prevented the women from accessing service or even gaining knowledge. To overcome this obstacle, ICWA designed culturally appropriate techniques and activities to engage these women. The awareness workshops and informal gatherings conducted in ethnic languages such as Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi to overcome the language barrier. The women had increased trust and acceptance level as information was delivered by their own community and within their own community boundaries. During these workshops the women are also briefed by experts about healthy lifestyle and exercises. They were shown yoga videos and a coach taught them various exercises. During 2011-2012 29 workshops and 56 informal gatherings were organized for education and awareness.

Engaging Women:

A support group has been established with the help of breast cancer survivors. This

support group helps the newly diagnosed patients through their treatment and recovery. The support does one on one patient visits, provides transportation and interpretation as needed, any consultation services and also give moral support throughout the treatment.

The breast health project also made efforts to connect health professionals with south Asian women. Health professionals, policy makers and community groups have attended the workshops to better understand the health concerns of south Asian women. The policy makers are also better equipped to design policy in accordance with cultural and religious beliefs. The health professionals also brief the community women about latest breast health developments and issues.

Overall, the project has been very successful in increasing the knowledge of south Asian women about breast cancer. They are able to overcome their various barriers and gain access to health services. The project has also been able to promote leadership and volunteerism among the women by creating support groups that assist newly diagnosed patient.



Breast Health Educator Kishwar Ghani conducting a workshop

Community Development

Outreach for Newcomers

ICWA aims to help immigrant women and men to integrate into Canadian society. Our outreach workers play a vital role in helping immigrant women and men to integrate into the Canadian society. They assist newcomers in connecting them with educational, legal, health and social services through appropriate referral and counselling. Outreach workers help seniors overcome the language barriers by providing support during difficult times. The outreach worker saw about 120 clients in 2012-13.

Skill building and adult education-ECALA Funded Programs

Conversational English and Resiliency Skills for seniors

The class was specially designed keeping in mind the needs of seniors. Due to the language barrier, seniors often feel lonely, bored and depressed as they cannot involve themselves in social activities on their own. In this class, seniors learn how to access various services, how to speak to people at these service provider locations and how to communicate what they need. It also helps seniors build strong language skills that they can use in their daily activities. The instructor put in 5 extra hours which were compensated by ICWA.

ESL Functional Literacy

The purpose of our ESL Functional Literacy Class is to introduce English to non-English speaking immigrants and bring them to a level where they can understand and communicate at a basic level. The class identifies the literary barriers that newcomers face because of language in Canada. The class is in high demand because of the accessible location and the practical teaching method used to teach the course.

Citizenship preparation for new Canadians:

Citizenship preparation class prepares newcomers who do not have strong English language skills, for their citizenship exam. It is essential for newcomers to fully understand their rights, responsibilities and values of being a Canadian. This class remains in high demand and has students from various communities. The instructor spends considerable time preparing study packages which include questions and important dates. With this study material, students have found it much easier to prepare for the exam.

The Citizenship class has 94 % success rate. Many students who succeeded in their citizenship exam after the preparation class came to ICWA office to thank the instructor for all the hard work he put in. These

students then referred more newcomers to our classes because they were highly satisfied with the instructor and his teaching methodology.

Computer Literacy

The classes are offered in two parts: Basic and Intermediate. The computer classes are very popular among adult immigrants because they realize having computer skills enhances their employability. With

computer skills the mature learners have the confidence to apply for higher positions and advance their career. These skills enable them to integrate into the Canadian work place with more ease and can raise their economic status. The adult or seniors who take this class feel less dependent on their children as they can access information or communicate with their friends via email on their own.

ICWA gratefully acknowledges the funding of Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association for successfully running these classes.

Programs for youth, women and seniors- Casino Funded Programs

Youth group

'I feel I am going through a culture clash. It's like living in two different worlds.' This is something we hear from youth repeatedly. Youth from immigrant families are trying to integrate into Canadian society and also maintain their traditional values and cultures as expected by the parents. At the same time they are transitioning from childhood to adulthood and struggle with identity, gender roles and personal issues. The purpose of the youth program at ICWA is to provide these young immigrants a platform where they can discuss various problems and issues, find solutions and engage in various activities.

The youth have been engaged in community theatre to raise awareness of girl's rights abuses. Community theatre has been a very interesting activity for the youth. They had many suggestions about the script, acting and presenting the script and were very enthusiastic about raising awareness on social issues. They have also attended workshops with the Edmonton Police Service, where the police were trying to build a deeper relationship of mutual trust with youth.



Above: Youth during a skit performance

Women's Group:

The Women's resiliency program aims to help newly arrived women to settle down in a new country and provide social and cultural support to ease their transition. The group facilitated by Shazia Ambreen meets once every month to attend workshops on various topics like financial planning, running a small business from home, finding employment, and understanding of their rights in Canada.

This provides the women with an opportunity to meet other immigrants who may be going through a similar situation or others who have been successfully dealt with them. Through workshops and activities of the group the women are encouraged, hopeful and determined to integrate well into the new country.



Above: Women's group during the session

Senior's Program:

Indo Canadian Women's Association (ICWA) has been helping ethnic and new immigrant seniors for last 29 years to build a new life in Canada. Seniors are often house bound due to language barriers and inability to move about on their own. Consequently majority of them remain isolated during long winter period and feel bored, sad and depressed. They never learn any winter sports and have little desire to go for a walk or any exercise. Community based supportive counselling helps to alleviate these problems.

Senior's group facilitated by Rajbir Kharod remains a renowned gathering for the seniors. Each meeting is attended by 15-20 men who discuss various issues. Attendees are informed about things such as the recreational activities in which they can engage and the Alberta Seniors Benefit that they can access. Often the participants want to talk about other topics and the facilitators arrange for these sessions accordingly.

ICWA is thankful to Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission for their continuous support in running these programs.

Special events & fundraiser

Daughter's Day proclamation

In 2011 ICWA in partnership with International Association of Citizens for Civil society started raising funds for a special celebration that was to be called Daughter's Day. The mission of Daughters Day is for the elimination of gender inequality, violence, and discrimination against girls and women at home, at school, in the workplace, and on the street. A meeting of 47 representatives from various organizations was held on September 21, 2011 at City Hall to plan the event. It was decided to have an annual celebration of Daughter's Day on a Saturday in the first week of September.

The first Daughter's Day was celebrated on September 1st, 2012 at City Hall. Various community members, government officials, youth women and seniors gathered to celebrate the successes of women. The celebration included education about the role of daughters in building a civil society and a message to families to respect human rights of girls and women, and to abhor violence against them. There were speakers from a variety of political affiliations and organizations, music, and entertainment.

The first Daughters of the year awards were given out on this celebration to recognize the achievements and success of some of the women. ICWA's youth group presented a skit depicting how a girl's life can completely alter if she is invested in. With love, care and education girls can lead a prosperous and fulfilling life. They can contribute as much to the society as boys are thought to do.

Thanks to the efforts of Daughter's Day team, September 1st, 2012 was proclaimed as the Daughter's Day by Mayor Mandel on behalf of the City of Edmonton. Planning for 2013 Daughter's Day celebrations are currently underway.



ICWA's youth group at the Daughter's Day celebration



Daughter's Day team at City Hall

International Women's Day Celebration 2013

Every year, Indo Canadian Women's Association celebrates the International Women's Day to celebrate accomplishments of women, highlight the barriers still being faced and to discuss ways of overcoming these obstacles. Likewise, in March 2013 ICWA celebrated International Women's Day with MLA Rachel Notley as the keynote speaker.

Ms. Notley spoke about the challenges and barriers faced by women in social and political arena. She highlighted what had been achieved in this regard and what further needs to be done.

Also present at the celebration was MLA Naresh Bhardwaj who brought greetings on behalf of the provincial government. Councillor Amarjeet Sohi brought greeting from the City of Edmonton. MLA Raj Sherman also attended the occasion.

ICWA President, Miriam Thomas spoke to the audience about importance of celebrating the International Women's day. She highlighted some of the heinous crimes that are still committed against women, and the need for community to raise their voices against the abuse.

The audience also saw an Indian Classical Dance performance by Marla Thomas, a pharmacy student who loves classical Indian dance. She has received her training at the Usha Kala Niketan dance school. The performance was choreographed by Mrs Usha Gupta, director of the Usha Kala Niketan.

ICWA's youth group presented a skit on this occasion that stressed the need for everyone to open their eyes and acknowledge that women's abuse is highly prevalent. ICWA has been using skit presentations to deliver social messages and initiate dialogue about injustices in our community.

The presentation by youth group was a compilation of messages. The presentation emphasized that instead of blindly following the old age customs and traditions, we should have the courage to question them. It also encouraged the masses to think about their individual responses to violence against women and the possibility of redefining our role in reducing harm to women. The skit was written and directed by Mahvish Parvez who works as a Project & Program Coordinator at ICWA.



Rachel Notley delivering her Keynote Address



MLA Naresh Bhardwaj



Councillor Amarjeet Sohi

Damini Memorial Gathering

On December 16, 2012, a young paramedic student was brutally raped and beaten on a New Delhi bus on her way back home. She was thrown off the bus after 30 minutes along with a male friend, who was also tortured. The girl succumbed to her internal injuries and died after a 12 day struggle on December 29th, 2012. This girl was 'Damini' and she was 23 years old.

Damini's ordeal reflects the attitude towards women that persists in our communities. She was treated as an object that the men exploited and then discarded. A similar incident happened in Delhi recently where a young girl was raped on the streets after she left a bar one night. Seeing that she was drunk and leaving a bar, the men assumed that she was calling out to be abused.

Violence against women is the most commonly accepted human rights abuse. The tragic demise that Damini suffered should serve as a wakeup call for all of us; whether community members, police officers, social workers, health professionals or any other profession. ICWA hopes that we all learn our lessons from this tragic incident and not let this pass away as one more incident of violence against women. Our approach to preventing violence against women is by raising the status of women

through dialogue and community mobilization. An attitude shift about the way women are portrayed and treated is essential and we believe small shifts in attitudes about women can create a large overall impact and raise the status of women in our communities.

To condemn this dreadful crime and show solidarity, ICWA held a memorial gathering on February 15th 2013. Various members of the community, Government representative and members of various organizations expressed grief and solidarity in combating the violence against women.



Attendees at the memorial gathering



Audience holding up the lights in remembrance of 'Damini'

Supporters and funders

ICWA wants to especially thank the following agencies and organizations for their continuous support for our projects and programs.



Citizenship and Immigration Canada



Status of Women Canada



Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission



Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association



Human Resources and Skills development Canada-
New Horizons for Seniors Program



Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation

Special Thank you

Indo Canadian Women's Association would like to express its gratitude to the following sponsors for their generous donations.

- Servus Credit Union
- James Brown & Associates
- Bhatia & Khurrana LLP
- Vinay Bhardwaj
- Avau and Malcolm Fast

Board of Directors

Miriam Thomas	President
Anjali Agarwal	Past President
Gita Das	Vice President
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Netta Phillet	Secretary
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Nisha Bhatia	Director
Ratna Basappa	Director
NAVneet Kiran	Director
Avau Fast	Director
Judy Axelson	Director
Betty Marlin	Director
Sherry Ahmad	Member at large
Saadat Chaudary	Member at large
Krishna Gupta	Member at large
Rashmi Jyoti	Member at large

Volunteer hours by board

Board meetings: 288 hours

8 Board meetings, 10-12 members in attendance, each meeting 3 hour long

Executive Committee work: 300

Executive committee spends 25 hours a month.

Standing committee hours: 600 hours

Program and Project work: 1500 hours

Total volunteers hours contributed by board: 2298 hours

Staff

Sabrina Atwal	Project Director
Mahvish Parvez	Project & Program Coordinator
Trina Joshi	Project Manager
Farah Fatima	Settlement Counselor
	ESL Instructor
Saima Tanwir	Settlement Counselor
Poushali Mitra	Settlement Counselor
Shazia Ambreen	Outreach Worker
Rajbir Khraod	Outreach worker
Kishwar Ghani	Breast Health Educator
Jaya Saxena	Computer Instructor
Rajinder Paul Kalsi	Outreach Worker
	Citizenship Exam preparation Instructor
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