



# BCCS ANNUAL REPORT 2019- 2020

FEATURING THE FUTURE

services

events

youth

multicultural

newcomers

program

women

children

intergenerational

community

home based

canada

inclusion

centre

fundraiser

toronto

resources

bangladesh

canadian

performance senior

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
SATURDAY 21ST NOVEMBER, 2020

# **Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday, November 21, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.**

## **AGENDA**

- **Welcome and Introduction of Board members**
- **Land Acknowledgment**
- **Approval of Agenda**
- **Approval of 2018-19 AGM Minutes**
- **Report on Programs and Services**
- **Audited Financial Statements 2019-2020**
- **Appointment of Auditor for 2020-2021**
- **Reports from the Nomination Committee**
- **Election of the Board of Directors**
- **Remarks from Special Guests**
- **Other Business**
- **Closing Remarks**
- **Adjournment**



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

### ***2019-20 has been an inspirational year***

Greetings from the Board of Directors of BCCS.

I want to thank all of you from the core of my heart for joining this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM), in spite of the difficulties posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. AGMs have been a major event in the history of BCCS.

It is truly an honour and a privilege to work with the amazing team of BCCS Board members, and be able to convey the heartfelt greetings from all of us.

Since its inception, BCCS has made its mark in the community as a dedicated service provider and "a friend in need". During its ten years of existence, BCCS has worked and still continues to work in a number of diverse areas including, but not limited to, Elder Abuse Awareness, Peer Support for the Elderly, Senior Empowerment, Cultural Integration and Social Inclusion, Settlement Support, Employment and Skills development training, Health Education, Youth Leadership, Cultural Events, Tax Clinic and Translation & Interpretation etc.—all directed towards integration of Visible Minority groups into the Canadian society.

We look to the past with pride and continue to follow the values driven by our mission and vision. We believe that we exist to build caring, compassionate, equitable and inclusive communities in the areas we serve. We listened to what our client communities were telling us about the challenges they commonly face, and developed programs to address those in line with our mission.

As all of you are aware, this year we faced some unprecedented challenges due to Covid-19 pandemic. BCCS was unable to fulfil many of its intended objectives, but the members were very active and resilient in addressing the needs of our clients. We are amazed at the commitment of our staff, volunteers, Board members, funders who have shown their incredible support with a compassionate heart. We took up a number of initiatives during the crisis, which included support to vulnerable families and seniors by delivering groceries, helping the clients to fill out EI and CERB forms, making regular inquiries about their welfare through telephone assurance calls and connecting them to services through virtual platforms.

Owing to the overall changes in the funding landscape, we recognize the importance of fundraising to finance our diverse social programs, and continue to grow at the same time. Our robust Fundraising Committee has been working strategically to make plans and adopt more creative and innovative approaches in fundraising. In this regard, we are pleased to acknowledge that we are fortunate to receive incredible support from all our stakeholders to help us implement our services.

The BCCS Strategic planning is one of our major priorities. With the help of the Management Advisory Services, we have completed 80% of the work so far. We aimed to complete the report by the spring of 2020, but, due to Covid-19 pandemic, we could not meet the target. Our goal is to complete it by the summer of 2021.

We are excited to report that this year we have made significant improvements to the accessibility of BCCS office premise by the installation of a “care elevator”, which is nearly complete. This will enable many individuals who are physically challenged to access our programs and services without difficulties. We appreciate the financial support from Ontario Trillium Foundation to support this invaluable project. We are also grateful to Albion Builders for their generous support in the renovation of the main floor of our facility.

We are greatly honoured by the opportunity to serve our clients. We focus on results, which are not possible without the dedication of staff, volunteers, Board members, donors, partners and funders. We thank them all for their understanding of clients’ needs, meaningful collaboration, and committed efforts in support of BCCS’s mission.

Finally, sincere thanks to our Board of Directors for their time, hard work, passion and Governance.

Respectfully,

***Hasina Quader***

Chair, Board of Directors  
BCCS, CA

## ABOUT BCCS

The BCCS was established in March 2010 as a not-for-profit organization to support primarily South Asian immigrant communities in the GTA. The organization's goal is to build our clients' skills and capacity to better connect them with Canadian culture. Services for social and economic integration are provided through project-based interventions from the BCCS office. Regular participants are primarily from South Asian communities; however, services are open to all Canadians irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, language, religion, sexual orientation, gender or ability. BCCS has become a solid community hub in East Toronto.

To advance South Asian culture and heritage for younger generations, we regularly observe Canada Day, Heritage Months, International Mother Language Day and Bengali New Year's Day. Debates and discussions on issues of public interests, town halls and events on different cultural festivities are regular features of the Centre. These activities are funded mainly from community donations.

BCCS is governed by a board, comprised of 15 dedicated volunteers committed to the organization's mandate. The board meets monthly to provide strategic directions, review services provided, and ensure efficiency and accountability. New members to the board are elected at the Annual General Meeting. Several committees are formed such as governance, program management, cultural events and finance etc. The committees report to the board at monthly meetings.

We believe in building communities through collaboration and partnerships. We partnered with the community sector organizations such as COSTI Immigrant Services, Warden Woods Community Centre, Rexdale Women Centre, South Riverdale Health Centre, North York Women Centre, Danforth Village Community Association, Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, East End Arts and Scarborough Food Security Initiative. Most recently, the BCCS partnered with Warden Woods Community Centre to prepare masks for Michael Garran Hospital's health care workers and delivered 750 face (cloth) masks prepared by our volunteers.

In the past 10 years, we received project funding from all three levels of government. At the outset of COVID-19, we received funding support from New Horizons Seniors Programs and United Way, Toronto for projects where over 100 seniors and vulnerable individuals are connected to weekly, virtual platforms to maintain their physical and mental health. The seniors are also supported with grocery hampers and non-prescription medications. The activities will continue up to March 2021.

## **OUR VISION**

Bangladesh Centre and Community Services (BCCS) aims to empower South Asian communities living in the Greater Toronto Area in their transition to social and economic integration in the Canadian Society.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Bangladesh Centre and Community Services (BCCS) aims to assist newcomers and immigrants and connect them with Canadian culture through enhancement of their knowledge and skills.

## **SHARED VALUES**

- Responsive and sensitive to the needs of our clients, members, volunteers and other stakeholders.
- Promote independence and dignity of people within the communities.
- Active participant in the communities.
- An organization that operates in an effective and transparent manner through a participatory process.

## **OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Hasina Quader - President**

**Dr. Shafiq Chowdhury - Vice President**

**Nahid Sultana Sharif – Secretary**

**Syed Shawkat Mahmood –Treasurer**

**Mohammed Alamgir Hakim**

**Shebu Chowdhury**

**Kafiluddin Parvez**

**Andrew Flint**

**Hasina Begum**

**Hon. Maria Minna**

**Mak Azad**

**Sayeeda Rahman**

**Swapan Kumar Das**

**Serajul Islam Kazi – Executive Director**

## GOVERNANCE

BCCS believes that good governance is imperative to ensure that the organization achieves its objectives by being able to put forth its best efforts to implement its strategies and make the best use of its resources.

Our Board is made up of dedicated, hardworking and passionate volunteers who are committed to the work we are mandated to help the community. Our Board consists of 15 members representing the not-profit, financial, public service sectors and the neighbourhoods we serve.

The Board is responsible for making policies and procedures, ensuring transparency, setting strategic directions based on our mission, goals and objectives of the organization.

New members on the Board can be elected at our Annual General Meeting and all of our eligible members of the organization can participate in the run. The Nomination Committee makes recommendations for new recruitment of the Board members based on requirements.

Board meetings are held at least 11 times a year. The minutes of the meetings are filed once it is approved by the Board. The minute books are kept in the Organization's office and are accessible to the members.



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## SUPPORT IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

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***Thanks to our staff, volunteers, funders, that helped us to provide essential services during Covid-19.***

Telephone Reassurance Calls: 45 seniors

Halal meal delivery: 320 to single parents and international students

Delivery of grocery supplies: 145 seniors

Virtual sessions (Yoga, meditation and chat sessions): 135 seniors and vulnerable individuals

Delivery of non-prescription medical supply: 30 vulnerable individuals

Delivery of diapers: 10 families

Supply of 600 handmade masks to local hospitals by our dedicated volunteers.



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## Programs and Services

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### PREVENTION OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

***50 participants attended our 28 sessions!***

- In order to enhance awareness of the community members on the prevention of type 2 diabetes, BCCS received a peer leadership grant from Toronto Public Health (TPH) for 2019-2020. Our target group included South East Asian newcomers who are experiencing challenges to adopt a new lifestyle, food habits, language barrier etc. (Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Guyanese, Somali etc.)

A total of six BCCS Peer Leaders were trained by Toronto Public Health (TPH), who afterwards developed advocacy materials, prepared presentations and conducted workshops at BCCS. The participants became aware of causes of prevention of type 2 diabetes, learned nutritional requirements, menu planning, merits of physical activities shopping and information about low-price mark, gained knowledge about the benefit of reading food labels, how to compare between the products, and knowledge about preparation of healthy food etc. They also gained knowledge about mental health and how to cope with stress through exercise. The participants were given an updated version of Canada Food Guide, The participants were advised to share their knowledge with their friends and family.



## GATHER TO DANCE

*48 seniors received the service directly*

*Impacted over 100 non seniors*

In this project, we primarily focused on introducing a therapeutic dance program for newcomer seniors of South Asian origin. The goal was to help them to learn the importance of the elements of healthy diet, preparation of a healthy meal, importance of physical exercise and thus help them to stay healthy, active, and age well.



**The program included three components:**

**Learning:** The learning activities provided opportunities for seniors to learn new skills (weekly therapeutic dance) and new knowledge through sessions on healthy diet and demonstration of preparation of a healthy meal). The activities offered them the opportunity to learn, share and exchange their daily issues with the peers, and helped them to remain connected to their peers.

**Experiencing:** This component involved the seniors taking part in various activities, such as planning, organizing and implementing various events on their own, such as picnics, outdoor activities and cultural events. Thus, the seniors acquired unique opportunities to build capacity and get real hands on experience.

**Empowering:** The seniors felt empowered and self-sustained by learning new skills, by being with other senior peers, and felt connected with inter-generational members of the community in a new environment.

Throughout the course of the project, 45 seniors and 5 mentors gathered new skills on learning the technique of Indian therapeutic dance, acquired new knowledge through sessions on healthy diet and demonstrations of preparation of healthy meals. The program helped the seniors to become more confident, self-dependent, socially engaged and active. They also learned from peers and enhanced their ability to do networking, improved their self-esteem and thus felt empowered. All these eventually will lead the seniors to stay healthy and reduce health risks. The mentors gain real life experience in using the learned skills and develop their leadership skills.

## CANADA SUMMER JOBS

BCCS received federal government funding from the Department of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) for the fifth consecutive year to recruit students during summer holidays. Two students were recruited in 2019-20 for eight weeks to help with different project activities. The students were assigned with the tasks of updating the BCCS website, databases, office work, fund-raising and community outreach.

## SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Newcomers and immigrants walk-ins to BCCS were provided settlement information and referral services to different programs and services of all levels of the Government. Services were provided in Bengali and English, allowing newcomers for an increased sense of comfort and ease. We also provided over 100 referral services to the appropriate organizations for the services which we were unable to provide.



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## *Community Engagement*

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## PITHA UTSHOB (TRADITIONAL CAKE FESTIVAL)

***500 attendees, 45 volunteers and raised over \$4,000***

One of our significant popular fundraising events, Pitha-Utshab, was organized in April in order to celebrate Bengali New Year. More than 500 community members, including dignitaries, attended the events with family and friends. The delicious cakes (pitha) were prepared at home by our female volunteer members and well-wishers and donated to BCCS. To accommodate diabetic patients and those with sugar restrictions, a few spicy items were also available for sale. Our Multicultural show was another attraction of the event where many cultural groups performed.



The youth were busy painting Henna designs on the hands of those who desired. There was a raffle draw in the afternoon where many winners were happy to take an item home. The day was filled with fun activities, music and a variety of foods. The event also served as a platform for community engagement.

## SOUP WITH MUSIC

***Over 100 attendees, 30 volunteers, Raised \$2,000***

This yearly event is held for community engagement and also to raise funds through community members donating soups and snacks. It was held on December 1, 2019. In spite of bad weather, over 100 people, including local elected officials, attended the event. The day was full of a variety of activities including cultural shows, dress as you like, Henna painting, tasty soups and snacks, raffle draws and much more. Free Tim Horton's coffee was another attraction of the day. We are very thankful to our community members and volunteers for their generosity to help us raise funds.



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## CELEBRATIONS

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### CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY (IMLD)

BCCS organizes a program every year for celebrating IMLD, inviting community members and dignitaries. The activities this year included a Children’s Art competition, cultural performances and discussions on the background of the IMLD. In the early hours of Feb 21<sup>st</sup>, the BCCS team showed respect to the language martyrs of Bangladesh by laying flower wreaths at the base of the temporary (Shahid Minar) monument at Danforth. This year, in order to give the event an international appearance, artists from various countries such as India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Iran, and Poland were invited. They recited poems in their own languages.



### CANADA DAY

***Attended by 35 members***

BCCS took pride in celebrating Canada Day by attending the East York Canada Day parade. The participants included BCCS seniors, youth team and adult members. It was an important day to strengthen our belonging and identity, as well as celebrate our unity and diversity with fellow Canadians.



## **CELEBRATION OF ISLAMIC HERITAGE MONTH, OCTOBER 2019**

### ***Over 100 people attended***

BCCS believes in partnership and strives to build partnerships in delivering services. To this end, we celebrated Islamic Heritage Month in partnership with Nazrul Foundation at our Hall room. The youth team was a part of the planning and organizing the event. The celebration was focused on the contribution of Islam in science, art, music, technology, medicine and in many other areas. Approximately, 15 speakers delivered their speech outlining the significance and contribution of Islam in various disciplines. We thank Nazrul Foundation for their partnership and thank the speaker for their valuable speech.



## **CELEBRATION OF VICTORY DAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019**

### ***75 community members attend the event***

The Event Committee of BCCS took the initiative to celebrate Victory Day of Bangladesh. The activities included speeches from freedom fighters, discussions on Bangladesh Independence Movement, a drama depicting the struggle of a family during the war, cultural shows, children and youth programs.



# WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION, MARCH 2020

(In collaboration with nine local organizations/associations)

*Over 100 people attended the event*

BCCS took pride in celebrating International Women's day with nine other organizations. The event was attended by over 100 people. Each organization had their own programs which included speeches, cultural shows, a chronological history of women's roles in different times. The focus of the program was the contribution of women in various disciplines and women's struggle for their rights in the public and private sphere.





# OUR FUNDERS

Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI)

Ministry of Employment and Social Development

Ontario Seniors Secretariat

Department of Canadian Heritage

Ontario Trillium Foundation

City of Toronto

Toronto Public Health



An agency of the Government of Ontario  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



Canadian Heritage

Patrimoine canadien

## OUR PARTNERS (PAST AND PRESENT)

Bangladesh Association of Toronto (BAUT)

Bangladeshi Canadian Community Services (BCS)

Bengali Information & Employment Services (BIES)

Canadian Bangladeshi Organization Network (CBON)

South Asian Women's Rights Organization (SAWRO)

Costi Immigrant Services

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)

Danforth Village BIA

East End Community Health Centre

Greater Dhaka Association (GDA)

North York Women's Centre

South Riverdale Health Centre

Warden Woods Community Services

East End Arts

Mennonite New Life Centre

Mural Routes

Quantum Meditation Society Toronto

Rexdale Women Centre

WoodGreen Community Services



## OUR SPECIAL DONORS

*Chayanika Dutta*

*Dr. Kamruzzaman*

*Iqbal Roshd*

*Honourable Maria Minna*

*Mohammed Alamgir Hakim*

*S.M. Faruqi Hasan*

*Shahidul Khandker Tuku*

*Zamal Haque*

## LIFETIME MEMBERS

Alimul Chowdhury	Md. Alamgir Hakim
Andrew Flint	Md. Moqbul Hossain
Ashabuddin Khan	Md. Mostofa Afzal Momen
Barrister Chayanika Dutta	Md. Shahabuddin
Barrister Jayanta K. Singha	Mohammad Amin Miah
Barrister Lazina Khan	Mohammed Abdul Waheed
Barrister Omar Hassan Al Zahid	Monir Islam
Dilruba Ahmad Shapla	Moushumi Barua
Dr. Kamruz Zaman	Nahid Akter
Dr. Mozammel H Khan	Pranabesh Podder
Dr. Shafiq Chowdhury	Rummana Chowdhury
Enamul Haq Chowdhury	Saiful Alam Murtaza
Farida Haque	Serajul Islam Kazi
Hasina Begum	Shabuddin Mahmud Chowdhury
Hasina Quader	Shahidul Khandker Tuku
Honorable Maria Minna	Shahin Reza Loni
Hosneara Ahmed	Shahnaz Begum
Jamal Hossain	Shanker K. Dey
Joyanta Banik	Shebu Chowdhury
Kafil Uddin Parvez	Shumona Shafinaz
Kanan Barua	Shubhra Saha
Khand. A. Waheed Asghar	Syed Abdul Goffar
M. A. Quader Milu	Syeda Selina Sarwar
Mahabub Reza	Tasrin Khan Shikha
Mahmuda Khan Alam	Towhid Noman
Mak Azad	

## OUR YOUNG MEMBERS

Adrita Abbas	Samrin Khan
Aniruddha Barua Kabbya	Shakib Absar
Antoma Ahmed	Sudipta Sardar
Ashes Anahata Abiel	Sujan Chowdhury
Aysha Tabassum	Tafheem Khan
Jarin Tasnim Niha	Tasnima Anila
Jawad Zaman	Zubier Abdullah
Johayer Rahman Chowdury	Faiza Rutba
Kashshaf Ahmed	Naziat Kareem
Labib ahmed	Mahir Shayor
Lamia Siddique	Oritro Mahadi
Lavinia Auhoma	Tabassum Jabber
Lubaba Ahmed	Sadad Sheikh
Mohona Meeftahul	Sara Hassan
Raidah Fairouz (Mishty)	Hridita Das
Raifah Nazahah Khan	Ameea Hossain
Rameesa Fareeha	Momo Kazi
	Rakeen Ahmed

## OUR MONTHLY DONORS

Hasina Quader

Serajul Islam Kazi

S.Shawkat Mahmood

Shafiq Chowdhury

Shebu Chowdhary

Kafil Uddin (Parvez)

Hasina Begum

Mohammed Alamgir Hakim

Mak Azad

Syedda Rahman

Hon, Maria Minna

Andrew Flint

Nahid Sharif

Swapan Kumar Das

Shumona Shafinaz

A.H.M Ziaul Islam Mollah

Sabiha Zia

Mohammad Shamzzoha

M. Rizuan Rahman

Chayanika Dutta

Arthur Potts

Alimul Chowdhury

Jayanta Kumar Singha

***Thank You All For Your Support***