

Muslim Social Services October, 2014 newsletter.



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**Muslim Social Services**

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### Message From the President

Salaam/Peace,

On behalf of MSS I would like to thank you all of you for the support you have rendered to our organization during the 2014 year.

Your commitment to helping us with various programs during the year for the ongoing progress of our community is sincerely appreciated.

Through the programs that we have been offering, we have seen many lives changed for

the better. In particular, the counselling program has enjoyed great success in the past year with which we too have grown as an organization.

As we continue to advance with our vision of '*Serving the Community*', our hopes are to see your continued and dedicated support for the new year.

We wish you all Happy Holidays with peace and joy for 2015.

With warm regards,  
Khalid Khokhar



From the Executive Director

Dear friends and supporters of MSS,

It is hard to believe that the end of 2014 has arrived; how quickly the year has gone by!

The year's end always brings with it a remarkable sense of achievement as so many things have been accomplished. From the '*Out of the Cold Program*' near the beginning of the year, to the '*Christmas Hamper Soup*' program for the House of Friendship packers towards the end, our staff and volunteers have been involved in an astonishing number of activities. Of course, we should not forget the tremendous amount of learning which has taken place at MSS during the year with the various workshops such as the Second Line Service Training, Volunteer Training workshop, and finally, the Safer Families Workshop which took place recently.

This year has been an active one for our organization. In addition to all the clients served, and especially the extensive referrals for counselling from Family & Children Services of the Waterloo Region, MSS has been kept busy with the various programs that we conducted throughout the year. The Board has put in much time and effort to strengthen and review the vision, mission, the by-laws, and the strategic plan, so as to ensure that the needs of the community are well met. As you can see, we believe in operating MSS as effectively and efficiently as possible. We could not have done so without the commitment of our volunteers and dedicated donors.

THANK YOU for making 2014 a year of great achievements and progress. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all Happy Holidays.

Sabira Hudda  
Executive Director

## Ladies' Tea Time



Sponsored in partnership with The City of Kitchener and The House of Friendship, MSS conducted an eight week Ladies' Tea Time gathering. Women from the Chandler Mowat and surrounding areas came into a warm and accepting environment to share their life experiences, recipes, and cultural stories. Those who could take the time off on Friday mornings, got an opportunity to take a break from the regular home routine of chores, children and cooking. Our sessions gave way to help build confidence and find support in a confidential and nurturing environment with the small group that gathered at this community centre. Over tea and snacks, everyone had a valuable story to share and we all learnt so much from each other! Special thanks to all those who attended and made these sessions worthwhile, especially Jacqueline Burke, who volunteered with her time and teapot and served all those who were present at every gathering.



Jacqueline Burke

## Christmas Hamper Soup

Christmas Hamper packers that volunteer with the House Friendship during this season enjoyed a hot soup cooked and provided by MSS staff and volunteers. On December 12<sup>th</sup>, a special vegetable lentil soup was picked up from the Chandler

Mowat Community Centre by the driver who delivered it to the 75 packers nice and hot. Thank you HOF for giving us the opportunity again this year to serve.



### Special Thanks...

Capacity Canada delivered the sixth Manulife Board Governance Boot Camp training to non-profit charity Boards and equipped them with relevant action plans that will help deliver a noticeable performance improvement in their boardrooms. MSS staff could take part thanks to a subsidy provided by the organizers as well as The Family Centre. Under the Community Hub Fund, the Executive Director and one MSS Board member could take advantage of this special training. Special thanks go to both organizations for making this possible for us.

The mentoring meetings with Cathy Brothers every month are extremely helpful. MSS has grown as an organization because of these and we would like to sincerely thank Cathy for imparting vital tips that are helping us become better as an organization.

With regards to the Community Hub-Thank You Cameron for your ongoing support.

### Counselling News

MSS has had the opportunity to build a safe and trusting atmosphere for the clients that have needed counselling. Faith and culturally sensitive consideration is becoming popular and gives one the chance to share issues that are intertwined across ones faith, culture, and life experiences. Each situation is unique and requires a treatment plan which eventually leads to achievable goals. Many of our clients have grown with self-confidence through these sessions.

### Foster Parenting Workshop

On November 25<sup>th</sup>, Family & Children Services offered a Foster Parenting Workshop specifically for Muslims interested in fostering children. The need for

Muslim foster care parents in the Child Welfare system is increasing due to the fact that the number of Muslim children being placed into care being is on the rise. The demand for parents who can provide a loving home and an Islamic atmosphere is crucial. These Muslim children come from diverse cultural backgrounds and need continuity in terms of their religious practices and sensitivity to the Islamic concerns in terms of halal food intake and other issues. The workshop was well attended with a room full of parents who had many questions with regards to the training provided by FACS. Special thanks to Carol Hunsdale-Loh, Teresa Trofymowych, and Mary Wilkinson, a foster parent who has been fostering children for 35 years, for facilitating this workshop.



Teresa & Mary

### [Diversity, Awareness, and Sensitivity Workshop](#)

Muslim Social Services partnered with Family & Children Services of Waterloo Region to provide and information session to parents that foster children. The workshop entitled '*Diversity, Awareness and Sensitivity*' was facilitated by MSS staff in the community room at FACS. Well attended, the evening was filled with questions from interested participants. As the session progressed the religious requirements for Muslim children in care became clear and better understood. An effective message relayed here was the difference between culture and religion and how the two often get mingled with each other.

## Indonesian Professors Visit to Jami Mosque and the Islamic school of Cambridge

Centre for Community-Based Research (CCBR) hosted an Indonesian delegation of professors visiting Canada to learn about community-based research (CBR). MSS got the opportunity to arrange with the principal Khalid Khokhar to give them a tour of the Islamic School of Cambridge then attend the Friday prayers there. The afternoon was well organized and started first with introductions of the Board and staff members followed by lunch. Each professor got the chance to speak a little about the work they did in Indonesia. Special thanks to Br. Khalid for making the professors' visit pleasant.



From left to right are: Mrs. Niveen Shrem, Mrs. Aida Elbaf, Mr. Khalid Khokhar, Mr. Akhtar Malik, Mr. Mohammad Darr.



Professors from Indonesia

### Safer Families Workshop

On Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, MSS presented the Safer Families Workshop at The Family Centre. Dr. Kristine Lund from the Delton Glebe Counselling Centre, Casey Cruikshank from the Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, and Parastoo Derakhshandeh from Family & Children Services, were the main speakers for this event. Numerous vital points were covered regarding domestic violence during the session. We were fortunate to have a special guest speaker from the Islamic Humanitarian Service. Imam Shafiq Hudda gave an Islamic perspective to the much needed important values within families and how Islam prohibits any kind of violence.

Our special thanks to the four organizations below that partnered with us for this workshop, namely; Family & Children Services, Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, Coalition for Muslim Women, and the Delton Glebe Counselling Centre. The workshop would not have been a success without the commitment of the volunteers who dedicated their Saturday morning to provide daycare for the children that came with the parents and helped with registration.



Parastoo and Chris from FACS

### [MSS Fundraising News](#)

Our target for the end of the year fundraiser was \$50,000 and we are nowhere near this mark. For all those who have made a contribution we extend our sincere gratitude. Our appeal is still open and we urge our readers to please take some time

and look at the MSS website and especially the counselling program. We are in dire need of funds and request that you help us by making a contribution. Every donation, regardless of the amount, makes a difference.

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