

ANNUAL REPORT

2017



Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS)

Non-Profit-Charity Agency (#86691 4013RR0001)
2899 Danforth Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4C 1M3
Tel: 647-499 4484
Fax: 416-698-8127
www.bangladeshi.ca





Contents

LETTER FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	6
2017 AT A GLANCE.....	8
BCS INITIATIVES	11
RESEARCH	17
ON-GOING PROJECTS.....	19
UPCOMING EVENTS.....	22
OFFICE MEMBERS	23
PARTNER AGENCIES/AFFILIATIONS WITH OTHERS.....	26



LETTER FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Message from the President

July 31, 2018

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure I welcome you all and thank you for attending the 16th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS). BCS, with its mission objectives, “Helping People to Help Themselves”, have supported the needs of thousands of youth, seniors and newcomers over the past 16 years by developing and delivering programs and services of importance to them.

Over 3500 immigrants people rely on services provided by BCS, with a steady increase every year. The Executive Director’s report will provide details on the programs and services offered by BCS and where most successes have been achieved.

BCS has had a busy and fulfilling year in 2017. We have faced many ups and downs during the year and yet achieved successes in many of our program and service delivery areas, while taking on several new initiatives to further reach out to the community. These achievements are the shared credit of a dedicated staff, a committed Board of Directors, and diverse group of volunteers. Building on this strong foundation of people and the work we have accomplished thus far, we look forward to taking on more challenges in the coming year.

Of course, our growth and achievements would not have been possible without the support of our funders. I would like to this opportunity to thank all of our funders for their sensitivity and support towards our mission. I would also like to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their hard work, commitment and dedication; our partners for their collaboration; and our Board of Directors for their wisdom and vision. I congratulate them for their contributions and look forward to another successful year.

Thank you all for attending and for your unstinted support.

Dr. Kazi Hoque
President, BCS Board of Directors





LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BCS is proud to announce it's another busy and successful year for the organization. We achieved many of the goals we set last year and through the process, we were able to launch new initiatives like Entrepreneurship and Technology for youth (ETY) and events (e.g. inter-gen workshops & events), while continuing to ensure that our existing programs flourished.

Youth Eliminates Smoking (YES), one of our oldest running youth initiatives, has completed phase 9 this year and is now progressing to phase 10. YES is currently organized by 12 youth leaders who continue to strive to create a healthy smoke-free community. We have also continued our Youth Recreational Project in collaboration with Neighbourhood Youth Alliance (NYA) to provide Smoke-free Game Nights every Friday to encourage youth to participate in positive recreational activities.

Bringing back the Golden Age for Seniors is now in Phase 7 and continues to be a program that empowers and engages seniors and provides them with opportunities to be involved and influential members of their community. There are over 200 seniors who participate in the various health support services, recreational activities, weekly exercise and educational programs we offer. During the second year of the South Asian Senior network (SASN) project, we have been able to offer a platform for the seniors. Through this, they can practice their empowerment, improve their independence as well as self-esteem and can explore their potentiality to make a congenial environment for a safer community. This project included field trips, technology literacy programs, and weekly drop-in sessions for Coffee N Chat and Meditation. Another inter-gen program titled Better Together (BT) give an opportunity to our senior and youth to mingle together and share their space in capacity building and recreational activities. We have successfully formed a senior cabinet and youth volunteer pool for our inter-gen activities.

In addition, our Afterschool Tutoring Program (ASTP) and Summer Sports programs have been well regarded and supported by the community. The ASTP program has provided volunteer opportunities to 50+ youth and has helped improve the education of other 500 kids throughout the year.

The Summer Sports program has continued its success with over 280 youth participating in the BCS Annual Soccer Tournament. This year we have partnered with NYA that helped us to reach the broader community youth.

One of our new initiatives in 2017 was the Peacock Dance Crew, our very own cultural dance team with 15 participants and 2 youth mentors. The youth in this team shared their talents and their culture with their community by performing at various events throughout the year. Graduate from this crew has been performing in wider community events all over the city.

We have also partnered up with the City of Toronto's Community Safety Investment on the BCS Safety for All Toronto Residents (STAR) Project, this is the first of its kind in the community. This project focused on the topic of Islamophobia and how to react to it. BCS hosted two community consultations educating the members of the community through interactive activities on Islamophobia and five training sessions.

Another exciting initiative is Entrepreneurship N Technology 4 Youth (ETY) program, a technology literacy and business program for youth. Youth were taught different platforms of technology such as coding, MS Word, and Graphic Design and learn how to apply these skills in a business setting. This program will



take place over three years and will involve 30 youth and 6 youth mentors. As of now we have 10 youth been graduated for the first year and another batch will be recruited for next year.

Along with the success of many of our existing programs, BCS has launched four new initiatives this year. Our new initiative TPH Peer Leadership Grant for Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes recruited 4 youth peer leaders who received training from Toronto Public Health. They are to educate recruited participants on prevention of Diabetes with various training and activities.

Some prominent and exciting new projects are as follows: "Senior Ambassadors+55: inspiration and strengths for deprived seniors" an inter-gen project funded by Service Canada; Better Together: Moving Forward (Project BT2), an inter-gen project funded by Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. South Asian Arts: Culture and Colours for kids and youth funded by the Ontario Art Council; Youth Social, Financial & Economic Collective (YSFEC) funded by Laidlaw.

These accomplishments could not have been possible without the extraordinary commitment and hard work of our staff, volunteers, and board members. The support of our partner organizations and funders have also been significant to our operations.



Dr. Nasima Akter
Nasima Akter
Executive Director



INTRODUCTION

THE BCS MISSION: "HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES"

BCS MANDATE:

BCS shall provide information, referrals, skill development and settlement services to diverse communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Services shall be adaptive to the changing community needs and are delivered in partnership with other committees and service providers.

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS) is a non-profit organization serving not only the vast Bangladeshi population here in Toronto but also the local (Taylor-Massey, Crescent Town and adjacent neighbourhoods) community since 2000. Our focuses are youth, seniors and newcomers and we now serve over 3000 beneficiaries that rely on the services we provide, with the number increasing every year.

YOUTH INITIATIVES

Youth engagement: Currently, we have four unique and active youth-led projects and programs (YES, YSFEC, Summer Sports, and ETY) catered specifically to the adolescents of the community. Through these initiatives, we have been able to develop a healthy living, a stronger community as well as a wide array of inter/intrapersonal skills (leadership, communication, time management, etc.) among the young people. In the past year specifically, BCS has met with success in all of our campaigns.

Youth Eliminates Smoking (YES) Phase 9 successfully conclude in June 2017. Throughout the phase, monthly leadership meetings have been held amongst our 12 youth leaders who have worked tirelessly to develop the YES Program to its fullest. Additionally, monthly Game Nights, held weekly throughout 2018, have seen 15-20 youth in attendance for each event with special tournaments, attracting youth from all across the community and city. Integrated with the recreational games were peer-led presentations on tobacco prevention and healthy eating topics.

The Summer Sports Program now in its 12th year has helped more than 280 youth (registered participants per year) participate in a free annual soccer tournament, as well as friendly matches in the weekends leading up to the tournament.

Entrepreneurship and Technology for Youth (ETY) launched recently in 2017, the program teaches youth digital literacy and entrepreneurial skills through weekly workshops.

Youth, Social Financial and Economic Council (YSFEC) was formed by the BCS Youth Leaders in partnership with the Neighbourhood Youth Alliance (NYA) in order to explore and better understand the employment and financial literacy experiences, such as barriers in acquiring the right skills and knowledge, among youth in marginalized communities.

SENIOR SERVICES

Seniors support services: Our seniors' program (Bringing Back the Golden Age for Seniors Project), now in its 7th Phase, has continued to empower more than 300 seniors within the community by engaging them in weekly discussions and facilitating their contributions to the community. The program has been tailored to address an ageing population facing a wide range of difficulties, including frailty, social



isolation, immobility, depression, etc. Essentially, it has been designed to support seniors by giving them the means to improve their lives whilst also feeling comfortable alone at home. This has been achieved by hosting monthly health workshops and weekly fitness activities which are attended by 30-40 seniors per session and 10-15 seniors, respectively. Additional services such as home support and accompaniment have helped 149 seniors and 152 seniors, respectively, in the past year; and regular telephone follow-ups and friendly visits have ensured seniors are confident in the fact that someone is there to stand by their side when needed.

This year, the South Asian Social Network (SASN), funded by the Ministry of Seniors Affairs, will provide various activities for 30-40 seniors including health workshops, coffee and chat sessions, field trips, and technology sessions.

ASTP & CULTURE/HERITAGE PROGRAMS

Free after-school support: For young children and newcomers, our free After School Tutoring Program (ASTP) has provided supplementary education to children of families that could not otherwise afford paid services. One of our most successful and longest-running initiatives, the ASTP program has enabled 40 volunteers to help 500 kids throughout the year. The initiative now also features a children's dance program entitled **Peacock Dance Group**, where children can learn about traditional and modern dances for free. They also have the ability to perform at the many large community cultural events that BCS hosts throughout the year such as **International Mother Language Day, Canada Day, Pohela Boishakh, CBON Mela** and many more. In 2017, BCS hosted the International Mother Language Day and Pohela Boishakh events, featuring traditional food, dances and songs, with 300+ community members taking part in the festivities.

SETTLEMENT SERVICES & RESEARCH

Research: BCS continues to push forward research on our community and the demographics we serve. Recently, we completed three focus groups and two community consultations on the topic of Islamophobia. Moreover, we have conducted numerous studies specific to the community that has been completed and presented in different forums and seminars like Bengali diaspora, precarious employment seminars, Health & Equity Conference and more, thus laying the foundation for future developments.

Settlement Services: Additionally, settlement services are provided in partnership with other community organizations, helping approximately 1200 clients over the past year. Our clients include new and old residents of the catchments area who are not only Bangladeshi but from other ethnicities as well.



2017 AT A GLANCE

Knowledge of cultural norms and values has allowed BCS to maximize its potential by providing services targeted at newcomers, youth, and seniors. BCS has over 3000 beneficiaries that rely on the services provided by the organization, with a steady increase in beneficiaries every year. Our achievements in 2017 are given below.

Initiatives for Youth	
Youth Eliminates Smoking (YES)	
Monthly Leadership Meetings	12 Youth
Smoke-Free Board Game Night	15-25 Youth
World No Tobacco Day Celebrations	100 Participants
Anti-Tobacco Pledge Signing	80 signatures
2017 Summer Sports	
Track & Field Day	50 registered participants plus visitors
10 Session Training Camp	10-15 Youth
Soccer Tournament Weekend	200 registered participants plus visitors
Initiatives for Seniors	
Activity	# of participants per session
Weekly Exercise Sessions	32 sessions (10-15 Seniors)
Weekly Technology sessions	32 sessions (5-6) Seniors
Senior Cabinet Meeting	10 meetings (11 members)
Monthly Health Education Workshop	15 workshops (Average 20 participants)
Home Support	140 members
Bangladesh Independence Day Celebrations	70 Seniors
Accompaniment Supports (<i>for interpreter, travel assistance, etc.</i>)	152
Senior Outdoor Visits (<i>Aga Khan museum, Guildwood Park, Apple picking and Pacific mall</i>)	150
Coffee and Chat sessions	8-10 per session
Meditation for Seniors	8-10 per session
Barriers to Access, Canadian Health Care Systems	210 Seniors
Barriers to Volunteering and motivations to volunteers	Qualitative study (Sample size n=45)



After School Tutoring & Heritage Program	
Activity	# of participants
Free weekly tutoring sessions	500 students per year (cumulative) with an average of 25 students per session as well as 40 volunteers throughout the year (8 volunteers on average per session)
Weekly Cultural Session	Children's Session which is half an hour of events such as poem recitation and dances

Settlement Services	
Support Type	# of participants per session
Day-to-day settlement services	40-50 Individuals (cumulative)

Field Trips, Celebrations and more	
Event	# of participants
Bangladeshi New Year's Performance	200 Visitors
CBON Community Festival	5,000+ Visitors
Bangladeshi New Year's Art Competition	60 Kids
International Mother Language Day Performance	400 Visitors
Victory Day Cultural Show	80 Seniors
Canada Day Rally in Taylor-Massey	50 Participants
Apple Picking Trip	50 Participants
Islamophobia: Know Your Rights	50 Participants
Earth Day	30 Participants
Sundarban Rally	25 Participants
Canada Day Speech and Art Competition	25 Participants and 150 Visitors



Research

Environmental influences on skilled worker migration from Bangladesh to Canada: The Canadian Geographer / Le Geographe canadien 2017, xx(xx): 1–20
DOI: 10.1111/cag.12430 © 2017 Canadian Association of Geographers

Book chapter - The Immigrant Discount: How Provincial Labour Standards Are Ignored on the Edges of the Labour Market, 2017

Bringing back the golden age of seniors- Ways to improve their Health Situations. – Qazi Shafayetul Islam, Nasima Akter

PEPSO publication: “It’s more than poverty or precarity: The immigration penalty” By Diane Dyson & Nasima Akter, PhD

Paving Their Way and Earning Their Pay: Economic Survival Experiences of Immigrants in East Toronto - Keren Gottfried, John Shields, Nasima Akter, Diane Dyson, Sevgul Topkara-Sarsu, Haweiya Egeh, Sandra Guerra

Economic performance and its impacts on newcomer in Toronto East with reference to informal economy -Nasima Akter, Sevgül Topkara-Sarsu & Diane Dyson

BCS INITIATIVES

1. SETTLEMENT SERVICES

We have continued to provide settlement services in partnership with other community organizations, helping approximately 100 clients over the past year. Our clients include new and old residents of the catchment area who are not only Bangladeshi but from other ethnicities as well.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

2. YOUTH ELIMINATES SMOKING (YES)

Facebook: [facebook.com/youtheliminates](https://www.facebook.com/youtheliminates)

Investment in Youth Engagement (IYE) supported the YES program in its 10th phase, running since 2010. YES is a youth group dedicated to increasing awareness of tobacco use with a focus on tobacco prevention.



The tobacco topic for phase 10 focused on engaging community youth in tobacco-free recreation, whilst the Chronic Disease Prevention topic highlighted the importance of nutrition promotion. The program has been able to engage up to 180 youth through a series of smoke-free recreational competitions, youth leader meetings, and the World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) celebration. The smoke-free recreational competitions held in December, February, and March allowed youth to identify



alternative activities to smoking using games such as FIFA 2018, President (card game), Mafia, and Pictionary. The core group of 12 youth leaders attended monthly meetings, working tirelessly to ensure the success of the project. The World No Tobacco Day Celebration held on June 3rd, 2017 included speeches and presentations from local political figures, a Toronto Public Health nurse, and youth. The final event successfully engaged over 100 individuals from across the community. Additionally, community members were encouraged to sign a pledge to do their best to pursue a healthy lifestyle, free of tobacco use at every event. By June 2017, the pledge reached 70 signatures. YES continues to be a highly successful youth-led community initiative.

3. ENTREPRENEURSHIP & TECHNOLOGY FOR YOUTH (ETY)

Delivering a project at the idea or conceptual stage over 36 months to provide digital literacy, and entrepreneurial education, resources and supports for low-income, racialized youth in Toronto with funding and support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation - Youth Opportunities Fund. Youth will learn to harness the power of business and technology and have space where they feel a part of, share their ideas and work collaboratively. In the first year of the program 2 mentors, 12 mentees and 3 youth project staff were recruited. 32 weekly workshops were delivered throughout September 2017 - April 2018. The workshops taught important digital and entrepreneurial literacy concepts such as business canvas models, elevator pitches, personal branding and coding.

4. SUMMER SPORTS

Another initiative focused on encouraging and facilitating children and youth engagement in sports and other physical activities is the *Summer Sports* initiative. Over a decade's worth of success can be associated with this comprehensive Summer Sports program, throughout which the program has helped upwards of 200 youth annually – and this number continues to grow every year as it did in 2018. The sports initiative for youth is made 100% free and inclusive to facilitate the integration of low-income families and those who have recently immigrated to Canada. Thus, allowing these individuals to enjoy the benefits of an organized sports program while encouraging a healthy lifestyle.



5. AFTER SCHOOL TUTORING & CULTURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM (ASTP)

The After School Program is one of the pioneer initiatives taken by BCS and has provided quality tutoring for the last 16 years. It is an extremely successful project and helps over 500 students (per year) achieve, if not surpass, the TDSB's expectations of them.

These efforts are implemented by volunteers, which include youth who have grown up within the school system. They are provided with the necessary material (practice questions, lesson plans, etc.) for each age group and use their experience to create an environment where learning is encouraged through interaction and enjoyment. The relationships that are developed as well as the success achieved by students and teachers alike extends beyond the walls of the After-School Program and continues to better the community in the years to come.

The Afterschool Program is open to all youth (as young as grade 1 or as old as grade 12) on a drop-in basis. However, the focus of the Afterschool Program is on children who may not have the necessary resources to achieve academic success: children from families who have recently immigrated to Canada and/or children of low-income families often face numerous barriers to learning (such as language, financial, etc.). For this reason, the service is provided completely free of charge.

6. LET'S DANCE WITH PEACOCK

The project was funded by "Cultural Hotspot" City of Toronto that started in May 2017 and ended in September 2017. The project's goals were to create talents among newcomer kids and youth and a strong platform for practicing South Asian Culture and expressing South Asian heritage through dancing. BCS opened a new dimension for the South Asian parents and kids who were not able to bear the cost of practicing South Asian culture. Over the project period, the project developed 15 kids and youth for showing South Asian heritage through performing in special events, including Canada 150 Celebration event of BCS, CBON multicultural festival in Dentonia Park (a big community gathering, 5000 in number), and Hotspot event in East York. In addition, more than 100 community members along with City's representative enjoyed the ending event in October 2017. Kids performed 10 dances with South Asian and Canadian music and were highly appreciated by audiences. Two dedicated and skilled youths facilitated 20 workshops for developing performers. 10 parents were fully involved as volunteers in the



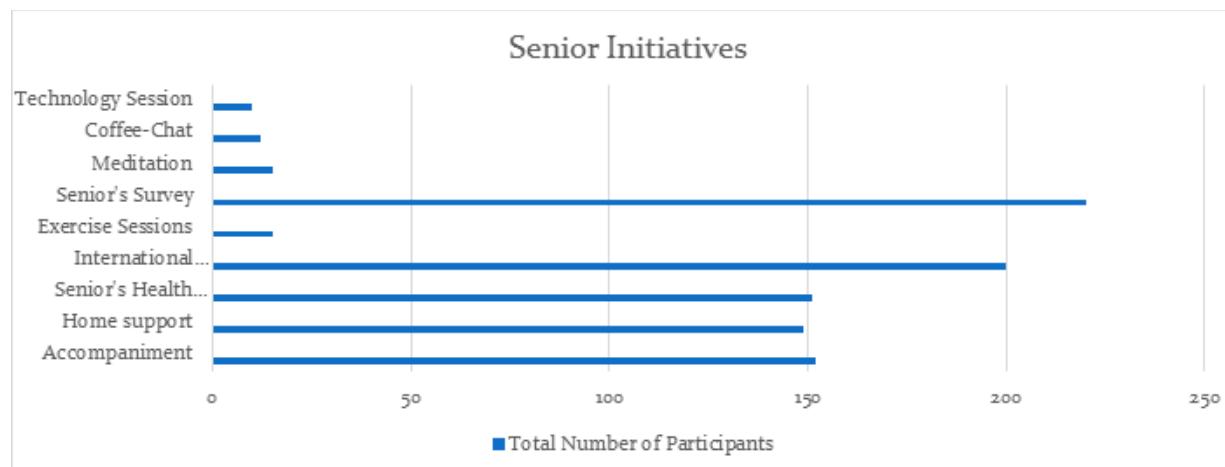
project, and parents and performers got appreciation certificates from BCS. During the project period, the kids and youths learned about basic principles of dance, and different music for performance. Surprisingly, some of kids and youths are still performing in the community after the project.

SENIORS

7. BRINGING BACK THE GOLDEN AGE FOR SENIORS PROJECT



For seniors, ageing can result in many problematic situations: health issues such as multiple physiological illnesses, decreased mobility, etc. can make everyday life very difficult. Moreover, sorrow, loneliness and (potential) abuse (which is often a result of socioeconomic burdens preventing immigrant families from dedicating time and valuable resources to their elders) can lead to psychological disorders that worsen their current situation. These socioeconomic burdens are also faced by seniors in the form of income security, housing affordability and inadequate social support, which further undermines their ability to attain optimal healthcare.



It was a 10-month project funded by WoodGreen Community Services to address Bengali seniors' chronic illness for preventing and managing a better health. The WoodGreen has been funding BCS since 2011 to focus on social determinants to improve seniors' mental and physical health. For the period, 2017-18, BCS' two staff, 20 seniors, and 10 youth were actively involved in the project activities in Crescent Town, Toronto to reach more than 200 seniors with services, including knowledge improvement health workshops, accompaniments for going to health systems, and physical exercise. BCS organized 14 workshops with minimum attendants (20 participants) over the project period (June 2017-March 2018). To reach the seniors with comprehensive health education, BCS worked closely with Alzheimer's Society of Toronto, South Riverdale, Canadian Mental Health Association, Flemingdon Health Centre, East End Community Health Service, and Toronto Public Health for facilitating the workshops. After the workshops, the seniors were able to manage their diabetes, arthritis, hypertension, anxiety in the community and started going to health system like a family physician, specialized doctors (on the basis of their requirement). Furthermore, BCS brought more than 50 seniors to health care system and provided the seniors with interpretation services, too. More than 107 seniors attended physical exercise's sessions (a



total of 28 sessions) to learn about balance exercise to prevent fall during walking and standing, upper body and lower body strengthening and stretches for being active physical and improving the self-esteem. In addition, BCS provides the seniors (who feel lonely and or isolated) with home support to give emotional support and to improve the social connections. WoodGreen has been funding BCS since 2011.

8. SASN 2017-18: SOUTH ASIAN SOCIAL NETWORK

The project duration was about 10 months and was funded by Ontario's Seniors Secretariat. The project originally started in 2016 and, the year 2017 was the continuation of SASN project. The purpose of the project was to make a platform for the seniors, so they can practice their empowerment, improve their independence as well as self-esteem and can explore their potentiality (through voluntarism) to make a congenial environment for a safe community for the seniors. Through the project period, 10 vulnerable seniors were able to discuss the social problem, including the intergenerational gap, seniors' challenges, health issues and overall solutions to improve the seniors' quality of life for being an active life. The project formed a senior cabinet consisted of 10 vulnerable seniors who attended a monthly meeting. During the project period, the cabinet members attended 8 meetings, and their discussions were documented by BCS's staff. Moreover, the project organized 6 health promotion workshops about the common diseases (diabetes, chronic pain, Dementia, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol) to educate and empower Bengali seniors for managing their diseases with minimal support. More than 150 seniors attended outdoor activities under the project. They enjoyed Aga Khan Museum, Parks and Mall (Thompson Memorial Park, Guildwood Park, Pacific Mall, Wardenwood trail) and cooking session. Furthermore, 22 seniors were graduated from the technology classes. They were able to check emails, send pictures on Vibre, and use Facebook. The project was successful in connecting 150 seniors in the community and making a social network and keeping the environment safe for the seniors.



9. BETTER TOGETHER (PROJECT BT)

An Inter-gen project

The Better Together project focused on reducing the intergenerational gap present between the seniors and youth in the community. Total of six activities took place within this project and catered to a total of 252 participants. The activities consisted of a consultation workshop to gauge the community's interests and concerns, a museum trip to Aga Khan Museum, the celebration of International Mother Language Day (Ekushey February), a Bangladeshi cooking workshop at Victoria Park Hub where seniors and youth worked together to create various cultural dishes, an outdoor hiking excursion to Warden Woods Trail, and finally an impact assessment workshop took place at the BCS office where the effectiveness of the project was measured and any concerns/suggestions from the participants were addressed.

10. SENIOR CABINET



The cabinet is the ideal way to bridge the gap between the needs of seniors and the services provided which consists of 12 members this year. Through the Cabinet, BCS is able to offer enhanced programs to resolve issues seniors face. The senior cabinet is the primary reason that the many different senior initiatives of BCS are effective and efficient.



11. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS

BCS provides accompaniment, pharmacy assistance and support for any medical appointments for seniors when required. BCS also provides home support services for seniors such as scheduling medical appointments, basic cleaning and meal preparation, emotional support, and assistance in walking. Home support has helped 149 seniors and accompaniment has aided 152 seniors.



12. REFERRAL AND CONNECTIONS

BCS has strong ties with various organizations and individuals and can connect seniors with the right resources when necessary. We connected 239 seniors with family physicians, nutritionists, dentists, eye doctors, specialized doctors and many more services.

13. LITERACY HEALTH AND FITNESS

BCS hosts monthly health promotion and health management workshops, and informal discussions to relay conducted by DECNET, CMMA, FHC, East end health healthcare discuss vital health-related topics. Attendance for these monthly health workshops is approximately 30-40 seniors per session.

FESTIVALS & CELEBRATIONS

14. BANGLA NEW YEAR

Pohela Boishakh (Bangla New Year) was a wonderful and entertaining celebration with fun activities and performances for all community members to enjoy. BCS was fortunate to see over 200 visitors attend the event.



15. CANADA DAY

BCS held their annual Canada Day festive event during July. It consisted of art and speech competitions, a playback of the national anthem, a ceremonial Canada Day cake-cutting and a parade localized in the Victoria Park and Danforth area. It brought 70 community members to celebrate the event together.



16. WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY



World No Tobacco Day is an event that is coordinated annually by Youth Eliminates Smoking. It is held annually on the community since 2018. Held at Access Point Danforth, WNTD is a day where the community brings awareness against the dangers of tobacco use. This year 60+ community member attended including our esteemed councillor, along with having the youth and kids participate in the competitions and interactive activities.



17. INDEPENDENCE DAY

Another important cultural event for BCS was the Bangladesh Independence Day event during 2018. This is to orient our children about the history of Bangladesh. Our seniors and young kids take part in cultural performances, speech competitions and various jeopardy and fun games. This year BCS had 100 community members attend to celebrate this glorious day.



18. CANADA 150 GALA

The Canada 150 celebration took place in the Dawes Road Legion Hall with over 200 guests and many special guests such as MPP's and Amit Chakma, as well as speeches from Janet Davis and Gary Olson. There were many speeches and performances during the celebration, to remember Canada's 150 years of history. Overall the event was a success and was a night to remember.

19. SUNDARBAN RALLY

The Sundarban Rally was held on July 9, 2017, to show our solidarity to save our largest mangrove forest from the Rampal power plant. There were over 40 people that came to the rally to show their support along with many activists and supporters of nature.





RESEARCH

A big portion of BCS's efforts is directed towards research. A largely under-rated aspect of the organization, research lays the foundation for all initiatives – these studies are imperative in determining the needs of the community and the means to best address these needs. These studies are often conducted via surveys and/or face-to-face focal group interviews in an effort to determine both quantitative and qualitative information, existing mandates: youth, seniors and newcomers. The following conclusions were reached:

Research Project

1. Paving Their Way and Earning Their Pay: Economic Survival Experiences of Immigrants in East Toronto

ABSTRACT:

This paper lies at the intersection of precarious labour and immigrant employment experiences. The labour market has evolved over the past few decades such that jobs are increasingly precarious - poorly paid, insecure, and lacking in employee protections.

Immigrants are over represented among those working precarious jobs and face compounded challenges to achieving socio-economic stability. Immigrants, especially immigrant women, experience heightened exploitation and marginalization in the process of trying to economically and socially integrate into Canadian society. The paper investigates how immigrants living in an east Toronto ethnic enclave navigates the labour market and survive precarious and informal employment realities. It makes use of a unique empirical survey of this community to help shed light on the economic lives of this population.

2. PEPSO Book chapter

The Immigrant Discount:

How Provincial Labour Standards Are Ignored on the Edges of the Labour Market

ABSTRACT:

The study is a ground-level, quantitative examination of Canadian immigrants and the undocumented economy. It measures and examines how immigrants experience the labour market and how they cope at the edges of it. This research project included researchers involved in the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) project done through United Way Toronto and McMaster University's Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario (PEPSO). This chapter provides a more focused examination



of the employment experiences and the prevalence of employment standard violations for immigrant communities, subjects covered only in a more general way in the main PEPSO reports.

3. Seniors 60+ volunteer & their motivations towards voluntary work

ABSTRACT:

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS), a grass roots ethnic organization in Toronto, involved a group of Bangladeshi immigrants 60+ years in senior projects to provide vulnerable seniors with social and recreational services. These volunteers had no experience of social works and voluntary activities in back homes. However; they are making success stories in terms of reaching the vulnerable with services in Canadian society. The project explored major motivations as well as barriers to volunteering. The information was obtained from 60 senior volunteers (36 females and 24 males) through face-to-face interviews. Narrative data were translated into English and summarized and organized thematically in the matrices for analysis and interpretation. The study found five domains of motivations: a. emotional connections like encouragement, relationship, and appreciation, b. empowerment such as freedom in taking decision, recognition, access, and c. entertainments, for examples; indoor and outdoor fun activities, and d. skills (workshops, discussion, meeting), and incentives (transport, gifts, and certificates). On the other hand, health problem, language, lack of family support, poverty, in stable immigration life, exploitation, and extreme weather were the major barriers. The volunteers had a wide range of motivational factors, but they had sociocultural and economic barriers for the social work. These volunteer forces could be greater sources for supporting community if they are utilized properly.



ON-GOING PROJECTS

Settlement Services

Settlement Services is at the core of BCS initiatives, continuously providing newcomers with support in all facets of life, whether it is a translation of application forms or information about immigration, healthcare, etc.

Youth Recreational Drop-In

The Youth Recreation Drop-In program funded by Neighbourhood Youth Alliance (NYA) provided youth from the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) of Taylor Massey and Oakridge with an easily accessible weekly recreational drop-in within their community.

Preliminary studies conducted in the community found that local youth had a desire to participate in sports and other recreational activities; however, they were limited by a lack of space, safety concerns, in addition to increasing costs. With the Drop-in, youth could participate in leisurely and beneficial recreational activities such as card games, board games, and table tennis. The program provided youth with a safe space to relieve stress and interact with other youth in their community. Special events such as bowling nights and skating nights were also able to engage over a dozen youth. This has been proven to be a positive deterrent from risky behaviours, resulting in a more vibrant and healthy community.

Grassroots Seniors

Phase 4 of the Grassroots Seniors initiative has successfully begun. Seniors have been actively engaged within the community and are being given the opportunity to put their knowledge and experience to use in a multitude of ways.

Summer Sports

The summer sports program has seen 12 years of success and continues to grow with every passing year. This summer, BCS is attempting to expand the initiative to university students to increase outreach whilst generating revenue.

Peacock Dance Group

The peacock dance group continues with weekly sessions and providing further opportunities to community youth and children to partake in recreational and cultural activities. This program allows youth in the community to participate in dance classes that focus on different styles of cultural dance. The youth are then provided with opportunities to perform at various community events and showcase their talents. This year, we had 15 youth participants involved with the program and two youth mentors who taught and lead the classes. By the end of the year, the youth will have performed at four different community celebrations including BCS Canada 150 Event and CBON Mela. The program has allowed children in the community to stay connected to their roots while continuing to integrate into Canadian society. It also provides an opportunity to learn about the arts and showcase youth talent to the community. Classes are run every Saturday and are eligible for youth aged 7 – 13 years.

Art workshop: Color and cultures

The project is funded by Ontario Arts Councils to encourage South Asian kids and youth for expressing their cultures with a colourful touch. The project started in May 2018 and ends in December. Initially, 50



youth and kids had registered, and average 30-35 youth and kids are attending the weekly session. This is the first time, BCS and Ontario Arts Council started a weekly free art workshop for a great number of South Asian youth and kids (50 in number) that are being held in Danforth area. The participants are learning about the application of appropriate colours in South Asian cultures through Alpona, graphic design, pottery, Calligraphy, architectures, crafting and decoration, and ceramic products. Over the project period, about 24 workshops will be facilitated by professionals. In the end, the participant will receive certificates and their art products will be displayed for the community people.

New Horizon for Seniors: Senior Ambassador 55+: An Inter-gen Project

The project was designed to address the intergenerational gap and to eliminate the gap to form a healthy and safe environment in Crescent Town areas. The project activity started in April 2018 and ends in December 2018. The main activities of this project are to form ambassadors consisting of 10 seniors (age 55+ years) and 5 youth. The ambassadors organize a monthly workshop to invite 40-50 youth and seniors to discuss the factors for the integrational gap and solutions. A total of eight workshops will be done by December and discussions are being documented. To date (July), there were three workshops were completed. In the workshop, 4 or 5 groups discuss each other and present the findings. At the end of the project, the ambassadors will present (in a large audience) the information (discussion results) about the intergenerational gap in front of community members, media, and local providers. Another activity of the project is to create a pen club for seniors and youths. The ultimate goal is to generate writers who write the social problem, intergenerational issues for the community. Two workshops about pen club are run in a month. Up to July, the project completed 10 workshops. One blog was created, and writers put their writings on the blog and 20 small and big stories (written by youth) were posted on the blog (blog link: <https://bcspenclub.blogspot.com/>). Furthermore, under this project, more than 20 seniors are learning technology like Facebooks, emails, internet for connecting people and social media.

Better Together: Moving Forward (Project BT2)

An Inter-gen project

This is the continuation of phase1 (Better Together project BT1). The project is funded by the Multicultural Community Capacity Grant Program. The project duration is 4 months (May to Aug). The purpose of the project is to create a scope or a platform where South Asian immigrants (both senior and youth) can participate in cultural events together to be empowered in Canadian society. To understand about the collectivistic South Asian culture, three monthly meeting (intergen meeting) were done, and more than 100 youth and seniors attended the meetings, and they discussed about the about intergenerational gap and challenges towards cultural performances together (both youth and seniors). From the discussion, the project got ideas to encourage both youth and seniors and engages youth and seniors to perform cultural event together on the same platform. With a view to, one cultural show (bridegroom's journey in rural Bangladesh) was done in Taylor Creek Park where 10 seniors and 10 youth performed. More than 300 community people enjoyed this cultural show with BBQ. Another two cultural events will be done in July and Aug. The final one (the cultural show) will be held in Dentonia park (Saturday, Aug 11, 2018). Tentative 5000 community members will enjoy the show.

Entrepreneurship and Technology for Youth (ETY)

Delivering a project at the idea or conceptual stage over 36 months since 2017 seeks to provide digital literacy, and entrepreneurial education, resources and supports for low-income, racialized youth in Toronto with funding and support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation - Youth Opportunities Fund. Youth will learn to harness the power of business and technology and have space where they feel a part of, share their ideas and work collaboratively. In the first year of the program 2 mentors, 12 mentees and 3 youth project staff were recruited. 32 weekly workshops were delivered throughout September 2017 -



April 2018. The workshops taught important digital and entrepreneurial literacy concepts such as business canvas models, elevator pitches, personal branding and coding. The project is now officially in its second year.

Youth Social, Financial & Economic Collective (YSFEC)

Funded by Laidlaw - the initiative launched in 2018 has 2 main components over 12 months; research and outreach. The research seeks to better understand the financial literacy and employment experiences of Scarborough youth through surveys and semi-structured interviews. The outreach component seeks to take the information and learning to transform into tangible outreach materials such as community presentations and brochures.

Youth Eliminates Smoking (YES 10)

Running since 2010, this phase of the anti-tobacco initiative focuses on smoke-free movies as well as hookah and shisha. Planned events include World No Tobacco Day Celebrations, smoke-free movie nights for the youth, online smoke-free movies blog and tobacco-free lifestyle pledges. The 2018 World No Tobacco Day Celebrations attracted over 50 community members and many dignitaries such as the councillor.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Special Events

Event	Date
YES International Mother Language Day Event	February 21, 2018
YES Bengali New Year's Event	April 17, 2018
World No Tobacco Day Event	June 3, 2018
BCS Annual General Meeting	August 13, 2018
Canada Day Celebrations	July 01, 2018
Soccer Training Camp	Early August
Soccer Tournament	Mid-August
Bangladesh Victory Day Celebrations	December 16, 2018
BCS Volunteer's Dinner	TBA
Summer Soccer Finals	August 24-25
ETY Final Pitch Day	TBA
Annual General Meeting (AGM)	July 31st 2018

Regularly Scheduled Events

- After School Tutoring Program
- Senior's exercise, yoga, meditation, technology learning sessions
- Senior's Coffee and Chat
- YES Game Night
- YES Smoke-Free Movie Night
- Youth Leader Meeting
- Bi-weekly inter-gen pen club
- Monthly senior cabinet meeting
- Monthly Ambassador 55+ workshop
- Weekly art workshop for children & youth



OFFICE MEMBERS

POSITION	NAME
Executive Director	Dr. Nasima Akter
Project Coordinator	Dr. Qazi Shafeyetul Islam
ASTP Coordinator	Shamima Ahmed
Youth Coordinator	Tahmid Rouf
Assistant Project Manager	Fariha Bakht
Senior Outreach Assistant	Shamima Nargis
Assistant Youth Coordinator	Tonmoy Paul
Project Assistant	Fariha R Khan
Project Assistant	Abir Ashraful Islam
Placement Student	Mohammed Sohel
Placement Student	Mohammad Samsad
Placement Student	Hamida Begum

YOUTH COORDINATORS

Tahmid Rouf

YOUTH LEADERS

Tanmoy Paul	Safwan Ahmed	Naomi Monower
Rafsan Kabir	Shairi Islam	Shupto Rahman
Fariha Ruhani Khan	Orindom Dip Das	Abir Ashraful Islam
Mirza Faiyaz Mustafiz	Tabia Sobahan	

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

Senior Cabinet (Community Mirror)	Senior Advocacy Group (Community binoculars)	Door to Door worker (Community Comb)
Rahat zaman	Md Moyeen Chowdhury	Rafika Hakim
Jahanara Khanam	Farid Uddin Ahmed	Rehana Akter
Shamima Nargis	Rezaul Haque	Khorsheda Ahmed
Hasina Talukder	Kamil Hossain	Monowara Begum
Gulnaz Azad	Anthony Gomes	Lutfunnesa
Yesmin Ashraf	Sraboni Sarker	Tahmina Akter
Abdul Ghani	Mohammad Mufazzal Hossain	Rani Haque
Md. Rabiul Islam	Feroza Aziz	Shilpi Bhatta Charjee
Bidyut Sarker	Parvin Rokeya	Nazma A. Khanam
Gius Uddin Ahmed	Sultana Ahmed	Aleya Begum
Khalilur Rahman	Akter Ahmed	Shamsun Nahar Abedin
Md Mazibur Bhuiyan	Sultana Jesmin	Nawajish Ara



YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Sakid Anwar | 32. Mac | 63. Abir Ashraful Islam |
| 2. Mirza Faiyaz Mustafiz | 33. Bilal Chaudry | 64. Mamun Hossain |
| 3. Sakib Sarker | 34. Fariha Bakht | 65. Rafsan Kabir |
| 4. Hasibul Ferdous | 35. Mughnee Ahmed | 66. Mohammed Efaz Kamal |
| 5. Aswad Hussain | 36. Nafis Hassan | 67. Shafyath Hussain |
| 6. Naim Syed | 37. Saadia Sarker | 68. Ashraf Zaman |
| 7. Gowrinath Ramiah | 38. Nahin Chowdhury | 69. Kh Azan |
| 8. Ibnul Chowdhury | 39. Samir Nasri | 70. Rufaida Rahman |
| 9. Rahat Kabir | 40. Saadman Ahmed | 71. Mobarat Shariar |
| 10. Larry Liu | 41. Faisal Arman Khan | 72. Yaser Aziz |
| 11. Enosh Manuelpillai | 42. Taskinul Hassan | 73. Sadi Muhammed Wali |
| 12. Ibrahim Zahid | 43. Harold Lee | 74. Abir Khan Saumik |
| 13. Abdulmoeed Zahid | 44. Zaryab Ahmed | 75. Olide Jalal |
| 14. Soneya Khan | 45. Ali Abdalla | 76. Mohammed Bashir |
| 15. Saabiqa Chowdhury | 46. Alavi Awal | 77. Mohammed Shabir |
| 16. Aleksa Muzdalo | 47. Sabih Faraz | 78. Taharat Nawal |
| 17. Muhammed Bilal | 48. Michael Lynch | 79. Kanta Proma |
| 18. Nahian Khan | 49. Apoorva Chapagain | 80. Jannatul Ferdousi |
| 19. Nikolas Georgeopolous | 50. Noshen A | 81. Arika Abedin |
| 20. John Stenakhs | 51. Nushrat Ismail | 82. Elma Mahbub |
| 21. Jerald Gomes | 52. Aninda Poddar | 83. Sherie Sehab |
| 22. Binyam Dagne | 53. Nuzhat Jahin | 84. Afiyah Islam |
| 23. Zoheb Koreshi | 54. Shairi Islam | 85. Tafiyah Sobahan |
| 24. Ryaan Reesat | 55. Ridwan Mahmud | 86. Masum Bilah |
| 25. Sarjit Das | 56. Abdul Moohaimen | 87. Prohamti Mahmu |
| 26. Sakib Yasar | 57. Nayef Ahmad | 88. Farhan Alam |
| 27. Nihon Akbar | 58. Zeedan Ahmed | 89. Ahnaf Anwar |
| 28. Rafi Ralph | 59. Ashfi Pathan | 90. Liaba Chatha |
| 29. Anoosh Mannuelpillai | 60. Jawadur Rashid | 91. Zahin Murshed |
| 30. Hanif Uddin | 61. Nahian Navid Haque | 92. Syed Ahmed |
| 31. Sharukh Ronaldo Kabir | 62. Naveed Haque | 93. Sayma Hussain |

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Arthi Sarkar
Tamim Rahman
Sharia Hoque
Liaba Chatha
Nazifa Tasnim

Jannatul Ferdousi
Nafio Miah
Ramisa Razi
Heera Rahman
Farzana Yesmin



SENIOR CABINET 2018

Rezaul Hoque
Anthoni Gomez
Shamima Nargis
Gias Uddin Ahmed
Bahauddin
Akter Ahmed

Jahanara Khanam
Shahara Banu
Siddique
Tulsi Das
Samshul Arefin
Rezaul Hoque

PEN CLUB MEMBERS 2018

Rezaul Hoque
Ashraf Ahmed
Shamima Nargis
Gias Uddin Ahmed
Nadira Tabassum
Sraboni Sarkar

Jahanara Khanam
Sultana Ahmed
Rahat Zaman
Bidyut Sarkar
Samshul Arefin

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017)

Position	Name
Chair	Mr. Kazi Haque
Vice Chair	Ms. Reza Rokshana
Secretary	Ms. Reza Rokshana
Treasurer	Mr. Syed D. Bakht
Director	Mr. Sarwar Khan
Director	Ms. Israt Ahmed
Director	Mr. Shahidul Mintu
Director	Ms. Teresa Gomes
Director	Mr. Saklain Jaigridar
Director	Mr. Souria Zaman
Executive Director	Ms. Nasima Akter

FUNDING AGENCIES

Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)

City of Toronto

Toronto Public Health

Service Canada

Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

Ontario Art Council

LaidLaw Foundation

Wood Green

Canadian Heritage



PARTNER AGENCIES/AFFILIATIONS WITH OTHERS

Access Alliance Multi-Cultural Health and Community Services (AAMHCS)	Opening Doors Project, CMHA
Association of Bangladeshi Professionals in Accounting & Finance (ABPAFC)	Flemington Community Health Center
Bangladeshi Students Association – Universities: McMaster/ Ryerson / UTSG/UTSC/York/ Waterloo	East Toronto Health Link
Bloor Information and Life Skills Centre (BILS)	Flemington Community Hospital
Children's Peace Theatre	Fairlawn Avenue United Church
City of Toronto, Parks, Forestry & Recreation	Harmony Hall Center for Seniors
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)	Heart & Stroke Foundation
Crescent Town Club	Neighborhood Link Support Services (NLSS)
Crescent Town Youth Support Network (CT-YSN)	Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services (SAFSS)
Dixon Hall	Teesdale Support Network
Family Service, Toronto	Thorncliffe Neighborhood Office (TNO)
Sunshine Centre For Seniors	Toronto Community Housing (TCHC)
Birchmount Bluffs Neighborhood Centre	Toronto District School Board (TDSB)
West Scarborough Neighborhood Community Centre	WoodGreen Community Services
Neighborhood Link	Young Bangladeshi-Canadian Professionals
Bangladesh Center and Community Services (BCCS)	Young Diplomats
Regent park tenant association	Youth-In-Action
Danforth Islamic society	
Hindu society	
Heart & Stroke Foundation	