Muslim Social Services April 2014 newslletter. Check out what is new at MSS

Muslim Social Services

The Family Centre
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News



Out of the Cold: Over 200 homeless people served at Trinity United Church on March 17th, 2014

A special 'thank you' to our hard working volunteers.

There were bustling sounds coming from the kitchen at the church as the volunteers began the mammoth task of cooking for about 200 homeless people living in the Kitchener-Waterloo areas. The senior volunteers who were not new at this program and had



A welcome from the President,

Dear Friends of MSS & Community Partners,

We take this opportunity to join you all in extending a warm welcome to our first staff team that has recently joined MSS. Bibi Baksh is the newly hired Executive Director of Muslim Social Services KW. Bibi holds a Masters Degree in Social Work from the University of Toronto and is a registered Social Worker with the Ontario College of Social Work and Social Service Workers. With previous work with the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, extensive experience in working in the diverse Muslim community, and leading her own counseling service, she brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in leading a spiritually and culturally sensitive social service organization. Sabira Hudda is our new Counsellor who is recognized as a community organizer in the KW region with over 23 years of experience in leadership roles for her work with the Muslim community and in interfaith bridge-building. Holding a BSW, and near completion of her MSW from Renison University College School of Social Work, University of Waterloo, Sabira is registered with the Ontairo Association of Social Workers. With several awards under her belt, she will

participated in the past began with making preparations for the lentils soup and vegetables. The menu for this special day was taking a slightly spicy turn. We had lentils soup for starters followed by rice, tandoori chicken, vegetables with potatoes and finally ice cream for dessert. The kitchen was soon filled with many volunteers who had decided to attend and give their valuable time to making this meal. For the morning shift we had in total seven volunteers who worked hard and fast to make sure that the food was cooked before the afternoon shift arrived.

The afternoon volunteers made sure the food was stowed away appropriately so that it would stay warm while other cleaned the kitchen up. The evening crew ensured that the serving began on time as they piled plate after plate with the delicious food. In total 193 homeless people were served but 250 plates put out.

Our sincere thanks to all those who made cash and in-kind donations as well as gave their time towards the Out of the Cold homeless meal at Trinity United Church on March 17, 2014. We are most grateful for your generosity and commitment to give back to the community. It was a wonderful day and evening.

play an integral role in further strengthening MSS's critical outreach and support programs and will work closely with Bibi to expand MSS' counseling services. Please join us in welcoming them to MSS. We look forward to your continued support and collaboration with MSS.
You can reach them at: Bibi Baksh: ed@muslimsocialserviceskw.org Sabira Hudda: counsellor@muslimsocialserviceskw.org
Warm regards,
Humera Javed President MSS Board of Directors
Email: president@muslimsocialserviceskw.org



A message from the MSS Founding Director, Idrisa Pandit

Assalamalikum and peace,
“It is all new,” is perhaps the phrase that captures the current point in the seven year journey of Muslim Social Services. Indeed, we have come a long way. It is sheer delight for me to see a very small and humble effort at organizing a group for social change come this far. MSS is now a full- fledged charitable organization, with staff and a physical location. None of this would ever have been possible without the

Donations Breakdown

Total donations received: **$1665.14**
Expenses: **$532.21**
Remaining Balance: **$1132.93**
The balance funds will go towards the ongoing MSS food program and will be used during the year for providing lunch to Habitat for Humanity volunteers, a meal for the homeless at St. John's Soup Kitchen and the ongoing halal food distribution through the House of friendship Emergency Food hampers.



University 101: A youth engagement program

With the help of students form Wiflrid Laurier University (WLU) under the gudiance of Humera Javed, our Presiden, on Saturday March 22, MSS held its annual **University 101 youth engagement program** at WLU. This program aims at providing an opportunity for immigrant and refugee

great support and encouragement of so many people and community partners who believed in us because of our dedication and commitment to serving the community. The interdependent model of service has been the key to MSS's survival and growth. Our volunteers, especially our Board members, are the silent unsung heroes of this organization, regardless of the time of their involvement. They make MSS what it is today. Our special gratitude is due to Ontario Trillium Fund for their generous support to get us started with our new phase of organizational development. The Family Centre has made it possible for us to share a home with great partners and Capacity Waterloo has mentored us all the way.
Our new staff is very experienced, compassionate and efficient. Please get to know Bibi Baksh, our new Executive Director, and Sabira Hudda, our Counselor and offer them the same support I have personally received from so many of you. I am confident they will steer this ship in the right direction.
We will continue joining hands with all community organizations and members with shared vision of serving the community.

high school students to attend a session on campus and learn from students who are attending university. The students were treated to snacks and a chance to participate in a variety of activities. This year's program included interactive games and learning as well as educational sessions. There was a "photo scavenger hunt" which got the students out on campus; a "post-it-activity" provided a chance for the students to get to know each. There was a power point presentation with very useful and detailed information about the university application process and supports that are available along the way.

We had 17 students in attendance and they all reported that they thoroughly enjoyed the day! They felt less intimidated and better able to manage the process of applying. The University students did a wonderful job of answering questions and speaking of their experiences in very encouraging ways. They were very sensitive to the needs of the participants and when stumped with a question (what is life?) they could not answer, they handled it with humour.

MSS would like to thank everyone involved in the program, in particular our community partners who



From the desk of the Executive Director, Bibi Baksh

It has been a very busy two months since I started in my position as the Executive Director for Muslim Social Services. I have jumped head first in the world of not-for-profit and have had the opportunity to meet many fascinating and extremely generous people who have taken the time out to help as I learn and grow in my new role. My personal thanks go out to the MSS Board and volunteers who have spent many hours in orienting me to the organisation. Many thanks also to the Family Centre for all of their accommodations and assistance.

So far it has been particularly insightful experience. I have fully enjoyed a warm welcome from Family and Children Services, Reception House, YMCA, Monica House and other community organisations including Trinity United Church. Working along such committed and caring people has definitely been an inspiration to me and has given a boost to my desire to serve others.

Since I have been here MSS had two significant

encouraged students to come out and attend the program. A special note of thanks to our volunteers who ensured the participants had a safe and enjoyable time.



Upcoming programs

First Line ServiceTraining

Muslim Social Services is hosting an 8 weeks first line volunteer training program in the Kitchener Waterloo area. The program will be held on Wednesday evenings, starting April 30, 2014 from 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm at the Family Centre, 65 Hanson Avenue. Registration is limited to 20 participants who will receive training and support to work within their communities, and with the larger community as “cultural navigators”. If you would like to participate in the project and gain valuable experience without any cost to you, please email

community events that I was able to participate in, the Out of the Cold program and the University 101 program. These events allowed me the opportunity to actually spend time in the community. The Kitchener/Waterloo community is certainly very welcoming and it appears to me that everyone is proud and happy to be a part of working to make the lives of our residents a bit better every day. I am delighted to be a part of such great work and look forward to many opportunities to be involved in making a difference.

Faith and culture sensitive Counselling Services offered at MSS

Counselling provides a means of support and care for people in different situations and circumstances that might be difficult to manage on their own. Examples

your application of interest stating why you are interested and what skills you bring to this training to Bibi Baksh at ed@muslimsocialserviceskw.org

THE KITCHENER AND WATERLOO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

United Way

Studio Impact 101: Youth engagement program



Given the interest and success of the previous Studio Impact sessions, MSS will once again be providing this opportunity for youth in our community. Zainab Ramahi, from Social Innovation Generation will lead the workshop. The day long workshop is geared to provide space and tools for youth ages 14-18, who are generally disengaged within our society to discover/develop their passion in the world and realize

of such situations are dealing with relationship problems in families as well as with individual mental health and well-being. Family issues can be especially stressful with the immigrant community that struggles with many barriers to accessing services. MSS offers counselling services for individuals, couples and families that are experiencing stress associated with traumatic life events. A skilled counsellor will assist you with learning beneficial coping skills and grounding techniques to replace coping by denial, ignoring, repression and other unhealthy ways of dealing with difficult issues and conflicts.

We offer help to families and children experiencing:

- Family Violence
- Parent/Teen conflicts
- Youth Identity matters
- School Performance/Behavioural Issues
- Challenges associated with settlement and immigration
- Mental Health including depression

ABC's of Counselling

MSS is now offering counselling services but who should use it? who can benefit? and who will it help? Below is a brief question and answer section by Bibi Baksh

Q. **What is counselling?**

A. Counselling is a process between a professionally

their own value and impact potential in our community!

Our goal is to help participants develop interest in the discovery of personal passion(s) and excitement to undertake further actions as well as adopt new strategies/tools to use their passion to make an impact in our community. This is a youth-led initiative whereby those taking part will also be involved with follow-up exercises to review and improve the Studio Impact Program.

Session to take place in June, please keep checking our website for the exact date, time & place.

Announcing MSS Annual General Meeting

May 16th, 2014

Muslim Social Services invites you to its Annual General Meeting, on Friday, May 16, 2014, at The Family Centre, 65 Hanson Ave. Kitchener, at 3-5 pm.

Please confirm your attendance by return e-mail to info@muslimsocialserviceskw.org, no later than Monday, May 12th, 2014

trained counsellor/therapist and client where time is spent to explore the client's problems and resulting emotional stresses. The counsellor establishes relationships of trust, based on the client's unique situation, stresses and strengths and assist the client to focus on goals for positive changes and improved coping skills. The counsellor should also be able to assist the client to see issues more clearly and put into perspective feelings and behaviours.
It should be noted that there is significant differences between a professional counsellor and someone acting in your interest to provide advice.

Q. Why should I go to counselling?

A. Counselling provides a means of support and care for people in different situations and circumstances that might be difficult to manage on their own. Examples of such situations are dealing with the death of a loved one, relationship problems, divorce and other traumatic life events. There are also issues such as addictions, depression and other mental health issues that impacts individuals and families in ways that require professional assistance. A skilled counsellor will assist you with learning beneficial coping skills and grounding techniques to replace coping by denial, ignoring, repression and other unhealthy ways of dealing with difficult issues.

Q. **I would feel very embarrassed if my friends knew I was in counselling. Is there something you do to protect my privacy?**

A. Clients' privacy are protected by a confidently agreement that is signed by the therapist and the

Want to volunteer with us?

There are many ways to give back to the community. Please check out our volunteer page, for signing up to be a MSS volunteer. We train all our volunteers and expect all to uphold the MSS code of conduct.

client. There are two instances where the agreement can be broken one is disclosing the intent to harm oneself and the other is disclosing the intent to harm someone else. The therapist needs to act in a way to ensure physical safety.

Q. **I know someone who needs counselling, what should I do?**

A. If you feel that someone you know/love can benefit from counselling you can suggest that they speak to their family physician and discuss the medical implications of their situation as stress and anxiety provoking situations also have physical impact on the body. The physician will be able to assist with recommendations. Alternatively, you can suggest the individual contact a counsellor for an initial session to determine how/if they can be of assistance. You should be selective and ensure that the person providing services is qualified to do so.

Q. **How will I know that counselling is working?**

A. Depending on the presenting problem and your commitment to do the emotional work necessary, counselling can be short term, requiring few sessions to achieve specific outcomes or more long term to provide support as well as achieve long term results. You should be able to “feel better” as evidenced by your overall capacity to understand your issue in a more comprehensive way and focus less on details. There should be an increase in confidence and a reduction in anxiety and worry. People around you, family, friends and colleagues should also be able to

notice the difference.

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