

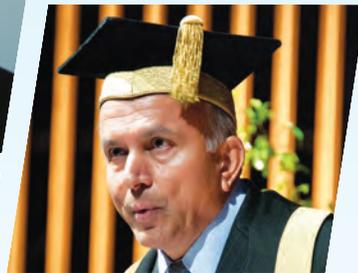


# THE A-LIST

2016



BY AJIT JAIN





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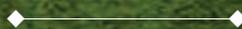
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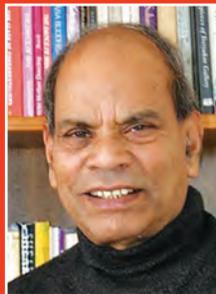
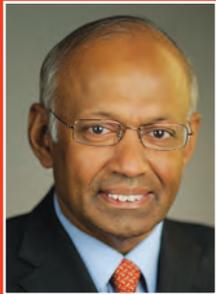


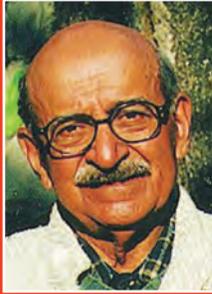
# THE A-LIST

2016



By Ajit Jain





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Canada India Foundation  
Center for South Asian Studies  
Child Haven International  
Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute

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**AJIT JAIN**

## Introduction



**THE A-LIST**  
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**DURING 1946-55**, a total of 1,139 Indians (who were then called persons of East Indian origin) were admitted in Canada. During 1956-62, that number increased to 4,088. Then there was a huge jump: 30,501 Indians migrated to Canada during 1968-72 and 57,411 during 1972-77.

Today, there are close to 1.2-million Indo-Canadians. India has now become the first source for immigration to Canada. Most of those who are migrating from India are professionals and technically qualified people. Others are part of family reunification category: spouses, children, parents and grandparents.

On an average, 250,000 new immigrants are admitted in the country annually. Of these, close to 25,000 come from India; also close to 12,000-15,000 Indian students come to Canada on students' visa, many of whom, after completing their undergraduate or graduate studies, can apply for a permanent landed status in the country.

The major influx of immigrants commenced after 1967 following new immigration regulations, that were, in 1978, incorporated into the Immigration Act that was then enacted. It clearly detailed fundamental objectives of the country's immigration policy: "To attain country's demographic goals" and those goals were and are to ensure population growth to run the economic engines in the country. There isn't enough population growth in the country. That gap is being supplemented through immigration.

During the first phase of the leadership of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (1968-79), most new immigrants to the country were blue-collar workers. They worked in factories, offered helping hands in restaurants and food and grocery stores, etc.

Most of their children and grandchildren have gone to

schools, to post-graduate institutions and many of them have either become professionals, working for the public service or private businesses. Many own small, medium and even big businesses. They have in turn given recognition and pride to the Indo-Canadian community.

In the October 2015 federal election, 20 Indo-Canadians were elected to the House of Commons, the highest number so far. Only three Indo-Canadians were elected to the Canadian Parliament for the first time in 1993. What's more significant is that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has inducted as many as four Indo-Canadians in his 30-member cabinet. They are Harjeet Sajjan, Navdeep Bains, Amarjeet Sohi and Bardish Chagger. The special section in the publication profiles these four ministers.

In this 2016 "The A-List" I have chronicled stories of 48 such Indo-Canadian high achievers (including three Indian-Americans and three who are categorized as 'Friends of India') and six Indo-Canadian academic, business and charitable institutions and organizations.

In these pages, I relate stories of persons like Prem Watsa, founding chairman and CEO of Toronto-based Fairfax Holdings. He's recipient of 2015 the Order of Canada, the highest civilian award in the country.

Fairfax, that Watsa launched in 1985 with an initial investment of \$5-million, now has a \$30-billion portfolio with businesses in over 100 countries. Today, Fairfax is the largest shareholder of Blackberry, the company that at one time controlled the smart phone market globally.

Paviter Binning is a chartered accountant from England, who's now president of George Weston Group of Companies that own Loblaw's 1,000 stores around the country, the largest grocery chain in Canada.

He earlier served on some of Britain's best-known blue chip firms and oversaw the break-up of Canadian telecom giant Nortel. Binning is undaunted by the challenges of running Canada's largest private-sector employer, with 140,000 employees.

Renu Mandhane is just 38. Ontario Government has named her the province's Chief Human Rights Commissioner.

Dr. Vijay Bhargava, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of British Columbia in Vancouver, is recipient of the 2015 \$100,000 Killam Prize, a very high honor for any academic in Canada.

"...Bhargava's work has had a profound impact in the field of wireless communications, practical application of his research includes wireless network that will support 3D multimedia, gaming, device-to-device communications, e-health and social networks," says the Killam award citation.

Dr. Paul Shrivastava can never forget his hometown Bhopal Union Carbide tragedy of December 1984, in which due to a poisonous gas leak, thousands died and countless were rendered physically disabled. Shrivastava is now the Executive Director of the Global Secretariat of Future Earth, the global research platform providing the knowledge and support to accelerate transformations to a sustainable world.

Future Earth has a network of 60,000 researchers working around planet Earth as they try to better understand the

implications of rising greenhouse gases.

In these pages, I also relate stories of two young television broadcasters – Omar Sachedina, who's part of the Ottawa News Bureau of CTV National News and Pooja Handa, young Indo-Canadian who wakes up Canadians with her breakfast news on CP24 – 24 hour TV channel.

Sachedina takes pride in his Uganda-Indian Diaspora. Even though he was born in Vancouver, he still speaks Gujarati and Kutchi, with a mix of Swahili, as well as French. He has traveled extensively to many countries, all part of his reporting assignments.

"Torontonians have come to know me as one of the faces greeting them every morning with news that will help them start their day," Handa explains about her work. She's widely known as the "born story-teller."

Sajeiv John, Professor of Physics, University of Toronto, is a "physicist par excellence." In his 1987 research paper he asked a question "can light be localized?" This 1987 paper has been cited nearly 10,000 times, writes Prof. Rashmi Desai, Professor Emeritus of Physics, University of Toronto, who has contributed John's profile.

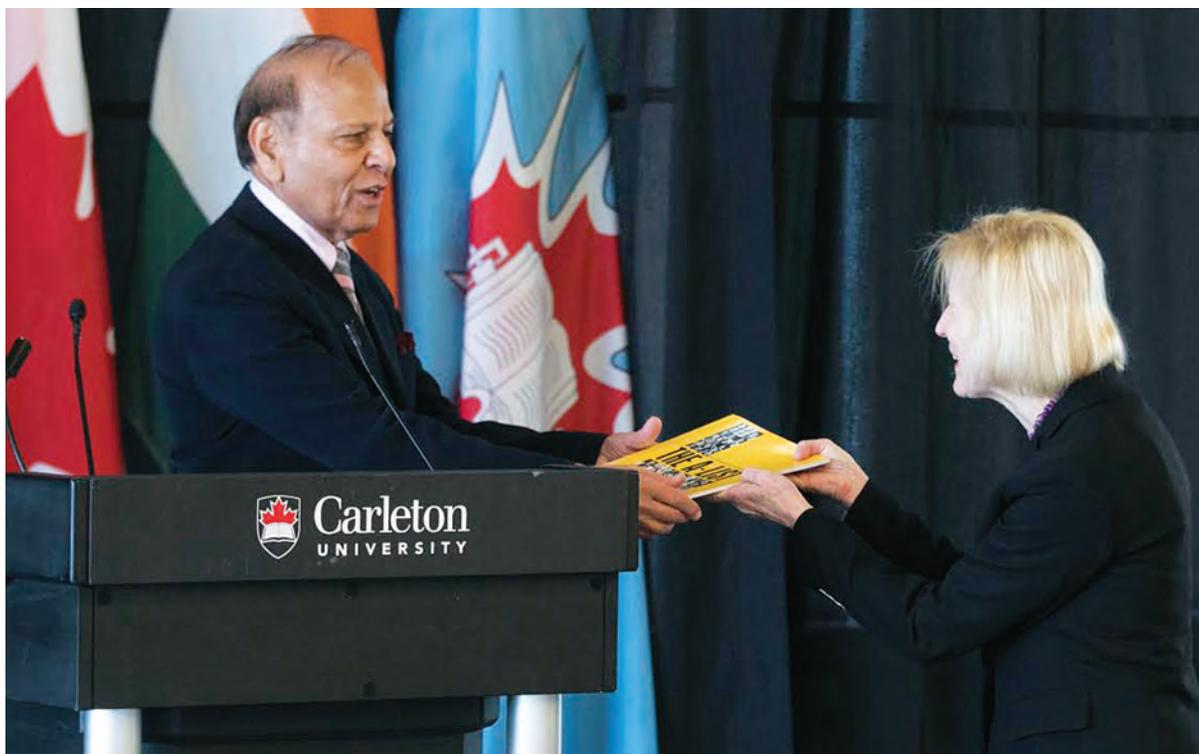
The first section of The A-List 2016 also has profiles of three persons who are part of the 3-million strong Indian-American Diaspora. But I decided to share their stories with the readers because of their association or involvement with Canada.



**THE A-LIST**  
2016



» First copy of 'The A-List 2015' is seen being presented by Ajit Jain to former Prime Minister Stephen Harper in his Parliamentary office on February, 4, 2015. Standing with him is Rosalinda Jain



» The 2015 A-List was formally released at Carleton University in Ottawa. Seen in the picture is first copy being presented by Ajit Jain to Carleton University President, Dr. Roseann O'Riley Runte (event held on February 5, 2015)



## THE A-LIST 2016

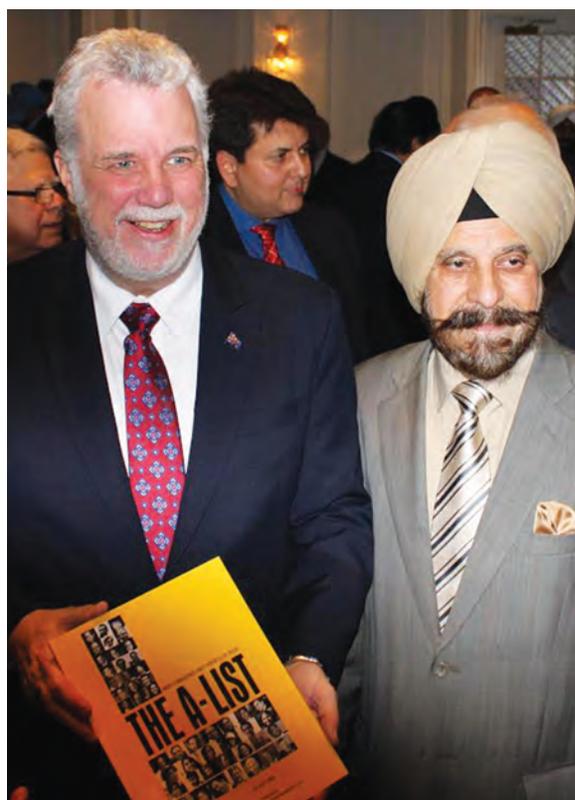
Dr. Manjul Bhargava is professor of Mathematics at Princeton University. He was born in Hamilton (Ontario) and after a few years of his birth, his family shifted to the US. His Ph.D. thesis at Princeton University in Mathematics earned him the Blumenthal Award for his breaking new grounds on a problem that saw no progress for 200 years.

Bhargava, just 40, was conferred in March 2015 the prestigious Padma Bhushan by the President of India.

The second Indian American profiled in these pages is Krishnan Suthanthiran. He lived in Canada after migrating from India in the 1970s. He earned his Master's in Mechanical Engineering from Carleton University in Ottawa in 1971 when he moved to Springfield, Virginia. Ten years back, he returned to Canada to buy Kitisault, an island in British Columbia, with houses, condos, medical clinic, shopping centers, restaurants. It was then a ghost town as all its inhabitants had left it several years back. He decided to buy it as "despite my moving to the US 40 years back, I always have the Canada bug and that induced me to buy the town to re-establish myself in Canada."

Dr. Navin Nanda is third in this category. He's known as the 'Father of Echocardiography'. Indo-Canadians suffer from a proportionately higher percentage of cardiovascular diseases than other people. Nanda is a pioneer in the development of echocardiography which is the most commonly used and most effective non-invasive technique in the assessment and management of cardiac diseases in the world.

The publication has a separate section titled 'Friends of India'. Only three outstanding Canadians have been profiled in this section. They include Gary Comerford, President and CEO of



» Dr. Harinder Ahluwalia is seen presenting a copy of the A-List to Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard

Canada-India Business Council; Mathieu Boisvert, Director of the Centre for Studies and Research on India, University of Quebec; and Patrick Brown, Leader of the Opposition in Ontario Provincial Parliament.

“Comerford is passionate about India,” writes Bhim Asdhir, President of Excel India Fund. “In his unending quest to build bridges between India and Canadian businesses, Comerford has traveled to India 88 times since 1995.”

Boisvert is conducting research on “Hijras of Maharashtra: Identity, Social and Cultural stakes” in India for which he has traveled to Mumbai several times and extensively interviewed and spent time with the socially ostracised Hijra (transgender) community.

The A-list 2016 is a celebration of successes of Indo-Canadians in various professions and businesses. They have made a name for themselves in Canada through sheer hard work and determination. Added to that is the friendly and peaceful atmosphere in Canada today. If you work hard, you can succeed in your chosen profession or career. Many Indo-Canadians, so also others, came to this country with nothing except a few dollars in their pockets and some clothes on their backs. Those days have been left behind by people who, through their hard work and sincerity, have risen to the top of their fields of endeavour and contributed to the positive and acclaimed profile of their community.

In 1965, John Porter depicted a vertical structure of Canadian society with Anglo-Saxons on the top and minorities at the bottom. James Fleming in his book “Circle of Power” too said the vertical mosaic in fact existed even in the nineties.

These books analyzed how minorities in public office are confronted with many more hurdles in achieving their goals than their mainstream counterparts and that different standards are used to judge their performances.

That was 25 years back. If you ask the question whether that kind of glass ceiling still exists, the answer is definitely NO.

Response from CTV broadcaster Omar Sachedina is “break it (the glass ceiling)” if you encounter it.

He agrees that while there is a lot of work still to be done “to improve the minority representation in business, arts, even in Parliament, there are also great opportunities for advancement in Canada.” His advice also is “don’t take anything for granted, work hard and education shouldn’t stop once you get a degree. It should be happening every day.” “Every generation has a role in helping the one that comes after it breaks through the glass ceiling.”

“While other countries struggle with issues of openness and tolerance, Canadians (Indo-Canadians and other minorities – religious and ethnic – all included) actually embrace their extraordinary diversity and celebrate it as a proud national symbol,” writes Edward Greenspon, former Chief Editor of Globe and Mail in “The New Canada.” The profiles of the creative geniuses, goal-oriented high achievers with lofty vision for the country follow Indo-Canadians, in real sense, are amongst the builders of a new Canada.

Lastly, I need to acknowledge the professional services of New Delhi-based Crossmedia Advisory Services Pvt. Ltd. for their support in production of The A-List 2016. I am indebted for the editorial and designing support of their team.



**THE A-LIST**  
2016



» One copy of The A-List 2015 was formally presented by Ajit Jain to British Columbia Premier Christy Clark, also seen in the picture are Rosalinda Jain and Vancouver-based businessman and community leader Barj Dhahan (event held on February, 27, 2015)



**AMARJEET SOHI,**  
**Minister for**  
**Infrastructure and**  
**Communities**

## An immigrant success story



**AMARJEET SOHI'S IS** a typical immigrant story. He comes from a small village in Punjab, India, and was only 17 years old when he migrated to Canada in 1981. He could hardly speak English and went to school to learn the language. He got his first job as a bus driver. Today, he is a federal minister and his job is to look after multi-billion dollar investments in infrastructure, public transport, etc.

Sohi, his official bio says, started taking active interest in politics at the ground level and that helped him twice get elected as Edmonton City Councillor. He first filed candidacy for the City Council in 2004 but was defeated — yet he wouldn't give up. So, he once again became a candidate in 2007 — and this time he scraped through by a 200-vote margin.

On October 19, 2015, it was a repeat performance of 2007: As the votes were being counted, one could see the result was on the wire. Initially, Sohi was leading his nearest rival, incumbent Conservative MP Tim Uppal. But then Uppal snatched the lead. Finally, however, Sohi was declared elected by a slender margin of 79 votes.

Uppal sought judicial recount of votes which was held on Oct. 29 — it resulted in Sohi increasing his victory margin to 92 votes.

All three candidates in this riding were Indo-Canadians. Besides Sohi and Uppal, the third candidate was Jasvir Deol of the New Democratic Party (NDP).

"I feel really humbled and honored," said Sohi who was sworn in as Minister of Infrastructure and Communities on Nov. 4, 2015. "This is about inclusion. This is about accepting our

diversity. Canada should be about accepting who we are, and we're going to live up to those expectations."

Sohi remains conscious of his small lead over Uppal which means Edmonton-Mill Wood riding is almost evenly divided. So, he recognizes he has some work to do to earn the trust of many more of his constituents.

As a member of the Edmonton City Council for two terms, Sohi sat on the Edmonton Police Services Board and came to believe in building safe and strong communities. He also worked on anti-racism initiatives and with interfaith communities. He believes that will help him overcome perceived differences to effectively represent his riding.

Sohi has worked to promote learning and cooperation among cultural communities by leading Immigration, Multiculturalism and Racism-Free Edmonton initiatives.

After Sohi was inducted into the Federal Cabinet, Alberta Premier Rachel Notley, though from NDP, was elated. Crediting him for being a "strong community champion", she said the province "has a number of different, competing infrastructure needs and so I look forward to being able to have some good conversations on how we can partner with the federal government on some of our infrastructure priorities".

Sohi has received the Edmonton Interfaith Advocate Award and John Humphrey Center's Human Rights Advocate Award for promoting welcoming and socially inclusive communities.

Sohi, 51, has also volunteered with Public Interest Alberta, the Center for International Alternatives and the Canadian Labor Congress.

**SOHI HAS WORKED TO PROMOTE LEARNING AND COOPERATION  
AMONG CULTURAL COMMUNITIES**



**BARDISH CHAGGER,  
Minister for Small  
Business and Tourism**

Bringing real  
change for the  
Indo-Canadian  
community

**AS SHE LAUNCHED** her campaign for the October 2015 federal election as a Liberal candidate from Waterloo (Ontario), Bardish Chagger, 35, emphatically said she would be a “strong voice for the riding of Waterloo”. She pleaded with her constituents to “join me in bringing real change for our community in Canada”.

To her credit, this young Indo-Canadian woman trounced incumbent Conservative MP Peter Braid by a huge margin of 10,000 votes — quite a record for a first time political candidate. Chagger was just 13 when she started taking interest in politics. She did that by working as a volunteer for then Liberal MP Andrew Telegdi (1993-2008) and later became his Executive Assistant.

After Telegdi ceased to be an MP, Chagger worked at the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre, an organization that assisted new Canadians as they transitioned to full participation in community life, Chagger wrote in her election campaign literature.

As the Special Projects Coordinator, she says she planned and coordinated the annual Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Festival bringing together community, cultural and business groups in Waterloo Region. Chagger studied at the University of Waterloo and got her Bachelor of Science degree from there.

Her interest, however, had always been in politics. “People were saying, ‘Bardish, put your name in (as a candidate for the federal riding)’. I was saying, ‘I don’t know. I’ll run someone else’s campaign’.” That’s what she did when she worked for Telegdi.

“I had been more of a backbone girl. And they’d say ‘No,

we’re going to back you. Go do it’,” Chagger explains. And finally she decided to stake her claim and the Liberal Party endorsed her as their candidate.

The party knew her well. She was amongst the first group that actively supported Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberal Party’s leadership campaign in 2013.

“I’m a daughter and a child of this community (in Waterloo),” Chagger said after the elections. “As much as I know... I’m representing Canadian values and we’re a nation of immigrants.” she said.

She also lays emphasis on the fact that she is Canadian-born and raised-girl. “I don’t feel any different until someone tries to remind me. But I don’t allow them.”

Now Chagger is not only an elected Member of Canadian Parliament but has earned a place in the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s cabinet — one of the 15 women in the 30-member cabinet.

“We recognize that small business is important and our platform promises that we made and you all know about, you’ll see that we are committed to working for Canadians for a better Canada,” she says of her portfolio.

In her official profile released by the Prime Minister’s Office, Chagger’s profession is listed as community organizer. Besides her work as a special project coordinator at the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Center, Chagger has volunteered with a number of community organizations, including the interfaith Grand River, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Waterloo Rotary Club.



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**CHAGGER HAS EARNED A PLACE IN THE PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU’S CABINET — ONE OF THE 15 WOMEN IN THE 30-MEMBER CABINET**

**HARJIT SINGH  
SAJJAN, Minister for  
National Defense**

Many firsts to  
his credit



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**THE GREATEST SURPRISE** for the Indo-Canadian community has been the appointment of Harjit Singh Sajjan, 45, as Minister of National Defense, a very important and sensitive post.

He holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Canadian Army and has served three terms in Afghanistan and once in Bosnia. He earlier worked for 11 years as a detective in the Vancouver Police, chasing drug dealers and gang members — some of whom were South Asians.

Sajjan's brief official profile released by the federal government quotes Brigadier-General David Fraser as having once said that Sajjan was "the best single Canadian intelligence asset in theatre" and he "single-handedly changed the face of intelligence gathering and analysis in Afghanistan".

"I had information that (the Taliban) had built a defensible base, a very large one, in that area (of Afghanistan) with compounds, defensive positions and their sole job was to use that as a staging area to be able to launch attacks into Kandahar city (where the Canadian forces were deployed as part of the NATO mission)," says Sajjan.

"There were at least 1,500 fighters in that area and they were ready to launch an attack into Kandahar city. I had enough information to say the force that Col. Ian Hope was launching was a lot smaller for the fight they were going into. I didn't want the operation to go through, but the decision was made to launch it."

Sajjan was the first Indo-Canadian to command a Canadian military regiment – the British Columbia Regiment (Duke of Connaught's Own). He is still a reservist with the Canadian Forces, which means technically he is still a soldier when he is in uniform, in a base or establishment, in a military conveyance or actually signed in or on duty.

He was born in a small village in Punjab, India, and his family migrated to Canada when he was just five years old. It is reported that Sajjan, who grew up in South Vancouver, benefited from everything this diverse and culturally rich community had to offer. While serving as a detective with the Vancouver Police, Sajjan advocated for education and mentorship programs that engage the youth to become more active members of society, while strengthening youth defense against the rule of gangs and drugs.

Sitting around the cabinet table, Sajjan is likely to play a significant role in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's decision to withdraw the Canadian forces' participation in the US-led aerial attacks on ISIS forces in Iraq and Syria. His importance has already been highlighted by his inclusion in the cabinet committee that is deciding on strategy to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada by February 2016.

Sajjan has been awarded several military honors, including the Meritorious Service Medal in 2013 for reducing the Taliban's influence in the Kandahar province, and a Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal.

**SAJJAN WAS THE FIRST INDO-CANADIAN TO COMMAND A  
CANADIAN MILITARY REGIMENT – THE BRITISH COLUMBIA  
REGIMENT (DUKE OF CONNAUGHT'S OWN)**



**NAVDEEP BAINS,**  
**Minister for**  
**Innovation, Science**  
**and Economic**  
**Development**

A political  
heavy hitter

**NAVDEEP BAINS WAS** barely 26 when he was first elected to Parliament in 2004 from the federal riding of Brampton South and was elected subsequently twice from the same riding till he lost his seat in 2011. He has now been elected to the House of Commons from Mississauga-Malton riding.

Prime Minister Paul Martin named him as his Parliamentary Secretary in 2005, which was a tremendous honor for him. Working so closely with the Canadian Prime Minister at such a young age was an experience that will help him in his current position as cabinet minister. He knows the ropes of government functioning from inside.

“He sees himself as the voice of business at Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s cabinet table,” wrote Globe and Mail. “Mr. Bains is a political heavy hitter. It’s no accident that the good-natured MP... has a major economic portfolio.”

Bains was born in Toronto. He received his Bachelor of Administrative Studies degree from York University in Toronto, his MBA from the University of Windsor and has also received his Certified Management Accountant designation after which he worked for the Ford Motor Company as a revenue and costing analyst.

When he lost his Parliamentary seat in May 2011 election, Bains started teaching at Ryerson University.

Bains sounds like an MBA course teacher when he talks of creating business ‘ecosystems like Waterloo’s tech com, he asks where ‘in the global supply chain’ Canada positions itself’.

What makes it so unique? What is our value-add proposition? Which parts do we want to focus on? That’s what we’ve got to figure out... My job (as minister) is that when they identify those opportunities, they have a partner (in me)’, wrote Globe and Mail.

Soon after he was sworn in, Bains was the first to appear before the media to make an important policy announcement on a return to the long-form for the national census — the form that was discontinued by the Conservatives and which resulted in the resignation of Chief Statistician Dr. Munir Sheikh and a shake-up of the entire Statistics Canada.

Also, a few days after his taking over as the Minister of Science, Innovation and Economic Development, Bains announced that “government scientists and experts will be able to speak freely about their work to the media and the public”.

This was a welcome statement for the scientific community in the country as the impression was that there was a gag order from the previous government that scientists working in the public service were not allowed to speak out against government policies.

Bains was Prime Minister Trudeau’s close adviser and the Ontario co-chair for the federal Liberal campaign in the 2015 election.

No wonder, Bains, at 38, has been awarded such a senior position in the cabinet.



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**BAINS WAS PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU’S CLOSE ADVISER AND THE ONTARIO CO-CHAIR FOR THE FEDERAL LIBERAL CAMPAIGN IN THE 2015 ELECTION**



**ABHAYA KULKARNI**

Brain surgeon  
for kids



**IT WAS IN MEDICAL** school (1990-1994), while pursuing his MD at the University of Toronto, that Dr. Abhaya Kulkarni discovered neurosurgery.

He was profoundly impacted as a resident by his two mentors, Drs. James Drake and James Rutka, at the Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), fuelling his decision to become a paediatric neurosurgeon. Dr. Kulkarni entered the neurosurgery Residency Training Program at the University of Toronto in 1994 under Chairman Charles Tator and graduated in 2002 under Chairman James Rutka.

Kulkarni is credited with starting the clinical research program in paediatric hydrocephalus (the condition of abnormal fluid collection in a child's brain). Hydrocephalus is the commonest condition seen by paediatric neurosurgeons, one that afflicts children born premature, or with brain tumors or after head injury.

He explains with a great sense of satisfaction how he developed the first disease-specific questionnaire for assessing health outcome in children with hydrocephalus and the first validated score to predict success of endoscopic third ventriculostomy (new method of treating hydrocephalus in children).

Kulkarni is now a site investigator for the North American Hydrocephalus Clinical Research Network for which he has received research funding from several national and

international funding agencies, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the National Institutes of Health.

In collaboration with Harvard and Penn State universities, Kulkarni has expanded the Hydrocephalus Research Program at CURE Children's Hospital in Mbale, Uganda. Kulkarni continues to be actively involved in advancing global surgery.

Besides his research activities, Kulkarni finds time to teach as well as to write and edit: He's currently Professor in the Department of Surgery and the School of Graduate Studies, Senior Scientist at the SickKids Research Institute, and Director of the Paediatric Gamma Knife Program at SickKids. In 2010, he was appointed Program Director for the Neurosurgery Residency Program at the University of Toronto.

He's also able to find time to serve on the editorial board of the Journal of Neurosurgery and as an Associate Editor in evidence-based medicine for the journal Neurosurgery.

He has published over 140 peer-reviewed manuscripts, over 20 book chapters and given numerous invited lectures around the world, including in Asia, Europe, South America, and Africa.

*(Contributed by Dr. Mohit Bhandari, Professor and Academic Head, Canada Research Chair, Division of Orthopedic Surgery, McMaster University)*

**KULKARNI IS CREDITED WITH STARTING THE CLINICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM IN PEDIATRIC HYDROCEPHALUS, A CONDITION THAT AFFLICTS CHILDREN BORN PREMATURE, WITH BRAIN TUMORS OR AFTER HEAD INJURY**



## ANIL ARORA

# An exceptional being

**I WAS ONCE** asked by a prospective employer for a reference about Anil. I told her that there is just about one thing that he might not be able to do: walk on water. And, I added, for all I know, he might even be able to do that.

Anil is an exceptional person because of two things: What he knows and what he is. He acquired a variety of hard knowledge through his formal education, had a B.Sc from the University of Alberta, studied Computer Sciences, Public Sector Governance and completed the Advanced Leadership Program of the Government of Canada.

He worked in Alberta in a variety of capacities (geologist, computer scientist) before joining Statistics Canada in 1988 where he stayed for 20 years and where I came to know him since, throughout that period, I served as Chief Statistician of Canada, in effect the deputy minister of the Agency.

It did not take long for Anil to be noticed after he came to the Ottawa headquarters of Statistics Canada. We had a six-week training course that was compulsory for all new employees. Anil was elected by his colleagues as the valedictorian speaker. I remember being present at the graduation ceremony. I was hugely impressed by his speech. It was substantive, warm, funny and delivered with lots of grace.

He had a spectacular rise in the organisation, moving from one tough assignment to another, always delivering sterling results on time and within budget. His first big break was the task to lead the redesign of our on-line dissemination vehicle, a

very complex system, housing and providing public access to millions of statistical time series.

On the basis of his brilliant success there, we asked him to serve as the project manager of the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, the largest undertaking by Statistics Canada and, indeed, one of the largest peace time projects of the entire government. Again, he succeeded wonderfully. As a result of his contributions he rose within the ranks: by the time he left Statistics Canada in 2008, he was an Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM). His performance obviously did not deteriorate with his departure from our office: for a time he filled the jobs of two ADMs at Energy, Mines and Resources. He is currently Senior ADM at health Canada. There are good reasons for his string of successes in the face of major challenges: he is very bright, ambitious, and ready to take smart risks (i.e. aiming high but ensuring that the necessary success factors are present). Beyond these intellectual gifts, however, is an even more important factor: people want to work with him because he is generous in sharing credit, demanding but fair and positive, a careful manager who nevertheless exudes confidence, one who can bring the best out of people. He was and is a superb human being. As I said, just about the only thing he might not be able to do is walk on water.

*(Contributed by: Ivan Fellegi, Chief Statistician of Canada Emeritus)*



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**JUST ABOUT THE ONLY THING HE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO DO IS WALK ON WATER**



## ANIL KAPOOR

# Trusted by law enforcement agencies



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**TORONTO-BASED LITIGATION** lawyer Anil Kapoor, appointed in 2006 as Commission Counsel to the Inquiry into the Investigation of the Air India Flight 182 bombing, says the federal government has ignored their recommendations in regard to close sharing of information between the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police by failing to create an effective and meaningful role for a National Security Advisor.

Kapoor was called to the bar in 1988. He practises criminal law at the trial and appellate levels, as well as regulatory law in the area of professional discipline – both defending and prosecuting. He appears regularly before the Supreme Court of Canada, as well as Courts of Appeal in Ontario. He has also appeared as counsel in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec.

There have been many highlights in Kapoor's legal practice. In 2008, he was appointed by the Canadian Minister of Justice to the roster of security-cleared Special Advocates conducting National Security litigations.

Being on this roster is quite a credit to Kapoor showing how much he's respected by the judiciary, by the country's legal community and the federal government. This roster gives

him access to highly classified information dealing with sensitive cases. It also shows Kapoor is widely trusted by the law enforcement agencies as well.

Kapoor has been called to testify on national security and criminal law issues before the Senate of Canada Standing Committee on National Security and Defence.

Kapoor is an Adjunct Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School where he has taught in both the J.D. and L.L.M. programs. He is a regular speaker at continuing legal education seminars throughout Canada, has been a guest lecturer at Oxford University, and has spoken at various conferences in the United Kingdom on security matters.

He's also author of Kapoor's Criminal Appeals Review, a Lexis/Nexis Publication, from 1999 to 2005, and continues to publish extensively.

Is there still a glass ceiling that's holding back Indo-Canadians in various professions in the corporate world? "There's racism everywhere," responds Kapoor. "I don't think it is healthy to focus on that as a barrier. I believe it doesn't help to sit and start complaining 'I don't have a job because of racism'. The solution to me is work hard so that you get the next job."

**BEING ON THIS ROSTER (OF SECURITY-CLEARED SPECIAL ADVOCATES CONDUCTING NATIONAL SECURITY LITIGATIONS) IS QUITE A CREDIT TO KAPOOR SHOWING HOW MUCH HE'S RESPECTED**



## ARUN CHOKALINGAM

# Creating global awareness about hypertension

**IT COMES AS** a surprise that Dr. Arun Chokalingam, an electronics and communications graduate, is now at the University of Toronto's Department of Medicine specializing in cardiovascular diseases. But that's his passion, a passion attributed to the passing away of his father at a fairly young age of 42 when Arun was a mere five years old.

That's how global health became his passion. He joined IIT Madras to study the fundamentals of heart muscle physiology and developed a 3-D electrocardiograph. One thing led to another and Arun landed in the Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University of Newfoundland where he developed a microgram force transducer to measure the force generated by beating heart cells grown in culture.

Arun conducted a national consensus conference which became a national policy on non-pharmacological management of hypertension (lifestyle management) through proper diet, exercise, healthy behaviors, including avoidance of smoking, limited consumption of alcohol and healthy body weight. He pursued it by creating awareness about consequences of hypertension. That explains his decision to serve first as the Executive Secretary and later as the President of the Canadian Coalition for High Blood Pressure Prevention and Control, and it was in that position that Arun hosted the first World Conference on Hypertension Control in 1995 in Ottawa.

In 1992, he got together a group of like-minded colleagues

from across Canada to convene the first International Heart Health Conference in Victoria, British Columbia. The "Victoria Declaration on Heart Health", the first global public document to create awareness of heart disease and its burden, resulted from that conference. This document serves as Arun's legacy, the document that serves, and will continue to serve, the larger population immensely.

In 1999 he edited and published a book on 'Impending Global Pandemic of Cardiovascular Diseases' for the World Heart Federation and for the first time raised awareness of heart disease throughout the world and notably in the developing countries. It is because of his determination to serve that he accepted to serve for nine years (2005-2014) as Secretary General of the World Hypertension League and founded the World Hypertension Day, which is observed on May 17 each year -- the objective being to promote global awareness of hypertension.

In 2005 he was invited by the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver to be the founding Director of Global Health to establish the first graduate program in Global Health in Canada. Over the next five years, the program produced many global health scholars at masters and doctoral levels.

During this time I was fortunate to meet and work with Arun, when we co-Chaired Canada-India network initiative 2010, which was to build links between Canada and India.

*continued on page 70*



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**HE SERVED FOR NINE YEARS AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WORLD HYPERTENSION LEAGUE AND FOUNDED THE WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY, OBSERVED ON MAY 17 EACH YEAR — THE OBJECTIVE BEING TO PROMOTE GLOBAL AWARENESS OF HYPERTENSION.**

## BALDEV NAYAR

# Early advocate of liberalization in Indian planning



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**PROFESSOR BALDEV NAYAR** came to Canada in 1964 and set a high standard of academic work at McGill University in Montreal. A pioneer in India studies in Canada, he authored 20 books, numerous book chapters and articles and his work was supported by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Wikipedia notes that his works on Indian politics and Indian political economy have been very influential. His research on globalization and its domains of governance has influenced a generation of scholars. He was born in 1931 in India where his early life was marred by the tragedy of the Partition of India in 1947. His parents moved as refugees from Rawalpindi in Pakistan to Bathinda in Punjab (India). But his father died shortly after the move and Nayar became the head of the family at a young age of 16. He secured a job as a clerk in the Indian Railways to care for his mother, then took lessons in stenography and worked in the US Embassy in New Delhi. He got a chance to assist Chester Bowles (who later became US Ambassador to India) and organized his meetings, including one with Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister.

Through sheer determination and help from well wishers such as Ambassador Bowles, Nayar entered the Ph.D program at the University of Chicago where he impressed his mentors. Professor Michael Brecher, author of the well known book 'After Nehru Who?' invited Nayar to teach at McGill University where he stayed for 30 years (1964-1994) and retired as

Professor Emeritus.

Nayar is an Indian nationalist and his academic work had an India focus. He argued that India, like Japan, the US and China, sought modernization for geopolitical reasons. Power was an essential to securing autonomy. Nehru and the Congress Party of India sought modernization through centrally-controlled state planning. North American scholars believed in modernization to increase public welfare.

Nayar admired Nehru but Nehru downplayed power politics in his approach to economic and foreign affairs. Nayar made the connection between modernization and geopolitics openly. He felt that Nehru had overemphasized the role of the public sector and had a narrow view of the private sector in India.

Writing and publishing in India in a difficult political environment when Nehruvian socialism and Indian Leftists dominated the political and public space and the political elite was arrogant about the role of the public sector, Nayar showed that the Indian private sector did better than the public sector in key areas like steel production.

Nayar was an early advocate of liberalization and globalization in Indian planning and the importance of the politics of economic decision-making.

*(Contributed by Prof. Ashok Kapur. Distinguished Professor of Political Science, University of Waterloo)*

**NAYAR WAS AN EARLY ADVOCATE OF LIBERALIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION IN INDIAN PLANNING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE POLITICS OF ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING**



## CHITRA ANAND

# Inspiring women to support each other

**CHITRA ANAND, 42**, is a leader among women of influence. She has been featured as a keynote speaker at Women of Influence events as well as the Women's Executive network, two of Canada's leading organizations that promote, mentor and support women in the workplace.

"These organizations really try to inspire women and provide mentorship and coaching in order to support each other. We need to evolve our role from being mentors to sponsors. Being a sponsor means that you are invested and that you have a responsibility in the support and promotion of women," explains Anand. "At such mentorship conferences, where I am invited to the podium, I share my own story... my highs and lows, some failures that I have had and what I have learned most along the way. I try and inspire women, particularly the new generation that recently graduated as they may need some direction. I try to provide some sense of direction to women in the workforce who have certain challenges in their careers and guidance on how to overcome them."

Anand believes there are women who still shy away from careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. While this topic is getting a lot of attention, there is still a lot of work to do. "Efforts are under way to equalize diversity among women in the workplace but in the technology sector, because most of the jobs are engineering and technically-oriented, they attract men. Now organizations like Microsoft are trying to

promote women to take interest in those fields."

Anand is head of Public Relations, Communications and Corporate Reputation at Microsoft Canada. In this position, she creates stories and experiences by engaging with key influencers, media and in the digital space. Projects she has guided there have been awarded IABC Gold Quill Awards and Canadian Public Relations Society Awards of Excellence.

Anand is helping change the way large organizations and brands do business. Within Microsoft, she's known as an entrepreneur. "My thinking is entrepreneurial as I am not afraid to take some element of risk. I always ask provocative questions and challenge conventional thinking."

Anand has an MBA from The Kellogg School of Management and is currently pursuing her PhD at Bradford University in the UK. Her topic is Entrepreneurship which is around the idea that taking an entrepreneurial approach within a large organization is fundamental in today's marketplace.

Passionate about academia, she has taught several business courses at both Seneca and Humber College in Toronto in their post graduate business programs.

Anand's work has been featured in several publications and newspapers such as the Globe and Mail, Canadian Government Executive, The Huffington Post, the CBC TV and Marketing Magazine. She's also an exclusive speaker with the Lavin Agency and speaks on this topic regularly at conferences and conventions throughout North America.



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**ANAND IS A WIDELY RESPECTED, SUCCESSFUL FEMALE MARKETING EXPERT WHO IS HELPING CHANGE THE WAY LARGE ORGANIZATIONS AND BRANDS DO BUSINESS**



## DEEPAK GUPTA

# Providing leadership to entrepreneurial initiatives



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**DR. DEEPAK GUPTA**, whose experience includes industry and academia, start-ups and large enterprises, products and services, has provided leadership to innovation, productivity, and entrepreneurial initiatives. His contributions have influenced manufacturing, energy, health, education, and information technology sectors.

Gupta is the Director for Applied Research, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Services at the Centennial College in Toronto. He oversees three centers, including the College's Center of Entrepreneurship which has, on an average, helped launch 185 start-ups every year. It is quite a feat – 185 start-ups is not a small number.

"Every year, our Ontario Self-Employment Benefits team has helped around 185 individual start-ups. We engage directly with these entrepreneurs. We had a 97% start-up success with this program, meaning they are generating revenue by the time they graduate," explains Gupta. He also played a founding leadership role in the College's new youth start-up accelerator named ACCEL and the unique Wearable, Interactive, and Mobile Technologies Access Center for Health. Previously, as the Director of Applied Research Services, Gupta guided NAIT in Edmonton in building applied research capacity. He took them to the final round of a prestigious \$2.3-million program through which Gupta has brought them together. He has also helped creation of operational

foundations for NAIT's \$18 million applied Research Chair program to seat industry-endowed researchers.

"One of NAIT'S applied research strategies was to create six industry-endowed research chairs, each supported by a \$3-million endowment. While we had a development office at NAIT that engaged donors to create these endowments, my role was to create the organizational structures to operationalize these chairs, address intellectual property policy frameworks, develop models for sustainability, and identify research infrastructure and human resourcing models such as reporting structure, models for other staff and linkages with academic programs," Gupta says.

At NAIT, one of Gupta's roles was to build a research program in green chemistry and engineering. As part of this project, he brought on board 20 partners and through them he raised about \$4.3-million in matching cash/in-kind contributions to go after a \$2.3-million competitive applied research grant from Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. His work also resulted in the creation of a now thriving research center located in the Edmonton Research Park.

Gupta has a degree in Chemical Engineering from IIT Kharagpur; as well as Masters and doctoral degrees in Chemical Engineering from Washington University in St. Louis. Gupta is recipient of several awards.

**HIS CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE INFLUENCED MANUFACTURING, ENERGY, HEALTH, EDUCATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTORS**



## **DESHBANDHU SIKKA**

# Vision and Straight Talk

**DR. DESHBANDHU SIKKA'S** commitment to modernize India's mining sector began in 1960 and continues still at the age of 90. He is a world renowned geologist and mining expert whose international work includes in countries such as Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Greece, Sudan, Norway, Sweden, the USA and India. Despite obstacles in his dealings with Indian government agencies, Sikka's work has made a lasting contribution to India's mining sector.

He first went to the Colorado School of Mines where Dr. Kermit Herness was instrumental in getting Sikka interested in Economic Geology with a focus on Mining and Petroleum Geology.

Sikka did his MS in Geological Sciences at New York University and his Ph.D. at McGill University in Montreal in 1960 where he pioneered the development of gamma-ray spectrometry for oil, gas and mineral exploration with applications to soil mapping and potential use of radon as a precursor in earthquake prediction.

His mentor was none other than then Industries Minister of Tamil Nadu, R. Venkataraman, who later became the President of India. Sikka accepted a job offer from the National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC). He was also with the Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) but the work in India proved challenging for this man after his 13 years of education and experience in the US. To his bosses in India, Sikka's experience was theoretical and they did not want him to

question any of their practices or reports.

Despite these obstacles and opposition from the Geological Survey of India (GSI) and the Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) and their governing agencies, Sikka succeeded in introducing modern technology, airborne geophysical surveys, geochemical surveys and deep diamond drilling.

He discovered magnetite iron ore deposits for pelletizing at Kudremukh, Karnataka and the giant world class Malanjkhand porphyry copper /molybdenum/gold deposit with close to a billion tonnes @0.83 %Cu in Madhya Pradesh. The recommendation to develop the Malanjkhand mine as an open pit operation was rejected by the GSI. Sikka reminds people that he was the one who originally discovered the billion tonne Malanjkhand deposit.

With all kinds of obstructions in his innovative ideas, Sikka decided to return to Montreal to carry on his work in the geological field.

Sikka has promoted India's mining sector and its mineral wealth. "Many amongst the Indian Diaspora have skills, knowledge and experience which would be beneficial to India. Because of parochial interests, their patriotic fervor should not be questioned," he says.

*This has been contributed by Indira Singh, Principal,  
Mining Consultancy International Inc. of Canada*



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**HIS CONTINUING EFFORTS, EVEN AT AGE 90 YEARS, HAVE MADE  
A LASTING CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA'S MINING SECTOR**



**DILIP SOMAN**

## Econs and Humans



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**PROF. DILIP SOMAN** is an acclaimed researcher on Behavioral Insights and Behavioral Economics. His research interests, he says, are in “documenting interesting human behaviors, understanding why they happen, and using those findings to help people make better choices.” He has worked with several governments, not-for-profit and welfare agencies in helping them design behaviorally informed products and processes and he’s a leading figure worldwide in the new field of behavioral economics or “nudge” economics.

He makes a distinction between econs and humans who live on the pages of economics textbooks, and humans, who, unlike econs, are emotional, impulsive, short sighted and often times, just cognitively lazy. Soman disagrees with scholars who term human behavior irrational. Instead, to him, “expecting other people to be rational is perhaps the prime example of irrationality.” When viewed in this manner, companies, governments, regulatory bodies and even markets are often irrational! Understanding the behavioral insights, that form the basis of choices, can help these agents better interact with their stakeholders.

Understanding the behavioral insights, that form the basis of choices, can help these agents better.

In his works, Soman explains why people’s spending patterns are different as a function of how they pay (payment methods) and income patterns (for example, regular monthly wage earners versus daily laborers). He also shows how people can save more

money simply by segregating income; or can consume less unhealthy foods by dividing this into smaller portions.

He has widely spoken on these issues on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, at several national and international conferences, and at the OECD. He advises the Behavioral Insights Unit at the Ontario government, the Innovation Hub in the Federal government as well as several U.S. government agencies in behavioral insights.

In collaboration with several faculty at the University of Toronto, Soman, Professor at Rotman School of Management, has developed a new agenda for innovating for the global south, with a particular focus on India. As the founding director of the India Innovation Institute, he is visible in the community circuit and is active in intellectual events relating to India.

Soman is the author of several books. His most recent book is titled “The Last Mile: Creating Social and Economic Value from Behavioral Insights” (University of Toronto Press, 2015).

He received his BE in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Bombay, a Post Graduate Diploma in Management from the Indian Institute of Management (Ahmedabad) and a Ph.D. in Behavioral Sciences from the University of Chicago’s Graduate School of Business.

Soman has previously served on the faculties of the University of Colorado and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. He has been a distinguished visiting professor at the National University of Singapore and the University of Chicago.

**IN HIS WORKS, SOMAN EXPLAINS WHY PEOPLE’S SPENDING PATTERNS ARE DIFFERENT AS A FUNCTION OF HOW THEY PAY (PAYMENT METHODS) AND INCOME PATTERNS**



## DOLLY DASTOOR

# Trailblazer in Dementia Care

**FROM MUMBAI TO** Montreal, Dr. Dolly P. Dastoor has blazed a trail of leadership, achievement and compassion over seven decades. Her life is guided by helping people cope with emotional suffering, supporting the empowerment of women and gender equality and making the Zoroastrian faith relevant to the community's youth in North America.

Dastoor is well known in the psychiatric community for her prominent work in Dementia and Alzheimer's disease. At a lecture on "Secrets of Successful Aging" at McGill University (April 2014), Dastoor said, "...there are no secrets to aging gracefully. Just as being successful at anything, you have to really work at the things that will help you age well... Active people are generally the happiest ones. In this way maintaining and cultivating a person's social network is also essential in aging gracefully." After obtaining a Master's degree in Psychology (1964) from the University of Bombay, Dastoor moved with her husband to Nigeria where she worked for World Health Organization (WHO) as Senior Research Fellow, Department of Psychiatry, University of Ibadan. Dastoor's career began after immigrating to Canada (1973) to work as Clinical Psychologist in the Memory Clinic of Douglas Hospital, specializing in the assessment of dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease. For outstanding contributions to this field, she was awarded the C.A. Roberts Award for Clinical Leadership in 1990. Notably, while doing a full-time job, Dastoor completed a PhD in Clinical Psychology at Concordia University in 1998, the same year as two of her children graduated with doctorates. Together with Dr.

Martin G. Cole, Dastoor developed an important and current assessment tool, the Hierarchic Dementia Scale (1996), by studying models of cognitive decline with geriatric patients to obtain a prognostic and functional picture of the dementia patient. In 2001, she set up the program in Dementia with Psychiatric Co-morbidity at the Douglas Mental Health University Institute and served as Co-Director until retirement (2013).

Dastoor says, "People often ask don't I find it depressing working with elderly demented patients? I've never felt it was depressing work. Some of the patients have gone through such tremendous hardships in their lives before becoming ill, and, in spite of it all, there is so much resilience of human spirit to be able to live, and to smile, that it's something to envy. I've always found the work exhilarating."

Dastoor served as Founding Member/President of the Alzheimer Society of Montreal (1986-91); Chair of the Psychology Division, Canadian Association of Gerontology (1985-87); Secretary/Treasurer, Adult Division, Canadian Psychological Association (1994-2005); and VP, Shelter for Battered Women (1993-95). Being a practising Zoroastrian, Dastoor served as President of ZAQ (1978-1985), Secretary and President of Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (1994-1998), and Editor of FEZANA Journal (2005-present).

*(Contributed by: Beverley Colquhoun, Vice President, Zonta Club of Montreal)*



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**HER LIFE IS GUIDED BY HELPING PEOPLE COPE WITH EMOTIONAL SUFFERING, SUPPORTING THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY AND MAKING THE ZOROASTRIAN FAITH RELEVANT TO THE COMMUNITY'S YOUTH IN NORTH AMERICA**



## GAGAN BHALLA

# Orthodontist and a yoga teacher



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**DR. GAGAN BHALLA** is an orthodontist in suburban Mississauga (Ontario) with a very busy practice but his first love is yoga. He spends most of his spare time teaching people how to live a healthy life.

He's Vice President and on the Board of Directors of Patanjali Yog Peeth Canada. He was also the National Yog Teacher's Coordinator, Canada. In these positions, he strives to create awareness and educate Canadians on the holistic benefits of yoga.

The first ever Patanjali Yoga Teachers' Training camp was held outside of Toronto in 2008, which was a few months after Swami Ramdev, founder of Patanjali Yogpeeth, held a yoga camp in Toronto. Since then, Bhalla has personally conducted 400+ yoga sessions/seminars/workshops free of cost that have positively impacted the lives of over 8,000 people. Under his guidance, over 900 people across Canada have been trained as yoga teachers.

Bhalla's yoga training is not geared towards individuals only. He also conducts yoga seminars/workshops in hospitals, schools, corporations and various organizations. "One must care for the most valuable, expensive and best gift God has given to us – our body," he says. So, his advice is "people should take to Patanjali Yoga, in which the emphasis is on breathing exercises which anybody, in any age group, can do (once learned properly) without hurting his/her body."

Bhalla recites benefits of simple yoga exercises: "a fit mind, a fit body; balanced mind, body and soul though which we can achieve a disease-free healthy body, calm mind and peaceful soul." He's optimistic that if yoga is practised regularly by Canadians it would make Canada one of the healthiest nations in the world.

Bhalla, with scores of others, lobbied in support of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolution that he tabled in the UN General Assembly in 2014, to designate June 21 as International Day of Yoga. As many as 177 nations supported this initiative. Yoga, they all believe, is a physical, mental, and spiritual practice that originated in India and now has gone global. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said International Day of Yoga would bring attention to yoga's holistic benefits.

Bhalla supports a number of charities. These include the Credit Valley Hospital, Child Haven International, and Mississauga-Erin Mills Lions Club.

As part of his dental profession, Bhalla has received many recognitions, including the prestigious Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Gold Medal that was conferred on him in the House of Lords in London.

As a dedicated yoga teacher, he intensely believes in Yoga and Ayurveda: the ancient Indian science of healing naturally. He believes simple yoga exercises can make people healthy and disease-free.

**AS A PROFESSIONAL ORTHODONTIST, BHALLA TAKES CARE OF DENTAL HEALTH OF HIS PATIENTS. AS A DEDICATED YOGA TEACHER, HE INTENSELY BELIEVES IN YOGA AND AYURVEDA: THE ANCIENT INDIAN SCIENCE OF HEALING NATURALLY**



## **GOPAL BHATNAGAR**

# No ordinary man, no ordinary surgeon

**THE ODDS WERE** stacked against him. A small-statured South Asian immigrant in an all-white school, Gopal Bhatnagar was an easy target for bullies hoping to squash his dreams. Little did they know how difficult that would be?

Gopal later entered the Canadian reserve forces, learned the merits of hard work and discipline, lessons that would serve him well throughout his life. Despite coming from a family of engineers, Gopal decided to study medicine at the University of Western Ontario, and subsequently trained in cardiac surgery at the University of Toronto.

Gopal Bhatnagar is a shining example of how Canada supports hard-working, determined and motivated immigrants. Upon completing his surgical training, he quickly gained a reputation as a highly skilled cardiac surgeon on staff at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto. In 2000, he was appointed chief of cardiac surgery at a fledgling new program at the Trillium Health Centre in Mississauga, Ontario. It being one of the first community hospitals in the province to start a cardiac surgery program, all eyes were on Bhatnagar as he assembled his team and prepared for the monumental task of starting a cardiac surgery program from scratch.

Gopal is no ordinary man, and certainly no ordinary surgeon. Rather than taking the safe route of modelling his program in the shadows of successful university programs, he decided that the Trillium cardiac surgery program would

distinguish itself across the country. Being extensively trained in beating heart surgery (off-pump surgery), a fairly recent advance back in the year 2000, he and his team built the largest beating heart surgery program in Canada.

Over the next few years, the surgical program became one of the highest volumes, and most recognized, programs in the country. Gopal made sure to attract the best talent in novel surgical techniques and established his reputation as not only an outstanding surgeon, but an inspiring and visionary leader. It is not surprising that he eventually rose to the rank of Chief of Staff at Trillium, one of the country's largest community hospitals.

Gopal has been recognized with numerous awards, and has co-chaired the Trillium Diwali gala, one of the largest South Asian fund-raising events in Canada. However, his many successes have not gone to his head. Having modest roots, he remains humble, kind, and gentle. He gives back to the community in many ways, and remains the strongest advocate for heart healthy living and prevention.

Dr. Gopal Bhatnagar has come a long way from the boy being bullied in the schoolyard. And we are all the more fortunate for it.

*(Contributed by Dr. Milan Gupta, highly applauded cardiologist at Brampton (Ontario) Civic Hospital)*



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**DR. GOPAL BHATNAGAR IS A SHINING EXAMPLE OF HOW CANADA SUPPORTS HARD-WORKING, DETERMINED AND MOTIVATED IMMIGRANTS**



## HARI KRISHNAN

# The speaking eyes



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2016

**AS AN AWARD-WINNING** dance-maker and the artistic director of Toronto-based InDANCE Company, Hari Krishnan is frequently commissioned to create works on soloists and companies around the world.

“My dance training is extensive, varied and eclectic. My Eastern psyche is informed by Asian cultures in primarily India, China, Singapore, Malaysia and Japan. In the West, I love contemporary dance from Europe and am obsessively addicted to the avant-garde performance arts scene in New York City – all these influences go into the complex mix of the global language that I speak with as a choreographer,” Krishnan explains.

He describes his choreography as subversive and transgressive. These adjectives are supported by well-known scholars and dance teachers, like Dr. Ketu Katrak, Professor of Theatre at the University of California, Irvine. Krishnan’s “work is playful, subversive, and intellectually exciting in pushing boundaries of gender and sexuality, and narrow stereotypes of the ‘nation’. He subverts classical Bharatanatyam when he interprets lyric poetry not via abhinaya, as is done traditionally, but conveying the story and emotions via nritta.”

“Krishnan ably flips post-modern considerations about deconstruction, crossing and blurring forms through his

gestures and attitudes,” says Phillip Szporer, Instructor of Contemporary Dance at Concordia University, Montreal.

Krishnan holds a Master’s degree in dance from York University in Toronto and is completing his PhD in the dance department at Texas Woman’s University.

He is also Associate Professor of Dance in the Department of Dance at Wesleyan University (Connecticut) since 2001.

Krishnan’s gurus include K.P. Kittappa Pillai and R. Muttukanammal. With them, he studied courtesan-style classical Bharatanatyam. After years of appearing on the world stage, and blossoming into a renowned choreographer with dozens of works to his credit, he discourages the use of the word ‘purity’. “The idea of ‘purity’ panders to a dangerous, narrow-minded, limited world view, which fosters fundamentalism.” He, on the other hand, aspires “to excellence in art making, with uncompromising work, reflecting authentic self-introspection”.

The Book of Sandalwood, his most recent choreography, which premiered in Toronto (May, 2015) traverses a diverse landscape of classical, colonial and contemporary South Asian poetry. In its review of his 2013 choreography *The Frog Princess*, the New York Times wrote that Krishnan “has the speaking eyes, the flourishing gesture, the cascading and pounding rhythm to make Bharatanatyam compelling... even with an isolated finger”.

**KRISHNAN “HAS THE SPEAKING EYES, THE FLOURISHING GESTURE, THE CASCADING AND POUNDING RHYTHM TO MAKE BHARATANATYAM COMPELLING... EVEN WITH AN ISOLATED FINGER”**



## HARJEET BHABRA

# Representing immigrant communities

**IN RECENT YEARS**, visible minorities in Quebec have had to confront new challenges related to maintaining their faith and culture and growing professionally at the same time. Starting with the debate on reasonable accommodation in 2007 to the more recent Charter of Quebec Values proposed by the previous Party Quebecois government in 2013, the immigrant communities in Quebec have had to constantly fight for their fundamental rights.

Harjeet Bhabra moved to Canada in 1997 after accepting a tenure-track position in the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University, where he is now Associate Dean of Research and Research Programs. In his earlier position as MBA Director, Bhabra introduced the Accelerated MBA Program and the Co-Op MBA Program. As an Associate Dean now, he's pleased that a new Masters in Supply Chain Management will be introduced in 2016.

Bhabra's research is mainly in the area of corporate finance, on issues such as mergers and acquisitions, financing choices, corporate governance and social networks. He has published a number of research papers in peer-reviewed journals and presented at numerous international and national conferences. He has been invited to present his research in universities in Australia and New Zealand and on teaching assignments in Austria and France.

Among leaders of the growing Indo-Quebec community,

Bhabra has played and continues to play a leading role in voicing the concerns of the community. "As a visible minority myself, I fully understand these challenges as I live with them on an ongoing basis. It may be difficult for Canadians outside Quebec to relate to the issues facing us. We need to remember that while immigration populations grew significantly in the rest of the country decades ago, it is only happening now in Quebec. So these changes for the host society here are quite new," he explains.

Bhabra has served as President and on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Sikh Council, a non-profit volunteer organization serving as a voice for Sikhs in Canada. He proposed and presented plans to the Quebec government on how they could effectively attract highly trained French-speaking immigrants from the South Asian subcontinent in a cost-effective manner and they would be ready to integrate into the Quebec labor force.

Bhabra obtained his PhD in finance from the University of Missouri-Columbia, MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore and his engineering degree in naval architecture from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur in India. Prior to arriving in the U.S., he worked as a design engineer for a leading shipbuilding company in Mumbai.

Quite a change from shipbuilding.



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**AMONGST LEADERS OF THE GROWING INDO-QUEBEC COMMUNITY, BHABRA HAS PLAYED AND CONTINUES TO PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN VOICING THE CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY**



## INDIRA NAIDOO-HARRIS

# Ambassador for equality



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**INDIRA NAIDOO-HARRIS** is passionate when she talks about her experience living in South Africa, the country of her birth. She talks about places that she couldn't visit due to the apartheid regime: "Things like not being able to sit on a bench in the public park, beaches we couldn't use, restaurants where we wouldn't be served – all because of the color of our skin," Naidoo-Harris explains. She points out that while some of these things may seem small they add up to something much bigger – oppression.

It is that discriminatory policy that led her family to leave South Africa way back in 1967. Naidoo-Harris was just a child. "My father was a lecturer in a college. My mother was a school teacher. We had a beautiful house, nannies and gardeners. So, we had a good life but it is not your bank account, or how grand your house is that decides how you feel about yourself. If there's no equality, you don't have dignity and self-respect," she relates.

Naidoo-Harris is now an elected member of the Ontario Legislature (from Halton in Ontario). She's also the Parliamentary Assistant to Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Eric Hoskins.

"Sometimes we hear that democracy is only for a few. Having gone through the process myself, having started out in a country where I had no voice and I wasn't treated with respect, I didn't have the ability to participate in the democratic process and then to go to a new country (Canada) that gave

us the opportunity and to be actually able to seize those opportunities, is fantastic," Naidoo-Harris says. She first contested for the Ontario Legislature as a Liberal Party candidate in 2011 but lost. Many friends convinced her to give it a second try. "I really felt there was a need for a change locally. I felt it was time our local politics was reflective of change that was happening in this riding. I believed there should be someone at Queen's Park who should work tirelessly for the people."

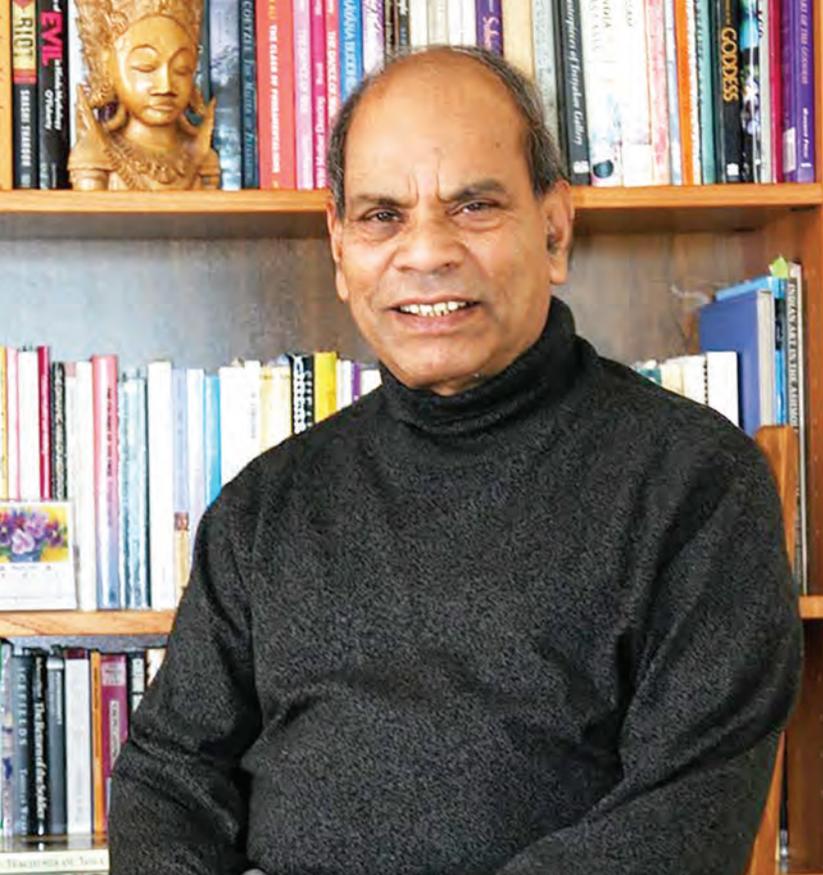
So she became the Liberal candidate again in the June 2014 election and won by a wide margin.

Naidoo-Harris is a journalist and a broadcaster, having worked for CBC-TV, CTV, TVO, NBC, CBC Radio and as a news anchor with the OMNI Television.

She says being able to sit in the Ontario Legislature as an elected official is an incredibly humbling experience. "If you are willing to work hard, good things would happen," she believes. "I just didn't know how far I could actually go. I say to myself I am going to work tirelessly and let's see what happens. It is a powerful story for me and my family."

Naidoo-Harris would tell people who still complain of discrimination in Canada that they shouldn't think about limits others may put on them: "Think about what you can achieve on your own. We control our own destiny. We have to believe in hard work, perseverance and strong values and not think about the negatives."

**"IT IS NOT YOUR BANK ACCOUNT, OR HOW GRAND YOUR HOUSE IS THAT DECIDES HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF. IF THERE'S NO EQUALITY, YOU DON'T HAVE DIGNITY AND SELF-RESPECT..."**



## JAGANNATH PRASAD DAS

# Developing a new theory of intelligence

**PROF. JAGANNATH PRASAD DAS** received Order of Canada in 2015, the highest civilian award in the country, and the citation credited his “internationally recognized work in the field of cognitive psychology, notably in the development of a new theory of intelligence”.

The award nomination committee might have also noticed the exceptional number of scholars that Das, Education Psychologist Emeritus at the University of Alberta, has trained and influenced over 45 years, and the publications, including 10 books and 300-plus scientific papers that he has authored.

His specialization in the field of educational psychology encompasses intelligence and childhood development. He concentrates his research on children with learning disabilities and mental retardation. Das was born in Puri (in Odisha state of India) in January 1931, studied for his graduate degree in India, did his PhD from London, and then taught in the US and India. In 1968, he got a call from the University of Alberta which was looking for a scholar and researcher for its new center on mental retardation. That’s where he developed his “PASS theory of intelligence and the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System”.

“For a long time, many people believed that intelligence is fixed, it is fixed at a very early age and it doesn’t change. I disagree,” argues Das. “Intelligence depends so much on the environment in which you grow up, the kind of education you

have, and the type of culture you are born in.”

About how a child’s intelligence is shaped, Das discusses functioning of the brain. The assumption is that although the brain functions as a whole, it has different parts dedicated to different activities. Even when a part of the brain may be damaged, that person can still talk, see and hear. But this person may not be able to comprehend.

His signature PASS theory is explained briefly as “Planning and decision-making, judgment; attention, basis of all human understanding, and active activities; Simultaneous to putting things together to see a pattern and sequences”. What does intelligence have to do with language and culture? A lot, says Das. “Culture has much to do with why a middle-class child may be better at language and vocabulary.” We may, according to Das, pronounce a person mentally retarded based on his/her IQ but we ignore that this person has some abilities. He/she seeks a job as a teacher’s assistant in Kindergarten. You know why? “Because he/she remembers all the rhymes,” Das explains.

Das retired from the University of Alberta in 1998 but he still works there as Professor Emeritus as his interest in intelligence and learning disabilities hasn’t diminished.

He visits India each year to work with researchers at his alma mater Utkal University in Odisha where he has been running a research center for 18 years.



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**DAS DISAGREES INTELLIGENCE IS FIXED AT AN EARLY AGE. TO HIM IT “DEPENDS SO MUCH ON ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH YOU GROW UP, THE KIND OF EDUCATION YOU HAVE...”**



## KASI RAO

# Strategist and Team Builder



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**A FEW THINGS** stand out in Kasi Rao's career: He has provided advice to a wide range of sectors - public and private sectors, including business associations, universities, governments and not-for-profit organizations.

With his excellent analytic frame of mind, Rao played a key role in organizing the first Convention for the Indian Diaspora in North America "Building Bridges: Positioning Strategies for the Indian Diaspora" - held in Toronto in June 2011. The Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce organized the conference and it received plaudits from the Indian Government, including recognition from the President of India. Rao's leadership role was recognized and applauded.

As the founding Executive Director of the Beacon Project funded by General Motors at the Ontario Institute of Technology, Rao led a collaborative initiative relating to the automotive sector in 2005. Those who know him well say Rao is a strong-willed individual with a flair for team-building. No wonder that at a very young age, he was recruited by the Cabinet Secretariat of the Ontario Government and then worked in the Office of the Ontario Premier. After that, the Ontario Government named him their Senior Policy Adviser in their trade office in New York.

The University of Toronto, where he completed his Masters, recruited him as Director in their President's office,

and Rao simultaneously served as Director of Government Relations. After working there for several years, Rao decided to change to Bank of Montreal. Here too, he was Director in the office of the Bank's President.

Rao is a quintessential practitioner with an eye on the big picture as well as details and commitment to those he provides advice. He has worked on the Asian Advisory Council of Saskatchewan that reported directly to the provincial premier.

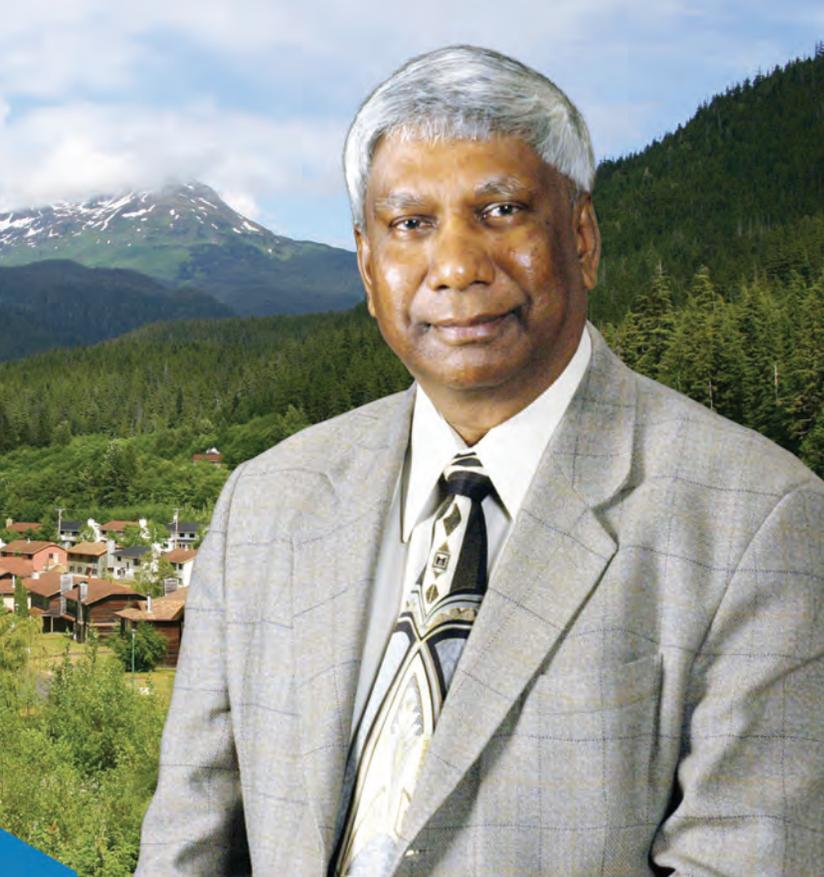
He is a tenacious crusader for strengthening Canada-India relations and for building sustainable and robust partnership between the two countries. He is a highly sought-after adviser with companies and organizations seeking his guidance on strategic issues on India.

Rao currently serves as Vice-President and Director for Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada's Toronto Office, which is just one part of what all he finds time to do.

He willingly provides guidance to important non-profit Indo-Canadian Organizations in their India-related work.

*(Contributed by Kant Kishore Bhargava who served as secretary-general of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and has been Indian ambassador to several countries)*

**KASI RAO IS A TENACIOUS CRUSADER FOR STRENGTHENING CANADA-INDIA RELATIONS AND FOR BUILDING SUSTAINABLE AND ROBUST PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES**



## KRISHNAN SUTHANTHIRAN

# Using obstacles as opportunity

**KRISHNAN SUTHANTHIRAN** came to Canada in 1969 with \$400 in his pocket. He now owns the entire island of Kitsault in British Columbia, with 90 houses, 150 condos, medical clinic, shopping center, restaurants, and a recreational center. He is using the town and infrastructure for his Kitsault Energy project which, once completed in the next 7 to 10 years, will become an export terminal connected to an energy corridor running from northeast British Columbia and northwest Alberta to Kitsault.

Kitsault Island had become a ghost town after it was abandoned by AMAX mining company and its inhabitants when, in the 1980s, the price of Molybdenum (used for strengthening steel) collapsed in the international market.

Suthanthiran, who did his Masters in Mechanical Engineering from Carleton University in Ottawa in 1971 and moved to Springfield, Virginia in New Jersey in 1972, established Best Medical International in Springfield in 1977. Since then, he has established many companies worldwide and has invested several million dollars in medical, real estate, construction, entertainment and energy companies. Interestingly, he decided to buy the ghost town of Kitsault in 2005 after seeing its value and potential.

“Despite my moving to the US 40 years back, I always have had the Canada bug and that induced me to buy the town,” explains Suthanthiran.

Suthanthiran is keen on revitalizing Kitsault with its spectacular ocean-front. He looked into using the town as a permanent northern destination “with spectacular sports, including world-

class fishing, world-class water and helicopter skiing – Kitsault could be used as a resort place”. With the launch of Kitsault Energy, those plans have to co-exist. Suthanthiran’s efforts now are to bring a “pipeline from port Kitsault to convert natural gas into liquefied gas, and shipping that to customers in Asia”. “The pipeline through Kitsault can be shorter by 100 to 200 kilometres ...and it can save a significant amount from the total cost of the project and save two to three years in project planning, construction of pipelines, and other facilities. Working with Canadians, including First Nations, this will bring significant benefits to Canada,” claims Suthanthiran.

He has made millions, but he also gives away millions helping poor people through his not-for-profit “Best Cure Foundation”. He’s committed to making quality healthcare and education affordable and accessible globally. He has launched the Total Health Program as a pioneering effort to focus on “Best Cure Foundation’s goal of prevention, early detection, and effective treatment to achieve total cure for cancer”.

“Life is a gift from our parents. We are born to live, enjoy and cherish our gift. We can look at every obstacle as an opportunity or every opportunity as an obstacle,” says Suthanthiran.

Also under his Best Cure Foundation, Suthanthiran is promoting the development and advancement of women under a program which is in the name of his mother. In the name of his father, who died of cancer, Suthanthiran has launched a Global War on Cancer and has made fighting cancer his main pursuit.



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**“LIFE IS A GIFT FROM OUR PARENTS. WE ARE BORN TO LIVE, ENJOY AND CHERISH OUR GIFT. WE CAN LOOK AT EVERY OBSTACLE AS AN OPPORTUNITY OR EVERY OPPORTUNITY AS AN OBSTACLE.”**



» Photo from one scene from "Listen to Me"

## LALITA KRISHNA

# Filmmaker par excellence

**IN HER BIOGRAPHICAL** note, Lalita Krishna, 60, has been described as a "multiple award-winning filmmaker whose work has been broadcast in Canada on all major networks, and featured at film festivals around the world."

She is in the news for directing a 43-minute-long documentary 'Listen to Me' (*Meri Awaz Suno*) that has been proclaimed as the 'Best Canadian documentary' at the Reel World Film Festival, 2015, and which was premiered recently at the Scotia Theatre, downtown Toronto.

Krishna has since 1989, when she migrated to Canada with her husband, directed more than 15 documentaries.

Back home in India, she was a news anchor with Doordarshan in New Delhi. Unlike scores of new migrants, Krishna was fortunate as she got a break in her own field of filmmaking within less than six months of setting foot on Canadian soil. She was hired as a producer by TV Ontario where she worked for six years. "It was my Canadian immersion training, worked on lots and lots of programs and it was really fantastic working on different shows, live shows and I had to go out during the day, edit in the night and put out the show the next day. I also did live video conferencing."

Krishna's last stint on TV Ontario was her creating a feminist 12-part series of documentaries that had a ripple effect. "That's how I realized the value and significance of

documentaries and I became script writer and film director. I haven't looked back," she says. A documentary that Krishna is very fond of is "Tiger", the story of a professional wrestler who came to Canada with nothing. Through hard work and discipline, Tiger Jeet Singh became a professional wrestler and is now better known, believe it, in Japan than in Canada or elsewhere. Krishna traveled with him a few years back to all parts of Japan for filming and shooting the film and so she knows first-hand how the Japanese follow Tiger.

Her other film is "Ryan", which is about a 6-year-old boy who, Krishna says, changed her life. "He made me think about the youth, how anybody, even a 6 to 8 year old, can make a difference in the world. In 2013, Krishna received the 'Crystal award for Mentorship'. She's proud that this award was recognition of the guidance that she has provided to aspiring filmmakers of diverse backgrounds. In 2012, Reel World Film Festival acclaimed Krishna as the 'Trailblazer'; also the 'Dream catcher award' that she received from the Hope and Dreams festival of New Jersey for using her craft for better humanity.

She's happy with her latest film "Listen to Me" as this is a subject that impacts the lives of millions and millions of women in all parts of the world: Forced marriage and violence against women are so common in the world.

**SHE'S HAPPY WITH HER LATEST FILM "LISTEN TO ME" AS THIS IS A SUBJECT THAT IMPACTS THE LIVES OF MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF WOMEN IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.**



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## MANASVI NOEL

# Never-say-die beauty queen

**WITH A SCREW IN** her knee and her knee cap, Manasvi Noel performed belly dance in front of 700 people and got a standing ovation. Quite a praise-worthy act of courage and determination for this 24-year-old woman who finally won the prestigious title of Miss India-Canada 2015, the title she had been coveting for 10 years. There were a total of 16 finalists (contestants). They had to go through three grueling rounds – evening gown, talent competition and public speaking which saw contestants responding to questions from a panel of 9 judges. Noel was born in Dubai. The family migrated to Canada when she was very young. She is adventurous and a risk-taker. That explains her deep interest in belly dancing for which Noel chose to go to Mumbai to learn this Egyptian-origin dance style from well-known teacher Veronica Simas DeSouza of ‘Veve Dance’ (Bollywood Choreographer of *‘Sheila ki Jawani’*, *‘Tees Maar Khan’* fame).

“She taught me to believe in my talent and capabilities. She pushed me till I gained confidence in myself and began to excel and started my own dance classes in Mumbai.”

To her bad luck, Noel broke her leg in 2014 during a dance course. “I had to go through a knee surgery. After the surgery, I went into depression as for 8 months I was not able to dance, teach or even walk,” Noel explains.

She was, however, determined to get back to her normal self. And that she did as Noel now wears the crown and the sash of Miss India-Canada 2015.

The title gives her ready public platforms all over Canada and in India, platforms from which she is able to talk to Indo-Canadian and Indian women, women in general: “Believe in you. Be proud of who you are. Love what you do and how you do it.” Noel says that in the Indo-Canadian community, “confidence is not taught. I want to promote empowerment. We are all skilled and talented individuals, talent that eventually creates you and your personality.”

Noel has graduated in performing arts and drama. She wants to have her own academy for freestyle dancing through which students can learn different Indian, traditional dance forms, merging them together as fusion.

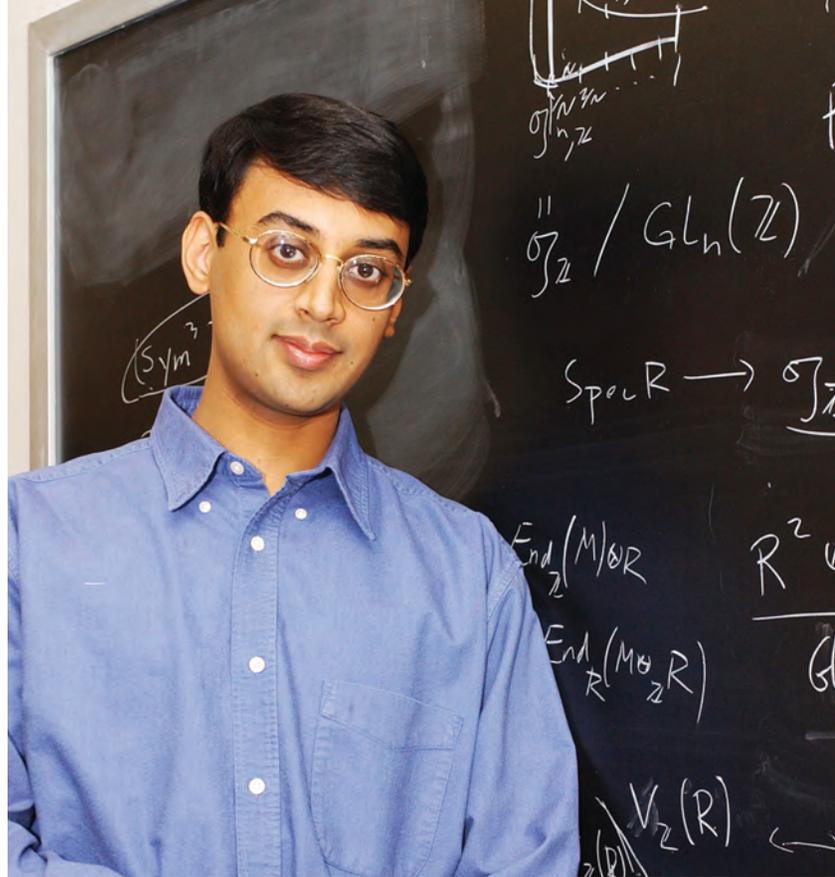
About belly dance, Noel quotes Carolena Nericcio-Bohlman: “There was a time in history, a long time ago, when the bounce and sway of a woman’s hips was considered so beautiful that they set it to music and made a dance out of it.”

Belly dance is part of Egyptian history, where mothers helped daughters prepare their womb for child-birth and labor. “I promote belly dance as it makes women feel confident, bold, beautiful and sexy. They no longer depend on external reassurance to feel this way,” explains Noel. Unlike many of her predecessors, Bollywood is not Noel’s priority: “I want to stay in Canada and work here with the police services or media. While growing up I realized that most people only talk about justice but they do nothing about it. I am serious about pursuing this ambition (of going to Bollywood) later in life.



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**NOEL SAYS IN THE INDO-CANADIAN COMMUNITY, “CONFIDENCE IS NOT TAUGHT. I WANT TO PROMOTE EMPOWERMENT. WE ARE ALL SKILLED AND TALENTED INDIVIDUALS, TALENT THAT EVENTUALLY CREATES YOU AND YOUR PERSONALITY”**



## MANJUL BHARGAVA

# The Musical, Magical Number Theorist



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2016

**THIS APT CAPTION** from Erica Klarreich's article in *Quanta Magazine* (August 2014) on Dr. Manjul Bhargava, R. Brandon Fradd Professor of Mathematics at Princeton University, sums up this phenomenon. Bhargava became full tenured professor when he was merely 28 years old, skipping junior ranks of lecturer, assistant professor, and associate professor. He wouldn't have been lured otherwise even by his own alma mater – Princeton University – where he completed his Ph.D.

In his thesis, Bhargava solved a problem which nobody had made progress on for two centuries. "That earned him the Blumenthal Award, given to the best Ph.D. thesis written in Mathematics anywhere in the world," says his brief bio written for the Padma Bhushan Award that this young professor received from the President of India in March 2015.

"His Ph.D. thesis was phenomenal," declares Benedict Gross, Professor of Mathematics at Harvard University, where Bhargava obtained his undergraduate degree. "It was the first major contribution to (the German Mathematical giant, Carl Friedrich) Gauss's theory of composition of binary forms for 200 years." Besides his position at Princeton, Bhargava holds Adjunct Professor positions at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Mumbai, at IIT-Bombay, and at the University of Hyderabad. He is also Stieitjes Chair, at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

Bhargava "is recognized worldwide as one of the foremost mathematicians of our times and one of the leading experts in Number Theory, a branch of mathematics in which he has

made several pioneering breakthroughs". It is these breakthroughs that earned him the 2014 Fields Medal, which is considered the highest honor in Mathematics, akin to the "Nobel Prize of mathematics". Bhargava's mother, Mira Bhargava, was herself a professor of Mathematics at Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York. According to her, Bhargava, at the tender age of 3, wanted to play with numbers, and he would solve problems that she posed for him by flipping his fingers "back and forth and then give me the right answer leaving me wondering how he did it, but he wouldn't tell me. Perhaps it was too intuitive to explain".

Bhargava also maintains a strong interest in linguistics, and in particular the Sanskrit language. His grandfather in Jaipur (Rajasthan), Purushottam Lal Bhargava, was the head of the Sanskrit department of the University of Rajasthan, and Manjul Bhargava often talks about how he grew up reading ancient mathematics and Sanskrit poetry texts. In her article, Klarreich says Bhargava "discovered that the rhythms of Sanskrit poetry are highly mathematical..." and that "its first 25 consonants form a 5 by 5 array in which one dimension specifies the bodily organ where the sound originates and the other dimension specifies a quality of modulation". He is also an accomplished tabla player. He says he "liked the intricacy of the rhythms" which, to him, are closely related to the rhythms in Sanskrit poetry. "His work is better than world-class. It's epoch-making," says Ken Ono, a number theorist at Emory University in Atlanta.

**BHARGAVA IS RECOGNIZED WORLDWIDE AS ONE OF THE FOREMOST MATHEMATICIANS OF OUR TIMES AND ONE OF THE LEADING EXPERTS IN NUMBER THEORY**



## NAVIN C. NANDA

# Amongst World's most respected echocardiographer

**DR. NAVIN C. NANDA**, Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Cardiovascular Disease at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, in Alabama, has revolutionized the way we practice cardiology in the world today, which is attributed to various techniques he has developed over years.

Nanda is a pioneer in the development of echocardiography which is the most commonly used and most effective noninvasive technique in the assessment and management of cardiac diseases in the world.

Specifically, he discovered the pulmonary valve by echocardiography, diagnosed a bicuspid aortic valve by echocardiography, invented treadmill exercise for echocardiography, introduced color Doppler in the USA and India, invented the techniques of transpharyngeal and transgastric ultrasound, and pioneered the use of echocardiography in cardiac pacing and electrophysiology.

They have, Nanda claims, contributed enormously in the prompt diagnosis and management of cardiac diseases not only in adults but also in children and infants.

Even as a medical resident in Mumbai, Nanda did early pioneering work demonstrating a high incidence of heart attacks in young Indians under the age of 40 years. His work in demonstrating and unmasking of diabetes mellitus by a heart attack was cited by The New England Journal of Medicine in 1967 as “an important contribution” and “a

thorough study of an Asiatic population”.

The Chinese Society of Ultrasound calls him “the world’s best and most respected echocardiographer”.

Nanda, who is the founding President of the American Association of Cardiologists of Indian Origin, has received dozens of awards and recognitions from medical institutions in several countries. These include two honorary doctorate of science degrees, D.Sc. (Hon) from Sakaria University, near Istanbul in Turkey and D.Sc. (Med) (Honoris Causa) from the Rajasthan University of Health Sciences, Jaipur, India — all for his phenomenal pioneering work in the medical field. He was also recently recognized as a “legend in cardiology” by the Cardiological Society of India.

In addition to dozens of papers, Nanda has published 10 books, one of which is a text book on echocardiography.

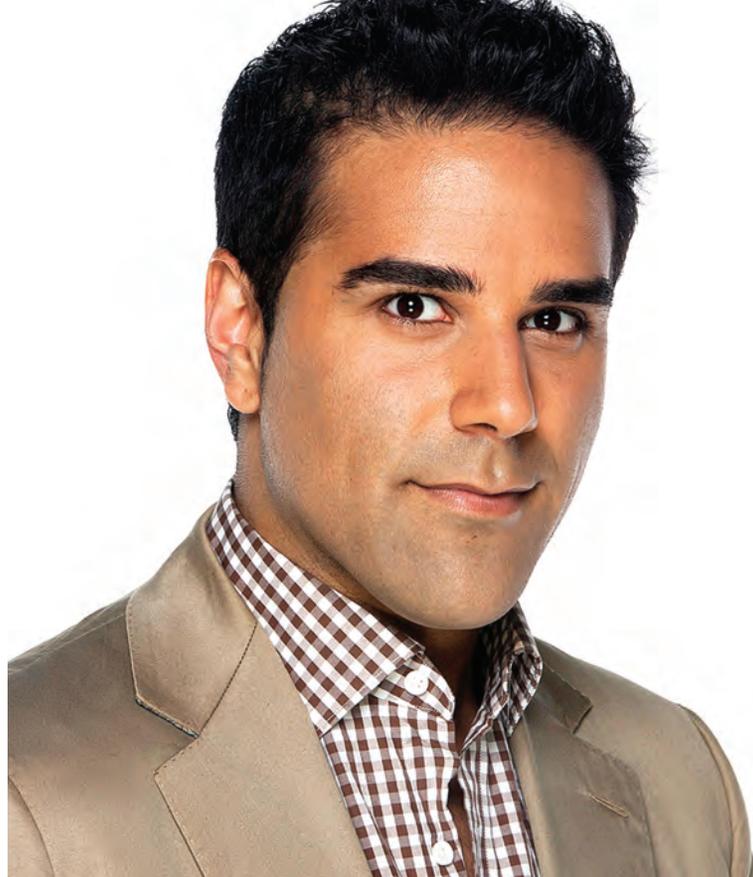
His discoveries and research works have also earned Nanda the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor, which is approved by the United States Congress and the American College of Cardiology’s International Service Award for “enhancing cardiovascular care throughout the world”.

Nanda takes a great deal of pride on emphasizing on having received the unique Bridge Award from the Association of Black Cardiologists (USA) for “building bridges across cultures, particularly among African American and Asian Indian cardiologists”.



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**NANDA IS A PIONEER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY, THE MOST COMMONLY USED AND MOST EFFECTIVE NONINVASIVE TECHNIQUE IN THE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF CARDIAC DISEASES IN THE WORLD**



## OMAR SACHEDINA

# Fixture on Canadian TV News



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**OMAR SACHEDINA TAKES** pride in sharing details of his ancestry: “I am part of the Ugandan-Indian Diaspora, ethnically Indian (from Gujarat). Both of my parents and grandparents were born in Uganda.”

Sachedina was born in Vancouver, where his family migrated to after the 1972 expulsion of Asians from Uganda by President Idi Amin Dada. (Interestingly, his mom came to Canada from Uganda via England). He speaks Gujarati and Kutchi, with a mix of Swahili, as well as French, which his parents fostered by enrolling him in French immersion at an early age.

Currently, he is Correspondent, Ottawa Bureau, for CTV National News,

“Curious about his East African homeland”, Sachedina traveled there in 2005 to produce a PBS Frontline Fellowship web documentary titled “Uganda: The Return”, exploring the return of Asians to Uganda after the 1972 expulsion. Many Asians have since returned to Uganda because the political conditions have changed for the better in the country.

Sachedina has a degree in Political Science from McGill University in Montreal, a Masters in Journalism from Columbia University in New York, and is a graduate of The Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida.

He joined the CTV National News Bureau Ottawa Bureau in September 2013. Since then, he has reported from the United

States, Jordan, Israel, France, Mexico and South Africa. He has also covered international summits in Russia, Senegal and Mexico. He loves traveling and was delighted when the network assigned him to go to London, England, to cover the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton in 2011. Later that year, Sachedina was sent to Oslo, Norway, to report on the brutal mass murder of 77 people at a youth camp.

Sachedina’s face has become a fixture to more than one million Canadians who tune in to CTV National News daily.

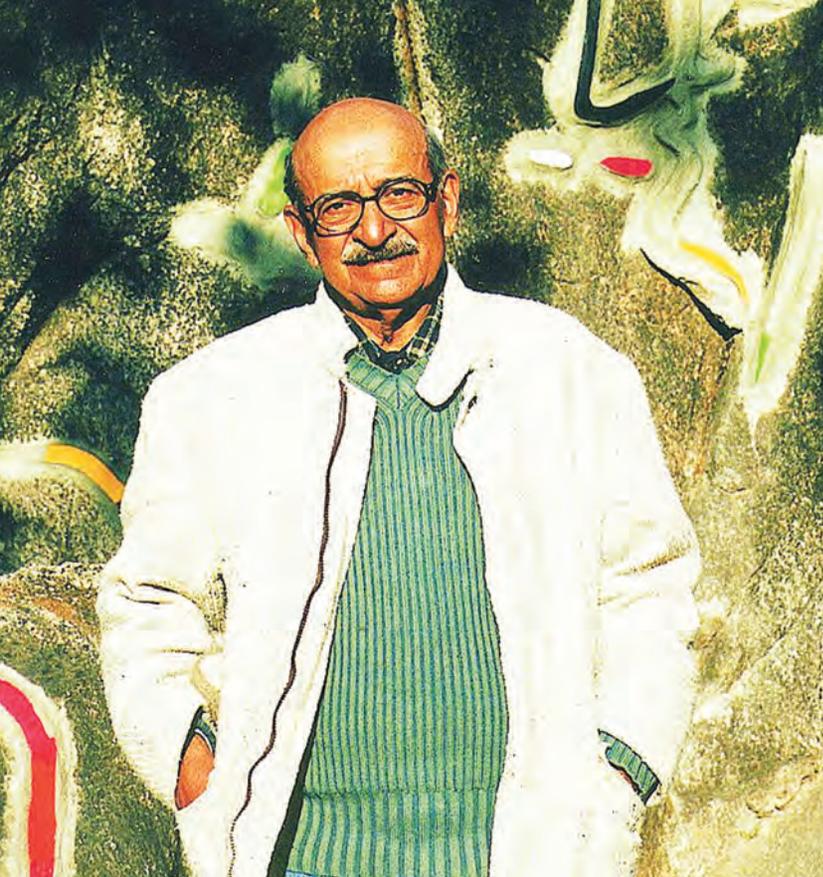
Sachedina serves as substitute anchor on CTV NATIONAL NEWS and as guest host on CANADA AM, and contributes to CTVNews.ca and CTV’s W5. Aside from covering Parliament Hill and the National Capital Region, he has covered breaking news stories such as the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newton, CT. in 2012, and the Boston Marathon Bombings the following year.

Before joining the CTV, Sachedina was Reporter/Anchor at CP24, where he anchored Toronto’s breaking news to a new prime time record in the summer of 2009, when a super storm hit Toronto and 1.2 million viewers tuned in to coverage led by Sachedina.

He also anchored the 2008 U.S. Election Night, and President Barack Obama’s historic inauguration.

“There’s not a single day where I don’t learn something new,” says Sachedina.

**“DON’T TAKE ANYTHING FOR GRANTED. WORK HARD AND...  
EDUCATION SHOULDN’T STOP ONCE YOU GET A DEGREE. IT  
SHOULD BE HAPPENING EVERY DAY.”**



## PANCHAL MANSARAM

# Artist with influence on artistic community

**PANCHAL MANSARAM IS** an artist, a class by himself, who has influenced the artistic world widely. Those who know this Toronto-based artist, call him master of creating collages – on any medium, and in vivid colors.

He has known about collages from his childhood. That awareness came in many forms: Kites being collaged during festivals, homemade toys made from recycled paper and bamboo; walls being collaged with personal artifacts, mirrors, photos, oleographs in villages of Rajasthan, etc.

Mansaram went to the highly reputed J.J. School of Arts in Mumbai. At the end of his five-year arts education, he won the Dolly Cursetjee Gold medal in 1959, the medal that he later sold as he needed the money.

He created his first collage in Amsterdam in 1966 when he was there on a Dutch Government fellowship. The City of Amsterdam had given him a studio for his use and it was there that he first noticed that the map of Amsterdam had a graphic quality. "I was compelled to use part of it in my first collage. Later my visit to well-known Dutch Assemblage artist Jaap Waaghmaker reinforced my will to pursue collage as a medium for Art Making." When he was in New York during that period, Mansaram says he was impressed seeing Robert Rauschenberg's collages. That further strengthened his belief in the potential of this medium.

Mansaram has, during all these years, organized a number of one-man art exhibitions and exhibitions in collaboration with

other well-known artists at many art galleries all over the world. He is 80 now but there's no sign of slowing down for him. "Exhibitions nourish me, creating art pieces of different shapes keep me going," he says.

Mansaram migrated to Canada in 1966 with his wife, herself an artist of repute, and their young daughter.

Well known collage artist Marshall McLuhan, whom he met at the University of Toronto in 1966, wrote about Mansaram's works: "The work of Mansaram brings the mosaic forms of T.S. Elliot and James Joyce to the Orient in the very moment and by the same means that Mansaram enables us to contemplate the Orient as a variant modality of The Waste Land..." "Woven through each piece, each composition (of Mansaram) are visual references, sometimes subtle and hidden in the background, sometimes grand and up-front, to the omnipresent Ganges River, the mother goddess," says one media review about his works.

In various parts of the world wherever he has exhibited and visited, Mansaram made many friends -- artists like F.M. Hussain; members of the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group; also he came to know Pupul Jayakar and K.G. Subramanyan; Paritosh Sen, Nirode Majumdar, Gopal Ghosh, Jamini Roy, Satyajit Ray; as also the Cobra Group in Amsterdam.

"I have been an independent thinker and creator. I always felt I should create with total freedom," says Mansaram. As an artist, he asserts, he has "strictly adhered to these principles".



THE A-LIST  
2016

**HE IS 80 NOW BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OF SLOWING DOWN FOR HIM. "EXHIBITIONS NOURISH ME, CREATING ART PIECES OF DIFFERENT SHAPES KEEP ME GOING," HE SAYS**



## PAUL SHRIVASTAVA

# Future Earth leader



THE A-LIST  
2016

**PAUL SHRIVASTAVA LEADS** Future Earth, a network of about 60,000 researchers working across the world as they try to better understand the implications of rising GHGs (greenhouse gases) and other “sustainability issues” for the biosphere and the billions of human and non-human inhabitants of planet Earth. In December 1984, when the Bhopal gas tragedy occurred, claiming hundreds of lives and leaving behind thousands of injured, Shrivastava spent a great deal of time in investigating and analyzing the cause of the tragedy – mismanagement by the government and by Union Carbide.

It was in the light of that work and his years of involvement in working on issues such as climate change and its ecological effects that Shrivastava was chosen as Executive Director of Future Earth (in early 2015) by this body’s Governing Council. Future Earth was formed under the auspices of the United Nations and major national science agencies and by researchers from major international physical, natural and social science research societies. Shrivastava’s story began after he graduated in Mechanical Engineering from Bhopal University. He received his Post Graduate diploma in Management from the Indian Institute of Management (Calcutta), and PhD from the University of Pittsburgh. Shrivastava’s first job was at New York University. He later moved to take up the Howard I. Scott Chair in Management at Bucknell University. He served there for many years, including the time he started and developed eSocrates, an online knowledge management and software-based

educational company. In the academic arena, he co-founded the ONE (Organizations & the Natural Environment) Division of the Academy of Management (AOM) which now has hundreds of members around the globe.

His concerns about the links between corporate behavior and ecological sustainability led to the publication of his seminal Academy of Management Review paper in 1995, “The role of corporations in achieving ecological sustainability”, which has been cited by other authors nearly a thousand times. In 2007, he was appointed to be David O’Brien Distinguished Professor of Sustainable Enterprise at Concordia University in Montreal.

Shrivastava is not only interested in the logic and methodology of the management sciences, he is also interested in a topic that has received comparatively very little attention in the academy: How aesthetics — images, symbols, art, fables, and stories — influence our perceptions of the environment, and sustainability in particular. He also leads the International Research Chair on Art and Sustainable Enterprise at the ICN Business School, Nancy, France. Recently, Shrivastava was chosen as one of its “100 Influential Leaders” during the initial century of the Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business.

*(Contributed by Dr. John Grant, Visiting Fellow, Colorado State University, US)*

**SHRIVASTAVA WAS CHOSEN AS ONE OF ITS “100 INFLUENTIAL LEADERS” DURING THE INITIAL CENTURY OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLLEGIATE SCHOOLS OF BUSINESS**



## PAVITER (PAVI) BINNING

# An inspirational leader

**HAVING SERVED SOME** of Britain's best-known blue chip companies and overseen the breakup of telecom giant Nortel, Pavi (Paviter Singh) Binning is undaunted by the challenges of leading, as President of George Weston Limited, one of the country's iconic companies which includes Loblaw, Shoppers Drug Mart, Weston Foods and Choice Properties, employing over 200,000 people. His business associates and others call Binning an inspirational leader, change agent, restructuring expert, strategist, merger and acquisition specialist, among others. Binning was born in a small village in Punjab, India. He was six months old when his family moved to the UK. "My mother died when I was very young. My father remarried and so it was a bit of a tricky situation. So I learnt to be self-sufficient at a very young age." After finishing his high school, Binning started working and that's how, when he was just 21, he completed his professional C.A. exams. "That time in England you could take your professional exams without going to the university and in my case my father was unwilling to support my university education."

His first role in business was with Electrolux where he quickly demonstrated his grasp of business issues. He then moved to Solex, the UK subsidiary of French group Matra, where he had his first taste of restructuring as the company's UK business was put into receivership.

Binning worked closely with the Receiver to restructure and sell the business. He then moved to Grand Metropolitan, a major

British Public company. In 1997, Grand Metropolitan merged with Guinness to create Diego, one of the world's leading consumer goods companies. Binning worked there for 17 years in a number of senior corporate and operational positions. He left Diego, to move to Marcomi, and from there as CFO at Hanson, one of the largest building materials and construction companies in the world.

It was at that time in 2007 that Binning moved to Toronto to take the position of CFO at Nortel Networks. "The global business was in the process of rebuilding itself following the dot com crisis and then, as we all know, in the summer of 2008, the financial crisis took hold, and Nortel's customers around the world cancelled and delayed orders forcing the company into Chapter 11 receivership," explains Binning. The CEO left and Binning was asked to lead the company with the title of Chief Restructuring Officer. In 2010, Binning moved to George Weston as CFO. After a short while, he was named President of this giant. The company's current revenue is \$45 billion. Binning, who says he was largely instrumental in the \$12.4 billion acquisition of the Shoppers Drug Mart, is working very, very hard to augment the revenue to \$50 billion.

Binning has also been active with the community, first in the UK and now in Canada. He has recently worked with Prince's Charities Canada in creating the Prince's Responsible Business Network which aims to address youth unemployment in under-privileged communities.



THE A-LIST  
2016

**HIS BUSINESS ASSOCIATES AND OTHERS CALL BINNING AN INSPIRATIONAL LEADER, CHANGE AGENT, RESTRUCTURING EXPERT, STRATEGIST, MERGER AND ACQUISITION SPECIALIST, AMONG OTHERS**



**POOJA HANDA**  
Toronto's  
versatile  
broadcaster



**THE A-LIST**  
2016

**UNTIL RECENTLY, INDO-CANADIAN** parents craved having their children study medicine or engineering. Any other discipline was not typically acceptable to them. That hasn't changed in India even today when it comes to preferred disciplines - medicine or engineering. Pooja Handa, born in Canada, comes from a different stock. She opted to study drama as her major and then moved to New York City to study at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts as her interest was in acting, telling jokes, even performing Bollywood dances.

Her father was supportive but also concerned about his daughter not receiving a proper education and suggested she should "get a post-secondary education". Handa decided to major in Broadcast Journalism and Women's Studies at Seneca College and York University. "I wanted to utilize my performance ability with my natural desire to tell stories, only it would be stories that mattered," she explains why she decided to go that route.

Her work has paid off. Slowly, but surely, Handa has climbed to the top of the ladder – as Co-Host of the weekday CP24 Breakfast morning television show, and has in the process become a fixture in thousands and thousands of Canadian homes who start their day with Handa.

"Torontonians have come to know me as one of the faces greeting them every morning with news that will help them start their day," she explains. Her official bio emphasizes her story-telling ability calling her "a born story-teller who uses wit

and humor to engage viewers both inside and out of the studio". Handa is a versatile broadcaster. There is no field in which she hasn't reported – from politics to entertainment, including the annual Toronto International Film Festival, the 40th JUNO AWARDS in Toronto, the annual Pride Parade, World Pride 2014.

She deems herself lucky even outside of her profession: "I get a chance to give back and to be a part of the very community that embraces and brings me into their homes every single day," says Handa. "I am fortunate that my career and being in the public eye affords me the opportunity to really have an impact on a broader scale. Frankly I believe it's my responsibility to give back" which she does by volunteering her time with various charities.

One cause which is near to her heart is the annual event 'Women as Career Coaches'. "It has been a very gratifying experience to be able to celebrate and empower such wonderful, bright young women. It never ceases to amaze me just how much I learn from them year after year about following my own dreams."

What about her advice to other aspiring young women? Handa shares some words of wisdom that she received from her own father: "If it is to be... it is up to me." "And as simple as that is, it's the absolute truth." "No career path is easy. Hard work, perseverance, practice, dedication and sacrifice are just some of the words that describe mine," she says.

**HANDA IS A VERSATILE BROADCASTER. THERE IS NO FIELD IN WHICH SHE HASN'T REPORTED – FROM POLITICS TO ENTERTAINMENT...**



## PRABHAT JHA

# He taught the world how to count deaths

**DR. PRABHAT JHA** “is obsessed with sex and death”. That comes out clearly from his “Million Death Study” in India, a study that continues despite a series of reports that he has released during the last 10 years. He is Executive Director of the Center for Global Health Research, St. Michael’s Hospital and Professor of Global Health and Epidemiology at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto. Jha is recipient of the Order of Canada, highest civilian award in the country, for his contribution to global health.

Jha’s major contribution is the “Million Death Study” that first produced results in 2006. Take any major disease in India, and MDS can help. For example, the study shows that the number of HIV-related deaths in India is below 100,000, not 400,000 deaths as the UN was saying. This study shows how about a million people, 80% in rural areas and mostly illiterates, die in India annually due to smoking. The MDS provided robust evidence on how many families in India selectively abort female fetuses. Jha has concluded that about 4-12 million female fetuses have been aborted over the last three decades. This has resulted in growing gender imbalance in the country. With this historic “Million Death Study”, Jha has taught India and the world how to count deaths at just \$1 per household. He calls the ongoing study a “GPS” for countries to take the roads needed to improve their own health. The MDS is now being emulated in Africa and Latin America.

Jha was born in Ranchi, India. He was just 6 years old when

his family migrated to Canada. After obtaining his MD from the University of Manitoba, he was awarded a Rhodes scholarship and did his DPhil in epidemiology and public health under the mentorship of Sir Richard Peto. He was later a Cardiology Fellow at McMaster University, where he set up the ground-breaking HOPE study with Professor Salim Yusuf to prevent cardiovascular disease.

He worked at the World Bank as the team leader for developing a national AIDS control strategy for India, and also as a senior scientist and leader for the World Health Organization’s Commission on Macroeconomics and Health. Then David Naylor, Dean of the University of Toronto medical school (and later its President), recruited Jha back to Toronto.

He is recipient of numerous awards and recognitions. He was named as one of Canada’s top 40 under 40 (2004); and received Ontario Premier’s Excellence award. In 2012, Globe and Mail named him as one of Canada’s top 25 Transformational Canadians. Besides serving as an expert advisor to the Canadian Government on Tobacco Control, and several other committees – including for the South African and Indian governments on national health insurance, Jha also serves as a senior editor of the on-line journal eLife. He is also a member of the International Advisory Board of the Journal The Lancet, Global Health. Jha is highly sought after for speaking engagements on health and continues to be one of the world’s most influential epidemiologists.



THE A-LIST  
2016

**WITH THIS HISTORIC “MILLION DEATH STUDY”, JHA HAS TAUGHT INDIA AND THE WORLD HOW TO COUNT DEATHS AT JUST \$1 PER HOUSEHOLD**



## PREM WATSA

# Inspiration and role model



THE A-LIST  
2016

**PREM WATSA**, founding Chairman and CEO of Toronto-based Fairfax Holdings, is on the list of 2015 recipients of the Order of Canada, the highest civilian award in the country.

He is an outstanding investor, the person whose company made more money during the 2008-2010 recession when most companies suffered heavy losses. Watsa knows how to invest, and when and where to invest.

He launched Fairfax in 1985 with an initial investment of \$5 million; it now has a \$30 billion portfolio with businesses in over 100 countries. It is the largest private property and casualty insurance business in India with \$1.2 billion portfolio in premiums written. Watsa calls himself “very, very lucky and blessed”, lucky to have been admitted to IIT Madras and lucky to have been born to good parents who valued education. He did his degree in Chemical Engineering, and was admitted to IIM in Ahmedabad which he quit after one month as his father told him: “Go to Canada where your elder brother lives and opportunities abound.”

He landed in London (Ontario) and went to the Ivey Business School where he got his MBA. He worked with Confederation Life where he became Vice-President of Investments and that is how he learnt the investment business and was exposed to the concept of Value Investing.

“Our principles are very simple: look after your customers, treat the employees well and then ensure return for your shareholders and then ... give something back,” Watsa explains

his business model. “We do well only after our customers do well and our employees do well.”

He cautions people, if you succeed in business, please don’t develop egos as that could “be disastrous”.

At the June 2014 Pan-IIT Alumni conference, where he was recognized “as a Distinguished IIT Alumnus” in front of 800 people, with Governor General David Johnson as the chief guest, Watsa said he gives away 1% to 2% of his company’s pre-tax profits — in 2013 it totaled in excess of \$10 million — and from inception over \$120 million. He firmly believes in his saying: “Do good by doing well, never forgetting that we have to first do well and then we can do good.” Today, Fairfax is the largest shareholder of Blackberry, the company that at one time controlled the smart phones market globally. Even though its stock values have declined from \$140 some years back to \$9.50 (July 2015), Watsa still believes “it’s a good long-term investment.” Watsa ended his two terms as Chancellor of the University of Waterloo in May 2015. University President Feridun Hamdullahpur calls him an “inspiration and role model to many of us at the university and, most importantly, to our students”. The values and the guiding principles that helped make Fairfax successful “are rooted in his upbringing in India and shaped by his experiences in Canada. These values give insight into the context of the historic realignment taking place between our two countries (Canada and India),” Governor General David Johnson said about Watsa.

**HE CAUTIONS PEOPLE, IF YOU SUCCEED IN BUSINESS, PLEASE DON'T DEVELOP EGOS AS THAT COULD "BE DISASTROUS"**



## RAM S. JAKHU

# His specialization is outer space

**DR. RAM S. JAKHU**, who specializes in law and policy for outer space, firmly believes that outer space matters for the whole humanity. Currently, the world depends heavily upon space and life without satellites could be very difficult and even disastrous creating global crisis with economic losses of billions of dollars.

According to him, the world is facing serious challenges in maintaining international space legal order that is necessary for the smooth operation of space activities. If such challenges are not addressed in a timely manner, humanity may lose the benefits space offers. So, he favors establishment of a global institution that is empowered to make decisions, and take actions, on behalf of the mankind.

It was for this reason that in 2014, Jakhu, who's Associate Professor at the Institute of Air and Space Law, McGill University in Montreal, organized an international, interdisciplinary Conference to discuss what form should global space governance take, both in terms of format and substance, in the next 20-30 years to achieve the goal of using space for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all mankind. The Conference initiated an international study on global space governance in which over 100 experts from various nations and disciplines are participating. Jakhu is spearheading this study.

Jakhu holds Doctor of Civil Law (Dean's Honors List) and Master of Law (LL.M.) degrees from McGill University,

Canada, as well as LL.M. from Panjab University, India.

At McGill University, Jakhu teaches and conducts research in international space law, space security, space safety, and public international law. He manages and guides a multi-million-dollar research and outreach program for space law and policy. He has served as Director, Centre for the Study of Regulated Industries, McGill University, where he directed research and outreach activities related to telecommunication regulation and policy in Canada and India, through the Indian Institute of Management (Ahmadabad) with funding of up to \$1.2 million from the Canadian International Development Agency.

During 1995-1998, Jakhu served as the First Director and Senior Faculty Member of the Master of Space Studies Program of the International Space University, Strasbourg, France.

Jakhu has taught Space Law and Policy in several countries. He has made presentations to the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS). He has also participated in the drafting of Space Law Curriculum for the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA).

Besides several articles and research papers, Jakhu has co-authored two books, and has edited 6 books, including one that earned him the 2011 Social Sciences Book Award from the International Academy of Astronautics.



THE A-LIST  
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**JAKHU HAS ADVISED SEVERAL COUNTRIES (INCLUDING INDIA)  
IN THE PREPARATION OF NATIONAL LAWS AND POLICIES  
(REGARDING OUTER SPACE)**



**RAMINDER DOSANJH**

# Epitome of Women’s Resilience and Strength



**THE A-LIST**  
2016

**RAMINDER DOSANJH HAS** always fought inequality and injustice. Soon after landing in Vancouver in 1970, she noticed that in the meetings and gatherings in the community, women and their voices were absent. She felt the need for an organized voice for women. As a result of discussions with friends, Raminder and four other women initiated the formation of the India Mahila Association (IMA) in 1973.

Four decades later IMA, a grassroots organization, has become a formidable voice against inequality and violence against women. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the issue of sex selection, by aborting female fetuses, raised its ugly head when a US doctor, with a sex selection clinic in Blaine, USA, placed full-page ads in South Asian newspapers in Vancouver, offering sex determination tests and abortion targeting South Asian women living in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. He also tried to establish a clinic in BC. Raminder and the IMA vigorously challenged the assumptions and values that underpinned this abominable practice and brought together a coalition of South Asian women’s organizations to run him out of Canada.

Raminder comes from Punjab, India. There were strict family norms — more so for women than for men. She says she defied these norms and worked outside the household. She finished her BA and teaching degree before she started teaching in India. Despite belonging to a military family, more liberal than many others, she felt constrained and decided to travel to Vancouver

to see a different part of the world believing in her own mind that she would return to India after sometime.

In Canada she ran into her husband-to-be, Ujjal Dosanjh, an outspoken political activist on equality and social justice. The two got married in 1972. Together they would attend public meetings and hear about incidents of racism and discrimination in the South Vancouver neighborhood. Ujjal later became the Attorney General and then Premier of British Columbia and subsequently Federal Health Minister.

As Raminder looks back, she explains how Ujjal would encourage her to get involved. She started taking a leadership role, attending public meetings; visiting gurdwaras and speaking out on local radio and television against injustices faced by women and encouraging South Asian women to stand up and give voice to their concerns and needs.

In those early days, Raminder’s activism was not well received in the community as it questioned the status quo and pushed for gender equality. Regardless, she, along with other members of IMA, continued to bring important issues to the forefront for public debate and policy consideration. Looking back, Raminder says, she is proud to have undertaken such important works that changed attitudes, services and policies for South Asian women in Canada.

*(Contributed by Satwinder Bains, Director of Indo-Canadian Studies, University of Fraser Valley (British Columbia))*

**RAMINDER IS PROUD TO HAVE UNDERTAKEN IMPORTANT WORKS THAT CHANGED ATTITUDES, SERVICES AND POLICIES FOR SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN IN CANADA**



## RENU MANDHANE

# Human Rights Champion

**AT 38, RENU MANDHANE** is Ontario Chief Human Rights Commissioner. In this role, Mandhane is mandated to ensure that the rights of 11.4 million Ontarians, as enshrined in the province's Human Rights Code, are fully protected.

There is room for improvement on women's issues in Canada, Mandhane notes. "Canada is a great country to live in for me as a woman and as a woman of color but I don't think we are immune from the kind of discrimination that we see the world over in terms of violence against women," she observes.

Mandhane is passionate about non-discrimination, and the protection of core civil and political rights, including freedom of expression.

She has JD and LLM degrees focused on the rights of the most vulnerable. Before being named to her current position, she was Executive Director of the International Human Rights Program at the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto. She is also a member of Human Rights Watch and the Legal Committee of PEN international.

Mandhane is recognized as an expert on international human rights and has appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada and the United Nations and has trained Canadian and foreign judges through the National Judicial Institute of Canada.

How will her work at the OHRC differ from her work at the University of Toronto? She believes there's a lot of similarity: "Most of the work in the human rights field, that I have done, has been international but it raises the same issues and problems: how do we protect the most vulnerable members of our society at home, at work, and in public life?"

In 2007, the Act was amended permitting people to file their human rights violation complaints direct to the Human Rights Tribunal. But that didn't weaken the OHRC; rather it allowed the Commission to sharpen its focus on persistent systemic discrimination. As head of the OHRC, Mandhane is interested in ensuring that people are not shut out of opportunities just because they have an accent, a different skin color, or identity as a sexual minority.

Canada is one of the few countries in the world having a wealth of diversity and multiculturalism. Ontario, in particular, is more multicultural, more diverse than other parts of the country. Sometimes, Ontarians and Canadians can be complacent about human rights as many believe that we have rights "all figured out" and it is for other countries to think about their rights. Mandhane cautions against such an approach: "We should all be working together to really strive to be best that can be, and to set an example for others around the world."



THE A-LIST  
2016

**SHE IS RECOGNIZED AS AN EXPERT ON INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND... HAS TRAINED CANADIAN AND FOREIGN JUDGES THROUGH THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE OF CANADA**



## ROHINTON MISTRY

# He tells a good story



THE A-LIST  
2016

**ROHINTON MISTRY IS** easily one of the most awarded and respected authors in the country. He is an international bestseller, Governor General Award winner, Booker Prize nominee and was even recommended and celebrated by the “Queen of all Media” – Oprah Winfrey herself!

Born in Bombay in 1952, Mistry’s early years in India’s iconic city by the sea influence his powerful storytelling and deeply rich characters to this day. He left India in 1975, not long after Indira Gandhi declared Emergency against which the story of his celebrated novel ‘A Fine Balance’ unfurls.

With a degree in mathematics and economics from the University of Bombay, Mistry didn’t start writing seriously until the early 1980s when he started getting attention for his short stories. By 1987, his collection ‘Tales from Firozsha Baag’ was published and a star was born.

The saying “write what you know” could not be more apt – Mistry’s Parsi background infiltrates most of his work – including his first and most recognized work ‘Such a Long Journey’. This beautifully rendered story of hard-working Parsi bank clerk and family man Gustad Noble and his family won the Governor General’s award, the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize and was short-listed for the prestigious Booker Prize and catapulted Mistry to literary superstardom.

His next novel ‘A Fine Balance’ was a heart-breaking family story, and the story of the struggle of India as a whole, in the time from Independence to the Emergency.

As he told Oprah, the entire novel was inspired by a single image in his mind of a woman working at a sewing machine. He was once again short-listed for the Booker and won the Giller prize. After Oprah Winfrey dedicated an entire episode of her show to Mistry and his novel, he became one of the most famous Canadian authors of all time – mentioned in the same breath as Margaret Atwood, Mordecai Richler and Alice Munro.

Mistry’s subsequent novel ‘Family Matters’ was once again recognized by the Booker committee and Mistry has been awarded honorary doctorates from the University of Toronto, York University, The University of Ottawa and Ryerson University.

The issue of identity has often come up – is Mistry a Canadian writer or an Indian writer? Mistry prefers to leave the question open: “I’m referred to more often as a Canadian writer than an Indian writer. Or – what is it they say? A Canadian-writer-born-in-India. And I’m certainly more of a Canadian writer than an Indian writer, because I have no sense of being part of any group or school or generation of Indian writers. But that doesn’t really interest me at all. All I try to do is tell a good story.”

*(Contributed by Dr. Dhun Noria, Medical Director of Laboratory, The Scarborough hospital)*

**THE ISSUE OF IDENTITY HAS OFTEN COME UP – IS MISTRY A CANADIAN WRITER OR AN INDIAN WRITER? MISTRY PREFERS TO LEAVE THE QUESTION OPEN: “I’M REFERRED TO MORE OFTEN AS A CANADIAN WRITER THAN AN INDIAN WRITER**



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**SAJEEV JOHN**

## A Physicist par excellence



**THE A-LIST**  
2016

**MANY METALS EMIT** electrons when light shines on them.

This phenomenon, known as the photoelectric effect, was explained in a 1905 Nobel Prize winning research paper by Albert Einstein. He proposed that a beam of light is a collection of discrete wave packets; he called them photons, thereby ascribing particle-like behavior to electromagnetic waves. Quantum physics, developed over subsequent decades, ascribes wave and particle duality to all physical objects such as electrons, photons and classical objects like a pebble on a beach.

Isaac Newton explained in 1687 through one of the three universal laws of motion that a pebble will remain localized (at rest) unless acted upon by some force. Three centuries later, through his 1987 paper in the Physical Review Letters, Sajeev John asked the question: can light be localized? This 1987 paper has been cited nearly 10,000 times.

Sajeev John, born in a Kerala village, migrated to Canada at the age of four with his parents (a biochemist mother and a physicist father). His early years and schooling was in London, Ontario. During the late seventies and eighties, he received his undergraduate degree at MIT (S.B., 1979), did his postgraduate research at Harvard (Ph.D., 1984) and was an assistant professor at Princeton (1986-1989). It is his Harvard thesis that gives the fundamental ideas regarding the localization of light; these were sharpened at Princeton in 1987 through the

conception of Photonic Band Gap (PBG) materials that can trap light and cage photons.

In electronic circuits, semiconductors such as silicon guide the flow of electrons, and resistance to the flow of electrons generates heat. In contrast to electrons, photons travel much faster with no resistance to flow and so no heat generation, and many different channels of light can freely and simultaneously propagate.

The new optical (PBG) materials are considered to be “semiconductors of light”. Light localization is key to the caging of light within optical microchips.

Sajeev’s theory of light localization was tested and proved in major laboratories around the world during the next two decades. He returned to Canada in 1989 as a faculty member in Physics at the University of Toronto. Soon he asked another new revolutionary question: can one make light jump through optical microchips, just the way electrons are guided to jump through electronic microchips? By 1998, John figured out which PBG materials would cage light of wavelength 1.5 micrometers, and how to make them. This wavelength is used in fiber-optic telecommunications.

During 1998-2000, he led a University of Toronto team consisting of a chemistry professor, a physics professor and their graduate students, and a group of researchers from Spain, to construct such a PBG material. The work, an example of

**THE IMPORTANCE OF JOHN’S RESEARCH HAS BEEN  
RECOGNIZED THROUGH MANY INTERNATIONAL AWARDS AND  
HONORS ACCORDED TO HIM**



» Sajeer John is seen receiving the King Faisal International Prize in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

finest interdisciplinary collaboration, is published in *Nature* (2000), a top science journal. The process of creating this material- a self-assembled, silicon based, inverse opal photonic crystal- is challenging. It is well described humorously by a physics graduate student team member: "It was like baking a cake. John had the recipe, the Spanish had the supplies, the University of Toronto chemists were the cooks and the physicists knew how exactly it should taste."

John's research has recently (2008) shown that by trapping light in slow-group-velocity modes, enhanced solar energy absorption can occur which creates an important application of photonic crystals to high efficiency solar energy harvesting in some specifically designed solar cells.

Using the concepts of light localization and photonic band gap, a start-up company "Omniguide" manufactured (2002) a hollow core photonic band gap fiber, which was used for laser surgery in order to remove a persistent tumor in a live patient. In a 2015 research paper, John conceptualized a "medical lab-on-chip" which can use the unique properties of PBG materials to provide instantaneous and detailed fingerprint of various diseases by transmitting laser light through the chip.

Photonic band gap (PBG) materials are a central and fundamental physics contribution by Professor John, with broad applications at the boundaries of physics with chemistry, engineering and medicine. The importance of John's research

has been recognized through many international awards and honors accorded to him. At the University of Toronto, he is recognized as a McLean Senior Fellow since 1996 and as a University Professor since 2001. In 1995, the Canadian Association of Physicists awarded him the Herzberg medal. He won the Steacie prize in 1997 and the Ontario Premier's platinum award in 2002. He is also a holder of a Canada Research chair in Optical Sciences since 2000.

Internationally, John received a Guggenheim fellowship during 2000-2001 and a Humboldt Senior Scientist award in 2000. A very prestigious award, 2001 King Faisal International prize for science, was given to him in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for inventing a new way to process and transmit information by optical pulses. This prize is considered a bell weather for the Nobel Prize, and includes \$100,000 cash as well as a 24-carat gold medal. He also received the Nanotechnology Pioneer Award (2008), 2007-Quantum Electronics Award from the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) and the Sir C. V. Raman Chair Professorship (2007-2008) of the Indian Academy of Sciences. Most recently, he was awarded the 2014 Canada Council Killam Prize in Natural Sciences.

*Contributed by Dr. Rashmi Desai, Professor Emeritus of Physics, University of Toronto*



**THE A-LIST**  
2016

**INTERNATIONALLY, JOHN RECEIVED A GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIP DURING 2000-2001 AND A HUMBOLDT SENIOR SCIENTIST AWARD IN 2000**



## SANJEEV SETHI

# Chef in a class by himself



THE A-LIST  
2016

**SANJEEV SETHI IS** a class by himself. He is self-taught, taught by other chefs in the kitchen of his uncle's only Indian restaurant Sangham in Toronto in the 1980s and 1990s. When he launched his Host Fine Cuisine Restaurant in downtown Toronto, in 1994, he quickly earned name recognition.

Punjabi food is oily and Torontonians were unhappy especially because people are now becoming more and more health conscious. Sethi's first dictum is 'No Oil' in his dishes that one can see with the naked eye. He was an instant hit. Catering orders started pouring in — an average of 150 outside caterings annually for between 200 to 400 people and sometimes the orders could reach even for 1,000 people.

He has now 80 major venues and they include the Trillium Health Foundation annual Diwali fundraiser, AIM for SEVA; Upper Canada School fundraiser; Granite Club Diwali dinner, etc.

"Restaurant business is a combination of mastery over entrepreneurial risk-taking abilities and a chef's mastery over culinary creativity," explains Sethi, who has developed a menu which is a "rich culmination of traditional recipes prepared with new techniques and presented innovatively".

Sethi has acquired his professional expertise through

ingenuity and perseverance. He is not in favor of fusion food. Still he mixes the traditional Indian food with modern "with an underlying attempt to ensure that the cuisine achieves the basic authenticity and adheres to its traditions".

Sethi also worked with CARA foods that cater to onboard airline catering. He developed the menu and adjusted recipes to make them suitable for long-flight catering. "The passengers' needs are proper intake of proteins and carbohydrates. And the food has to stay fresh for long-haul flights."

Sethi also imparts his skill as a chef to other aspiring chefs. He regularly appears on TV special shows on CBC TV Morning Show; I do... let's eat – Food Network; Chef Worthy – Food Network; CBC's Chef in the City, etc.

He is recipient of the 2014 'Male Entrepreneur of the Year' award from the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce: "With a combination of passion and patience," Sethi has transformed into a restaurateur with few parallels," ICCA says in the award citation.

Sethi is also recipient of the Toronto Star's "Butter Chicken Contest", and Toronto Life's "Best Tandoori Chicken contest"; where Toronto Life gave him the "Most Memorable Food" award.

**PUNJABI FOOD IS OILY AND TORANTONIANS WERE UNHAPPY ESPECIALLY BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE NOW BECOMING MORE AND MORE HEALTH CONSCIOUS. SETHI'S FIRST DICTUM IS 'NO OIL' IN HIS DISHES THAT ONE CAN SEE WITH THE NAKED EYE**

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**SOHAM AJMERA**

No lack of  
decisiveness



**THE A-LIST**  
2016

**TORONTO HAS FRIENDLY** and deeply caring people with an extraordinary Indo-Canadian community. With hard work and talent and pursuit of excellence, they have enriched Canada. Businessman and philanthropist are amongst the shining examples of this community. Soham Ajmera is one of them.

After getting his college education in the US, Soham along with his brother Shreyas, started with what came to them naturally -making an Indian product, the roti. With their Gujarati business acumen and an uncanny ability to sense opportunities they soon added Pita bread to their range, and there was no looking back. The business grew rapidly and, when the time and the price was right, it was sold in a decision taken in less than a day, to the Canadian Pacific Railway. Decisiveness is one thing Soham does not lack.

In due course, Soham launched himself into yet another business, this time with GenNext -his sons Ojus and Tejus-going back to his Indian roots for his new product- the Naan. It may sound simplistic, but a lot had gone into it - hours upon hours of research, millions of dollars in the development of techniques and machinery which was then patented. The outcome was a Naan arguably better than the one coming out of the neighbourhood tandoor. He became equally successful in flat breads. If for Thomas Friedman 'The World is Flat' for Soham Ajmera the bread is flat!

He has been equally successful in his other foray into

making that most North American of products -the muffin. He has become the largest producer in Canada in quick time. This willingness to constantly evolve and to venture into previously unexplored areas, are reflective of his boldness, ability to take risks and see beyond the horizon.

But his success, fame and wealth did not change him or his deeply ingrained Jain beliefs of non-violence and vegetarianism and he refuses any business that would affect his beliefs. He is steadfast and unwavering on these as is his family.

Many create wealth on their own, but few have the ability to give it away without any fanfare or publicity. Soham, with the full backing and participation of Shaila, Ojus and Tejus, has done so- generously donating millions of dollars towards cutting edge medical research and other serious causes and charities without seeking any recognition or rewards. This is the most impressive part of his personality. Not just for the Indian community in Canada but for every Canadian, Soham bhai, as he is called by many of his friends, is a fine role model.

This article has been contributed by Satish Mehta, former Indian Consul-General in Toronto, and later India's Ambassador to Kuwait and currently Director General of Indian Council of Cultural Relations.

**NOT JUST FOR THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN CANADA BUT FOR EVERY CANADIAN, SOHAM BHAI, AS HE IS CALLED BY MANY OF HIS FRIENDS, IS A FINE ROLE MODEL**



» Soham Ajmera, seen with Sunnybrook Hospital President Barry Macallum, when the announcement was made for 'Ajmera Chair' for urology.

In his reflection of his diplomatic posting in Toronto, this is what Mehta says about Toronto, about Canada and how he met Soham Ajmera and reasons he agreed to write this profile:

"It's been seven years since I left Toronto having served as India's Consul General for three years. Like with every new diplomatic posting there was a sense of curiosity and a bit of anxiety about the challenges and opportunities the city would provide when we first moved there. Toronto far exceeded our expectations; and we grew very fond of the city, its serenity and relaxed atmosphere, its vast range of cultural and artistic offerings, and above all, it's friendly and deeply caring people and the extraordinary Indian community which, by its hard-

work, talent and pursuit of excellence has enriched Toronto and Canada. Soham Ajmera is a shining example of this community and I could not say no when asked to share my thoughts on this remarkable man; I owed this to Toronto and the Indian community.

I first met Soham and his wife Shaila in 2006, when I was at a friend's place for dinner. That chance encounter left on me a deep impression of his straight-forward, honest and clear-headed man. We struck up an instant rapport and, over time, got better acquainted and formed a friendship which has endured to this day despite the distance and our very intermittent communication since I left Toronto."

**MANY CREATE WEALTH ON THEIR OWN, BUT FEW HAVE THE ABILITY TO GIVE IT AWAY WITHOUT ANY FANFARE OR PUBLICITY**



## STEVE RAI

# A cop with a calling



THE A-LIST  
2016

**AS A TEENAGER** growing up in Vancouver, Steve Rai often thought about purpose and meaning. For him it was about finding an exciting career while serving the greater good. By the time he reached 16 years of age, his heart and mind were captivated by policing.

In July 2015 Steve was appointed Deputy Chief Constable of the Vancouver Police Department. He is the first person of South Asian descent to serve in this role with one of the most respected policing organizations in the world.

In his twenty-five years of outstanding policing career he has thrived in the camaraderie and team spirit which permeates the policing culture of the Vancouver Police Department. He has served in a wide variety of roles including as a patrol officer, a hostage negotiator, a district commander, a public order commander and an inspector in human resources. Now, as deputy chief, he oversees the human resources section (recruiting, training, professional standards), finance, and technology and information management systems. Steve's family came to Vancouver from Punjab, India in the late 1960s. He grew up in a trendy neighbourhood of Kitsilano. He loved playing team sports in high school. He says "my school liaison (police) officers, some of them were my coaches as well, were a big influence on my decision" to go into policing. He also credits his father, Gurdial Singh, for inspiring him with stories of police officers doing good and respectful work.

Before joining the Vancouver Police in 1990, Steve was a Canadian Forces Reserve member and had graduated from the

University of British Columbia with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Asian Studies. He has a passion for learning and developing new skills. He holds a Master of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice, from the University of the Fraser Valley. In 2006 Steve was the only Canadian police applicant selected by the US State Department for its prestigious International Leadership Development Program which brings together police leaders from around the world.

Steve believes that every role he has served in has been "an opportunity to do the right thing." He has focused on helping officers and residents to do more towards making Vancouver the safest city in Canada. As such community policing is close to Steve's personal values and principles. It is a philosophy and an effective strategy for creating and maintaining highest levels of public safety in a large city like Vancouver. Steve lives this out every day as he says "the purest form of community policing is found in Indian villages where everyone knows everyone. After all the city is a collectivity of smaller villages or neighborhoods." He continues to connect police with the diverse communities in Vancouver.

Steve has received numerous awards for his exemplary leadership including a Chief Constable's Commendation for "courage and professionalism"

*(Contributed by Barj S. Dhahan, Vancouver-based business and community leader, former National Chair, Canada India Foundation and Vancouver Police Board Member)*

**STEVE BELIEVES THAT EVERY ROLE HE HAS SERVED IN HAS BEEN "AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO THE RIGHT THING", MAKING VANCOUVER THE SAFEST CITY IN CANADA**



## SUNDER SINGH

# Champion advocate for immigrants

**TWO THINGS STAND** out in Sunder Singh's career — the paramount passion of her life has been issues relating to women and her heart is with new immigrant women, many of whom are victims of domestic violence and abuse. Her other interest and achievements have been the creation of a social enterprise called RivInt Interpretation and Translation Services, which has become an avenue of jobs for new immigrants since 2005.

From a skeletal service in just 5 languages and a dozen interpreters, it now provides interpretations in over 100 languages and has on its roster 900 interpreters, most of them new immigrants. This service is now operating under the auspices of Elspeth Heyworth Center for Women, where Sunder is Executive Director.

The Social Enterprise Council of Canada has applauded her work for providing an astute leadership. Being an immigrant woman herself, Sunder is familiar with the adjustment problems that new arrivals experience in settling in the community. Through their upbringing, many women have been taught to be adjusting, submissive and forgiving. These immigrant women, even though they are being subjected to domestic violence, do not stand up for their rights.

“When these immigrant women come to our Center, through their body language we see anxiety, we see lot of stress, and lack of concentration. Our trained counselors discuss preventive measures with them, what they should be doing to take care of

themselves against any verbal or physical abuse,” she explains: “We provide them training and then, if they have work permit, we help them get employment. Once they get employment, they show self-confidence.”

On November 30, 2005, Singh attained recognition as one of the future leaders of Toronto when the Vital People Award was conferred upon her for her commendable work in the sphere of community service. She earned another distinction when in June 2007, she was selected by the United Way of Greater Toronto as the recipient of the Leaders of Today Award. Sunder has been instrumental in the evolution and advancement of the movement to make a difference in the lives of women of domestic violence. She initiated the award-winning program “Reduce Abuse” in collaboration with Toronto Police Service, 31 Division. In 2014 she was instrumental in publishing a book called “Violence against Women – All Pervading”. She, with Editor of the book Ajit Jain, traveled to Ottawa to share the book with Canadian Senators and MPs.

The EHCW, established in 1992 as a charitable organization, has been in the vanguard as a vital service provider to newcomers, immigrants and refugees who require settlement, employment and other social services. The organization works closely with women, their families and seniors, and has been awarded the Mayor's Community Safety Award as well as Ministry of Attorney General's Victim Services Award of Distinction.



THE A-LIST  
2016

**SUNDER IS AMONG THE VALUED LEADERS WHO HAVE MADE  
OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT  
SECTOR, GOING OUT AND HELPING OTHERS, DOING IT QUIETLY,  
WITHOUT EXPECTATION OF ANY ENCOMIUMS**

## VEENA RAWAT

# Trail-blazer for women



THE A-LIST  
2016

**DR. VEENA RAWAT** is a trail-blazer for women in the telecommunications sector. She is recipient of Canada's highest civilian award, the Officer of the Order of Canada (2014). It was attributed to the work Rawat has done in the field of telecommunications. To her, this award "signifies importance of my contribution in the advancement of telecommunication technologies and services for the benefit of Canadians and globally." She believes countries everywhere are working towards a 21st century communications infrastructure with a focus on extending the benefits of information and communications technologies to more and more citizens.

According to the Canadian Communications Research Center publication, "Dr. Rawat has a vision of a world in which voice, video and data work seamlessly anywhere and anytime over next-generation networks to empower citizens, businesses and communities – regardless of geography or socioeconomic conditions." After finishing her Master's degree in Technology from Birla Institute of Technology and Science in India, Rawat migrated to Canada in 1968.

She went to Queen's University, where in 1973 she was the first female to get her PhD in Electrical Engineering.

After working for about two years in the private sector, Rawat joined the Canadian Federal Government, where she rose through the ranks to become President of the

Communications Research Center, with 400 employees, 250 of whom are highly qualified scientists and engineers. This is the only Canadian federal government research lab conducting R&D in all communications technologies including wireless, optical, broadcasting and satellite networks.

Rawat is a widely known expert in radio frequency spectrum management and ICT technologies and trends. She has been a keynote and invited speaker at large numbers of domestic and international conferences and events.

In 2011, Rawat joined Blackberry as Vice President, Advanced Technologies and Ambassador to the International Telecommunications Union, a UN body for all global matters dealing with ICT.

In 2003, Rawat had the proud distinction to be the first female and first Canadian to chair ITU's World Radio Conference that was attended by 2,500 delegates from 150 countries. Rawat has received numerous awards and recognitions for her contribution to the Canadian and international telecommunications industry. In 2003, she received the gold medal from ITU for her contributions globally. In 2012, she was recognized by the IEEE for Public Service in communications.

Rawat is currently consulting for GSM Association as their Senior Spectrum Advisor. GSM Association is an international organization representing interests of over 800 wireless service providers and equipment manufacturers.

**VEENA RAWAT IS A WIDELY KNOWN EXPERT IN RADIO FREQUENCY SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT AND ICT TECHNOLOGIES AND TRENDS**



## VIJAY BHARGAVA

# Making an impact on wireless communication

**VIJAY BHARGAVA**, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of British Columbia, has made a “profound impact in the field of wireless communications”.

“Practical application of his research, includes wireless networks that will support 3D multimedia, gaming, device-to-device communications, e-health and social networks,” says the citation on the 2015 Killam Award (\$100,000 tax-free cash award) that he received from the Governor-General of Canada at Rideau Hall on May 12, 2015. “His current research interests are in the area of fifth generation (5G) wireless communications and cognitive spectrum access, expected to be the norm for future wireless networks.”

Bhargava’s major research works are in wireless communications in which Canada has been a pioneer for well over 100 years. With its vast geography, wireless communications link the entire country, including the remote communities.

Many of the codes and algorithms that Bhargava and his students have developed can be found in a number of wireless devices and products in use today.

He believes that by 2020, the speed of wireless communications would increase by 1,000 times than what it is today. “That will have lot of applications in the health sector, social network, electronic gains and it has already started the combination of wireless communication with cloud computing. The current buzz word is fifth generation (5G) wireless

communication, and we are talking in terms of billions of wireless devices. By 2020, they will be approaching 10-fold the devices we have today.” Bhargava migrated to Canada in 1966 and did his Masters and PhD from Queen’s University, returned to India in 1974, started teaching at Indian Institute of Science (Bangalore), quickly got disenchanted, and within one year he was back in Canada.

He first taught at Concordia University in Montreal, then University of Victoria in Victoria (British Columbia) and has been at the University of British Columbia since 2003.

Bhargava established a company, Binary Communications Inc., in 1983 which he sold in 1998. He is also founder of the first wireless conference in India in 1994. The conference, held every 18 months, started in Bangalore, then moved to Delhi and then to Mumbai. Due to various challenges resulting from distance between Vancouver, where he is based, and Delhi, Bhargava gave up his involvement in this conference in 2002.

“It is hard to say what life would be like without wireless communications. One of the early pioneers Marco Polo made a statement that it is dangerous to put a limit on wireless communications,” Bhargava asserts.

Bhargava has received numerous other awards including the Canadian award for Telecommunications Research, the Advanced Computing and Communications Society award, Center for Development of Advanced Computing Foundation Award and the A.G.L. McNaughton Gold Medal.”



THE A-LIST  
2016

**BHARGAVA’S MAJOR RESEARCH WORKS ARE IN WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS IN WHICH CANADA HAS BEEN A PIONEER FOR WELL OVER 100 YEARS**



## VIKRAM VIJ

# Chef going beyond boundaries



THE A-LIST  
2016

**AS A CHEF,** Vikram Vij is going beyond traditional boundaries. The man behind the acclaimed Vij's Restaurant in Vancouver, his most recent television venture was for CBC TV's *Dragons' Den* (the Canadian version of ABC's "Shark Tank") as an investor on a panel of business experts, deciding the financial fate of entrepreneurs looking for success.

Because of the launch of his upcoming new restaurant (a larger version of his flagship Vij's), and knowing how much time he would need to dedicate to recording the next season, Vij decided to leave the *Den* to focus on his business interests.

Along with his wife Meeru Dhalwala, Vij opened his first restaurant Vij's in September 1994 in Vancouver. Now his chain of restaurants include Rangoli and My Shanti in South Surrey, as well as a food truck, and a factory making Vij's brand frozen curries. Vij's has come to be widely recognized as a place for Indian authentic food. In 2003, New York Times food writer Mark Bittman reviewed Vij's as "...easily among the finest Indian restaurants in the world".

Just a few months after it first opened its doors, Vij's My Shanti restaurant received a nomination from Air Canada's *enRoute Magazine* as one of Canada's Best New Restaurants. It was the second year in a row a Vij's establishment had been nominated, having won the People's Choice award in 2013 with his food truck Vij's Railway Express.

Sustainability, eating local and minimal waste is important to Vij, as he and wife Meeru have both been involved with the Chef's Table Society of British Columbia. They have helped

fund Vij's Kitchen, a state-of-the-art culinary learning facility, dedicated to teaching chefs and nutritionists about the future of ethnic food and cuisine.

Vij goes far beyond merely creating dishes. He has acted as a guest judge on *Top Chef Canada* two years in a row (2011-2012) and he was also the guest of honor in a 2013 *Top Chef Canada* episode dedicated to Indian cuisine.

Visa has enrolled Vij for his demonstration of what they call the "Chef Experience with Vikram Vij". It is part of dozens of demonstrations of highly acclaimed Canadian chefs, specializing in producing out of the ordinary platters from different parts of the world.

Because of the popularity of the restaurants, and the dishes created in their kitchens, Vikram and Meeru decided to write a cookbook based on these recipes. They have now authored two books, "Vij's: Elegant and Inspired Indian Cuisine", which won the 2007 Cuisine Canada Gold Award for Cookbook of the Year; and "Vij's at Home; Relax, Honey".

Honors and Awards have been bestowed upon Vij. In June 2011, the British Columbia Food Processors Association honored Vij with the Rising Star Award. In October 2011, he was awarded The Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year award for the Pacific Region's Hospitality and Tourism category. As well, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of law at BC's Simon Fraser University in June 2015, one of his finest moments. Vij's goal is to make Indian cuisine accessible to all.

**'BY MIXING INGREDIENTS, INFLUENCES AND TECHNIQUES FROM DIFFERENT REGIONS OF INDIA, VIJ HAS CRAFTED A NEW WAVE OF INDIAN COOKING THAT HAS WON NOTHING BUT PRAISE AND ADMIRATION – NOT TO MENTION HUNDREDS OF HUNGRY FANS...'**



# FORTHCOMING 2017 'THE A-LIST'

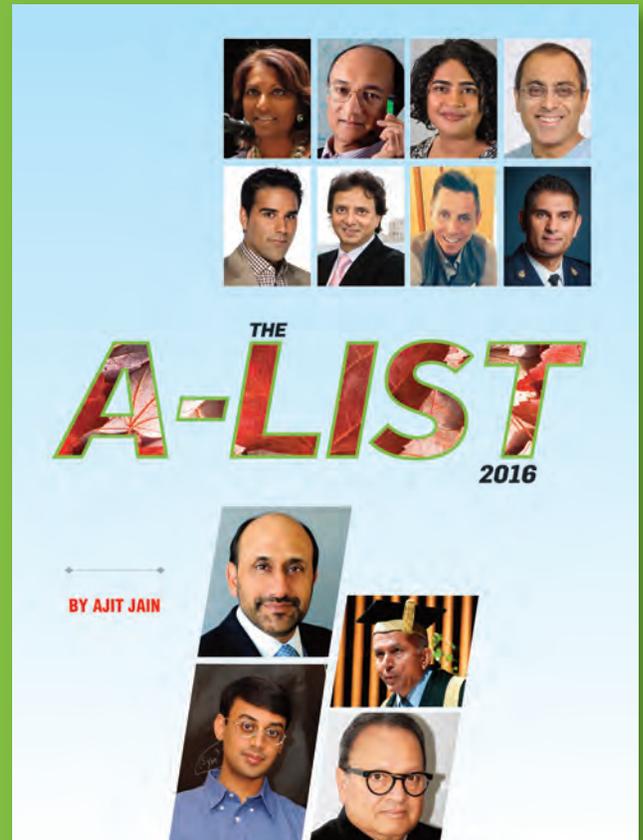
*This will be released in January 2017.*

*Once again it will profile 50 successful Indo-Canadians and Friends of India. These will be all mentors, eminent and successful people among persons of Indian origin in Canada. We define a mentor as a "Wise and trusted person whom others could follow", and an eminent person is "Towering, or the ones who stand out above others, a prominent person of high quality, like an eminent academic", also anyone who has, through his/her profession and/or business/charitable work added to the profile of persons of Indian descent in Canada.*

*If you know any such person, please nominate him/her through a simple message and a brief profile with his/her coordinates.*

*Thank you for your support.*

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**GARY COMERFORD**

Building bridges between Canada and India



**GARY COMERFORD'S ILLUSTRIOUS** career in the financial services industry spans almost four decades, about half of which he has spent building bridges between Indian and Canadian companies.

He became a member of the Canada-India Business Council (C-IBC) during its formative years in the mid-1990s when it was still experiencing growing pains and has since then played a vital role in its development. He was C-IBC's Vice Chair for almost ten years before taking over the helm as its President and CEO at the beginning of 2015.

Comerford is passionate about India and believes that there are substantial opportunities for Canadian and Indian companies to cooperate and collaborate in expanding their operations as well for improved government-to-government relations.

He sees India evolving into a significant trade partner with Canada in the wake of Canada's diminishing trade opportunities with the United States, which has traditionally been Canada's largest trade partner. He likens the scope for India to that of China 10-15 years ago when China was seen as the best bet for global expansion – a role that he sees India fulfilling today.

Comerford's long-standing relationship with India started in 1995, when, as Vice President (International) for Sun Life Financial, he first visited the country to explore new business opportunities. Incidentally, a year earlier, the Malhotra Committee, headed by former Reserve Bank of India Governor R.N. Malhotra, had presented its report on reforming the Indian insurance sector, opening the doors for foreign participation by companies like Sun Life.

During this visit, Comerford set the stage for two giants –

Canada's Sun Life and India's Aditya Birla Group - to become partners in the financial services industry. Under his leadership, Birla Sun Life Asset Management Company Limited was formed in 2001, followed a year later by Birla Sun Life Insurance Company Limited.

In 2002, he was appointed Vice President and General Manager of Sun Life India and four years later he became CEO of Birla Sun Life Asset Management (India).

In his unending quest to build bridges between Indian and Canadian businesses, Comerford has travelled to India 88 times since 1995. His distinguished service to the Indo-Canadian business community earned him the C-IBC's Business Person of the Year Award in 2007 and the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce President's Award in 2008.

Comerford started his career in the financial services industry with the Canada Permanent Trust in 1977, before joining Sun Life in 1986. In 2009, he joined RGA International Corporation as its Chief Marketing Officer.

A true corporate executive, with youthful energy and drive, Comerford has been actively involved in the numerous corporate, community and charitable initiatives. He currently sits on the Board of Directors of TV Ontario and the International Insurance Society and is a Member of the Board of Trustees of Brock University. He is also immediate past Chair of the Shaw festival. He holds Bachelor of Arts (Honors) and Masters of Business Administration degrees from the University of Western Ontario and is a Member of the Institute of Corporate Directors,

*(Contributed by Bhim Asdhir, President, Excel India Fund)*

**COMERFORD SEES INDIA EVOLVING INTO A SIGNIFICANT TRADE PARTNER OF CANADA**



**MATHIEU BOISVERT**

## India-Centered Academic

**DIRECTOR OF THE** Center for Studies and Research on India (CERIAS) at the University of Québec in Montreal, Mathieu Boisvert is a professor of South Asian Studies at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM).

His work has been India-centered and he has conducted research on different topics: religion, politics, asceticism, pilgrimage and transgenders (*hijras*).

Soon after his hiring at UQAM in 1992, Boisvert brought a group of 16 Canadian undergraduate students for a study tour in India that lasted three months. In 2000, he brought a group of 15 UQAM professors to South Asia. He also led Canadian research teams that resided for the entire period of the events to the Kumbh Mela of 1998 (Hardwar), 2001 (Allahabad), 2003 (Nashik), 2004 (Ujjain), and 2013 (Allahabad). According to him “bringing students to India is one of the best methods to ensure that interest emerges in graduate studies”.

Boisvert says he has always been concerned with stimulating interest in India among Canadian students and professors in order to strengthen deeper academic engagement between Canada and India. So, he has created short graduate programs on India, wherein students follow seminars in the Fall and the Winter in Canada, and head to India during the Summer semester. He has conducted six editions of these programs, leading students to Gangotri and Tapovan in Uttarakhand.

When he established the Center for Studies and Research on India (CERIAS), one of his objectives was to increase cooperation between academics from French Canada and those from India. UQAM has signed a number of MOUs with Indian institutions under which several professors from UQAM have

gone to SNDT Women's University (Mumbai) for conferences and research collaboration.

Starting in 2013, several student internships have been conducted yearly, thus enabling Indian students to reside for several months in Canada and collaborate with Canadian faculty members, and similarly Canadian students with Indian faculty members.

CERIAS also organizes more than 20 public lectures every year on topics related to India, thus informing and kindling further interest on India.

Boisvert has an MA in South Asian Studies (1987) from the University of Toronto and a PhD from McGill (1992) in Sanskrit, Pali and South Asian Studies.

Currently, Boisvert is in charge of a major research project on “Hijras of Maharashtra: Identity, social and cultural stakes”, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute and the Ministère des Relations internationales et de la francophonie (Québec). This project is multidisciplinary and involves three other scholars in various fields (anthropology, performance studies and legal studies). A major publication is planned for the spring of 2017.

“Though my initial interest in India has been through philology, when I started teaching at UQAM I developed a perspective that was much more anthropological. This enabled me to better understand contemporary India and, eventually, (I have developed) interests that are worlds apart from my initial training: the hijra research project as well as the workshops on India,” he explains.



**THE A-LIST**  
2016

**“BRINGING STUDENTS TO INDIA IS ONE OF THE BEST METHODS TO ENSURE THAT INTEREST EMERGES IN GRADUATE STUDIES...”**

## PATRICK BROWN

# He knows India



THE A-LIST  
2016

**IN 2011, WHEN** Narendra Modi was still Chief Minister of Gujarat, he named Patrick Brown an honorary citizen of his state for all the work that he did in forging understanding between Canada and Gujarat, understanding about what Modi is as leader of one of the most prosperous states in India.

No wonder, when Modi got elected as Prime Minister of India in May 2014, Brown (whom he calls “Patrick Bhai”) was one of the first people he called.

When Modi paid his first official visit to Canada in April 2015, during the official dinner reception at Toronto’s Exhibition grounds, he made it a point to briefly attend Brown’s fund raising dinner which was taking place in the same building as the Indian High Commission’s official reception.

Patrick Brown has visited the sub-continent 16 times. He has addressed students in Chandigarh about educational opportunities in Canada, enjoyed the backwaters of the south in Kerala, travelled in the picturesque east and he has been the Keynote Speaker at Vibrant Gujarat Summits (four times) in the west.

Brown accompanied Prime Minister Stephen Harper on his first official visit to India in late 2009 to meet with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh; he has run the Mumbai Marathon and visited the Golden Temple in Amritsar on eight different occasions.

Patrick Brown knows India.

As the long-time chairman of the Canada-India Parliamentary Association, the former Conservative Member of Parliament for Barrie and current leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario played a leadership role building Canada’s relations with one of the world’s fastest growing economies and the world’s largest democracy.

“Canada and India already have strong relations. We have good trade between our nations. But it could be so much better. We can certainly take it to the next level. We share many common values with India and I have every confidence it is a country we can do more business with. With over 1.3 million Indo-Canadians now calling Canada home, the personal relationships between the two nations are undeniable and they continue to grow stronger,” says Brown.

His travels throughout India have been extensive and Brown has seen first-hand the incredible diversity of India.

From goodwill tours delivering equipment to local youth at the Hockey in the Himalayas event in Leh, Ladakh, to official visits in Delhi, Brown has made lasting friendships with Indian people from every region, from every religion and from every walk of life.

Brown says his Indian experience is unique for a Canadian politician. India has a loyal friend in the Ontario PC Party Leader. He is as comfortable in Kochi, Baroda and Jalandhar as he is in Windsor, Brampton or Sault Ste. Marie.

**HIS TRAVELS THROUGHOUT INDIA HAVE BEEN EXTENSIVE AND THE RELATIONSHIPS HE HAS FORGED ARE INVALUABLE. HE HAS SEEN FIRST-HAND THE INCREDIBLE DIVERSITY OF INDIA**

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**Bob Dhillon**  
*Founder & CEO*  
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## AIM FOR SEVA

# Leaving their mark on the planet



» Dr. Terry Papneja with his wife Nimmi Papneja, co-founders of Aim for Seva Toronto Chapter at their recent fund raising gala in Toronto

“LET’S LEAVE OUR mark on this planet by changing human lives.” This is the slogan that Dr. Terry Papneja, co-founder of not-for-profit charitable organization AIM for SEVA (Toronto Chapter), adheres to.

The charity, under the leadership of Papneja and his wife Nimmi, has already raised over \$4 million, the highest amount compared to other AIM for SEVA’s chapters globally, all involved in helping raise funds to educate children from remote villages through its free student homes (hostels).

People in Canada, and across many countries, often hold back from making commitments to charitable causes because they cannot be sure that all their donations will end up benefiting the poor people who are the intended recipients of their generosity.

The AIM for SEVA’s Toronto chapter is novel: Each penny raised by them goes for the building of hostels and education of children. Local expenses are covered by volunteers.

The AIM for SEVA’s student homes provide complete care — supervision and guidance — to poor children and these homes are located near existing schools thus making it convenient for children to attend school regularly.

The Toronto chapter, established in 2002, has raised funds for building 23 hostels making it the highest donor in the world with the total amount raised so far being \$4.1 million. The 14 hostels donated by the Toronto chapter and currently in service today accommodate 644 children — and more will be housed in the new hostels as they come into operation.

These AIM for SEVA homes, Papneja says, are growing hubs of sustainable change. Children, whose chances of acquiring basic education are bleak, are brought under the care of the

wardens at these student homes. Each child receives free residential accommodation, nutritious food, education, tuition and vocational training. In addition, the children are trained in extra-curricular activities like handicrafts, music, dance and sports.

Overall, the AIM for SEVA global organization has already placed in service 101 student homes. And the children in these homes in India have big aspirations.

These kids have the same aspirations as millions others. You ask them and they will tell you to your absolute delight: “I want to be a pilot, or I want to be an engineer; or I want to be a lawyer.” They don’t want to continue to live in misery, grow up without learning alphabets.

“To think that these children, just a short while ago, were on the fringes of civilization, condemned to poverty and suffering simply because of where they were born; and now their lives have progressed so much that they can dream of a better life, and have more than a passing chance of fulfilling those dreams,” says Papneja who is delighted as to where AIM, as an organization, has reached in Toronto — all due to hard work and commitment of volunteers, under his leadership.

Not only are donations to AIM mounting each year but its “biggest contribution has been sensitizing people about the desperate needs of poor kids who are no less intelligent than our own kids”.

And they too have dreams.

The call to the general population is “take out your check books and write a check, whatever be the amount”. It will help educate a deserving child and the world would be a better place where peace and serenity would prevail.

**THE TORONTO CHAPTER OF AIM FOR SEVA, ESTABLISHED IN 2002, HAS RAISED FUNDS FOR BUILDING 23 HOSTELS MAKING IT THE HIGHEST DONOR IN THE WORLD WITH THE TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED SO FAR BEING \$4.1 MILLION**



» Dr. Narayan Murthy, co-founder of Infosys - Dr. Roseann O-Riley Runte, President of Carleton University, who conferred an honorary degree on Narayan Murthy. Next is Vancouver-based community leader Barj Dhahyan, board member of Canada-India Centre

## CANADA-INDIA CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, TRADE AND POLICY

# Developing stronger bilateral ties

**THE OTTAWA-BASED** Carleton University's 2008 Strategic Plan identified globalization as one of the four pillars around which efforts would be centered. In view of the number of students from India or of Indian origin, the strong research activities of a significant core of faculty members in areas ranging from engineering and architecture to the arts, and the programmatic offerings which included Indian music and philosophy, it is not surprising that the University community welcomed the opportunity to develop stronger ties with India by partnering with the vibrant and highly educated Indo-Canadian community in Ottawa and across Canada.

At the initiative of Indian High Commissioner in Canada Shashi Gavai, and Deputy High Commissioner Narinder Chauhan, leading lights of the Indo-Canadian community Dr. Pradeep Merchant, Dr. Nishith Goel and Mr. Barj Dahan met with Carleton University's President, Dr. Roseann Runte.

One evening in 2008, over dinner, the Canada-India Center for Excellence in Science, Technology, Trade and Policy was born. Over the course of the coming months, other leaders from the community joined the circle and an agreement was forged in support of the Center's vision.

The Government of India offered Carleton a Visiting Chair who would spend a semester teaching and doing research at Carleton each year. The University contributed offices, a board room and library for the Center. The collection of books, started by the High Commission of India, has grown annually with generous donations from faculty and community members.

Carleton University held a major colloquium on Innovation with important guests from India including Sam Pitroda and

heads of technology firms in Canada including Sir Terry Matthews. In collaboration with Universities, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, Carleton held a second major conference which included 25 University Presidents and Vice-Chancellors from Canada and India to determine ways to promote exchanges between the two countries. The Center has continually welcomed visitors from India for lectures and conferences and collaborated with the Indian High Commission on the Year of India events.

The Center also arranged for three offices in India to promote academic exchanges and economic development.

The Center then proposed that the Canadian government contribute to its operations. The Canadian government recognized the importance of Canada-India relations and set up a fund which would be made available following a competition. However, Carleton University, and its network of eight collaborating universities, was unsuccessful in the competition.

The Center has nonetheless continued to work diligently, hosting the Indian film festival, two conferences in 2015 which were funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and organizing the well-attended Dahan Lecture, and Parliamentary Internship Program which encourages young scholars to understand the workings of our government and to consider a career in governance.

It has also organized the exchanges of numerous faculty members and students including strong research in computing science and a major design project involved a

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**TODAY, THE CENTER CONTEMPLATES NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH SISTER UNIVERSITIES IN CANADA AND INDIA, NEW WAYS TO SERVE THE INDO-CANADIAN COMMUNITY IN CANADA AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE HEALTH, SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND GROWING ECONOMIES OF BOTH COUNTRIES**

## CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION

# Forging ties that bind



» Minister Eric Hoskins, Government of Ontario (centre) at Canada India Health Forum, organized by CIF, with Co-Chairs V.I. Lakshmanan (left) and Ramesh Chotai (right)

**CANADA AND INDIA** share cultural and diplomatic relations dating back to almost 70 years. Both countries enjoy bilateral relations that have influenced every aspect of life in both countries from energy and education to science and technology. And there's a rapidly growing Indo-Canadian community of over 1.2-million people.

It is in this spirit that the Canada India Foundation (CIF) was launched nationally in 2007. With a broad founding membership across Canada, the goal of CIF is to promote and support a growing engagement with India.

Through its activities and reach, CIF, in its short span of existence, has influenced the Government of Canada to commit to regular consultation with the Foundation as a national stakeholder.

CIF strives to be one of the more relevant public policy platforms in Canada and the primary purpose and goal of its forums is to prompt serious and multi-dimensional, recommendation-based dialogue on opportunities for Canada and India to expand bilateral trade and strengthen strategic relations. The most recent forums held by CIF in Ottawa and Toronto focused on infrastructure and healthcare where participants included parliamentarians and business leaders from both countries.

On his recent visit to Canada in 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said "Canada is a major Asia-Pacific power and should play a more active role – including in regional institutions". It is this challenge that is framing the agenda and

narrative for future CIF forums.

One of the hallmarks of CIF is the Chanchlani Global Indian Award held annually in Canada.

The event is the premier Indo-Canadian gala honoring global Indians who have made a substantial and fundamental impact internationally. The award is given along with a cash contribution for the recipient's charity of choice. Previous winners include Sam Pitroda, Tulsi Tanti, Ratan Tata, Deepak Chopra and NR Narayana Murthy.

The 2015 CIF Gala Committee had planned to honor India's 11th President, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, who had a long-standing relationship with Canada and who had been instrumental in forging innovation in science and technology between Canada and India. Sadly he passed away last summer following sudden and massive cardiac arrest while addressing IIT students in Shillong.

There is awareness in Canada that major transformations are occurring in India that will have global impact and which will also impact Canada. But sadly many Canadians are not well informed on India.

The CIF is playing that role – to inform the Canadian public as to what's going on in India, and also encouraging considered debate and public discourse in this area. That is its hallmark.

*(Contributed by Marc Kealey of K&A Inc. in Toronto)*

**CIF STRIVES TO BE ONE OF THE MORE RELEVANT PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORMS IN CANADA. ITS PUBLIC FORUMS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADA AND INDIA TO EXPAND BI-LATERAL TRADE AND STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC RELATIONS**



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## CENTER FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

# Training ground for experts on South Asia

**FOR A WELL-INFORMED** and accurate understanding and judgement of issues confronting South Asia, Indo-Canadians must depend on properly analyzed news with broader perspectives, undertaken by hard-core analysts and professionals, who have dedicated their lives studying and interpreting South Asia. What better place to find such experts than at the University of Toronto, Canada's premier institution of higher education.

In 1965, the University of Toronto took a pivotal role in the expansion of South Asian Studies in the areas of Indian culture. Under the guidance of Professor A.K. Warder, a scholar of Buddhism and Sanskrit, a nucleus of scholars in Sanskrit, Pali and Hindi languages, Indian Religion and Philosophy, literature and ancient Indian history were appointed at the University and the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies was established with a full time professorial staff of 11 members, that lasted from 1971-1979.

In 1980, the University replaced the Sanskrit and Indian Studies Department with the Center for South Asian Studies, because of the University's strategic need to broaden the base of South Asian Studies and to accommodate the University's growing strength in modern periods of South Asia in political science, economics, modern history, sociology and anthropology, and geography.

Professor Milton Israel, the first Director of South Asian Studies, laid a solid foundation of South Asian Studies at the University of Toronto from 1980-1990. He expanded South Asian Studies' graduate and undergraduate scholarly and research base, and degree-granting activities. He started the Center's prestigious publication series. By integrating studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, he emphasized multidisciplinary training in South Asian studies area at the University. Prof. Israel enhanced the Center's activities by hosting International conferences on South Asia at the University.

As the next Director of the Center, Professor Narendra Wagle (1991-2002) expanded the Center's activities. The research publication program on South Asia reached its peak. The Center saw the materialization of 15 internationally well-acclaimed books as well as a dozen booklets and conference papers on South Asia.

Professor Wagle also multiplied the efforts of convening special lecture series and International Conferences on South Asia at the University. The Center's academic programs flourished unabated under his leadership.

The Directors at the helm of South Asian Studies Center who succeeded Professor Wagle are: Professor Chelava Kanaganayakam (2002-2006; 2007-2010) and Professor Ritu Birla (2010-). Under their exceptional management, the Center has continued to grow and offers MA and PhD interdisciplinary and collaborative programs on South Asia in history, religion, geography, anthropology, languages and literature at the University.

With a total of approximately 23 professorial staff in South Asian Studies at the University of Toronto — perhaps the largest such contingent of scholars in a Canadian University having an impressive record of internationally acclaimed research accomplishments — and having the largest collection of books on South Asia in Canada, the future prospects of the Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Toronto look very promising.

The newly established India innovation Institute at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, is emerging as Canada's leading think tank for Modern South Asia's economic, social, ecological and technological development issues.

*(Contributed by Narendra K. Wagle, Professor Emeritus of History, University of Toronto)*



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**THE CENTER CONTINUES TO GROW AND OFFERS MA AND PhD INTERDISCIPLINARY AND COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS ON SOUTH ASIA IN HISTORY, RELIGION, GEOGRAPHY, ANTHROPOLOGY, LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

## CHILD HAVEN INTERNATIONAL

# A unique model of charity and philanthropy



» Bonnie Cappuccino with kids at their Kalyampoondi home

**SHARING EXPERIENCES WITH** Bonnie and Fred Cappuccino - Personal narrative by Dr. Kunjar Sharma, Honorary Consul-General of Nepal in Toronto.

Any attendee at a Child Haven International fundraiser (20 or more are organized each year across Canada) will be shown Child Haven's nine homes in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Tibet through Bonnie and Fred Cappuccino's eyes. They are the co-founders of this Gandhian philosophy-based organization, to which both of them have devoted their lives. Bonnie is 81 and Fred just celebrated his 89th birthday, with both in good health. They stand together on the podium, sharing this again and again through a slide show that tells the stories of the poor and destitute children who reside in these homes.

The fundraisers have become a tradition, and a main source of revenue to pay for the maintenance of these homes and the living expenses and education of the 1,300 children who reside in these homes. The Cappuccinos are thus freed from the "strings-attached" model, under which givers may dictate their own terms. Fiercely independent, and reliant on the goodwill of their volunteers, young and old, Bonnie and Fred believe funds will come. "We are both agnostic/atheist and so we don't rely on God's will but have faith in human kindness and compassion, also hard work," explains Bonnie. Their philosophy and beliefs are akin to those of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. They attract admiration from Child Haven supporters in the same way. They have firsthand experience as the couple marched with Dr. King in Selma in 1965.

The Child Haven logo and mission is Gandhian, as they care for the children with a vegetarian diet and lots of love.

Child Haven was founded in 1985. Bonnie would go to India four times a year, which she continues to do today, to

administer their homes there. I met Bonnie and Fred at their first fundraising dinner in Toronto and came to admire their approach to helping children. I, therefore, persisted in asking Bonnie to let me take her to Kathmandu, hoping to start a Child Haven program there. In 1993 she finally agreed.

Child Haven is a unique model of charity and philanthropy. It shows how a couple's determination to help those who are needy and deserving can have a multiplier effect on local and international resources. With local input, Bonnie rented quarters for a home in Kathmandu with three children. Soon, some 50 or 60 children came. Some were orphaned; others were destitute because their families were broken.

The home moved to another facility, also in Kathmandu in Boudhnath, as the number of children grew. Their new school was run by idealistic, young teachers. One teacher named Arjun would spend hours before and after school helping the children with their homework on his own time. The stories of Child Haven in Kaliyampoondi near Chennai, Hyderabad, Ghaziabad and elsewhere are similar. "The children are poor and destitute when they arrive (in our homes), but they soon become healthy and happy and laugh and jump like any other children," Bonnie explains with all sense of optimism. After all, she's Bonniema (Mother Bonnie) to all 1,300 children, and they really and truly receive her love and affection in unstinted bounty. No wonder they laugh and jump!

The work of Child Haven goes on in India and elsewhere. Supporters are currently engaged in building up a six-million-dollar endowment in perpetuity, to continue the Cappuccinos' life's work. They believe this endowment should generate enough income to pay for the maintenance of all nine homes to make them self-sustaining. To find more information please check out the website at <http://www.childhaven.ca>.

**CHILD HAVEN IS A UNIQUE MODEL OF CHARITY AND PHILANTHROPY. IT SHOWS HOW A COUPLE'S DETERMINATION TO HELP THOSE WHO ARE NEEDY AND DESERVING CAN HAVE A MULTIPLIER EFFECT ON LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES**



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» Dr. Margaret Walton-Roberts of Balsillie School of International Studies in Waterloo is seen addressing the students of School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Indira Gandhi University in New Delhi (November 2014) The visit was sponsored by Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute.

## SHASTRI INDO-CANADIAN INSTITUTE

# Half a century of educational diplomacy

**IT WAS JUNE** 1965 that at a convocation address at McGill University, then Prime Minister of India Lal Bahadur Shastri expressed a desire for an institutional understanding between Canada and India in the field of humanities and social sciences. Three years later the two countries announced the establishment of the “Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute”, named as such in honor of Prime Minister Shastri. That time there was a limited knowledge of India in Canada. So, the goal of the Institute was to create links between individuals and the academic communities in the two countries. For the past 47 years, the Shastri Institute has not only played a major role in keeping that interest alive but also increased it exponentially with the efforts from its 35 Canadian and 55 Indian member universities and institutions. Significantly, even francophone Canada has recently become active in the institution.

Despite its offices in Calgary and New Delhi, Shastri was essentially a Canadian institution in its first 37 years. Its focus was on social and cultural subjects. It promoted opportunities for Canadian students and academics to delve into some of the riches of Indian life and society. The Institute was highly respected in India. So, the Shastri-sponsored Canadian academic and student groups, while visiting India, could gain audiences with eminent Indian scholars, even political leadership like Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Despite political ups and downs in their relations, the Canadian and Indian governments have actively acknowledged the work of SICI as an “educational and collaborative bridge” between the two countries.

In 2005, Shastri Institute took a major step to reinvent itself as a truly bi-national organization, with membership opened to Indian universities as well. It is now governed by an executive

council with balanced participation from both countries and equivalent funding provided by the two Governments to support all its activities.

The Shastri Institute now funds a wide range of programs and bi-national activities, including faculty and student exchanges, round table discussions, and collaborative research projects in varied fields including agriculture and food-processing, immigration, digital literacy, energy, medical and environmental research, etc. The collaborative projects include research even on leukemia and diabetes. These have resulted in the development of clean drinking water in areas in India where source water is contaminated. The Institute is also promoting close interactions among business and industries, including areas that the two governments have identified as priority sectors for bi-lateral co-operation.

The Shastri Institute continues to bring together students, academics and civil society in both countries to work jointly, to share in learning and understanding of each other’s societies. All the Shastri member institutions are committed to work beyond the upcoming golden Jubilee, and look forward to the next fifty years of training the next generation of leaders, building and supporting meaningful relationships between the scholars and educational institutions of the two countries, and collaboratively generating knowledge, ideas and solutions of benefit to Canada, India and the rest of the world.

*(Contributed by Prof. Balbir Sahni, Prof Emeritus of Economics, Concordia University, Prof. Gary VanLoon, Queen’s University, and Prof. Girish Shah of Laval University, who’s currently President of the Shastri Institute)*



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**THE SHASTRI INSTITUTE CONTINUES TO BRING TOGETHER STUDENTS, ACADEMICS AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN BOTH COUNTRIES TO WORK JOINTLY, TO SHARE IN LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER’S SOCIETIES**

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### DR. ARUN CHOKALINGAM

#### Creating global awareness about hypertension

In 2010, he was invited to be the founding director of Global Health at the US National Heart Lung and Blood Institute in Washington.

During a short period, this researcher established 11 Centres of Excellence in 10 developing nations — Argentina, Bangladesh, China, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Mexico, Peru, South Africa and Tunisia – which was done in collaboration with a number of developed countries including the US, Canada, Finland and Australia.

In late 2013, Arun returned to Canada and joined the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health as Director of the Office of Global Health. Simultaneously he was appointed as special advisor on Global Health to the Dean of Health at York University which launched the first ever Undergraduate program in Global Health.

Arun's vision of global public health includes his concerns about environment and pollution; nutrition, agriculture and healthy living; better city design and architecture; global equity and governance; conflict resolution and global peace; and every aspect of any nation.

*(Contributed by Dr. Arun Kumar Garg, Clinical professor, Faculty of Medicine, The University of British Columbia; Medical Director, Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, Fraser Health; President Canada-India Network Society)*



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### CANADA-INDIA CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, TRADE AND POLICY

#### Developing stronger bilateral ties

dozen Canadian students and an equal number of students from India who joined together to design residences for students at a new university in Mumbai and to re-imagine the surrounding low-income area.

Projects in water use for agriculture, food security, power grid distribution, and supply-chain management figure among the many areas of shared research to date.

Today, the Center contemplates new partnerships with sister universities in Canada and India, new ways to serve the Indo-Canadian community in Canada and to contribute to the health, sustainable environment and growing economies of both countries.

*(Contributed by Dr. Roseanne O'Riley Runte, President, Carleton University)*



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## 100% of Donation Invested in Child Education & Support.

### Help change the life of a less-privileged child

AIM for SEVA is a Canadian not-for-profit charity, registered in Ontario that is reaching out to the poorest of poor in India. Visit us online to donate, explore opportunities to help and support.

For further information of these scholarships, please contact:

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