
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of *The Philanthropist* focuses on “diaspora,” which became a popular term in the 1980s. Broadly defined, diaspora is the relocation of people away from their countries of origin, whether through choice or need, and for centuries Canada has seen an influx of immigrants from all corners of the globe. To orient us with this relatively new term, **Krishan Mehta** and **Patrick Johnston** set the stage for this issue with an engaging discussion on “Diaspora Philanthropy and Civic Engagement in Canada,” first introducing some challenging definitions and then focusing not on the commitment, the challenges, and hard work of Canada’s new citizens, but their dedication to diaspora philanthropy – giving back to both their adopted and birth countries. Mehta and Johnston specifically examine the role of Canada’s new immigrants in charitable foundations and volunteerism, a vital component of philanthropy.

Other avenues of diaspora activity, such as social service and community service, are discussed by **Archana Sridhar** in her article “An Opportunity to Lead: South Asian Philanthropy in Canada,” which examines the philanthropic history of South Asians in Canada and the diversity of their giving. This article also indicates “how little we actually know about the South Asian diaspora in Canada in terms of its philanthropy.” The author points to numerous social service and community service areas that would benefit from further “research and education around philanthropy.” **Sandra Wilking** also looks at Asian philanthropy in her article “Beyond Awareness: Engaging Ethnocultural/Racial Communities – the Chinese-Canadian Experience.” She relates her own experiences as a Canadian citizen within a mosaic community and points out that there is a lack of multicultural diversity within our communities directly related to commitment from the diaspora in volunteerism and involvement within community programs and services. Wilking offers eight valuable lessons to assist in “cultivating ethnocultural/racial diversity.”

Providing an international perspective on diaspora are co-authors **Mary Stuart** and **Deloris Russell**, who look at “Engaging the Diaspora as Volunteers in International Development.” Their article focuses on several key areas of diaspora participation, including involving the diaspora to improve healthcare and economic development in countries of origin. The authors also look at “some of the issues to be pursued in integrating diaspora associations.”

“Part 4” of **Blake Bromley’s** testimony at the Air India Inquiry is included in this issue. He addresses the need to move forward in improving and redefining “the purposes and activities that should attract tax benefits for donors and tax exemptions for organizations in the future.”

Concluding our article collection this issue is a Viewpoint selection by **Winnie Hwo**: “DSF Public Engagement with Ethnic Canadians.” Engaging ethnic Canadians and their communities to participate in initiatives such as climate change has already begun. She points out the awareness that Asian communities already have of the David Suzuki Foundation (DSF) and how the knowledge garnered from this organization can be used to further public awareness on climate change and encourage action both at home and abroad.

Some of our columns also provide readers with helpful information on the diaspora from different perspectives:

- “What’s the Law” by **Amanda J. Stacey** and **Andrew Valentine**, looks into the registration process and legal issues regarding registration of ethnocultural charities.
- As **David Lasby** points out in “What the Numbers Say,” with almost 20 percent of the Canadian population in the diaspora category, crunching the numbers on their giving and volunteering should not be overlooked.
- The “Social Media” column by **Giles Crouch** looks at the presence of the diaspora communities online and how they use Internet tools to organize and connect with each other and their communities.

And **Bob Wyatt** and **I**, in Point/Counterpoint, come to an amiable agreement on whether or not to litigate. Under “Book Reviews,” **Peter Broder** provides us with a look into *A Year of Living Generously – Dispatches from the Front Lines of Philanthropy* by Lawrence Scanlan.

With summer in full swing, we hope you will take time out to read *The Philanthropist*.

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