# Annual Report

2015-2016

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Canadians for a Civil Society's accomplishments during this year make me feel really proud and humbled to be part of such a dedicated team of individuals.

From launching national conversations on Canadian values to hosting impactful symposiums and expanding digital platforms, 2015 was a pivotal year for establishing key initiatives.

Through strategic community collaborations, educational events, and policy engagements, CCS continues to promote human rights, gender equality, and empathy across Alberta.

# VISION, MISSION & WHAT DO WE DO

## VISION

A culture of human rights is the foundation of life in a civil society

## WHAT DO WE DO?

CCS works to advance a culture of respect for human rights as well as gender equality through community events that celebrate women and foster an inclusive society. With education and advocacy as tools to effect change in society, we seek to cultivate an environment of dialogues and deliberations that strengthen our resolve on freedom from fear and promote the five pillars of civil society – respect, literacy, human rights, the rule of law and meaningful economic opportunity

## MISSION

We advocate, share, and celebrate Canadian values and human rights as a way of life by engaging people and communities

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# CANADIAN VALUES & STRATEGIC PLANNING

## Canadian Values, Canada's Value (April 15, 2015):

Launched in partnership with U of A's Peter Lougheed Leadership College and moderated by Sen. Doug Roche. Former Prime Minister Kim Campbell and former Foreign Minister Dr. Lloyd Axworthy addressed 100–120 Edmontonians on gender equality, constitutional values, and international human rights.

## Strategic & Business Planning (May 9, 2015):

The board formally adopted the operating name 'Canadians for A Civil Society', defined core organizational goals, and established key strategic focus areas for long-term growth.

## Members & Parliament Outreach (November 2015):

Founder G.S. Bhatia designed and personally funded a Canadian Values poster reflecting the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, distributing copies to newly elected Members of Parliament.

# DAUGHTERS DAY 2015

## "Every day is Daughters Day"

### August 29, 2015 at City Hall:

The fourth annual celebration recognized six outstanding Albertan women receiving Daughter of the Year awards: Yessy Byl, Kristina De Guzman, Sheliza Kassam, Malja Najmi-Beauchamp, Karen Smith, and Leslie Weigl.

### Keynote Address:

Zarqa Nawaz, creator of the hit CBC sitcom 'Little Mosque on the Prairie', delivered an inspiring keynote address to community members and supporters.

### Event Organization:

Organized under the leadership of Chair Charan Khehra with coordinators Poushali Mitra and Amrita Gill, guidance from Jim Gurnett, and hosting by Vivian Abboud.

# UN DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

## Public Film Screening (October 15, 2015):

In partnership with the Indo-Canadian Women's Association, CCS hosted a public screening of Leslee Udwin's acclaimed documentary 'India's Daughter' at the Art Gallery of Alberta to foster dialogue on ending gender-based violence.

## Skype Q&A & Expert Panel:

Featured a live Q&A with director Leslee Udwin via Skype, along with panel insights from top media lawyer Matt Woodley (on press freedom) and SACE educator Neital Siva-Jain (on supporting sexual assault survivors).

# CANADA 150 & DIGITAL PLATFORM

## Canada 150 Planning Session (November 20, 2015):

Led by Satya Das and Rick Moyse, 20–25 community leaders convened to design engagement sessions for a 'Citizens Update' on Canadian Values ahead of Canada's 150th anniversary.

## Website & Digital Development:

In partnership with NAIT representatives (Steve Chattergoon) and students, Director Trina Joshi led the launch of a new official CCS website and dedicated digital platform for national Canada 150 engagement submissions.

# HUMAN RIGHTS DAY & BECA 2016

## Human Rights Day at the Legislature (December 3, 2015):

Organized by Charan Khehra, Jim Gurnett, and Poushali Mitra. Community leaders gathered at the Alberta Legislature for a reception, group photograph, chamber introductions, and official member statements recorded in the Alberta Hansard.

## BECA Symposium May 2016 Preview:

Inspired by discussions with Leslee Udwin regarding her 'Think Equal' initiative, CCS partnered with MacEwan University, NAIT, and ICWA under Judy Piercey's leadership to organize the first 'Building Empathy, Conquering Apathy' symposium.