



**Inaugural Annual General Meeting**  
June 27, 2013  
Sheridan College  
4180 Duke of York Boulevard, Mississauga  
9:30 am - 10:00 am

## **AGENDA**

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|--|-----------------|
| 1. Welcome/Call to Order                 | Varsha Naik     |
| 2. Introductions                         | Sarala Uttangi  |
| 3. Approval of Agenda                    | Sarala Uttangi  |
| 4. Board Chair Report                    | Varsha Naik     |
| 5. Treasurer's Report/Financial Overview | Larisa Drozd    |
| 6. Coordinator's Report                  | Monica Valencia |
| 7. By-laws Ratification                  | Sarala Uttangi  |
| 8. Election of the Board of Directors    | Varsha Naik     |
| 9. New Business                          | Varsha Naik     |
| 10. Adjournment/Closing Remarks          | Varsha Naik     |



## Inaugural Annual General Meeting 2013 Chair's Report

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The past year has seen significant economic and political changes around the world and all of us have been impacted by them. Locally, the demographic changes have demanded appropriate responses from the human service sector. In this climate, the Regional Diversity Roundtable (RDR) had its own share of both challenges and opportunities that shaped its transformation and regeneration. The cross-sectoral diversity and equity professionals' network in Peel that was formed in 2005 became an independent entity in May 2012 with charitable, not-for-profit status.

The role of the RDR has become critical in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) not only in Peel but around the GTA and beyond. Our mission is to be a leader in supporting human and public sector organizations and institutions to provide services that are fair, inclusive and culturally responsive. Delivering on our organizational commitment of community capacity building and offering diversity and equity trainings while keeping to the core value of working together for greater impact and sustaining these results in organizations and the community has brought us many successes this year. The biggest to note is almost 95% support from our members as we transitioned to a formal structure with incorporation. The endorsement and recommitment comes from the heads of 29 Peel organizations. An award, ground-breaking projects and initiatives are some others that the RDR Coordinator will reference in her report. This speaks volumes regarding trust in the RDR's ability and we return that respect with a promise of excellence in governance and innovative programs.

RDR's focus remains rooted to community building and development that result in positive change for a cohesive and harmonious community. Institutionalizing equity is key to our efforts. The many training requests we receive from large and small organizations within our region and from others externally has added to our reputation and helped create environments that foster diversity, equity and inclusion.

All of the above is possible only due to our collaborative efforts and many stakeholders' involvement enhanced by grant supports. RDR is actively participating and working with others in the region to address systemic and community challenges to build strong and effective bridges. It gives me great pride to share that RDR's latest collaborative initiative with Peel Newcomer Strategy Group – The Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel - launched just a couple of months ago - has already delivered on the RDR mandate. Two large institutions and RDR members have begun to embed it internally and have further deepened our reach and work.

RDR's strategic direction and long-term goal remains the same: to have all Peel service providers join in the DEI journey. Our own has been possible with the support of Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Peel, a member and our trustee organization as well as the Ontario Trillium Foundation through its funding grant. RDR is thankful to both for their valuable backing. My two fellow Board members' dedication is greatly appreciated. The support of our volunteers is vital and Monica Valencia, our sole staff's contribution and tireless efforts is noteworthy. Our call for others in the Peel region to join us in the journey remains an open one.

Lastly and most importantly, a big thank you goes to all our members for their constant support with a reminder that we continue to speak and work as one voice to leverage our efforts for equity so that all succeed.

RDR has taken its first step today in its new independence and my hope is that it has a journey that is memorable and historic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Varsha Naik". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Varsha Naik  
RDR Chair, Board of Directors



## Inaugural Annual General Meeting 2013 Coordinator's Report

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Today is an important day for the Regional Diversity Roundtable (RDR) because we have two firsts in the history of the RDR – the first Annual General Meeting and the first RDR conference. Since its inception, the RDR has been committed to building inclusion and diversity competence within organizations and institutions in Peel. With our most recent grants from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the Social Planning Council of Peel and the Ontario Trillium Foundation the RDR has honoured this commitment with many initiatives, projects and events.

In 2012 the RDR received the J.S. Woodsworth Award for its outstanding commitment and excellence in the fight for the elimination of racial discrimination. This award was a significant achievement because it not only acknowledged the value of RDR's work but it also encouraged the roundtable to continue to deliver on the mandate of building an inclusive community and institutionalizing equity in organizations in Peel.

Another milestone for the RDR was the development of the *Steps to Organizational Equity* curriculum. This curriculum, made up of six modules, was designed to provide participants with the tools to engage in an internal change process. The process aims to enhance service delivery by building the capacity of individuals who serve Peel's diverse populations. In 2012 the curriculum was offered to a cohort of human service professionals and it will be offered again this year.

To expand RDR's knowledge transfer and exchange network, the RDR launched its Diversity and Equity Resource Collection. With over 200 resources, from books to DVDs, the RDR is now able to educate members of the community on how to provide services that are equitable, inclusive and culturally competent.

Partnerships have also enabled the RDR to have collective impact. We recently launched, in collaboration with the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, the Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel. The charter is a regional initiative to help create a "Peel Region that values, respects and embraces diversity and equity so that everyone can achieve their full potential". Over 100 people, including residents, and members from the public, non-profit and private sector have endorsed the charter. Individuals and institutions continue to embrace the charter's commitments through an electronic endorsement form available on the RDR website.

Apart from external activities, the RDR has also focused on its internal structure and operations. In 2013, the RDR Board has worked on the key recommendations outlined in last year's evaluation report. The by-laws were approved and the Policy and Operations Manual was revised accordingly. New membership application processes were introduced and an interim Board was established. The Board is also formally expanding to include members from the RDR and the community at large. This expansion strengthens the RDR as it brings more wealth of knowledge and expertise to the table.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has helped the RDR with their dedication, resources and time. Your help is very much appreciated.

Don't forget to visit our website [www.regionaldiversityroundtable.org](http://www.regionaldiversityroundtable.org) for updates and upcoming events.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Valencia  
RDR Coordinator



## **The Regional Diversity Roundtable's Most Recent Achievements**

- **Development of Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel**
  - The RDR and the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group collaborated on the creation of the Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel. The implementation of the charter will help build a more inclusive and welcoming community.
- **Recipient of the 2012 J.S. Woodsworth Award**
  - The RDR received the 2012 J.S. Woodsworth Award for its outstanding commitment and excellence in the fight for the elimination of racial discrimination.
- ***Steps to Organizational Equity Curriculum***
  - The RDR created a curriculum to increase the capacity of participants by providing them with the tools to engage in organizational change processes. The facilitator's guide and course book were also developed as part of the curriculum.
- **Resources in Local Libraries**
  - The RDR made its resources available to the public. Over 200 books and multi-media collection are now accessible to the community through the public libraries in Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga.
- **10 Workshops**
  - The RDR organized and delivered 10 workshops to train Human Service professionals on diversity and equity.
- **10 Tough Questions Cafés™**
  - The RDR facilitated dialogues that provided a space for diversity and equity workers to dialogue and shift attitudes on how complex issues are understood.
- **New Website**
  - The RDR launched its new website featuring access to a variety of inclusion and equity resources. The website also acts as a platform for the community to be informed about RDR initiatives and events.



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### **RDR BY-LAWS RATIFICATION**

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#### **Old Version**

##### **5.02 Election and Term**

Subject to the articles, the members will elect the directors at the first meeting of members and at each succeeding annual meeting at which an election of directors is required, and the directors shall be elected to hold office for a term expiring not later than the close of the next annual meeting of members following the election.

Generally, no person is permitted to be a director of the corporation unless he or she is a member of the corporation, and if the person ceases to be a member, he or she automatically ceases to be a director. However, a person may be a director of a corporation if he or she becomes a member of the corporation within ten days after his or her election or appointment as a director. If the person fails to become a member within the ten days, the person immediately ceases to be a director, and cannot be re-elected or reappointed unless he or she is a member of the corporation.

#### **New Version**

##### **5.02 Election and Term**

Subject to the articles, the members will elect the directors at the first meeting of members and at each succeeding annual meeting at which an election of directors is required, and the directors shall be elected to hold office for a term expiring not later than the close of the next annual meeting of members following the election.



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### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS SLATE**

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|------------------|--------------|
| • Varsha Naik    | Chair        |
| • Sarala Uttangi | Secretary    |
| • Larisa Drozd   | Treasurer    |
| • Atif Mahmood   | Board Member |
| • Gurwinder Gill | Board Member |
| • Laky Pabla     | Board Member |
| • Michelle Bilek | Board Member |
| • Paul Nguyen    | Board Member |
| • Peter Gatto    | Board Member |





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS BIOGRAPHIES

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**Varsha Naik** is community liaison coordinator for the Peel District School Board with more than 20 years of senior level experience in the human service sectors in Ontario and has a personal commitment to equity. She is responsible for initiating and managing collaborative and leading edge community development projects with emphasis on diversity. She is a noted expert and frequent presenter on integrating diversity into public education and in engaging and involving the diverse faith and culture communities nationally and internationally. She facilitates board, school and community communication to further develop transparent, inclusive and fair practices, procedures and protocols. Strengthening Peel board's partnership with key agencies within the Region of Peel is part of her portfolio. She has brought a number of new and innovative initiatives to the board like Faith Forward and Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel. She is one of the founding members of the RDR and has supported and led many of its activities, projects and committees from 2005. She is leading the RDR as Board Chair from April 2013.

**Sarala Uttangi** is the Multicultural Services Coordinator at Brampton Library and has been instrumental in the development of multicultural programs, services and collections, designed to meet the needs of the Brampton community. She sits on a wide range of committees including the Regional Diversity Roundtable. She has served as an RDR member since October 2005, contributing through working groups, steering committee and as a board member and has a passion for strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion in the organizations.

**Larisa Drozd** has worked at Peel Senior Link for over 12 years. As Supervisor of Client Services her main role is to manage Supports for Daily Living services that provide seniors in the community with the opportunity to live independently in their homes with dignity and respect. Therefore if at all possible, avoiding or postponing institutionalization. Larisa has a passion for equity and inclusion, advocates fearlessly for the marginalized, and is comfortable both working inside and outside of the box! She has been a member of The

Diversity Roundtable for approximately 6 years, and proudly sits as Treasurer on the Board of Directors.

**Atif Mahmood** is Youth Program Manager at Peel Multicultural Council for the past 5 years. He is a graduate from Ryerson University and has a B.COMM in Information Technology Management. However his love for working with diverse youth has strayed him away from computers and technology and has focused him more on working with young leaders in the community and empowering them to become leaders in the future. He is also passionate about creating a harmonious community in the region of Peel by promoting and spreading the message of diversity and inclusion. Atif is involved also as an executive council member for the Young Leaders Council (YLC) and South Asian Advisory Council (SAAC) of the United Way of Peel Region.

**Gurwinder Gill** for over 25 years has been leading and managing innovative programs in diversity, equity and cultural competency and is a passionate public speaker nationally and internationally. Currently she is the Director of Equity and Volunteer Services at William Osler Health System where she has facilitated three national awards in Diversity including Canada's Best Diversity Employers Award 2013. Gurwinder was born in Singapore and raised in England. Her education and training includes Business Studies, Adult Education, Volunteer Management, Leadership Training, Prejudice Reduction, Cross-cultural Communication and Diversity/Cultural Competency. She participates in the WHO's International Task Force for Culturally Competent Hospitals, co-chairs the CW LHIN's Diversity & Equity Core Action Group, is a Bethell Hospice board member and is one of RDR's founding members.

**Laky Pabla** graduated from York University with a BA in Sociology and a hon. in Bachelor of Social Work. She graduated from the University of Windsor with her Masters in Social Work. She was one of the initial members of Peel CAS' diversity committee and co-chaired the committee for two years. Laky also worked as a psychotherapist for several years. She is a member of the CAS/VAW collaborative table and is currently working with CAS' and VAW agencies in Central West Region. She is the primary trainer of social workers at Peel CAS and has chaired Peel CAS South Asian Heritage month events in past years.

**Michelle Bilek** is a 29 year resident in Mississauga and has experienced the vast growth and diversification of our Region. Michelle is a local social activist and advocate for social justice, equity and diversity. She served as a Diversity and inclusion Champion in the creation of the Regions first ever Diversity and Inclusion Charter. She recently served on the Board of Directors of SAVIS (The Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services) for 7 years as Vice-

Chair. She sat on the Finance, Personnel, Fundraising, and Strategic planning Committee. She has also served on the Board of Directors of UNACTO (United Nations Toronto Regional Chapter) for 5 years as well as on the Environmental Committee of that Board. She is currently an Executive member of the Ontario New Democratic Party as the Central West Regional Representative. Michelle is a formal Psychosocial Worker for the Department of Patient Education at Princess Margaret hospital, as well as in Long Term Care and Retirement in Peel Region. She is also a former High School Teacher. Michelle has studied Psychology and Sociology at McMaster and later educated in Women's Studies and Diversity Studies at York.

**Paul Nguyen** is an award-winning activist, journalist and filmmaker. He is dedicated to improving race relations and promoting multicultural understanding in Canada. Paul utilizes the power of the Internet and his passion for filmmaking to promote unity in diversity among people of various backgrounds. His work is extensively covered by the local and national media. He is an outspoken commentator on youth crime, gang violence and social issues facing marginalized communities. Paul was among the first 60 Canadians to receive the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal from the Prime Minister and Governor General of Canada. He is a recipient of the Paul Yuzyk Award for Multiculturalism, William Hubbard Award for Race Relations, Canadian Ethnic Media Association Award, Heritage Toronto Award and Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship.

**Peter Gatto** has been with the Brampton Fire and Emergency Services for 24 years. He is a Platoon Chief (PC) managing fire operations on one of the four platoons. Previously in his career as a Firefighter, Peter has worked in many different specialties including Hazmat and Extrication. Peter was also the Station Captain for the Technical Rescue Team; a crew that responds to Fast Water, Ice Water, Trench, Confined Space and High Level Rescue calls. Peter's previous experience was as an Executive Assistant for the Brampton Professional Firefighters Association Firefighter. In this role he was the WSIB advocate and represented the rights of injured firefighters. Recently, as a Platoon Chief, he created a Fire Department Diversity committee that focuses on education, recruitment, and diversity issues within the Fire Service. Peter is aware of the importance of creating ideal conditions and training opportunities that foster the development of change.

# The Regional Diversity Roundtable

## Financial Overview

From January 2010 to March 2013  
 Statement of Operation  
Year Ended March 31, 2013



### Revenue

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	\$	397,807
Social Planning Council of Peel		9,900
Ontario Trillium Foundation		37,500
RDR Generated Revenue		5,891
		<hr/>
	\$	451,098

### Expenses

Salaries & Benefits	\$	208,574
Professional Fees		117,889
Program Expenses		69,344
Administrative		38,450
	\$	434,257

Surplus(deficit)		<hr/>
	\$	16,841
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Note: Statement of Operation is unaudited  
 Project funds/grants managed by Trustee Organization