

ANNUAL REPORT

*STRONG WOMEN BUILD
STRONG COMMUNITIES*

2020 / 2021



OUR MISSION

We believe that strong women build strong communities. NEW empowers newcomer women and their families in building a life in Canada, by connecting them to social and economic opportunities and fostering a sense of belonging.



THIS IS NEW

Newcomer Women's Services Toronto (NEW for short) empowers newcomer women and their families in three key areas:



SETTLE IN



LEARN ENGLISH



WORK

How the NEW Team Sees Their Work

The Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP) seeks to support the successful settlement and integration of newcomers, including immigrants and refugees, through the provision of early settlement and longer-term integration support.

SistersatthecentrE is a November conference on GBV in partnership with WomenatthecentrE. The centrepiece is a series of vignettes within a forum theatre for social change format followed by panels and break-out discussion groups.

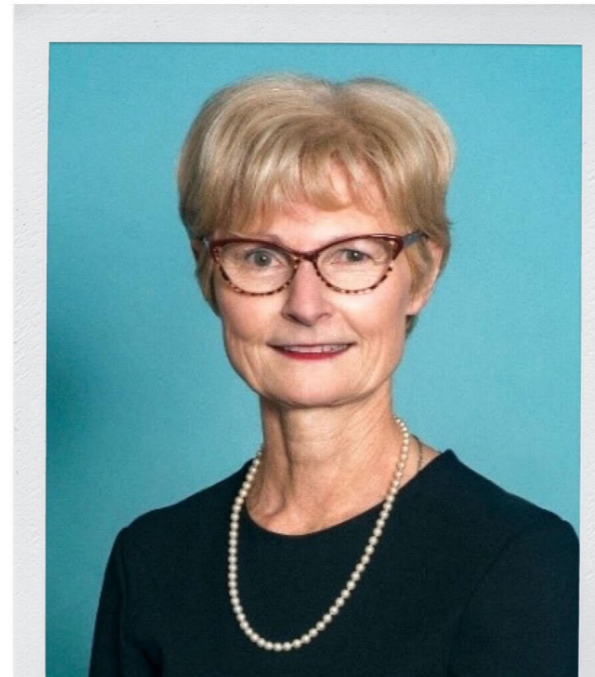
The goal of NEW's English Language Program (ELP) is ultimately 'self-actualization.' We take a holistic approach that not only provides language training but life skills coaching - from how to advocate for themselves and their children in society to societal norms around parenting to building confidence to seek employment, ask questions about finances and taxes and groom contributing citizens

The Employment Team recognizes that individuals are part of a larger, complex system that may contain visible and invisible barriers and customizes its approach by building trust, knowledge, skill and strategic community connections through wrap-around case management delivered by staff with lived experience.

Our Community Services Partnerships program ("Newcomer Women's Network") is "Sister2Sister." The goal is inspire newcomer women to become community leaders as advocates and peer supports for victims of gender violence and domestic abuse.

Sisters Prosper is a two-week program designed to fast track professional immigrant women into the workplace. Skills for Change provides counselling, Career Edge provides lunch 'n learns, paid internships and TMX mentorships.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Judy Fantham, NEW Executive Director

"Embrace each challenge as an opportunity for transformation!"

The pandemic produced tragedy. And we must never forget the lives lost, the bonds broken, and the freedoms compromised. But amid tragedy came creativity, unanticipated opportunity, and resilience.

The Creativity

Our teams moved seamlessly to remote service. The Employment Team hosted webinars with better than ever attendance. The English Language Instructors learned new platforms and we found funding for a digital literacy coach to support our students make the transition to online learning. Our Child-Minding Team produced engaging videos

for youngsters about stories and pets. We achieved unprecedented success in finding support to launch vital new programming for the immigrant women who have suffered most during COVID-19:

- Conversation circles for our students that proved to be critical in reducing their acute social isolation
- Sisters Prosper is a two week "boot camp" with counselling, employment coaching, mentoring, internships, and training on self-advocacy for professional immigrant women.
- SistersatthecentrE is a partnership with WomenatthecentrE - an agency of survivors of intimate partner violence - and is designed to give voice, support and resources to our sisters who have been trapped with violent partners during lockdowns.

It was a magical year for fund-raising. We achieved triple or quadruple (if you include successful grant applications) our goal. We found support for tablets for all 55 students. Project 21X21 doubled our investment in "Sister2Sister." Big donors sponsored "Sisters" for extra support for laptops and coaching. #NEWStart raised more than \$10 thousand dollars to equip our new child-care centre.

TMX donated \$50 thousand and mentors to Sisters Prosper. The Peter Gilgan Foundation knocked on our door with \$25 thousand.

The Unanticipated Opportunity

For years, our funders had been nudging us about relocating. The Danforth was gentrifying. Our premises was deteriorating and as important, the building was inaccessible.

As vacancy rates rose in the downtown core because businesses withdrew to remote work during the pandemic, the price of square footage dropped. We could afford to move our English Language Program to a bright and refurbished space in a neighbourhood dense and rich with newcomers.

Increasingly, social service agencies looked to collaboration to survive, and we found a "social service" hub on Church Street with four other Agencies – Family Service Toronto, the Teresa Group, Madison Community Service and Bereaved Families of Ontario – keen to collaborate with our Employment Team.

The Resilience

Despite such change, I am so proud of our team and how we have pulled together! We have forged connections despite our remote locations through regular meetings, education on Anti-Black Racism, Black history and Residential Schools, virtual games, virtual yoga, recognition of birthdays and even a virtual magic show.

In 2020, we won a "Canadian Nonprofit Employer of Choice Award" – one of only 12 non-profits in Canada to receive such an award. [Of note, fifty percent of the "marks" for this award come from a staff survey.](#)



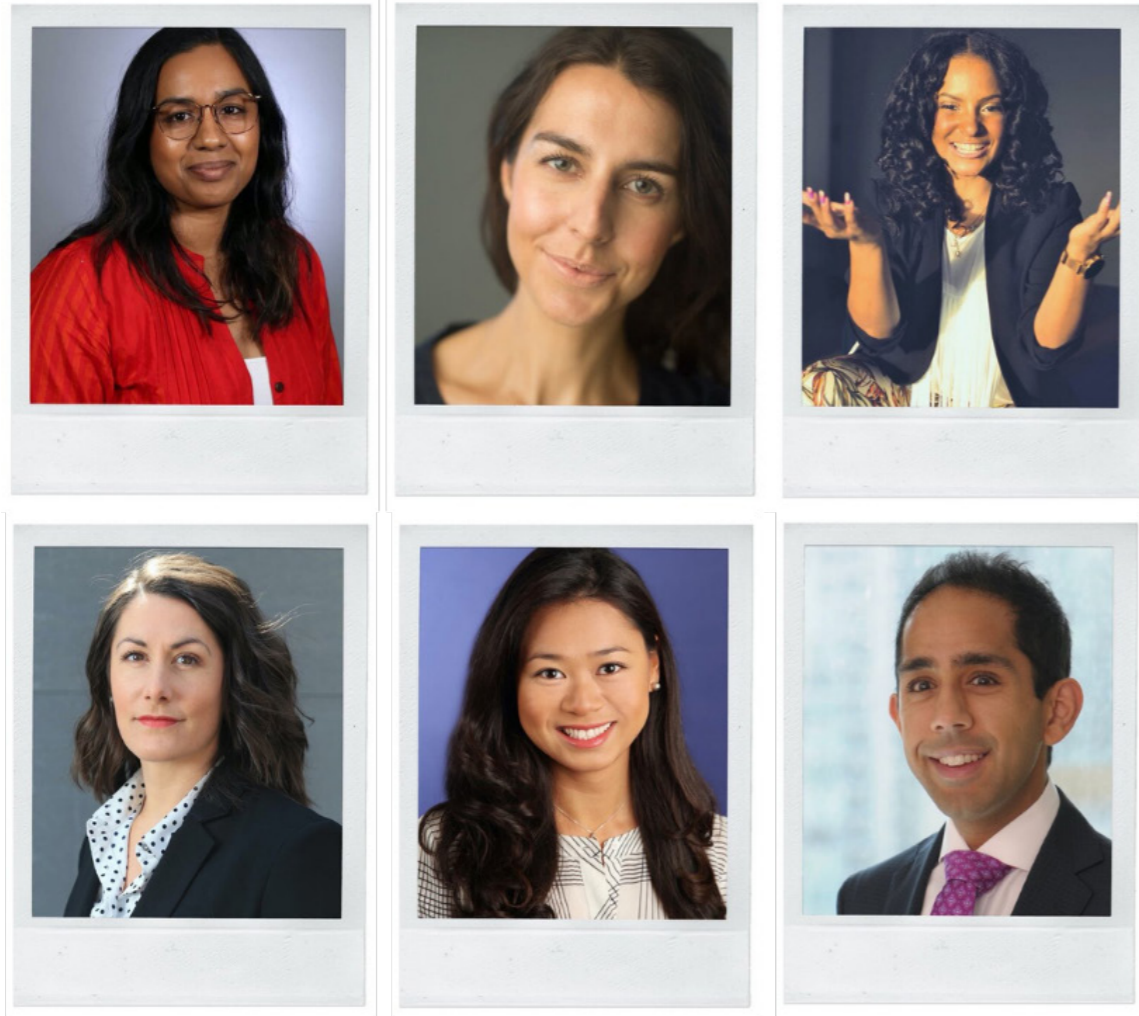
Acceptance speech at Virtual Nonprofit Employer of Choice Award Ceremony 2020

Our good work with Sister2Sister was recognized by Olivia Chow and the Institute for Change Leaders. [We won an "honourable mention" for "varied, creative, inspiring ways...to achieve social change".](#)

Closing Remarks

Newcomer Women's Services, Toronto is a small but mighty organization. It is mighty because of its staff. These people never leave their "hearts at home" when they start their workday. And I encourage you to read their biographies on our website. These are the heroes who have the lived experience and/or passion to serve. It has truly been my honour to serve with them.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD



Dear NEW Members:

We have spent the past year navigating what our next normal is amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

For almost 40 years, Newcomer Women's Services Toronto (NEW) has played an important role in connecting newcomers with social and economic opportunities. As the sector evolves, NEW's continued success is dependent on our ability to partner with complementary organizations and situate NEW in neighbourhoods where our clients live. For NEW's next chapter, the Board of Directors made the exciting decision to relocate the organization's head office to 489 Queen St East and create a satellite office at 355 Church St where there are more opportunities to create partnerships and where NEW is positioned to grow and mature.

More than ever, NEW remains committed to its mission to empower newcomers and their families in building a life in Canada.

The NEW Board of Directors are grateful and would like to acknowledge Executive Director, Judy Fantham, and staff for their continued resilience, hard work and dedication during this year of change - all of which have daily positive impacts on NEW and its clients. We are proud of what the team continues to accomplish in challenging times.

The NEW Board of Directors is made up of professionals responsible for:

- Guarding the mission of the organization and steering it in the right direction.
- Selecting the Executive Director, providing a sounding board and reviewing her performance
- Ensuring effective organizational planning so NEW is well-equipped to fulfill its mission
- Ensuring adequate resources
- Exercising appropriate oversight regarding risk mitigation
- Monitoring the activities, the health, and the ethical behavior within the organization

Over 2020 - 2021, we have worked hard to meet our goals and are pleased to share our accomplishments including:

- Creating an agile ad-hoc committee to review and recommend relocating NEW's services to 489 Queen St E and 355 Church St
- Actively engaging in fundraising for Sister2Sister's #Project21x21 campaign in Fall 2020 and #NEWStart in Spring 2021
- Reviewing and amending NEW's Board of Director terms and composition to ensure a strong, engaged Board to support NEW's growth and maturation;
- Supporting the audit process to completion
- Mitigating operational, legal and financial risk
- Successfully recruiting diverse and experienced Board members

We look forward to continuing to support NEW to further its mission and priorities. We will work closely with the Executive Director to ensure that NEW continues to be a safe and inclusive place where our clients can access the services and support they need to live their best lives.

Sincerely,

NEW Board of Directors

Thulasi Thedchanamoorthy, Michelle Connolly, Samantha Jackson, Cynthia Vukets, Mengbin Wu, Nailah Gordon-Decicchio, and Rustum Juma

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS!



Fazila Nurani

Fazila is the President and Founder of PrivaTech Consulting. PrivaTech has specialized in advising organizations for the past 20 years as they implement privacy and information security best practices. Fazila was called to the Bar of Ontario in 2001, after completing a degree in Electrical Engineering at the University of Waterloo, and a degree in Law at the University of Toronto. Her legal career began in the Information Technology Law Group at the law firm of Gowling, Lafleur, Henderson LLP and with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada. Fazila is a Certified Information and Privacy Professional, a Certified Information Systems Auditor and an active member of the Ontario Bar Association's Privacy Section Executive.

She also teaches an information management course at the University of Guelph sponsored by the Ontario Association of School Board Officials.



Cathy Winter

Cathy is Principal, IDC Advisory Services where she assists boards and organizations on their EDI journey.

Prior to establishing IDC, Cathy led DiverseCity onBoard/onBoard Canada at the Maytree Foundation and Ryerson University transforming the program from a small, local program to a national one that made significant contributions to building a more inclusive society and received both a Global Pluralism Award and a United Nations Intercultural innovation Award.

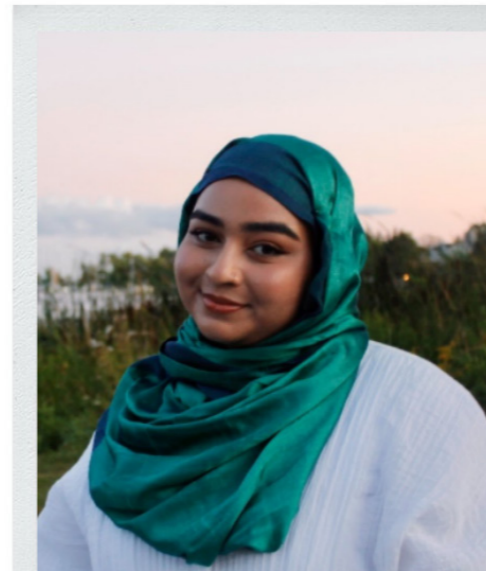


Jill Wagman

Jill is the Managing Principal and Board Chair at Eckler Ltd where she leads the firm and has principal responsibility for several of the firm's major clients.

Jill has an undergraduate degree in Mathematics from the University of Waterloo and is a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries (FCIA) and of the Society of Actuaries (FSA). She also has her ICD.D.

Jill has served as a member of Ontario's Financial Services Tribunal since 2013 and has served on several other industry and professional committees in the past.



Maleeha Shams

Maleeha is the Volunteer/ Communications Coordinator with Girls Inc. of Durham, a registered charity that provides research-based, gender equality-focused programming for girls aged 6-18 in the Durham Region. Maleeha considers herself a critical thinker who challenges the status quo and wishes to be involved in projects that uplift marginalized communities. She is always looking for opportunities to grow, learn, and volunteer. As a 2019 Queen Elizabeth Scholar, she completed an internship as a Youth Engagement Officer for an NGO in Arusha, Tanzania, focusing on championing gender equality and capacity-building.

NEW PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Through the pandemic, we remained dedicated to providing programming for newcomer women and youth. We successfully pivoted into the world of virtual programs, and even introduced some new initiatives in 2020/2021!

None of this work would be possible without the support of our generous donors and community members.



SISTERS PROSPER

In 2021 we launched Sisters Prosper: an employment "bootcamp" that helps underemployed newcomer women find work in their field. Each cohort welcomes 10 immigrant women of colour who are keen to advance their careers and expand their professional networks. These women are not only empowered with hard and soft career skills, employment opportunities and meaningful connections. They also receive support with wellness and mental health practices!

Participants have been connected to everything from corporate mentorships and paid internships to self-advocacy coaching and certified counselling. We're pleased to announce that this program now boasts a 100% job placement rate!



SISTER2SISTER AND AFGHAN SISTER2SISTER

Our Sister2Sister Leadership program continued to grow and thrive in 2021. We invited a second cohort of sisters for six months of leadership training, personal development, community building, and digital storytelling projects. We hosted a dynamic virtual summit that featured a full day of programming exploring COVID-19's profound impact on our societies and economies.

of which women - especially women of colour, Indigenous women, and low-income women have been disproportionately impacted. As we move into 2022, we're excited to announce that we've received funding to produce a new version of this program, Afghan Sister2Sister, which responds specifically to the recent refugee crisis in Afghanistan.



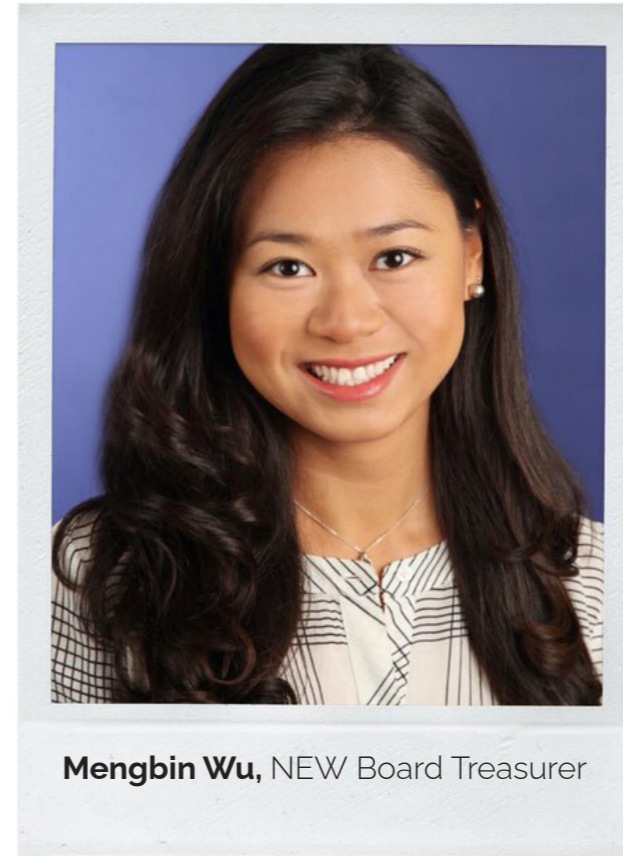
#NEWstart FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

NEW has helped hundreds of immigrant women adapt to a new life in Canada

through our English Language Program. We've even supported moms who take our classes with free, first-class childcare services. Until now, we've used the basement at our old location on Danforth as the go-to child-minding space. Our recent move to 355 Church Street has not only meant new, state-of-the-art work areas for our staff: it also meant an upgraded childcare space with lots of natural light and room to play, as well hospital-grade air filters installed since COVID!

We put out a call to our community for monetary and equipment donations to fully renovate our new childcare centre! With their help, we raised over \$7000 to go towards new book, puzzles, therapeutic toys, cubbies and even 2 brand new kitchen sinks. We're grateful for everyone who helped give our kids a #NEWstart!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD TREASURER



Dear NEW Members:

As we close out another year under these challenging and unprecedented times, I would like to thank NEW's Finance team for their continued dedication to the organization's operations and success.

I am pleased to report that our external auditors, MNP LLP, provided NEW with an unqualified opinion on the organization's financial statements for the fiscal years ended March 31, 2021 and March 31, 2020.

The opinion indicates that the financial statements have been prepared and fairly presented in accordance to Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The detailed audited statements have

been shared with the members. We have provided an abridged version of NEW's statement of operations, below.

For the year ended March 31, 2021, NEW had revenues in excess of expenses by \$3,942 due to changes in funding and operational efficiencies.

Members are welcome to contact me with any questions regarding the financials or for further information.

Sincerely

NEW Board Treasurer

Mengbin Wu