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## The Multicultural Fundraising Issue

It's summer time, and the livin' is easy...at least that's how the classic song goes.

What's not so easy is determining inclusive plans and strategies to engage our ever-changing Canadian donor demographic. There's been a lot of discussion around this issue; in our minds it's a 'hot' topic in the philanthropic world. In this issue, we'll explore the realities and challenges around multicultural marketing, fundraising and relationship building. We'll also share success stories from organizations that have taken the plunge and 'done it right'.

It's always been accurate to define Canada as a 'country of immigrants' and so, in many ways, the issue of reaching out to new Canadians is nothing new. However, over the past few decades the characteristics of our ethnic communities have evolved. Prior to the 1970s, most Canadian immigrants originated from Europe. Since that time, an influx of people from developing countries around the globe has resulted in a substantial demographic shift. Today, the sheer size and number of diverse ethnic communities has created an increasingly inescapable reality for many organizations across the country that seek to resonate with the people living in their regions.

In the process, there's been a lot of misunderstanding, confusion – and downright fear – when attempting to reach out to sizeable community ethnic groups. We tend to think there must be some 'magic bullet', precise rule book or roadmap we should be following to access these unique donor markets. Not knowing how to start or what to do, combined with the fear of making a mistake, is



preventing many of us from going forward.

The good news is that we've discovered we know more than we think. Essentially, fundraising in ethnic communities is based on linkage and interest. How relevant is your organization to that community? And can you find linkages to it? These questions show that the guiding fundraising principles are identical to

fundraising from any group of prospective donors: build the relationship and the money will follow.

As you read this issue, you'll also see that organizations that have been successful in raising money from ethnic communities have one thing in common – they are guided by a philosophy of partnership. They want people on their staff, boards and campaign cabinets not because they are South Asian or Chinese. They want them at the table because they are vital members of their communities, and because these organizations value their insight and point of view.

Successful organizations also prioritize cultural competency. They educate their staff to be aware of how different cultural backgrounds affect how we see others, and how we get results. They understand how to expand beyond their comfort zones by being open to raising funds in ways that make sense to specific ethnic groups. They've learned that meeting their constituents 'where they are' – whether that means targeted special events or radiothons – is key.

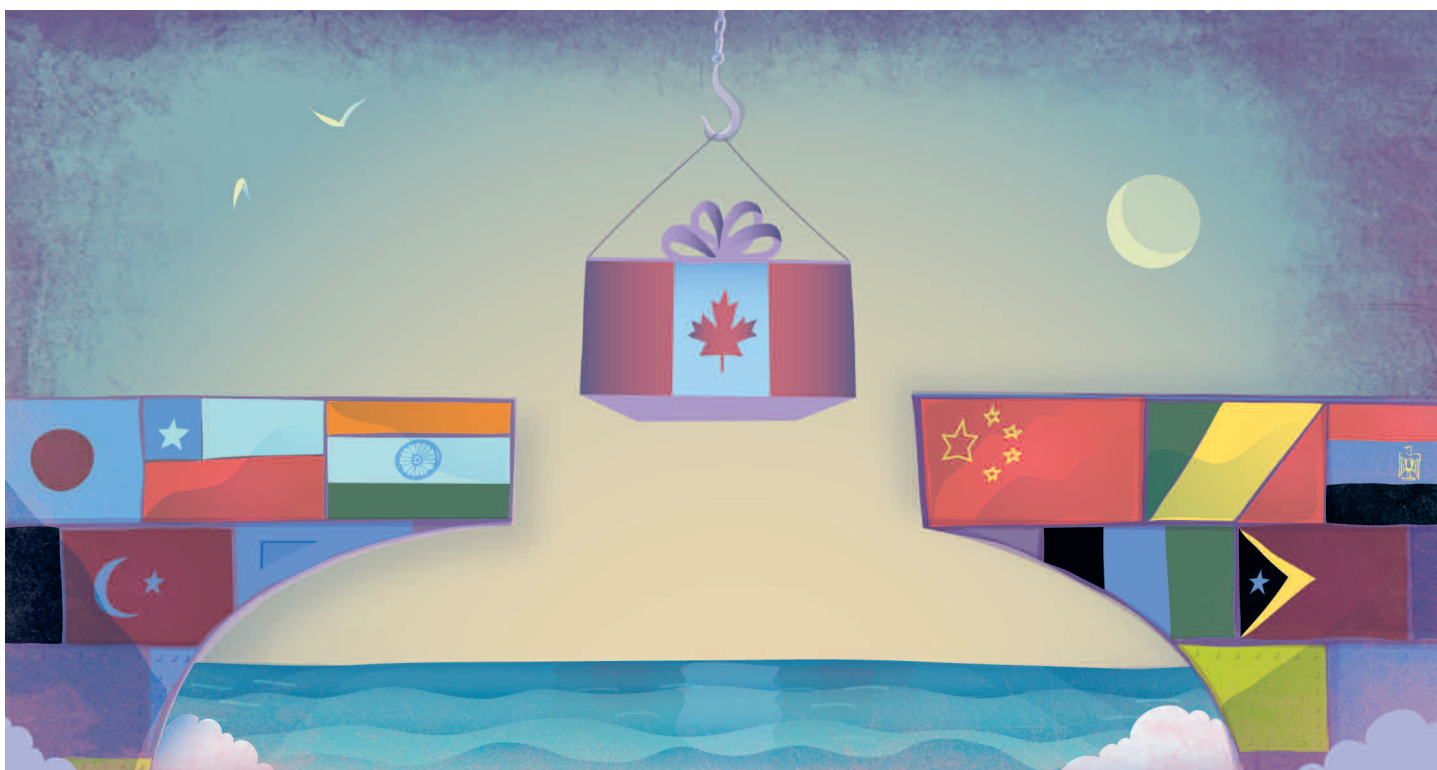
As we transition from rain umbrellas to patio umbrellas, let's take a moment to think about expanding our networks beyond our comfort zones and finding new ways to embrace and celebrate our differences while remembering all the ways that we are similar.

Have a sweet, safe, sensational summer!

Marnie Spears  
President and CEO

KCI >>>

FORWARD THINKING



## Building bridges to multicultural communities

If you want to know why building bridges to Canada's increasingly diverse population is such an important topic for non-profit organizations, consider this: based on data from Canada's 2006 Census, 16.2% of our population are members of visible minorities. And by 2031, Statistics Canada is projecting that approximately 30% of the population could belong to a visible minority group.

If that doesn't convince you, this probably will.

In Diane Francis' book *Who Owns Canada Now*, she notes that in 1986 only 5 of our country's 32 richest people (16%) were immigrants. But in 2007, 28 (37%) of Canada's 75 billionaires came from other countries. In addition, the list of names from *Who Owns Canada Now* reads like the global diaspora that our country has become.

### **Mission: The Gateway to Building Bridges**

While the need to build bridges to Canada's diverse ethnic communities is undeniable,

for many non-profits it can seem like a daunting and formidable task. Often the biggest hurdle is simply not knowing where to start. Yet, the starting point actually turns out to be simple and obvious – you must make sure that the community is reflected in and served by your organization.

Your organization's mission, programs and services must be the first point of reflection. "What you do must reflect and serve the community in some way," says Ratna Omidvar, President of the Maytree Foundation, a Toronto based non-profit that promotes diversity, fights poverty and assists immigrants to settle and find work. "For the community to have an interest in having a donor or volunteer relationship with you, your organization must provide programs and services that authentically engage and serve its needs."

Omidvar goes on to say that the key word here is authenticity, and she encourages organizations to be aware of 'tokenism' in their activities. "This is not a matter of creating a one-time program or putting on an

isolated event that targets a particular community," she cautions. "Rather, it is about recognizing different groups as important organizational stakeholders, either because of mission or as a result of the makeup of the community that the organization serves."

This recognition of importance can mean different things for different types of organizations. For a hospital, it can range from making services available in different languages to finding ways to respect religious and cultural beliefs. The Markham Stouffville Hospital is an example of one hospital that has done this very well, and that has reaped benefits as a result. With the help of Khalid Usman, FCA, a Foundation Board member and a leader in Markham's Pakistani community, the Foundation has raised more than \$1 million from the Pakistani Muslim community, a relatively small group among Markham's varied ethnic makeup. Usman says that asking the community to support the Hospital was an easy sell, in part because of the Hospital's history of responsiveness to the community's needs. "The

Hospital has made Halal food available to patients and is also committed to offering female physicians and medical staff to Muslim women whenever possible," says Usman. "These two initiatives go a long way in cultivating respect and a feeling of inclusion within the Pakistani Muslim community."

Jane Adams, President and CEO of Surrey Memorial Hospital Foundation in British Columbia, agrees that it is important for an organization to appropriately serve the cultural population they want to engage. "For example, at Surrey Memorial we now offer a 'family birthing unit' that is large enough for multiple family members and friends to witness a birth in the Sikh tradition. The Sikh community, which comprises 30% of Surrey's population, has been very appreciative of our responsiveness to their needs." So appreciative, in fact, that the community has raised \$2.3 million over

"For the community to have an interest in having a donor or volunteer relationship with you, your organization must provide programs and services that authentically engage and serve its needs."

*Ratna Omidvar  
President of the Maytree  
Foundation*

three years for the Hospital via a Radiothon on a local multicultural radio station!

Much can also be learned from the many arts organizations in Toronto that have made a conscious decision to authentically

reflect the communities that make up the vast diaspora that is the Greater Toronto Area. The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) is one such organization. Among its many notable outreach activities, it has made significant inroads with the South Asian community. It all started with a temporary exhibit that became the permanent South Asian Gallery. In addition, the ROM continues to have a 'Friends of South Asia' Committee. All of this activity helped to cultivate a \$5 million gift from the South Asian Community in Toronto.

To sum up, service is first and foremost. Outreach must be authentic and reflect cultural values. And it all starts at the top...

### **A matter of trust and partnership**

A key element to building any relationship is to establish trust and credibility. When

## *Fundraising best practices*

Building bridges to new and diverse ethnic communities requires the right attitude and plan. The following are some key points for organizational leaders to remember when reaching out to diverse ethnic groups to be involved with your organization.

### **1) Get the facts.**

Don't make assumptions about the cultural groups you want to engage. As evidenced by census data, the ethnic make-up of the country is different depending on where you live. And don't make the mistake of lumping all people of a particular ethnicity (e.g. South Asians) together. Devote a sufficient amount of time and resources to understand who the different groups are in your community. Once you have identified the groups of interest, do further research to learn and understand the norms, traditions and cultural nuances that are unique to these communities.

### **2) Get to know the community with respect and curiosity.**

Part of your research involves getting out

there. Immerse yourself in the culture by spending time where multicultural donors live and work and to see the world from their vantage point. As an organization, devote time to outreach activities and look for ways to have a presence at the community's events.

### **3) Enlist the help of a guide or 'interpreter'.**

Find a credible, well respected champion (or champions) who can help you build bridges with the community. Remembering the basic fundraising principle of 'linkage', organizations need to have an entry point. And, the members of the community need to trust you. Building one-on-one relationships with several well-regarded members of the community will serve to achieve both objectives.

### **4) Create shared ownership.**

While the concept of making sure there are seats at the table is nothing new, it is crucial that the spirit with which those seats are made available be one of authentic partnership. Genuinely invite input and share the authority and deci-

sion-making. Ensure that different perspectives and ideas are welcomed, heard and acted upon.

### **5) Don't just translate....resonate!**

When it comes to communications activities, it is imperative for nonprofits to create messaging that resonates with multicultural audiences to engage them as donors, volunteers and supporters. Pinpoint if your messages and materials work for your prospect group and whether they are based on cultural context. Relate existing concepts to the needs of your audience. It's not just a matter of translating your existing copy into another language and the message may need to be different for different groups.

### **6) Be in it for the long haul.**

And one final note is to take a long term perspective. Building bridges to new ethnic communities will take time, patience and perseverance. Remember, this is about building relationships, an activity that regardless of ethnicity, doesn't happen overnight.

building trust with newer ethnic and cultural communities, the organization's senior leadership must make it both a personal and an organizational priority.

On the personal side, it is crucial for senior leaders to be present and visible at community events. "It's really important for senior leaders to be seen as being interested and involved," notes Khalid Usman. "For instance, at the Pakistani community's annual fundraising gala for the Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation, the atten-

dance of Hospital senior executives and physicians demonstrates their commitment to and belief in achieving the fundraising goals and objectives. It shows the community that it and its members are valued."

On the organizational side, the involvement of members from diverse communities on volunteer boards and committees must be welcomed and sought out. As with the organization's programs and services, recruiting representatives from diverse communities cannot be a matter of

tokenism, but one of partnership that embraces the attitude of "we value your point of view, you are an important member of our community and we want you at the table".

United Way Toronto is a stellar example of an organization that has adopted this attitude of partnership. Winner of the Maytree Foundation's Diversity in Governance Award in 2010, United Way Toronto has made diversity, be it ethnic, sexual orientation or religious, a priority even in the

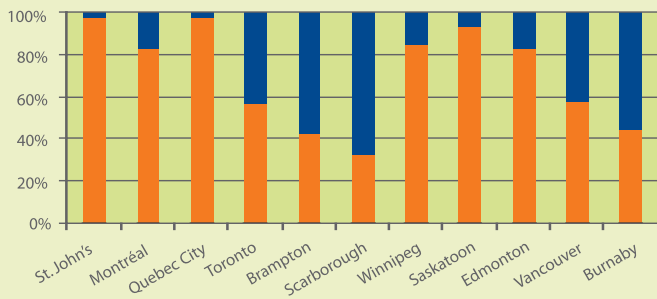
## The current picture...

Based on data from the Canada's 2006 Census, 16.2% of our population is a visible minority, confirming that our country's increasing ethnic diversity can't be denied.

However, it is important to remember that depending on where we live, our demographic pictures can vary significantly.

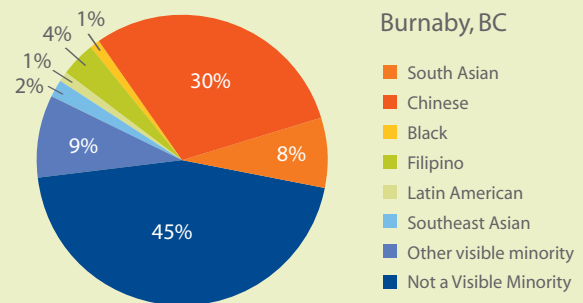
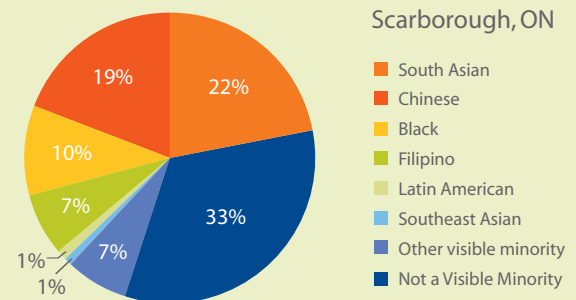
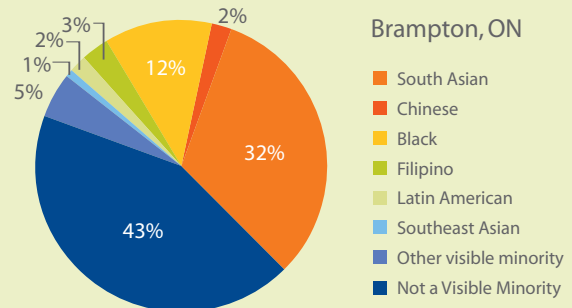
For instance, in the Census Metropolitan Areas like Vancouver and Toronto, visible minorities currently constitute upwards of 40% of the overall population. But, in other cities like St. John's, Saskatoon and Quebec City, the visible minority population is significantly smaller.

Current Visible Minority Population of Select Canadian Cities



Source: Statistics Canada 2007

Perhaps even more interesting is the makeup of communities that are quite ethnically diverse. Here again, the demographic picture can be very different from one community to the next. Brampton, ON, Scarborough, ON and Burnaby, BC each have about 60% of their populations represented by visible minorities. But in each case, the ethnic makeup of the community is very different. The examples of these three cities illustrate how important it is to research and understand your own communities when developing your diversification strategies.



wake of reductions in board size. "Diversity of our board membership has been an organizational priority for years. About 10 years ago, we undertook a governance review that recommended we halve the size of our Board, which at the time had 44 members," says Susan McIsaac, President and CEO. "At the time of that recommendation, the Board made a commitment that while it was reducing its size, diversity of membership needed to be an ongoing criterion. It has been a decade long journey for us to reach our desired number of board

members, but I'm pleased to say that, because we made it a priority, our Board is as diverse today as it was when we started the process 10 years ago."

Organizations should also be conscious to make every effort to recruit staff members from the communities that they serve. But, while it is nice to have fundraising staff from the ethnic communities of interest to you and should be something to strive for, don't fret if you're not there yet. For organizations looking to make progress in the

area of staff diversity, the place to start is in the institution's front line staff (be it a hospital, university, community service organization or arts group) to ensure that the community is well served. If your fundraising staff members are not from the community of interest to you, promote the principles of research, respect and curiosity. If you don't know, ask or find out before you dive in, even if that just means speaking to institutional staff or volunteers who are members of that ethnic community. Be sure to respect differences and values that you dis-

## ...and the Canada of the future

While Canada's future demographic landscape will continue to differ depending on where you live, population projections indicate that our country's level of diversity will only increase.

Stats Canada is projecting that by 2031 approximately 30% of the population could belong to a visible minority group, which is nearly double the proportion reported in the 2006 census. These projections have more than 71% of all visible minorities living in Canada's three largest census metropolitan areas: Toronto, Vancouver and Montréal.

- In Toronto, 24% of the population, or 2.1 million, would be South Asians, which would continue to be its largest visible minority group, up from 13% in 2006.
- In Vancouver, Chinese would be the largest visible minority group, with a population of around 809,000. They would account for about 23% of Vancouver's population, up from 18% in 2006.
- In Montréal, visible minority groups would represent 31% of the population, nearly double the 16% in 2006. By 2031, its Arab population would almost reach the Black population.

It is important to note however, that certain areas are expected to see very little growth. For example, the visible minority populations in St. John's, Greater Sudbury and Quebec City are expected to stay below 5%.

It is also anticipated that between now and 2031, the 'foreign-born' population of

Canada could increase about four times faster than the rest of the population to reach between 9.8 million and 12.5 million (25% to 28%) depending on various immigration assumptions.

Regardless of future immigration, diversity will grow among the 'Canadian-born' population. By 2031, upwards of 47% of second-generation Canadians (those who have at least one parent born outside Canada) could belong to a visible minority group, nearly double the proportion of 24% in 2006.

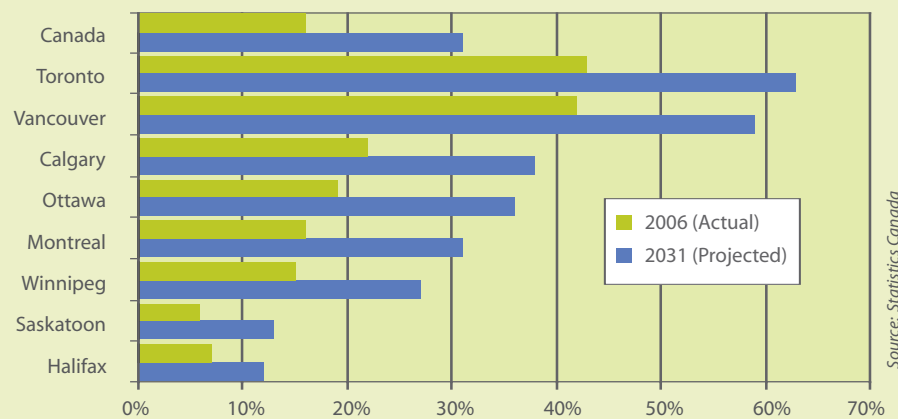
### Some specific projections about Canada's 2031 population:

- South Asians would still be the largest visible minority group. It could more than double from roughly 1.3 million in 2006 to between 3.2 million and 4.1 million.
- The Chinese population is projected to

grow from 1.3 million to between 2.4 million and 3.0 million.

- Canada's Black and Filipino populations, which were the third and fourth largest visible minority groups in 2006, could also double in size.
- The Arab and West Asian groups could more than triple, the fastest growth among all groups.
- The number of people having a non-Christian religion is expected to almost double from 8% of the population in 2006 to 14% in 2031. The proportion with a Christian religion could decline from 75% to about 65% while the share with no religion would rise from about 17% to 21%.
- Within the population having a non-Christian religion, about 50% would be a Muslim by 2031, up from 35% in 2006.

Visible Minorities in Canada



Source: Statistics Canada

cover, particularly if they don't match your own. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, approach the entire exercise with a genuine curiosity about the community of interest.

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### Grassroots fundraising

You have built relationships with your local ethnic communities. Now what approaches can your organization develop to raise money from them? As with raising funds from all donors, there are two general categories of strategy – grassroots giving and major gifts.

When it comes to building a grassroots, broad based giving program from the community, the strategies and tactics tend to be a bit different than with more traditional donors. It is definitely not a matter of getting a bunch of addresses together and doing an acquisition mailing. A far better approach is to find tools and fundraising mechanics that are already familiar to the community. And the ‘who asks matters’ mantra that is so true in major gift fundraising holds particularly true at the grassroots levels with ethnic communities. As a result, it is vitally important to have members of the community who can serve as ‘guides’ involved in the creation and execution of the fundraising strategy.

Jeff O’Hagan, CEO of the Sunnybrook Hospital Foundation, tells the story of their incredibly diverse group of patients and staff from the Chinese community and of the highly successful campaign that community undertook to raise funds for the Hospital. “Seymour Schulich, one of our major benefactors, created a \$10 million match challenge,” says O’Hagan. “Our Hon-



orary Patrons Council, a group of predominantly Chinese Canadians, took up the challenge and, through a variety of face to face meetings and events within the community, raised \$2.5 million in three months.” When thinking of the factors that made this initiative so successful, O’Hagan notes the match as a means to create leverage and urgency. He also believes that having members of the Chinese community raising funds from the Chinese community was a critical component of success.

The Surrey Memorial Hospital Foundation Radiothon is another great example of fundraising in ways that connect with the community where they are. Jane Adams

notes that radio can be a very important link to their new environment for new Canadians. “We have found that radio hosts are very influential in the Sikh communities; their calls to action are answered.” And the results speak for themselves - over \$2 million in three years. Adams shares some other learnings from the Radiothon experience that are of interest. “Of the 5,000 people who made gifts, 2,000 made them in person at the radio station. We also noticed that donations tend to be outright gifts as opposed to pledges.”

Another longstanding approach to raising funds from diverse ethnic communities is to partner on cultural events. And the

## Giving patterns of multicultural donors

Understanding the giving patterns and behaviours of multicultural donors is an important final piece of the puzzle. What kinds of organizations do they give to? Are there differences between ethnicities? And if so, what are they?

One source of high level insight is the Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (CSGVP). The most recent survey (2007) revealed that immigrants were slightly less likely to give to charities than those who were Canadian-born (82% vs. 85%). But, those who do give have significantly greater average giving (\$505 vs. \$423). Another finding is that immigrants were less likely to give to some types of organizations than others. For example, 59% of those born in Canada donated to health organizations, compared to 46% of immigrants. However, immigrants were more likely to donate to religious organizations than native-born Canadians (45% vs. 34%).

While this information is helpful, it lumps all immigrants into one category and we know that multicultural Canadians are by no means a homogenous group. A more nuanced and precise understanding of giving patterns from different ethnic groups in Canada is now available thanks to some recent work by Environics Analytics (EA), a research firm based in Toronto. Using geodemographic techniques, EA has been able to gain a better understanding of the giving patterns of various multicultural markets.

"The advantages of using a geodemographic approach are two-fold," says Dr. Doug Norris, Senior Vice President and Chief Demographer with EA. "Firstly it creates a

more complete picture of potential donors by simultaneously using many different information sources that are linked back to neighbourhood lifestyle types. And secondly, it allows you to know exactly where to find target donor groups on the ground because it is linked to geography."

Through their analysis EA identified five distinct target groups: *Older Established European Families*, *Established Multicultural Donors*, *Suburban Multicultural Families*, *Young Socially Conscious Newcomers* and *Struggling Newcomers*. And the results of this exercise yielded the following tremendously illuminating insights into the philanthropic tendencies of each specific group. Some of the highlights include:

- **Established Multicultural Donors** have a higher than average likelihood of giving. All other groups are below average for donations. For all groups, more than half of donations are to religious organizations.
- All the groups have below-average rates of giving to a health related organizations although **Established Multicultural Donors** rank above average in terms of giving to hospital foundations.
- **Established Multicultural Donors** rank above average in terms of giving to all types of organizations.
- **Suburban Multicultural Families** have above-average donor rates to environmental causes and average donor rates to alumni, cultural, international relief and educational organizations. They rank below average in terms of donors to

political organizations.

- **Older Established European Families** rank slightly above average in terms of donations to international relief organizations but below average for donors to all other types of organizations.
- Although both of the more recent newcomer groups have below average donor rates, they differ in the organizations they favour. **The Struggling Newcomers** group has below-average donor rates to all types of organizations except cultural ones, where they are average donors. In contrast, the **Young Socially Conscious Newcomers** group ranks substantially above average in donating to political, cultural, environmental and alumni organizations. But they rank lowest of all the groups in terms of donors to hospital foundations and other health organizations.

For descriptions of each of the target groups and to access and to read the full report, please [click here](#).

One final note about the giving patterns of all multicultural donors, particularly those who are recent immigrants, is their strong propensity to give back to their countries of origin. This 'diaspora philanthropy' can include remittances to family members who still live in the home country or to charitable projects and initiatives undertaken there. These remittances are estimated to be upwards of one and a half times our official aid, which in 2010 exceeded \$4 billion.

reason it's still in vogue is because it works. Look no further than our colleagues in the corporate sector to see its ongoing merits in building relationships. Corporations, particularly those like banks that have a significant consumer component to their business, have used event sponsorship as a strategy for years. A recent example is CIBC, which was the presenting sponsor of the *International Indian Film Academy Weekend and Awards* that were held in Toronto in June of this year, the first time the event was held in North America. And

the festival formerly known as Caribana (the annual celebration of Caribbean culture in Toronto) is now called the **Scotiabank Caribbean Carnival**. While non-profits are looking to be the recipients of event proceeds rather than sponsors, the principles are the same. Many ethnic communities are proud of their cultures, traditions and ways of life and enjoy having them celebrated by 'mainstream' Canadians. So events are not only a great way to raise funds, they are also terrific mechanism to promote integration and inclusion.

### A major gift is a major gift

When it comes to major gift fundraising, it turns out that the methodology is pretty much the same regardless of the ethnicity of the prospective donor.

This finding was confirmed by everyone we interviewed who had successful major gifts experience with donors from different ethnic communities, including Malcolm Burrows. As Head of Philanthropic Advisory Services at Scotia Private Client Group,

combined with his tenure working in major and planned giving at both Sick Kids Foundation and the University of Toronto, Burrows has a broad perspective on encouraging high net worth individuals from different cultures and ethnicities to make significant philanthropic investments. "By its very nature, major gift fundraising is highly customized," notes Burrows. "So what I've come to realize is that the process used to research, cultivate and solicit a gift from every major donor, regardless of ethnicity or cultural background, is similar. While the kind of research and customization may be different, with potentially more focus on cultural and religious factors, the overall approach is the same."

And what of the motivations for giving? Larry Sproul, Director of Development at UBC's College for Interdisciplinary Studies, has had the privilege of working with major donors of various ethnicities for many years. Annually, the College brings in between five and six gifts of \$1 million or more from this category of contributor. "I have found that most often, the motivations for giving are the same regardless of ethnic or cultural background," notes Sproul. "It almost always boils down to wanting to make a difference and becoming excited about the impact their gift will have."

Sproul does note that he has observed a unique element of 'invitation' involved in soliciting a major gift from a newer Canadian. He believes that this element has two nuances associated with it. The first involves the need for the most senior individual in the institution to be seen extending the ask or invitation, demonstrating a level of respect. And the second, while not present in all cases, can be the nuance of the 'traditional' or 'mainstream' inviting the non-traditional to be involved.

This particular nuance of 'invitation' is confirmed by Krishan Mehta, Executive Director Advancement and Alumni at Seneca College in Toronto. In addition to his role at Seneca, Mehta is a PhD student at the University of Toronto where he is conducting research on the philanthropy of high net worth first generation immigrants. "In recent years, I have had the chance to speak to a number of donors from a variety of emerging philanthropic communities," says Mehta. "Over and over again, I hear that the role of the solicitor is very important. Sometimes it's better for a member from their own community to make the ask. But in other instances, it's even more powerful when it comes from a member of the perceived 'establishment.' Taking the time understand 'who' should be involved in extending the 'invitation' is critical in achieving success."

### Becoming Canadian

To put together this edition, we had the chance to speak to a variety of new Canadians about why they are involved with philanthropy. In those conversations, three themes emerged – recognition, belonging and pride. And as we explored these themes, we discovered that interestingly enough, all three are closely tied.

While recognition is an important factor for any donor, Ratna Omidvar tells us that it has a special significance for many ethnic groups. "Being welcomed, accepted and recognized in their adopted country holds powerful meaning and value," she says. "And this is something charities should keep in mind when developing their fundraising strategies."

Closely tied to recognition is the concept of belonging. Many of Krishan Mehta's inter-

viewees cited philanthropy as a marker of citizenship. Khalid Usman concurs, noting that a personal motivator for his involvement as a volunteer is to enable the Pakistani community to feel a sense of ownership and belonging in the broader community as well as in the specific organizations that serve them.

Usman also talks about wanting community members to feel a sense of pride for the contributions that they have made to the organization that they use. This sentiment is echoed by Parag Tandon, Partner of Think Brown Media and a 2010 recipient of the Top 25 Canadian Immigrant award. "It was my choice to come to this country and make it my own," he says. "I am proud to be Canadian and proud to participate in making a contribution to Canadian society in as many ways as possible, including as a donor and volunteer."

And so, as we have come to discover, we already possess the rule book, roadmap, strategies and know-how to build relationships with new Canadians. If we do our research, cultivate our networks, have a partnership mindset and make our approaches with kindness, respect and sensitivity, it's only a matter of time before we'll have built not only our own bridges, but also contributed to building an inclusive and multi-cultural Canada.

#### > Next issue:

*Watch for our Fall Edition that will focus on defining meaningful measures of a charity's fundraising performance.*

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FORWARD THINKING