

Community Catalogue

Asian Community Convener Project

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A Note

In all our iterations of this project, we knew the importance of sharing the many words of wisdom that were spoken in interviews with our participating community organizations, many of which could not be fit into the final report. We felt held and centered by these words, and revisited them in their raw interview script form frequently. These interviews challenged the way we saw anti-racism work as being defined, helped us process the sometimes heavy and deeply personal themes in the report, and it made us feel less alone doing this work, sometimes in isolation from community. So we're sharing them with you. Enjoy!

5X Festival

REPRESENTED BY

HM
Harpo
Mander she/her/hers

5X is the essential festival & digital community elevating South Asian youth culture. Our vision is to build a world where we belong and thrive, so our flagship event is a multi-day, multi-venue festival covering music, visual arts, fashion, and culture. 5X also builds an online community through social media, such as our online blog, [5X Press](#), and creative content. Our values are to start local and grow global; to create magic, to be bold and to come together.

Q How would your team define anti-racism?

HP For us [as an organization], anti-racism is creating space for historically marginalized communities to be able to come and just be themselves, whether that's through our festival or through the events that we host or the on-line community that we curate. Anti-racist work for us is creating opportunit[ies] for people that look like us, sound like us, have dreams like us, want to do the kind of work that we're doing and creating those really niche, unique spaces as opposed to looking again and again within the same structures that have historically shut us out.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

HP One we did really recently was the Vaccine Hesitancy Project. We were given some money from the government to address vaccine hesitancy amongst South Asian young people in our community—specifically, people in their twenties. [...] So instead of the government creating all these communications to ask them to get vaccinated, we were able to tailor the communications to our specific community's needs. We hired [South Asian] TikTok influencers—we gave money to influencers who are creatives, who work hard at creating the content that they do and have worked hard to develop their personalities to create 15 second videos for us that were hilarious but directly spoke to the need to get vaccinated. We were able to tie in artists, creativity and the work that we're doing with a public health concern. [...] Then, to be able to employ and put money into the pockets of the very community that we're trying to reach out to. [...] I was really proud of that project.

The one that we're working on currently, [is called the] Artist in Residence Program. [...] A lot of young South Asian creatives don't necessarily have the support [they need] to turn their artistic careers into full-time careers—it's usually a side hustle they do on the side. So a program like Artist in Residence directly puts money into the pockets of creatives with no strings attached and they get to create art. They have full liberty

[and] studio space [to create what they want] in a collaborative environment. We also sprinkle in workshops that teach them how to write grants, and how they can balance productivity, mental health and their creative work."

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

HP Visibility and legitimacy are big for organizations like ours. We cater to a really important audience—young people. There's no youth-led movement in Surrey, especially if you're annoyed with what's happening either politically, socially or economically. [...] We are trying to be that space for young people where they can come and say, 'I'm not okay with this,' but it's hard to do this. [...] Traditionally, a lot of the support, legitimacy and visibility is given to organizations, companies, businesses, [and] entities that are owned by people in our parents' generation and older[...] It's been really hard to get both sides to believe in the work that we're doing, have them show up, have them understand that the work that we're doing is important, [and] support us. [...] It's been really hard to get that visibility, legitimacy and recognition at a community level and to get our parents to show up and say, 'Look at these kids—they're putting on an awesome music festival, [but] it's not just about music, it's something deeper.'

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue this work?

HP Operational funding is huge. A lot of organizations like 5X don't really get a lot of operational funding to pay the people that are doing the incredible work. [...] We have to look for it. It's great that they give us a lot of [project] funding to put into the pockets of the artists and be creative. But sometimes, there's an undervaluing of the actual people who are creating the systems to do that work. So operational funding would be a huge improvement to be able to take the organization from something that we do provide for people into a full-fledged operation—where there's the capacity to be full time beyond just contract work, to actually have an office space, and have those kinds of structures in place.

Action for Chinese Canadians Together (ACCT)

REPRESENTED BY

TWP

Teresa
Woo-Paw she/her/hers

[Action for Chinese Canadians Together works at] enhancing and increasing civic engagement and leadership amongst Chinese Canadians. We have three main objectives: to enhance leadership advancement, build community capacity, and further racial equality education.

Q How would your organization define anti-racism?

TWP We acknowledge that racism is systemic. Racism is tied to the policies and practices that disadvantage and do not offer equitable opportunity to groups of people. This system excludes some groups of people. It requires the examination of the ideology, policies, and practices to remove some of those barriers. It's associated with power, inequity in society, and the notion of dominance and it's about the need to adjust our power relationship.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that addresses anti-racism?

TWP ACT Foundation is about leadership advancement. We have leadership training which is identity and culture focused. Within our training program, we give time and space for people to examine and reflect on their cultural heritage, social identity, and how it's shaped in this country. We also look at the collective history of racism in Canada against Asians, and look at opportunity for change at all levels of government—municipal, provincial, and federal. We create space through the summit to talk about these issues. In addition to the ACT program, we are developing a policy and institutional change workshop so that people have a basic understanding of what discrimination looks like. We try to address systemic change under ACCT that way.

Additional Projects: [ACT2EndRacism](#)

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

TWP Trust with institutions is [a] barrier. We have trust amongst impacted groups, but in general, we need to do a lot more work to talk to impacted people. Why aren't people reporting hate crimes to the police? It's because our institutions have

not served everyone, all the taxpayers, in this country. The systemic lack of access, lack of culturally responsive services, is a barrier...

The initial response from the government is to go to the immigrant-serving agencies. That is a barrier, because not everyone accesses settlement services. This happens to perpetuate the notion that we are all foreigners. It lumps everyone together as newcomers, which further perpetuates these stereotypes and biases.

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue this work?

TWP At a very pragmatic level, funding. If you look at the model (pathway to change for diverse communities), it shows that continuum of work towards systemic change. The model shows that it is fundamental to have [the] capacity to sustain our efforts. Social justice work tries to convey the needs and struggles of our community. In order to support this, we need organizational capacity to sustain the work. Issues that impact minorities, in order to have a groundswell of support, we need to engage those who are not personally impacted by these things.

[We need] the opportunity to talk about our regional differences. People from the three main cities must recognize the regional differences and the reality that people in different provinces have to live in a very different racial climate. For a long time, people wouldn't talk about racism in Alberta, which is very different from Toronto and Vancouver.

Chinatown Today

REPRESENTED BY

BX

Brooke
Xiang

they/them/theirs

To share Chinatown's stories — past and future.

Q How do you approach anti-racism work?

BX A lot of the time, when we talk about anti-racism work, it speaks to a specific kind of activism, and I hesitate to claim that Chinatown Today's work is anti-racism, though it informs all of the work we do. I want to believe there's a way to do this work without naming it so, because language can only carry us so far...

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that addresses anti-racism?

BX Across Cultures and Generations [was] a series of three artist panels. We put a callout to artists who have connections to Chinatown, of any racialized groups [as] we think it's important to acknowledge that not only Chinese people are a part of Chinatown. The project was borne out of this need to invite people to have conversations about Chinatown, especially if they are not Chinese. The six artists talked about their artistic process and also talked about how we can build these relationships as racialized folks outside the lens of whiteness, which is an example of anti-racism work. We wanted to be an approachable gateway to think about anti-racism work without putting a specific label on it.

Additional projects: [Active Bystander Workshop](#), [Chinatown Stories](#)

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

BX [There is a] consistent lack of funding. We have 5 board members, who are all volunteers, who work full time jobs or who are students—sometimes both. We end up cutting corners, and we can't hire folks to do the work properly. It's detrimental to the [potential] impact that we can have.

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue this work?

BX All of these problems can be solved with money to hire staff to do the actual work."

Having more guidance on how to run a board [would be incredibly helpful], because we're all new. Having open conversations with other non-profits about similar challenges and on how they approach this kind of work would also help.

One of the findings of [the Across Cultures and Generations] project was that there are not enough platforms for racialized artists to talk to each other. It was also important that each of the artists brought each of their own followings and cultural groups to engage with each other in the chat. It's important to create a space for racialized artists to come together and talk about the lived experiences that inform their art.

"This work takes a lot of time. Upon reflection, we must give this work some time. Young people are still dissecting what all these racist incidents mean to them and their families and communities. People need more time to metabolize this."

Cold Tea Collective

REPRESENTED BY

TL

Tim
Lam

he/him/his

Cold Tea Collective is a storytelling platform and community for, by, and about Asians in America, exploring their identities and navigating the challenges of living between cultures. We are passionate about finding the next generation of Asians in North America. A platform to understand and connect with themselves and the world around them...

What's really important to us in terms of content is critical and constructive conversations that describe the lived experiences of the Asian diaspora. Through these critical and constructive conversations via content, we believe we can amplify, empower, and engage Asians in North America.

Q How would your organization define anti-racism?

TL It's part of the work that we do. In our journalism context, we informally define it by taking an active posture against racism in our articles. You need to identify where it is, systemic inequalities, name it, and in the media world, that is sometimes complicated. Mainstream media standards often dictate that something cannot be called racist so they can pretend to be so-called "neutral". As an organization, we want to call it out in our writing, and that's how anti-racism shows up for us. We don't take a neutral posture on racism.

Q How does representation play a role in the work that you do?

TL **We want to empower people.** In 2019, we were really focused on the empowerment of representation in pop culture, but we quickly realized the limits of that. We realized we can dive into harder, more challenging, and political stories, which can be just as empowering when our audience sees themselves reflected back in these stories. Yes, media representation on screen and in pop culture can be powerful, and I'm not taking away from that experience for people, but it is equally if not more important to understand, 'what is happening to regular people on the ground? Our neighbors who live next to us?' What does political representation mean? Community organizing? Those issues need representation and coverage in the media too and empowerment can also come from that.

Q What are some projects that you are proud of that address anti-racism?

TL We did a lot more internal workshops in 2020 related to racism. Part of it was to help inform our editorial practices, and also to help our healing. We built our capacity as a team—[we] just had three hours to convene and storytell with each other."

When we talked about the Atlanta shooting, we weren't leading with that. [There was] no click-bait. The way [Cold Tea Collective] approaches it is to humanize the victims a little more.

I'd describe us as a slow form of journalism. We don't do breaking news. We try not to be reactionary, especially if it's a tender topic. We'll get together to chat about how to report on this in thoughtful, mindful ways, that shares new insights for the community involved.

Additional Projects: Additional Projects: Watch the documentary series, [MAKING IT, While Making A Difference](#) which showcases four young Asian Canadians who are following their dreams while uplifting their communities and celebrating their Asian heritage.

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

TL Balancing the universal versus the specific in our writing and storytelling. This is a part of the work. We're constantly trying to get better at talking about the Asian diasporic experience while not generalizing it. There is collective power in unifying around our shared experiences and stories as a community, but at the same time, we also want to honor the specific and unique stories we have as individuals and avoid flattening our community with generalizations.. And on the other hand, there are also readers who have this experience for the first time.

[The] emotional labour [involved is also a challenge]. There was a lot of balancing between the people who wrote articles covering racism because it was so emotionally draining.

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue doing this work?

TL **Reader-supported Revenue—donations from our readers themselves.** Aligned incentives, where we serve the community in a way that is meaningful, and where they read when it is useful to them.

Sponsors—partnerships with businesses where it's mutually beneficial. They might pay to advertise and we promote them.

Downtown Eastside SRO Collaborative

REPRESENTED BY

NY

Nicholas

he/him/his

Yung

HO

Hamida

Oandeku

she/her/hers

KA

Kara

Ashkewe

she/her/hers

The SRO Collaborative was established [in 2015] to organize SRO tenants in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and Chinatown. [It started] as a pilot project that focused on setting up tenant committees and organizing for repairs in 5 privately-owned SROs which included the high profile cases where tenants won major improvements at the West and Lion Hotels and evacuation/relocation to better housing at the Regent and Balmoral Hotels. In 2017, SRO-C formed its own society and began organizing networks of SRO tenants for overdose prevention in the privately-owned SROs. In 2018, SRO tenants joined with academics from Queens and Simon Fraser Universities to research the past, present and future of SROs and to stimulate a new phase of organizing in the hotels. In 2019, SROC [worked] on a plan to present to the three levels of government to get renovations, rent control, better management practices and tenant committees in all privately-owned SROs. [See Website](#)

Q How do you approach anti-racism work?

NY We all come to organizing from different backgrounds and have different traumas. It's hard to have interdepartmental relationships because of this difference... SROC on their mandate includes anti-racism... Lots of our tenants are traumatized and come from precarious lifestyles, so we have to try to have enough resources for that and the decision making process reflects that.

HO We're growing and the DTES is growing and changing. We are trying to acknowledge our differences and come together. Hence, why we're a collaborative so we can all understand each other, and teach each other.

KA The anti-racism policy can look different based on the people within that organization, and the dynamics of everyone else. It's about valuing the experiences of everyone in the organization with clear and concise policies and then applying this to policies that work for them.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

NY In 2019, I organized social housing for Solheim with 75 units and over 100 tenants in the building. In the building, there were French, Spanish, Hoisanese, Vietnamese people and other racialized people. I was able to do multilingual organizing to develop the landlord and work with the landlord. Each language lead did a different protest and organized amongst themselves, we all won and everyone got compensated which was game-changing. That proved to SROC that we need to invest more on giving more resources to this kind of work (community, political organizing). We also spent money to buy

translation equipment for everyone. Now, we can see the whole organization coming in and investing in this.

Additional projects/initiatives: [Right to Remain](#), [The TORO Project](#), Food program

Q What are some of the challenges that you encounter in your work?

NY Since the pandemic, all the funding requirements have become more harsh, particularly on data collection. Funders ask who you actually provide services to, to prove who you help, and [they] need specific names and data—there is so much data collection. So many of my tenants' names don't even fit the English forms [and] racialized folks don't have a chance to understand what their data is being used for... The funding requirements [also] change based on the data collected. [When it comes to] non-English funding, we're placed in a less advantaged position.

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue doing this work?

NY [The] different [sources of] funding needs [to have] better communication with each other. Rather than asking organizations to compete with each other, they should see how they can connect with each other and create support for all of us. Rather than just us asking for money, it could come the other way around, not us asking for money, leading us not to achieve what we actually want to...

[We need] funding that requires less reporting and data collection. Racialized and oppressed staff are already having to deal with a lot on the frontlines [and] data collection drags us

“Everything needs to be trauma-informed.”

down. When we write grant applications, we should try to have the most impact, not satisfy funders' needs.

We [also] need more funding focused on intersections, not just finding different categories and territories to fit within. Some of these exist, but they're not very accessible. These funders who create grants need to understand more about the complexities within communities. Academic and research groups should advocate more for how to restructure different funding criteria.

For funding for racialized communities, mandatory budget lines on translations and interpretations, including support for partnerships with organizations that already have this capacity. Funding to rent and buy equipment with existing support, like organizations that already have this equipment to share these resources.

When different organizations create anti-racism learning packets, we can use these so they are accessible and shared with others. Also, funding to customize for specific communities and common practices for existing resources.

“To me, anti-racism work has a lot to do with knowledge translation. And knowing that different people have different experiences with racism. Finding resources and building solidarity to create programs and opportunities to understand nuances is important. To me as a frontline worker, it's even more than systemic racism. In systemic racism, there are many elite and powerful players who are interfering. The people who don't have the capacity or literacy in large campaigns are often the ones who are left over and who suffer the most.”

hua foundation

REPRESENTED BY

KH

Kevin
Huang he/him/his

the intersections between cultural heritage and
social change

hua foundation is a non-profit based in Vancouver's
Chinatown. They equip and empower Asian youth to take
ownership and leadership roles in addressing complex
societal issues that impact the civic and community spaces
they are a part of. This includes facilitating youth work-
shops, developing educational resources, and convening
coalitions within and across Asian communities.

Q How do you approach anti-racism work?

KH We've both been on the periphery and have projects on equity and food systems. Is exclusion: lack of recognition [for] how people that are non-white have different ways of interacting and understanding what are necessities and wants in different communities? A lot of this is reflected in policies and systems. For us as an organization, we try to tackle it in nuanced and targeted ways, and we're still learning as we do this.

Q What are some projects that you are proud of that address anti-racism?

KH I want to see how the [Asian Community Convener Project](#) progresses! We're considering the systemic approach of how we should tackling anti-Asian racism by learning what is going on out there... A lot of these organizations have important, needed work that they're already doing, but to take a step back to see all of the work being done, interest and possibilities that can come out of this.

Also see other projects: [The Choi Project](#) and [anti-racism + solidarities resource collection](#)

Q What kinds of challenges do you encounter in your work?

KH Part of the challenge for me, as an Executive Director, is do I pass on this work to the next group or person to succeed? Recognizing that a lot of our work hinges on relationships, and I continue to hold a lot of that, I worry about this. Over the past couple of years[,] I've been trying to take a step back. Allowing others to thrive and learn, it is healthier for the longevity of the

organization... How do I disassociate myself in a healthy way so the organization can grow in a healthy way?

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue this work?

KH There needs to be more recognition that the relationship building aspect of anti-racism work is critical moving forward. There also needs to be funding. Thinking about funding as a community development angle, especially the risk appetite. I've been on the side of adjudication for funding, but we have to have measures in place to give them the opportunity to try things out. Why are we thinking about projects in a way that they must succeed? If their values align, if they have enough of an idea to allow them to try, is that not a good thing? Because if this doesn't work out, maybe the next one will. Why are we only thinking about projects as an investment of success? Isn't failing also a success, especially in marginalized communities that have fundamentally different needs that us at the table might not understand?

Islamic Relief Canada

REPRESENTED BY

SI

Saleha
Islam

she/her/hers

Islamic Relief Canada is to inspire and enable people to respond rapidly to disasters and fight poverty through our Islamic values, expertise and global reach.

Q How does your organization approach anti-racism work?

SI One of our key values is 'adl', which means "social justice" in Arabic. In essence we not only try to fight poverty, but we also work with vulnerable communities to empower them.

Q How would you, personally, define anti-racism?

SI As someone who's experienced a lot of racism... "rahmah" which means "compassion" in Arabic is something I'd also include in my own definition of anti-racism. Racism can stem from ignorance and hatred. If we replace that with compassion and kindness, it can do away with a lot of the bad and the ailment we see in the world. Once we have compassion for one another, we also interact with one another with grace and love and start to get to know one another.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

SI **Our Seeds of Hope project.** We partnered with Chilliwack to work directly with the locals and planted trees along the riverbank where it used to be safe for salmon to go. We planted trees to reduce algae and bacteria so that the salmon could go back to the waterway, and so the water could flow again... we raised funds to help both local communities and also abroad, in Palestine. Everyone was so welcoming. Two different groups came together and built something good... In Palestine, [plants] are being planted in Gaza and the West Bank [and this] project happened in November.

The Orphan Sponsorship Program is one of the biggest ones we have. It is active in about 30 countries. Donors can sponsor different orphans

in countries. There are three levels of sponsorship based on countries—some countries are more costly to sponsor than others. It's a monthly subscription and that amount directly goes to the family. Islamic Relief acts like "their father", because even if they have a mother, they don't have a source of income.

Additional projects: Widows' program, Islamophobia in Canada Report

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

SI Racism [and religious discrimination] is a barrier to collaborations that we want to do. Islam is in our name—it shows that we're an Islamic organization—and this can serve as a barrier to others wanting to collaborate with us.

At the end of the day, when you're trying to do the work, people don't want to help unless they have a cut of whatever you're doing. Whether it's having their name credited or something else.

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

SI We heavily rely on volunteers, but we want to partner more with local businesses to have one day of their local revenue be donated to our programs... Domestic programs rely on grants so more funding for that would be appreciated... Sensitivity training, education programs. Partnering with organizations who do this work more.

Japanese Garden Society of Salt Spring Island

REPRESENTED BY

RK

Rumiko
Kanesaka she/her/hers

Peace, reconciliation and cross-cultural unity

We acknowledge the Japanese Canadian heritage and its legacy on Salt Spring Island. Before the war, about 100 people of Japanese descent lived here; however, they were forcibly moved to internment camps, and their property was taken away during internment. In 2009, the Society built a Japanese-inspired Heiwa Garden for peace and reconciliation to commemorate the pre-war Japanese Canadian community on the island. It was our landmark project. We organize events and talks to address the history of Japanese Canadians and its background of racism from the government and the society that supported it.

Q How does the Japanese Garden Society approach anti-racism work?

RK Stories about the dispossession of Japanese Canadians on the island hadn't been openly talked about until recently. The island used to be a very ethnocentric place like many other places in Canada. Also because it was (and still is) a small community, people tended to avoid opening up about the controversial past. By building a Japanese-style commemorative garden and placing information panels at locations associated with Japanese Canadian history, we have been slowly placing visible markers so that the community will recognize and learn what happened in the past and why.

Q What led you to do this work with the Japanese Garden Society?

RK Before I got involved with the society, I visited a memorial museum in New Denver in one area where Japanese Canadians were interned. At that point in time, I knew that had happened, but I wasn't really aware of what exactly went on, so I went to the museum without much expectation. When I stepped into one of the cabins, I started crying. Some kind of deep sadness came to me. I was really upset but I didn't explore further about those feelings that I got then. "But when I was asked to join the society at the time of its foundation, I said yes right away because I felt that I associated with that sensation I felt when I visited the New Denver Japanese Museum. I wanted to keep that story going, and I thought I could do it without too much emotional attachment as I had some distance between my own story and the Japanese Canadian experiences.

My involvement in the Society's activities and learning the history of the Japanese Canadians had given me the opportunity to know more about who I am, why I muted myself, and why I was feeling shy about being truly me—a new immigrant, English-as-a-second-language person, someone who looked differently than

others on the island. I muted myself from feeling those things, but this opportunity has helped me embrace myself more fully.

Q What are some projects that you are proud of that address anti-racism?

RK Our most recent project was called "The Conversations on Racism", and it was very interesting and well received. It consisted of four Zoom forums and we invited four sets of panelists to discuss the past and the present of 'minorities' on Salt Spring Island. The most interesting discussion for me was one called 'Where Are You Really From?' which was to explore the identities of Asian Canadian and HAPAs. We had several pre-forum online discussions among the panelists that became wonderful self-explorations for all of us, especially for some who had never examined who they really are in a deeper sense. By sharing their experiences and thoughts among themselves and with the audience, everybody, both the panelists and the audience, felt rewarded and learned something important. Those forums turned out to be very educational, especially for the white audience about what other groups of people are feeling and experiencing.

What we have done in the past was mostly focused on the history of the Japanese Canadians, talking about Japanese Canadian internment experiences.

Another memorable project was a month-long photo exhibit called *Uprooting* to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Internment. The exhibit was a visual history of Japanese Canadians on Salt Spring Island and we worked closely with the Salt Spring Island Archives and the Salt Spring Public Library to assemble archival photos and information. So many people from the community came to see the exhibit and learned about the untold past which was very rewarding.

We also had a collaboration project with the UVic History Department to do an exhibit of Asian Canadian history on Vancouver Island. This one was another rare opportunity to learn about

Chinese, Indian and Japanese Canadian settlers on Vancouver Island, the history of whom many people are unaware.

Q **What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?**

RK In the past, our team mostly consisted of seniors of over 70 years of age, but three younger people have recently joined our board to help us continue this work. The upkeep of the garden is quite physical and it is hard on our aging bodies. We hope that we will be able to pass the torch onto the younger generation on our board. I expect that they will take more active roles in taking care of the garden and running the outreach programs.

Until quite recently, there were also two people on the island who lived here before the war, were uprooted, interned, and came back to Salt Spring to start all over again. They have been through a lot, including very heavy discrimination. They were literally a living history of the Japanese Canadian experiences before and after the war.

One of them was a board member of the society and she gave talks at every possible opportunity. These talks were really powerful and

impactful because they came directly from her own experiences. The two were an inspiration for our work and the community respected them greatly. But they're getting old and losing their memory, and eventually they moved to the mainland to live in senior homes close to their other family members.

So we've lost two very important storytellers. I feel that we need to redefine ourselves in how we fill the void of losing some of the pillars of our organization. That's a big challenge right now to figure out how to keep the legacy alive.

Q **What kinds of support do you need for your work to thrive?**

RK It would be great if we could receive ongoing funding. There are almost no grants available to support the upkeep of our present structure such as the Heiwa garden. The Society's biggest expense is garden maintenance, so the financial challenge is always there. Also I would like to see more people involved in our administrative and outreach programming team.

“Years ago, I visited a memorial museum in Denver in one area where JC’s were interned. I knew that had happened, but I wasn’t really aware of what exactly went on. I was lucky to have some distance between my own story and that history. When I stepped into one of the cabins, I started crying. Some kind of deep sadness came to me. That kind of sadness, I really didn’t explore further until I was asked to join the society. I said yes right away because I wanted to help share this history.

That experience gave me the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of why I muted myself upon coming to Canada, why I was feeling shy about being truly me—a new immigrant, English as a second language person, who looked differently than others on the island. I muted myself before, but this movement has helped me embrace myself more fully.”

Love Intersections

REPRESENTED BY

JS

Jen
Sungshine she/her/hers

Love Intersections believes that intersectionality is a call to action. Collaboration and relationship building is a core philosophy of our organization. We tell diverse intergenerational and intercultural stories through art.

Q How would your organization define anti-racism?

JS Anti-racism is any organizing around critiquing and organizing against white supremacy and colonization and capitalism, broadly speaking. [It's] understanding that anti-racist efforts need to have an intersectional and intergenerational lens. It also includes efforts that we normally don't include [like] activism—there are many ways to do anti-racist organizing. Anti-racism has to entangle a diversity of tactics—it doesn't always look the same. In school, online, in fun activities, it shifts to different contexts.

Q How has this definition of anti-racism informed your work?

JS In the past, we really only had one goal in mind—to provide just some nuanced representation of queer Asians. The goal was simple. We weren't tackling capitalism or white supremacy, but as we evolved and understood our role and place in our community, we realized that we need to be responsible for the work. We grew more accountable to our philosophy. We formalized the process, and the work followed. Now, we care more about tackling capitalism and white

supremacy so our work needs to do this, too. But that being said, lots of white people find our work palatable, just like funders.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

JS We did two films on Amar, who is a queer, deaf, south Asian youth. The first film was when he was a youth, and the second, when he was an adult. There have been systemic changes there that have changed how we can apply for and receive funding for the deaf community.

The second project is Yellow Peril: Queer Destiny. It follows a queer, Asian drag artist, Maiden China. All of the work that that film brought has brought the most success, especially in schools. We've had discussions with youth about what it means to be a part of the queer community and Asian diaspora as a result of that film. It's also allowed us to travel to other places and have conversations on an international level, where the contexts can change completely.

Other projects include: *BITTER ORIENTALS: Yellow Peril Unmasked*, "Hot Pot Talks"

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

JS Repeated questions in grants make it feel like we're having to explain our project over and over again. The City of Vancouver's Culture Shift

is good at this, and the Vancouver Foundation doesn't require final reports anymore, which is great.

On a personal level, the pandemic revealed a lot about myself and my own self-worth in a global climate where productivity is revered and connected to your identity and personality. I've been challenged by that, [and have had] to do a lot of self-evaluation about who I am at 35 years old. Aging is also really challenging! This is also important to think about in terms of work—we run out of energy and steam and that impacts our work.

Q Why is a community-based accountant something that could support your work?

JS We go to a company, but they do very basic things for us. What we need is someone who understands accounting and finance through a lens of artists and non-profit organizations. An accountant with a deeper understanding of what it means to be an artist and non-profit worker.

Q What do you need to continue doing this work?

JS Operational funding is valued more than project-based funding. That means we're not constantly having to come up with new projects. If it's operational, and we can speak about what we do as an organization, it gives us the freedom to

focus on the work we're supposed to be doing. In larger organizations, ones who have a grant writer can actually adapt more easily, too.

Broadly speaking, we're quite tired of constantly being the only queer Asian organization that others want to reach out to. I would love to have more queer Asian organizations out here to collaborate with—we don't perform direct service and we need direct service. It's a lot of pressure to constantly be organizing because we're the only [ones].

“We’re centering people’s stories, not a voyeuristic perspective. This shift in the museum is important and exciting to see.”

Powell Street Festival Society

REPRESENTED BY

SM

Samantha
(Sammy)
Marsh she/her/hers

The Powell Street Festival first took place in 1977 and has since expanded to be one of the largest and longest-running community arts festivals in Canada.

The Powell Street Festival Society now functions as a non-profit registered charity arts organization based in Vancouver and the Paueru Gai Area—today known as the Downtown Eastside—located on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

In addition to its signature event, The Powell Street Festival, the Society offers year-round programs and collaborates with local, national, and international organizations, artists, and communities to advance equity and well-being for all. See [website](#).

Q How do you approach anti-racism work as an organization?

SM Our programs do not just embody anti-racism work, but also aim to challenge systems of discrimination. The Downtown Eastside faces stigma around homelessness, drug use, and marginalization. That's why it's so important to have the festival in the location that it is. It's not just about race, but about all kinds of systems of oppression that exist.

We take a modeling approach when it comes to anti-racism work. Rather than having a program solely dedicated to talking about anti-racism, it's embodied in all the programs we do. I think that's a product of something we've been working on for a while—cultural workers training. In the summer, all staff engage in six weeks of training online to talk about de-escalation, disability, the neighbourhood we're working with and in. It builds upon so many skills that are important to us: wellness, skill- and community-building. We don't use that term as such that often, but it's important.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

SM Japanese Canadian Youth Cohort. The Japanese Canadian community were forcibly displaced and interned during WWII, so many JC's have felt that they are disconnected from their identity, don't know much about their culture or family history, because of intergenerational trauma, and families not wanting to talk about what happened to them. This program is meant to provide an opportunity for people outside the province to come to BC and learn about JC identity while gaining mentorship experience with elders (in partnership with senior homes), help with festival production (event planning, etc.). We've received them from Japanese Canadians all over the world. This program is free, and parts will be online. Trying to make this a program without barriers—travel and accommodation will be covered, and have a per diem."

Other Projects: *Paueru Gai Dialogues*, *Storytelling Circle*, *360 Riot Walk*, and of course, the Powell Street Festival!

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

SM Funding [is a challenge,] especially finding sustainable funding [as opposed to] project funding. Emergency funding in the past years has been instrumental in providing aid, but the long term trajectory can be in flux. It would allow for continuous education and [the] empowering of events.

Our work is not just racially based. So much of this is based around education, because stigma is so hard to break. With gentrification, there will be a lot of misinformation about neighbourhoods and communities in this area.

Q Have incidents of racism and COVID shaped the way you organize?

SM Yes, it impacted us all mentally and physically, in the way we embody that trauma. At the height of anti-Asian hate crimes, we were having the *Paueru Gai dialogues*. It became an interesting point of community connection and sharing. Volunteers were an essential part of this program, as they always have been when planning the Powell Street Festival and associated events. Empowering volunteers to hold space for difficult conversations while finding ways to communicate across differences is something we hope to embody in our capacity building training for volunteers. It was a difficult time for us all, and we knew we couldn't take on everything ourselves. So we learned that we needed to call for help—support systems, mental health professionals. Finding space for people to feel safe while also connecting with the community.

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue doing this work?

SM Equitable and Accessible Infrastructure and Policy Changes. One of the programs we have is the design competition. It involves architectural, landscape design students, and often involves some kind of build that provides resources to the neighbourhood. This year, it's aimed at

providing a water station to the neighbourhood. It will hopefully incorporate accessible drinking water and also cultural learning aspects to it.

Relationship building with different fundraising sources [will also help our work succeed]. We work with universities.

“Anti-racism work shouldn't just be coming from marginalized communities. People shouldn't be looking at them to do that work only. When we think about community building, it has to be reciprocal. It takes time and trust and those relationships need to be fostered to be able to make progress. It's about fighting against systems of oppression, it's about sexism, discrimination against drug use, homelessness, education, access. These conversations need to be more multidisciplinary and I think it's one of those things that we can learn from not just racialized communities, but also from communities that are being discriminated against for other reasons. If we can work more in tandem, that is what I believe helps.”

SHER Vancouver S2LGBTQ+ Friends Society

REPRESENTED BY

KSS

Karn
Singh Sahota he/him/his

Sher Vancouver is a registered charity for LGBTQ+ South Asians and their friends and families in Metro Vancouver, B.C. “[Sher Vancouver’s mission is] to provide and support people who are queer throughout Metro Vancouver. We mainly focus on South Asian communities but it’s also open to everyone who has faced systemic racism, has faced some type of barrier or some type of discrimination. We [provide] a safe space for everybody to be heard and a community for those needing it.

Q How does Sher Vancouver approach anti-racism work?

KSS Anti-racism is deconstructing the idea that everyone has to act a certain way, or be a certain way. The main reason why I started “Vancouver works”, the way it works is that we have people of different backgrounds, different ethnicities, different sexualities, all working together. For us, anti-racism is just everyone working together, no matter what race, ethnicity, sexuality[...] A lot of our staff is heterosexual, which a lot of people [are] a bit surprised to see because it is a queer-based organization. So for us, anti-racism is a part of the fabric of what Alex, our founder, started and created here at Sher Vancouver.

Q What are some projects that you’re proud of that address anti-racism?

KSS Destination YVR [includes] everything you need to know when arriving in the Metro Vancouver area. It’s queer focused and there are so many things that I needed growing up. There’s a page about things like how expensive phone plans are, bars to frequent to make friends, etc. It’s been up for one year, and we’re doing revisions on it as we can.

Also: Emergence: Out of the Shadows is a documentary based on people living in Surrey while coming to terms with their sexuality while of a South Asian background.; Support groups on Whatsapp.

Q What challenges do you face in your work?

KSS Stigma [is a challenge for] people who are wanting to take part but are scared to out themselves or be seen in a group where people are out and queer or trans. I was in the Vancouver Sun last year and I remember having Alex ask me over and over again if I was okay, because of the flack he has gotten from the community for being publicly out... We [also] have anonymous volunteers because of this struggle and stigma.

Getting people to come to things [is also a challenge]. We’re mainly online, so we don’t have a physical space to hold events. Having volunteers

who need guidance has been a challenge and chase to get people to come together or come to a consensus.

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue doing this work?

KSS For Sher to grow, we need a space for people to see each other and share stories in a physical space together... We need more and more support from the community. We are still lacking some support from major players, like other non profit organizations. Having large partners that can help us grow and diversify would be the cherry on top.

Sliced Mango Collective (SMC)

REPRESENTED BY

ACB

Anne
Claire Baguio she/her/hers

Sliced Mango Collective is an organization that is based in so-called Metro-Vancouver centering Filipinx youth. It's an organization that's meant to help Fil-Can youth find a sense of belonging and give them a space to connect with each other, their culture and heritage through art, performance and community work.

Q How would SMC define anti-racism?

ACB I think of anti-racism [as] an active practice that we try to bake into everything that we do. We don't have [specific] initiatives or projects or programs because we try to ensure anti-racism practices are in everything. It is a central pillar of our values, so all projects reflect anti-racism as a result... Because it's in our mission to explore Fil-Can identity, there needs to be conversations around anti-racism, whether that's Anti-Asian and anti-Black racism that we need to confront in our own communities, which includes colorism, which are equally [things] that we want to address when speaking to Fil-Can community members... [We've] talked about this before and with our team, the idea that we live in a racist system, so by design, we are racist and anti-racism has to be an action—you can claim to be anti-racist but if you don't actually act on that or take that into your values or how you practice or how you move forward with your team and with the community, then it's not actually anti-racism.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

ACB #SliceOfSupport was an initiative that addresses systemic racism in our local community in Vancouver. Our team learned there was a redevelopment plan happening on Joyce Street that was going to displace Filipino and Chinese businesses... The Joyce-Collingwood neighbourhood is a really diverse part of the community. It's a cultural hub for Filipinos and Filipino Canadians, and we know that food for our culture is a way for us to celebrate our community, celebrate our culture, and gather. It's a place where Filipino migrants can feel at home, and 2nd generation [Filipino Canadians] can feel at home and learn about their culture.

So this initiative was launched to spread the word. It got really big because this was an important community space for Filipinos in Metro Vancouver. It was interesting to see how fast this city and the developers were going to move into this next phase of development without all this

community consultation. The work that Sliced Mango and a lot of our partner and allied organizations did was the community consultation for the developers and the city.

We had to do that for ourselves rather than having that kind of consultation with an immigrant and marginalized community happen and baked into how this city does redevelopment, instead of a bunch of grassroots organizations having to do it for themselves with[in] a very short time period... What we learned is not only was there very little time for people to say anything, but people didn't know it was happening. It was an issue with the city and developers not communicating with these communities properly, and especially not communicating our languages... One thing we noticed about the Shape Your City Website and its translation, was that it was just a general Google translation. When you serve a racialized community, you don't use Google Translate to convey important information. You have to actually hire racialized translators that actually know that community and know how to communicate in those languages. So that was something we did point out and something we were very critical about during that campaign...

The Filipino community was of the general understanding that racism doesn't affect us, but this campaign and its need was indicative of the fact that racism does affect us systemically... [There was this] notion that racism doesn't affect us—the general *bahala na* mindset of Filipino community is *it is what it is*. "This is not mine to carry."

Some of our projects include: "What's Your Slice?" Zine, Writing workshops on unpacking internalized racism, Speaking engagements (radio interviews, podcasts, articles, Filipino news outlets)

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in doing this work?

ACB Building a [youth-led organization] from the ground up has been extremely difficult. There were few progressive [Fil-Can organizations]

to follow. It's harder for our community to dig deeper and talk about generational differences and decolonization because of this. It's also hard for us to know if we're doing the right thing because we're the ones starting this kind of Fil-Can youth collective based work locally.

Q What kinds of support does the Fil-Can community need?

ACB Every time anyone says, 'suggestions to the government,' my immediate response is disaggregated data... We're specifically looking [for] race-based or ethnic-based data. So the idea is if you're going to do a story or look into the needs of health care workers, don't just look at health care workers, [but] look at how it affects women-identifying health care workers and nurses, and men-identifying health care workers. How does it affect trans health care workers and nurses, and cis health care workers? Then dividing that into, how does it affect Black health care workers versus White health care workers versus Filipino workers? When you pass out that kind of data, you're able to see which communities specifically within that bigger community [are] most affected... I don't like that we need to have data to prove to the government and other bodies and the system that, 'hey, our needs matter,' but this disaggregated data is a good first step

into [saying], 'hey, this community is being more affected by this, and you need to do something about it, and here's our data for that.'

Q What kinds of support does SMC need to succeed in this work?

ACB I think the support that SMC really needs is just more mentorship [on] how to run an organization like the one we're running, [mentorship] specifically for SMC. It ties back to [being] youth where there's no precedent for this kind of organization in Metro Vancouver... One of the biggest challenges is that... we're not a registered non-profit or society of BC, so it makes it harder to find funding. We're also volunteers, so no one here is staff. Our capacity to do work with SMC is reduced because we have to find work to sustain ourselves. There are [also] other parts of running an organization that we didn't anticipate, like website design and [the] financial [needs]... We need folks with different skill sets from what we have because [while] everyone [on the current SMC team] is very good at what they do, there are also things that fall through the cracks. And it's because we don't have people with the right skill set [for those specific things].

“There is a beauty in realizing that you are not the only ones doing this work. That we do not need to shoulder this burden ourselves, alone.”

South Asian in the Valley

REPRESENTED BY

AM

Alysha
Mahil

she/her/hers

South Asian in the Valley's mission is "to be the centre of cultural and creative innovation in the Fraser Valley. We are committed to preserving and sharing the stories of our rich and diverse cultural heritage, and showcasing the best in the visual arts from both inside and outside of our community... The purpose of the South Asian in the Valley Project, is to create an exhibition that showcases the history, culture and contemporary character of Abbotsford's South Asian communities.

Q How does South Asian in the Valley define anti-racism?

AM As an art gallery museum, [anti-racism is] recognizing how museums and galleries are implicated in conditions of colonialism and racism historically. It's recognizing again, their role as an art gallery and museum and supporting BIPOC initiatives and [better] reflecting the lived experiences of BIPOC communities through their exhibitions and programming.

Q What are some projects or initiatives that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

AM Two of them that I'm really proud of are the farming protest videos that was about the Indian farmers protest, and we interviewed people here who were protesting here just on their brick road—just asking them, why it was important to them, why a protest halfway across the world meant so much to them, and what they wanted to see come out of that protest.

I [also] think [the video] about the Muslim community was also really important to me. Those two topics aren't very well represented in mainstream media and getting to ask people from those communities, from those causes and what was important to them was really important to me.

One that the Reach is very proud of is the Semá:th Xó:tsa children's book that they wrote, and it's about the draining of Sumas Lake. There used to be a lake covering most of this enormous prairie that was drained in the early 1900s to make more farmland viable for a lot of white farmers that were coming in. So the book speaks to the environmental and cultural degradation that occurred from that event... [It] was written in collaboration with the Semá:th First Nation

and also features words in Halq'eméylem. So it's pretty cool to kind of see that project come together. We also had an exhibition on it, too.

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

AM Some of the challenges have been level of fluency. For example, for Punjabi, sometimes we'll get things translated and they're very formal academic Punjabi. And so maybe some of the video scripts have been written in this very formal language, but not everyone speaks it especially when you think about younger generations who are learning it as a second language. They're not using those very academic terms; it's colloquial Punjabi that they're used to. So it's trying to find that balance of, who are we trying to speak to? What kind of language do we need, what level of fluency are we looking [to speak] here? It's definitely raised a lot more questions I think for me in terms of how translation work should be done.

Museums and art galleries are typically kind of inaccessible or are not very comfortable spaces for a lot of people in the South Asian community, [instead] it's seen as a very white, almost elite space. So going to speak to community members, a lot of them don't know what the Reach or we are doing.

Q Has your positionality affected your approach or your feelings towards the work that you do?

AM Something that... we've also talked about is our positionality as both an insider and an outsider, talking to people in the community, being members of the South Asian community, being younger Punjabi women, but then also coming from this institution, and I would agree that there's some friction and trying to figure out how to navigate them. Sometimes it's even trying to

get [someone's] mom coming with us, so she's kind of a mediator in that way. It's definitely been difficult trying to navigate that.

Q **What support do you need to continue doing this work?**

AM We're trying to reach out to South Asian communities in the valley, not just the Punjabi Sikh community, which is the largest community here, but [we're also] trying to reach out to the Muslim community, the Hindu community, and even different ages and whatnot. It speaks to a diversity of experiences versus just a monolithic South Asian experience. We're looking at even South Asian influencers, [which is] something that's come out of talking to people—it's something a lot of younger people want to see because that's how they see themselves online.

Q **How has the last two years of the pandemic affected your approach to this work?**

AM One of the things about shifting online [that's had] a positive outcome is that initially we planned on having community collaborative meetings where[...] we would have people come in and ask what they wanted to see in the exhibition. But instead, being forced to shift online has forced us to meet people more so where they're comfortable. If that's going into the parks where the Punjabi uncles sit and play cards and talk to them there, or DMing South Asian influencers on social media saying, "Hey, can we do an interview or something with you?" "It's expanded our vision of the South Asian community from what initially might have come out of this project.

"We're centering people's stories, not a voyeuristic perspective. This shift in the museum is important and exciting to see."

Tulayan Filipinx/a/o Diaspora Society

REPRESENTED BY

SJR

Sammie
Jo Rumbaua she/her/hers

Tulayan, meaning 'to bridge the gap'

Tulayan Filipinx/a/o Diaspora Society is a grassroots community-powered group with a mission to bridge the ever-growing Filipinx/a/o diaspora. We strive to create an inclusive environment that facilitates our members to explore the histories, languages, and ever-evolving cultures of the filipinx/a/o people. Tulayan endeavours to cultivate opportunities for new connections and community building, through dialogue around our collective history and fostering positive cultural identification. See [website](#).

Q How would your organization define anti-racism?

SJR Basically, anti-racism is against any type of discrimination or prejudice against a race or colour. We strive to form partnerships with other individuals and organizations where we seek to dismantle and rebuild inherently racist systems that were designed without input from or consideration for the Filipinx/a/o community. We also believe that another way to be anti-racist is to promote our culture, heritage and history through meaningful engagement with society at large.

Q What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism?

SJR I, as a community member, and Tulayan are [both] members of the coalition, the Joyce Street Action Network [(JSAN)]. [The coalition] is combatting the displacement of people and small businesses and the loss of food and cultural assets. Even within that, [we're] dealing with developers and the City of Vancouver on how they deal with the public. There are so many layers and intersections in that project that I'm proud of and involved in.

Tulayan is proud to have facilitated the first Filipinx/a/o Town Hall with the City of Vancouver early on in the pandemic. Also we organized a Tagalog-English COVID-19 Info Session with a Filipino medical professional to educate our community of the emerging pandemic. Basically, a lot of programming and workshops that really cultivate Filipinx community engagement allow folks to have their voice, gather, and share their stories. Even though we don't include anti-racism in the title, it's still implicit in the outcomes of our efforts.

Additional projects: *Joyce Street Action Network* [community] tabling project, public speaking and civic engagement workshops such as *#voiceon-joyce: Leadership Development Initiative*

Q What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?

SJR It's really hard when you present things and you give recommendations and then none of those recommendations are taken seriously. Then,

they come back to ask for more recommendations when they [haven't] addressed or tackled the first list. The relationship building within the marginalized community is great, but what's difficult is [authoritative institutions]...

There's a difference between being at the table and creating our own table... The question is, building your table, sitting at the table, how many people can be at the table? And there's a really fine line with tokenism, and it gets me upset because, how do we know? Are we being tokenized? Or are they actually giving us a chance? We're still representing, [and] I'd rather represent that one person at the table than not be there at all...

Q What kinds of support do you need to continue doing this work?

SJR Time, we need time; more hours in the day... If all grants were [easy, low-barrier,] we would apply more, and a lot of other people would apply more. There are usually a lot of stipulations with grants and most of the Filipino organizations don't have charitable status; hence, this is why lots of people don't donate or do funding. There's that lack of trust in fundraising and where money goes... [We also need] capacity building in order to apply for the grants; grants are out there, we're just not applying for them because there are barriers that we [encounter] and we don't have time—this is all of our side gigs.

We still need more community engagement. There are so many of us and [Metro] Vancouver has grown so much. We just need more commitment and consistent relationship building with three levels of governments; there's so much turnaround on their end and they're always asking us what we need, and we keep telling them, [but] they never come out with any of their promises. So what we need is for the government to come out with the output of what they promised from all these years of past elections. We need more Filipinos in council, provincial, federal... It's finally happening, we have the first Pinay MP in Toronto.

UBC Asian Canadian and Asian Migration (UBC ACAM) Studies Program

REPRESENTED BY

SS

Szu Shen she/her/hers

ACAM is one of two university undergraduate programs that focuses on the histories, migrations, and politics of Asian Canadian and Asian diasporic communities. It was established in efforts to address historical discrimination that led to the forced removal of Japanese Canadian students in 1942.

- Q** How does your program approach anti-racism work?
- SS** We provide learning and research opportunities for students and community members to explore different aspects of being Asian Canadian or Asian diasporic. What makes our program unique is that our stakeholders are people we actually know, and [people who] are experiencing the legacy and continued impacts of racism. A lot of the work we do—course offerings, community engagement, partnerships builds on the core question of how to be accountable to communities that we claim to represent and/or work with. Accountability is a big commitment within ACAM, and we want to make sure we are doing things responsibly, [and preparing students to do this work responsibly out in the community].
- Q** What are some projects that you're proud of that address anti-racism work?
- SS** ACAM Dialogues is a student-led and -centered initiative, consisting of workshops and learning opportunities for students to come together and explore things like racism, sexual violence, mental health, etc. Instead of a one-off event where people have good one-off learnings but don't get to continue that learning, these students get to delve deep into how anti-racism is an ongoing process and learn together throughout.
- Some of our other projects include: The National Forum on Anti-Asian Racism, ACAM Courses
- Q** What kinds of challenges do you face in your work?
- SS** Because the work has to be ongoing, sometimes our projects may look repetitive. But that's the nature of how... to do anti-racism work meaningfully—it's a slow process. This kind of slow work is not as attractive or appealing as some of the more innovative projects, but our work needs to have overlapping aspects in order to facilitate sustained and meaningful impacts.
- Q** How do you navigate the diversity of experiences that the broad category of "Asian Canadian" includes?
- SS** There is a large East Asian—specifically Chinese Canadian and Japanese Canadian presence within ACAM. We're working more with Filipino and South Asian communities now but [we recognize that] different groups of Asians don't experience support evenly.
- Q** What remains important in the work that you're doing?
- SS** An important thing for ACAM is that students are heard and have an influence on our programming. Over the years, our students have been an integral part of the process and contribute to how ACAM is today—that we are committed to facilitate different kinds of student learning and leadership opportunities. For example, we saw that a growing number of students were interested in mental health and race [and] what health means for us. We worked with a professor in psychology to develop a new course exploring these questions and it's one of our most popular courses. They were able to work through their own family migration stories and understand what alternative health means for them.

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In Memoriam

We would like to acknowledge the passing of beloved community member Hamida Oandeku, who contributed greatly to building accessible and racially just spaces for Black people in local organizing. May she rest in power.

