

## Annual Report – 2012

### United Cultures of Canada Association

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

#### Acknowledgements

Status of Women Canada –  
Women’s Program

Strengthening Victims’ Response- A  
Self-Help Guide for Victim of Domestic  
Violence

Enhancing Community Response to End  
Violence

Citizenship and Immigration  
Canada

Settlement Legal Support Workers  
Program

Human Rights Education and  
Multiculturalism Fund

Enhancing Civic Participation among  
Ethno-cultural Communities

World on a Maple Leaf: A Treasury of  
Canadian Multicultural Folktales

Community Spirit Program –  
Donation Grant

City of Edmonton – Community  
Services

Creating Inclusive Communities

Enhancing Civic Participation

Organizational Development

Creating Collaborative Framework for  
Legal Response to Fraudulent  
International Marriages

World on a Maple Leaf: A Treasury of  
Canadian Multicultural Folktales

Cultural Liaison Specialists – A Needs  
Assessment

#### Photo: Tigist Dafla

Receiving UCCA Peace in Families Award

2011 from Councillor Amarjeet Sohi

Quote: – Margaret Mead

#### President’s Message

I am very pleased to share this report with you.

This is indeed a special occasion for us at UCCA because we are now completing five years in service. UCCA’s achievements over this past year would be considered as milestones in the history of our organization. In this year, we released two publications “*World on a Maple Leaf: A Treasury of Canadian Multicultural Folktales*” and “*Crimes, Not Cultures*”, both very different from each other, yet equally unique. “*World on a Maple Leaf*” was published by Edmonton Public School Board and is now being sold by Chapters, Amazon, Audrey and Greens. “*Crimes, Not Cultures*” was developed under the initiative “Enhancing Community Response to End Domestic Violence” funded by Status of Women Canada. Under different activity streams of this project, nearly 2000 Edmontonians participated in it in various capacities. This project concluded on March 31, 2012. In another major project of UCCA, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada for a period from November 1, 2010 to March 31, 2012, UCCA developed a training curriculum for legal support workers on 16 different topics of federal, provincial and municipal laws and provided legal information to 595 members of ethno-racial groups in individual and group sessions in 10 other languages - Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Swahili, Lingala, and Thiluba apart from the two official languages of Canada. Our earlier manual “A Self-Help Guide for Victims of Domestic Violence” was distributed to 800 delegates of Diverse Voices Conference 2011 at the hotel Fantasyland by the City of Edmonton – Community Services. Nearly, 2000 copies of this manual were ordered by different divisions of Edmonton Police Service for training of their staff. Several copies were ordered by different organizations in other cities, such as Sundre, Peace River, St. Albert. With all this, I truly believe that we have travelled a long distance in these five years and are now established as an agency with high standards of excellence in service delivery. I express my gratitude to all the funding agencies that have supported us in our effort. I thank all the staff and board members and program volunteers who have contributed toward the success of UCCA in these years.

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*Prevention of Violence is Important to Men in Edmonton*

**Train-the-Trainer Session for men**

*United Cultures of Canada Association* extended an invitation to men in the South Asian communities to learn and educate community members about family violence. Twenty men signed for the training provided by United Cultures. These men signed up because they are concerned about violence in the cultural communities. In doing so, each of these men takes on a leadership role in the community by teaching 25 others about family violence. Together they have trained approximately 500 members of cultural communities. Some of these men passed on their learning in their work environment, some others at the university, and their faith and social networks. The age range of these participants was from university students, professional and to a retiree. Although Edmonton as a city provides a range of services in the area of family violence, its citizens again demonstrated their commitment to end family violence through an innovative and unique strategy. United Cultures wishes to congratulate these men on their achievement. This initiative is supported by Status of Women Canada.



On behalf of the City of Edmonton, I would like to express my thanks and congratulations for your efforts addressing the issue of family violence in our community.

This is a very important issue to me, and I believe it is only through new and innovative approaches that we can bring it out into the open and begin to address this kind of violence in our communities. Your Self-Help Guide for Victims of Domestic Violence is a great resource and the way you are fanning out awareness training to our cultural communities is a creative way to reach many with the message that it is time to end family violence.

Thank you to your organization and the twenty men who committed to taking the training provided by United Cultures and sharing it within their networks and communities. Your leadership is making a difference in this city.

Yours truly,

Stephen Mandel  
Mayor

Four streams of activities were conducted under the project “Enhancing Community Response to End Domestic Violence.” 73 community women and 23 service providers provided their input in development of the manual “*Crimes, Not Cultures*.” It was presented to a group of approx 100 service providers at Prince of Whales Armoury on May 8. These included settlement agencies, i.e. Catholic Social Services, Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative, Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Changing Together, Multicultural Women and Seniors Services Association, Islamic Family Social Services, Indo-Canadian Women’s Association and many mainstream organizations such as John Howard Society, WIN House, A Safe Place, Options Sexual Health Education Centre, Today’s Centre, City of Edmonton – Community Services, Big Brother Big Sister of Edmonton, Alberta Network of Safe and Healthy Children, Alberta Health Services, Child and Family Services Authority, Centre for Race and Cultures, Edmonton Public School Board, Edmonton Catholic School Board and the University of Alberta. 300 copies have been distributed to community women and many agencies including REACH and CIAF V. Some of these agencies are Edmonton Police Service, City of Edmonton, Spousal Violence Intervention Team, Shelters, Child Welfare and immigrant serving agencies. 496 women participants attended 31 workshops and support groups. 30 women received RAD self-defense training and 20 men and 20 women participated in an extensive train-the-trainer session and further educated 948 community members on issues of domestic violence.

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The whole idea of females being inferior physically to men was changed and I felt like I could handle myself in a tough situation. **and**

I realized I have a lot more strength than I thought I had. **Participants – RAD Self-Defense Training**  
 A senior trainer handed out the training material and started the conversation with a young man who said that this senior trainer should not educate women on these issues because once they are aware of their rights in Canada they will not be controlled by men. At this the trainer asked - "Do you have any fear about them knowing their rights?" The community member answered: "NO." The trainer then said, "Why fear then. If there is nothing wrong going on, there is no need to fear. But if there is a need to fear, then something wrong is going on and must be stopped and that is when you need this information most. **Report on participants’ experience from Train-the-Trainer for men**  
 "It is amazing to see how these Legal Information Sessions are helping us greatly!" ... The client told us how his son was fined because of Jaywalking offence. His other son was given a ticket for parking in a private parking lot. **Report on outcomes of Settlement Legal Support Worker Program**  
 For my case it is a little bit late because when you are new, you don’t know the rules and then [you face] so many problems. This course should start when you arrive in Canada for all immigrants, like visitor or worker. **From participant’s feedback on legal information session**

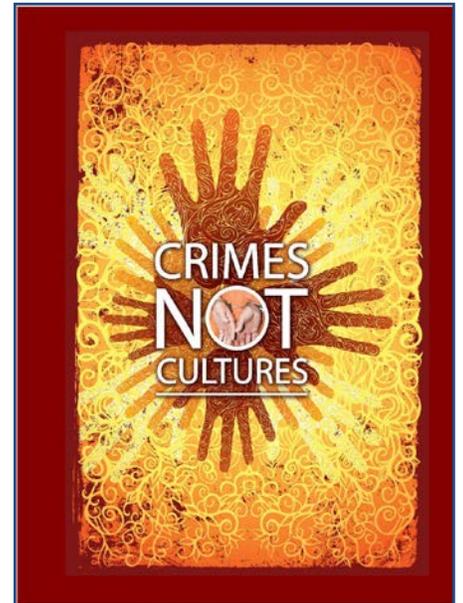
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Similarly, initiated as a pilot project, UCCA’s Settlement Legal Support Workers program was offered from different types of facilities including large public academic institutions such as Norquest College and smaller private vocational schools such as Campbell, ESL centres such as Solomon Colleges, immigrant and community based agencies, such as Edmonton Immigrant Services Association and Canadian Arab Friendship Association, public libraries, churches, faith and community centres, we made use of every facility to access newcomers and provide them extremely complex and expensive legal information.

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*Photo: Cover Page Crimes, Not Cultures  
 Designed by Flavio Rojas Designs*

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As global migrations are increasing, crimes are also transcending international boundaries. Culprits, who have their bases in many different countries, may find it convenient to commit crime in one and escape to another. Protecting the victims in situations when crimes cannot be defined or proven and the guilty cannot be tracked down or punished is a huge challenge of our time and the entire world is battling against it. Cross border enforcement of legal actions is beset with major challenges created by nationalities of victims and criminals, jurisdiction of courts, recognition and enforceability of foreign judgments and conflicts between laws of different countries.

This book explores possible solutions to certain crime situations available to us through Canadian laws. It identifies service and system gaps and points toward directions for change. Its message to both service providers and victims is: **SOLUTIONS EXIST.**



“... over the past few days I’ve been sharing it with friends and colleagues and listening to their responses. One friend—a junior high school teacher—said she would use it in her grade 9 social studies classes to introduce the Immigration unit of her course. She noted that the title alone “will be a great jumping off point for classroom discussion”. Another friend who teaches ESL to adults held it in his hands, and examined the cover from every angle. “I can’t look at this book and not be moved by it”, he said. How would he use it? He would have students act out the stories. “Taking on the role of a character”, he said, “is a good way to develop empathy for others,” .... I showed it to a friend who looks after her pre-school granddaughter. She said she would read from this book every day. “After all,” she said, “we all tell similar stories, to teach the same lessons, but these stories add a richness that my telling of the story would lack”. ... Finally, late last night, my neighbour and I discussed the book at length... This is how she would use the book in grade 2 classes—reading aloud to children, inviting comparison, introducing students to the diversity of the country. My conclusion is that the list is endless, and I estimate that there will be demand for the book throughout our schools, parent centres, professional offices, libraries—everywhere people gather to read, to learn, and to discover.

– Dr. Carol Suddards, Keynote Speaker  
Launch of World on a Maple Leaf  
One Kingsway, Nov 18, 2011

“**World on a Maple Leaf: A Treasury of Canadian Multicultural Folktales**” is a collection of 25 folktales from different cultures. Two of these are aboriginal and two originated in the provinces of Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia. It has been published by the Edmonton Public School Board, Resource Development Service (RDS) that develops and distributes educational material for children. RDS is distributing the books to schools, libraries and bookstores. It also organized its launch on November 17 at the EPSB building, One Kingsway in Edmonton. Nicholas Amayew and Mary Gallivan, the consultants from Education Fund and City of Edmonton – Community Services, were present at this event. Nicholas Ameyaw addressed the audience and expressed his deep satisfaction at the success of the project. At this occasion, school children from Daly Grove School presented a short play based upon one of the stories from the collection. The play was recorded and shown on the CBC evening news along with brief information about the book and the launch. First 1000 copies are being distributed by UCCA free of cost to agencies where they are made available to many children free of cost such as libraries, childcare and community centre and hospitals. The royalty from the copies sold will go toward UCCA’s Children in Distress fund to help children who are facing extraordinary challenges with small cash grants based on recommendations from service providers.

The project has become a great success story for UCCA. We continue to receive feedback from its reader. One reader hoped that this might be a choice tool to expose and include Canada’s multiculturalism.” Another wrote: “I think the book is stellar and will attract the attention of people of many generations and cultures.” Trustee Ripley said “I believe the sharing of these stories will open up new conversations about cultural traditions and beliefs while also allowing us to reflect on our similarities and open up our hearts to welcome and respect each other in new ways”. An internet article from a US site ([www.awazmagazine.com](http://www.awazmagazine.com)) considered it to be a testament of Canadian multiculturalism and, in praise of it noted: “Canada’s policy offers a hopeful approach to the ways in which many cultures can and do co-exist. This collection of 25 folk tales from across the world is apt evidence of the wide range of communities that help to make up modern Canada... This is a collection aimed at children; it is already being used in some schools in Canada. But it can be also be read with pleasure by adults ... The field of children’s literature has expanded considerably in recent decades, but this collection is still a distinctive and valuable addition to it. It can be read and used far beyond Canada and it is to be hoped that it can be distributed and made available to a wider audience than the country in and for which it was produced.”

*Congratulations*  
**Supt David Veitch and Tigist Dafla**  
*on receiving UCCA’s*  
***Peace in Families Award 2011***

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*Photo: UCCA Team at Chapters Strachcona at a consignment event for “World on a Maple Leaf: A Treasury of Canadian Multicultural Folktales”*