

SOUTH
ASIAN
AUTISM
AWARENESS
CENTRE

DREAMS

COURAGE

HOPES

PASSION

2016

ANNUAL REPORT





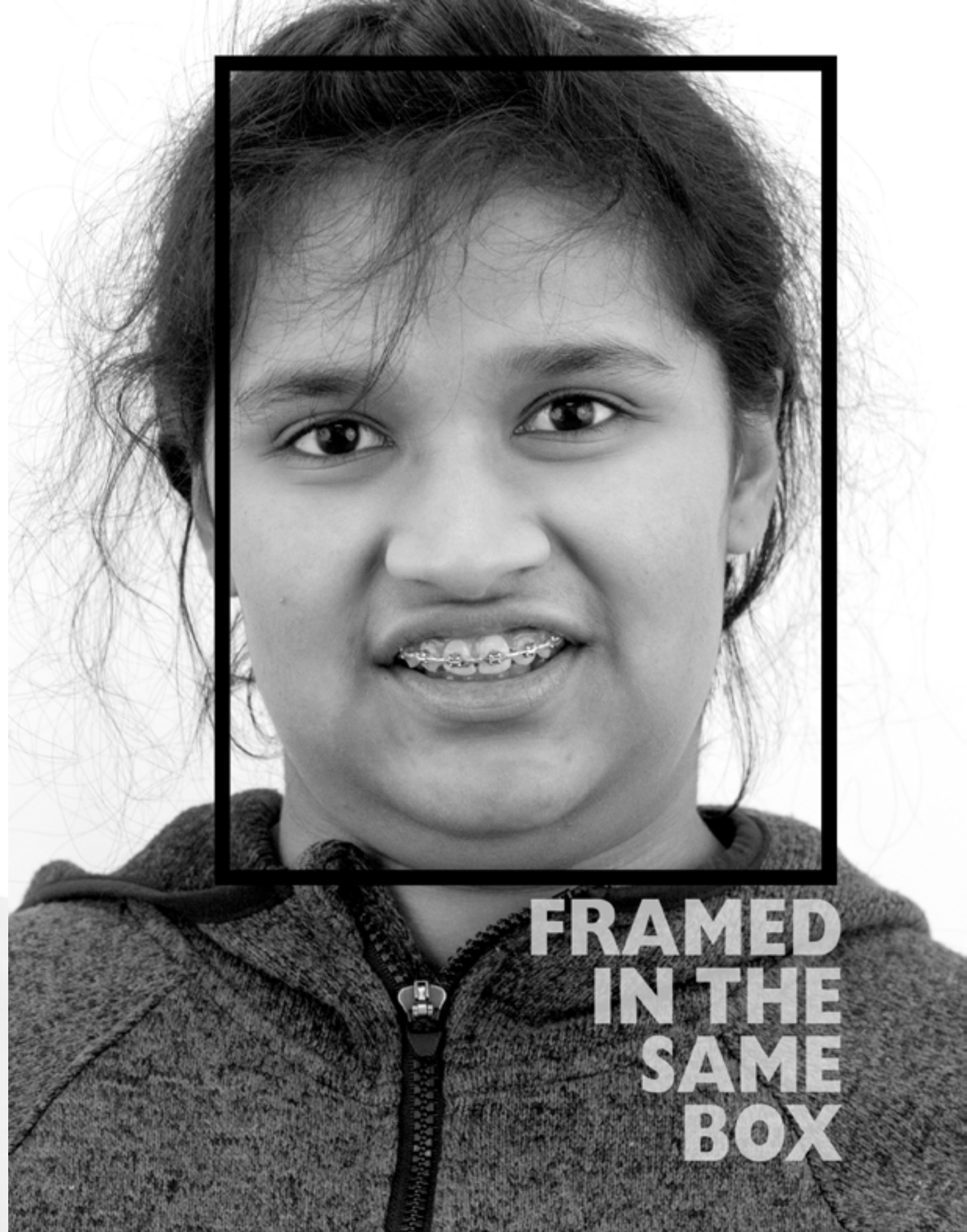
**Defeat
Ignorance
Embrace
Difference
Conquer
Stigmas**

C O N T E N T S

- 04** How do you see me
- 20** Message from Ed
- 22** About Us
- 24** Our Impact
- 28** Programs
- 30** Painting with Pravizhan
- 32** Board of Directors
- 34** Our New Home
- 36** Financial Overview
- 37** Donors & Recognitions
- 38** Radiant Night Sponsors



**HOW
DO
YOU
SEE
ME?**



**FRAMED
IN THE
SAME
BOX**







I AM
BOLDER.
BRAVER
LOUDER
DREAMER
STRONGER



I AM

**BOLDER
BRAVER.**

**LOUDER
DREAMER
STRONGER**



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BRAVER

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DREAMER

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I am happy to report that 2016 was another exciting and fulfilling year for the SAAAC Autism Centre. The year saw us continue to work towards our goal of being leaders in accessible ASD care in Ontario. Over the course of 2015-2016, we increased access to ASD services for 250 families, who enrolled in a diverse range of free and subsidized services. We also strengthened the capacity of our community to support the development of individuals with ASD by training 150 volunteers – our largest volunteer base to date.

2016 also saw us create services to better cater to individuals with ASD across all stages of life – from early childhood to adulthood. Our developmental screening clinic, supported by Autism Speaks Canada and Computek College, helped newcomer and low-income families get on a path towards early diagnosis and intervention. This project has created great opportunities to partner with hospitals, community agencies, and schools to help vulnerable families address developmental concerns early in their child's life. Moving from childhood to adulthood, SAAAC also continued to focus on helping adults with autism lead more independent lives through employment. In 2016, we also helped our students obtain 520 hours of employment. I want to give a special thanks to our employment partners- The Cable Shoppe Inc, the Law Office of Meleni David, Lastman's Bad boy, Saravanaa Bhavan, and Nava Law- for being part of our employment program and giving our students incredible opportunities to lead meaningful, independent lives.

In 2016, SAAAC also invested heavily in our recreational programming. We found there was a clear need for ability appropriate recreational programming in Scarborough for newcomer youth with ASD. Through consulting with health and fitness experts along with kind investment from RBC Learn to Play, GoodLife Kids Foundation, Holman Community and Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, and Ontario Trillium Foundation, SAAAC was able to develop three quality recreational programs (fitness, sports, dance) which focus on developing fundamental movement skills and building meaningful social interactions through physical activity. The programming currently serves 50 children and youth, and in 2017 will support more.

As we keep looking forward in 2017, we have some incredible news. We are moving! With more and more families utilizing our services, it has become increasingly clear that we need more space in order to provide high quality programming. With support from incredible community leaders like Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, we are happy to report that we have found a new home. In 2017, we begin a capital campaign to raise \$200,000 for our new home. We look forward to working with you in the coming months to develop an exceptional autism centre in the heart of Scarborough.

On behalf of the families, volunteers, staff and especially the children we serve, I want to truly thank all of you for your incredible support of our centre and our mission. SAAAC is truly a community initiative made possible by all of you. We look forward to working with the communities we serve to help individuals with ASD realize their dreams.

GEETHA

MOORTHY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“ WE
HAVE SOME
INCREDIBLE
NEWS ”



A massive barrier.

For newcomer families who have a child diagnosed with ASD, the challenges can at times seem insurmountable. Language barriers, financial difficulties, and cultural stigmas attached to ASD place families at a disadvantage when navigating the developmental services sector and forming patient-doctor relationships. In addition, other factors that may contribute to the lack of access to ASD services and support include poverty, lack of education, and fear of immigration status being exposed.

A simple philosophy.

We believe families and individuals living with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) should have access to support. Language barriers, low incomes, and cultural stigmas should not stand in the way of a child with ASD learning, growing, and succeeding. At the SAAAC Autism Centre, we strive to increase access to ASD services for all through innovative service delivery and by utilizing community support.

The SAAAC Autism Centre creates positive change through:

- Encouraging lifelong development of the children, youth, and adults we serve through diverse therapies and programs
- Empowering parents through education, training, and peer support networks
- Engaging communities through meaningful volunteer experiences and fostering greater understanding and acceptance of ASD
- Providing access for all through community engagement and knowledge sharing



SAAAC

OUR IMPACT

Families Served

250

This year, we provided services and support for 250 families impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) - the most families we ever supported in a single year. As we expanded our diverse range of programs, both free and subsidized, we have been able to provide more opportunities for children, youth, and adults with ASD and their families to learn and succeed.



OUR IMPACT

SAAAC programs were supported by 150 volunteers, providing 30,000 hours of community service in 2016 - our largest volunteer base ever! Our organization is proud of producing the next generation of socially conscious leaders who have the capacity to support their community and create a more inclusive world.

150

Volunteers Trained



In partnership with Autism Speaks Canada and Computek College, SAAAC piloted an innovative developmental screening clinic that increased access for families who were not on a path to an ASD diagnosis and early support. The clinic provided free developmental assessments and connected families with specialized clinicians and other important services and resources needed to address developmental concerns.

OUR IMPACT

ONE OF
A KIND

Screening
Clinic



In 2016, students from SAAAC's Employment Program gained work experience with 520 hours of paid employment. Through our vital partnerships with The Cable Shoppe Inc, the Law Office of Meleni David, Lastman's Bad boy, Saravana Bhavan, and Nava Law along with social enterprise projects like our annual Holiday Gift Basket, SAAAC was able to provide meaningful employment opportunities for our students.

Paid hours of
employment

520



OUR IMPACT

EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS

LASTMAN'S BAD BOY
LAW OFFICE OF MELENI DAVID
NAVA LAW PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
SARAVANAA BHAVAN
THE CABLE SHOPPE

Assessment, Development, Empowerment (ADE) (all ages + also for caregivers)

ADE builds the capacity of New Canadian and low-income families as well as communities to support children and youth with autism. Through training, supervision, and evaluation, volunteers work with children and youth to develop communication, social, and daily living skills. Simultaneously, the program also empowers and educates families by providing various strategies to become effective caregivers of individuals with autism.



OUR PROGRAMS

Applied Behaviour Analysis (all ages)

Our Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) program uses the research-based strategies of Applied Behaviour Analysis to support the growth of individuals diagnosed with autism. The program also works to reduce challenging behaviours that are obstacles to learning and development. Along with our skilled staff, we collaborate with parents and caregivers to develop individual learning programs that help our students to achieve their goals.



SAAAC Creative Painting Program (8+ and above)

This unique art program offers the transformative power of artistic expression to individuals diagnosed with ASD. Participants will learn the basic principles of painting and produce unique, original artwork. Adapted lessons and techniques allow participants to develop and reinforce fundamental painting practices in a creative and fun atmosphere. We are committed to break barriers through visual representation and social inclusion. By engaging community partners and creative individuals we are able to constantly enhance the artistic experience for our clients.



Speech Therapy (all ages)

Communication is a key area affected by autism. Our staff will work to develop effective treatment plans to help families reach their communications goals. Our Speech-Language program pursues the following avenues to help individuals communicate meaningfully:

Non-verbal communication: understanding and using gestures, pictures and symbols to communicate and help children/adults follow directions, develop their vocabulary, etc. Social skills such as building conversation skills, developing joint attention & turn taking.



Screening Clinic (ages 2-6)

Our Walk-In Clinic will increase access for families who are not on a path to an autism diagnosis and early support. The Walk-In Clinic provides free developmental assessments and connects families with developmental pediatricians and other important services/resources needed to address developmental concerns.



OUR PROGRAMS

Ready. Set. School (ages 3-4)

A fun pre-school program that utilizes play to encourage social, emotional, communicative and cognitive development. The program also emphasizes functional communication, independent play skills, and daily living skills.



Living'N'Learning Adult Day Program (ages 21+)

Our Living'N'Learning program will help young adults and adults diagnosed with autism learn new and meaningful skills that encourage independence. Through our unique programming, we help our participants to create greater connections to the people and the world around them. The emphasis is on developing daily life and social skills, while working on various aspects of vocational and job readiness training.



Recreational Programs (ages 6-18)

SAAAC's recreational programs (fitness, sports, dance) encourage students with autism to learn through movement and play. Our recreational programs will also help build social connections through non-competitive and competitive activities.





Painting with Phavizan

BY: SARMINI VETTRIVELU

Painting with Phavizan has been an interesting and inspiring journey for me. When I first started working with Phavizan, he was afraid to put brush on paper without assistance. Perhaps it was a fear that he would make mistakes. Gently, I moved from guiding his hand as he painted to encouraging him to try on his own. Often, after painting, he would hesitate and reach out to hold my hand for reassurance. Once he was reassured, his brush strokes appeared more confident as he continued painting on his own as he pleased.

Phavizan has a unique style of painting that I have never seen elsewhere. He boldly presses down on the brush until the bristles widen and become flat as he makes fast circular, horizontal or vertical motions that are repetitive. This creates an amazing soft, pastel-like effect that is further enhanced when he adds dark outlines around the shapes.

I felt that we worked well together and Phavizan was able to intuitively sense the flow of the brush strokes (even the difficult lines that required precision and a controlled hand). There were occasions when Phavizan appeared to have difficulty focusing on the painting as it required more concentration than a painting he would do freely on paper. When this happened, we provided him with other images to work with on paper where he could reconnect with his previous sense of freedom and confidence. Once he had released some of his restless energy, we returned to the painting on the canvas.

Phavizan's unique style of painting is considerably less visible in this painting due to his hesitation with the texture and the large canvas. If one looks closely, however, his style is present in the background. Phavizan became very attached to this painting and seemed to have enjoyed the process. This was evident from his difficulty leaving at the end of class when his mom arrived to pick him up. This painting also taught me a lot about Phavizan; I also learned about my ability to stay in the present with his challenges and creative energy throughout the process. I feel that we formed a deeper bond with each other through this painting.

OUR
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

BOARD PRESIDENT



DR. LINDY ZARETSKY

President of Reaching Education Resolutions Inc. She holds a Ph.D. in Education Administration, Theory and Policy Studies from the University of Toronto. She supports educational institutions and social service organizations that work to enhance inclusive and accessible quality programs, services, and organizational structures for persons with disabilities through strategic performance designs.

RESPONDING & EVOLVING TOGETHER: LINDY ZARETSKY

It continues to be a great privilege and pleasure to serve as a Director and Board President of SAAAC. I have the honour of working closely with board members, the Executive Director as well as other staff, volunteers, and partners. This year, the Board of Directors took stock of SAAAC’s successes, challenges, and next steps as we constructed a new multi-year strategic plan, informed by the input of families, volunteers, staff, and our many partners. The priorities focus on the enhancement and expansion of high quality evidence-based personalized programs and services for children, youth, and adults living with ASD and their families.

How does SAAAC intend to accomplish the goals set out in its new multi-year strategic plan? SAAAC will:

- Continue to develop community capacity to support more individuals with ASD and their caregivers through parent engagement and support
- Continue to expand its volunteer base, volunteer training, and design a competency framework
- Expand accessible programming to economically disadvantaged families and other low resource communities
- Strengthen the current funding practices through development of new revenue sources
- Increase the capacity of our subsidized programming through grant revenues and events
- Strengthen the governance of organization, and further invest in leadership development at all levels of the organization
- Expand partnerships with other non-profit organizations, education institutions, government and business, fostering even greater creativity and entrepreneurship in our relationships.

We invite you to turn the pages and read all about the evolution of SAAAC and the significant impact our collective effort is making in the lives of individuals with autism and their families. Our Executive Director, Geetha Moorthy, is continuing to lead SAAAC in new and exciting directions in response to community need. Our heartfelt gratitude is extended to our families, volunteers, staff, sponsors, donors, and partners across sectors who are committed to supporting SAAAC in achieving the goals outlined in its strategic plan.



TONY BALASINGHAM

President of Lastman’s Bad Boy Furniture. Tony is an industry leader in Furniture and Appliance with specializations in finance and operations.



SURESH THARMARATNAM

Financial Controller at Aptus Treatment Centre. Suresh is dedicated to supporting health and social service initiatives that serve vulnerable communities.



NISHAN DURAIAPPAH

Deputy Chief of the Halton Regional Police Service. Deputy Chief Nishan is committed to innovative policing, youth mentorship and community outreach and development.



DR. SHIVAJAN SIVAPALAN

Family Physician with a special interest in child development and mental health.



MICHAEL CHEUNG

Associate Director and leads the Business Performance Improvement practice for Canada at Protiviti, a global consulting firm specializing in Internal Audit, Risk and Technology. He has over 15 years experience in leading large transformation programs, re-engineered finance and accounting operations, and developed shared services centres with business process



DR. MOHAMMAD ZUBAIRI

Developmental Pediatrician at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, and is Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto in the Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Zubairi sits on the steering committee for PONDA (Physicians of Ontario Neurodevelopmental Advocacy) and is a member-at-large for the Canadian Pediatric Society’s Section on Developmental Pediatrics.

WE ARE BUILDING A NEW CENTRE

HELP US BUILD
THE DREAMS OF
TOMORROW

NEW LOCATION
NEW POSSIBILITIES

Slated to open in early 2018, SAAAC's new 10,000-square-foot facility will provide support to individuals with ASD at every stage of life - from infancy through adulthood. This incredible initiative had a lot of help, especially from Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker who tirelessly championed for SAAAC and our mission to increase access to vulnerable families impacted by ASD.

The city of Toronto along with Mayor John Tory's support have agreed to fix the vacant building at 705 Progress Ave., spending \$150,000 on structural issues. In addition, SAAAC will have to raise \$200,000 for equipping the new facility.

With your help, we look to build a safe, inclusive, and innovative autism centre in the heart of Scarborough.

2016 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The families that we serve, the programs that we operate, and the lives that we touch are made possible by generous contributions by community members and businesses. Through a commitment to accountability and transparency, we look to uphold the trust you have placed in us.

Your contributions are generous, valuable, and much needed. We are grateful for your commitment and your partnership in supporting families and individuals living with ASD.

90%
10%

Charitable Program
\$719,953

Fundraising
\$84, 326

\$804,279
\$896,886

OUR BRANCHES- Sources of Expenses

OUR ROOTS- Sources of Income

12%

Receipted donations
\$109,898

30%

Non-receipted donations
\$266, 549

7%

Gifts from other charities
\$61,700

31%

Government funding
\$275, 378

20%

All other revenue
\$183, 361

*All figures are compiled from our fiscal period April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016

** All figures consolidated for SAAAC were audited by Truster Zweig LLP Chartered Accountants

Our financial overview can be found on the Canada Revenue Agency charitable organization's website: <http://bit.ly/2IB7Hk0>

DONORS & RECOGNITIONS

\$5000-\$10,000

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Saravanaa Bhavan

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Erickumar Emmanuel
RZN LLP

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Els for Autism
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Ministry of Children and Youth Services
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RBC Learn to Play
Toronto Arts Council
Unity for Autism

PROJECT INFORM TEAM

Arrani Senthinathan
Arti Singh
Edwina Veerasingam
Erica Pereira
Nirusha Jebanesan
Lathika Sritharan
Priya Nadarajan
Umayangga Yogalingam
Veerpal Bambrah
Zamilah Balasubramaniam

SPECIAL THANK TO:

Air Canada Foundation
Arrow Professional Services
Autism Ontario
Autism Speaks Canada
Community Living Toronto
Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker
Dr. Jonathan Weiss
Dr. Mohammad Zubairi
Kobi Erasiah
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Sady Mahendran
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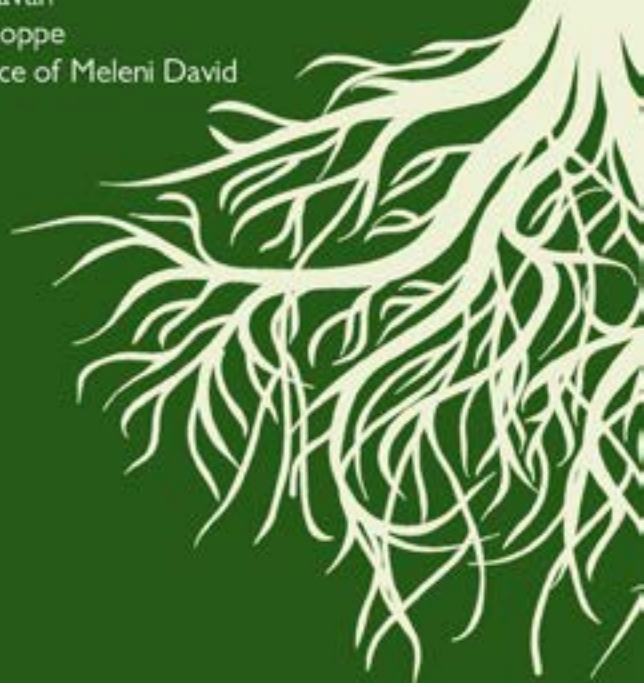
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—Arlene B



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than the

South Asian

Autism

Awareness

Centre?

NOOOBODY!



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Rouge Valley MITSUBISHI is a
proud sponsor of the SAAAC Autism
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We look to work together to build a stronger,
more inclusive community that gives everyone
the chance to grow and succeed.



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South Asian Autism
Awareness Centre
1970 Ellesmere Road, Unit I
Toronto, ON, M1H2W1

t:416.289.0100
f:416.289.2394
www.saaac.org
info@saaac.org

