



FEBRUARY 2017

# 2016 Annual Report

A YEAR OF GROWTH

---

Midaynta Community Services  
1992 Yonge Street, Suite 203,  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4S 1Z8.  
416 544.1992

# MESSAGE FROM CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Dear Community Members,

I would like to begin by thanking the staff at Midaynta Community Services, it has been an honour to serve as the President of the Board of Directors for the year 2016.

Midaynta was established in 1993 as a family reunification project, and incorporated in 1995 as a non-profit organization committed to identifying and responding to the varied and unique needs of the Somali community. Since that time, the organization has expanded to serve the diverse Greater Toronto community. While there have been many challenges our organization is happy to share our successes and accomplishments with our partners and community.

We are happy to report that we have met key objectives in our progress toward growth and development. In 2016 we had a Strategic planning session with the Board of Directors, Staff, and members of the community. The goal of this session was to review and discuss the vision, mission, goals, values, objectives, and tagline of the organization. This strategic plan will continue to guide our growth as an organization and to strengthen our capacity to address the needs of our community.

There was a need to work on the policies, practices and strategic planning for our organization in order to be able to meet the services needed in the community. As an organization we have updated our policies and procedures in order to be able to meet the services needed in the community. Given the challenges the organization faced and the nature of services needed to be provided to our community, this was necessary for the growth of Midaynta. Today, Midaynta Community Services is well positioned to continue to deliver exceptional service through our youth, settlement, housing, and seniors programs.

Midaynta's Board of Directors passed a resolution to use its unrestricted fund to strengthen our organization by retaining consultants, lawyers and auditors to perform a "Legal Audit". The purpose of this Legal Audit was to ensure that Midaynta is in compliance with all applicable Canadian charity laws and regulations in order to ensure that the services provided by Midaynta can be carried out to their fullest potential.

We are happy to share our successful projects such as our 2016 Fund Raiser event for the refugee crises in Syria. The two-day event hoped to raise support and funds with the support of the community. Through this collaboration the Syrian Fund Raiser was a success, and we raised \$ 18,000 dollars to sponsor a family.

We the Board of Directors at Midaynta are proud of the organization that we have become, and are looking forward to what exciting challenges and opportunities are coming next. Midaynta grown through the tireless dedication and passion of the staff, volunteers, students, community members and fellow Board members, we have brought Midaynta to new heights and we are so very excited to see what will come next! A special thank you to our Funders, partners, collaborators who have believed in us and given us opportunities, and with your generous help we are dedicated to providing the best support and services for our community.

Thank You,

Ben Ondoro

# MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Community Members,

I am pleased to report you that over the past five years Midaynta Community Services has grown, strengthened, developed, and implemented a unique service-delivery model to address the critical issues facing the community. In 2016, we held numerous round table meetings with all level of government, senior bureaucrats, community leaders, academia, law enforcement and other stakeholders to continue finding solutions to issues of settlement, youth violence, structural poverty, unemployment, mental and physical health, in addition to tackling the growing phenomena of Islamophobia and anti-Black racism.

Midaynta Community Services, in partnership with The Jamaican Canadian Association, the Black Action Defense Committee, the Somali Immigrant Aid Organization, and Northwood Neighbourhood Services have developed the following two major youth program targeted for African Canadians youth in the Northwest area of the City of Toronto, Project Turn-Around and The Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program. which are both culturally relevant & responsive programs aimed at supporting the positive development and success of African Canadian youth.

We also held our second Annual Youth Radicalization Conference: New and Emerging Challenges which took place on November 16th & 17th 2016 at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto. The conference was organized through the partnership of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education University of Toronto, The Mosaic Institute, Council of Imams, and the Office of the Consulate General of the United State.

There are common challenges that still plague the community such as; clients continuing to experience systemic barriers to resettlement where they are forced to undergo DNA testing when seeking family reunification. Most families applying to bring relatives to Canada must also endure rigorous vetting to enter the country and reunite with their loved ones.

The over-representation of Somali youth in both Federal and Provincial correctional facilities continues to alarm the community. Therefore, The Somali Mothers Group and Midaynta are working together to come up with community action plan entitled "Mending the Crack in the Sky" where we are hoping to solve community issues by developing a familial response to youth violence.

African Canadians are in need of culturally response trauma and mental health programs to address the social realities of displacement due to war, islamophobia, racism, poverty, stereotypes, and unemployment. The World Health Organization (WHO) stresses that mental health "is not just the absence of mental disorder". Therefore, we would like for our community to achieve "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community"(WHO).

On behalf of Midaynta, I would like to thank our dedicated staff, board as well as our partners and collaborators, Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA), BADC, Somali Immigrant Aid Organization, U.S. Consulate, The Heart & Stroke Foundation, Northwood Neighbourhood Services, University of Toronto, OISE, and ACCO. Special thanks to our funders in the Ontario Government and the City of Toronto whose support has been indispensable to our community.

Thank you!  
Mahad Yusuf



# HISTORY & MISSION STATEMENT

Midaynta Community Services is a registered Canadian charitable organization that provides settlement services and community development programs such as educational courses, seminars, workshops, community events, counseling and other support services for refugees, immigrants and youths in need. We are a social and settlement services agency, working hard to improve the quality of life of newcomers in Toronto and vicinity.

Midaynta was established in July 1993 as a family reunification project, and incorporated in August 1995 as a non-profit organization that is committed to identifying and responding to the needs of the community.

Midaynta abides by a policy of non-discrimination and equity, and our services are open to everyone and are free of charge. We are a team of professionals who are committed and passionate about the community as a whole. Midaynta's success is built on strong working relationships with its stakeholders. Due to our diversified services, Midaynta is able to assist newcomers from their initial start-up process upon arrival until their full integration into Canadian society. We are striving to provide services that promote accountability, transparency, social justice, equality and equity, partnership and diversity.

**Midaynta is committed to building vibrant communities in which social and economic developments are central to all aspects of individual and family life.**

- We believe in and value the provision of high quality community social services that promote and build a better and prosperous society;
- We are accessible, equitable and accountable to the community;
- We provide free and friendly settlement and community development services, and continue to advocate for a largely underserved and marginalized communities;
- We believe in working in partnership and collaboratively with other service providers to make a difference in developing the community and the society;
- We serve clients regardless of race, national origin, ethnicity, culture, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, ability or religion; and
- We endeavor to unite the communities by creating a socially cohesive environment under the roof of a "Community Centre".

# PROJECT TURN AROUND

Project Turn Around is a well rounded, culturally appropriate prevention and intervention program serving black youth in the Northwest areas of Toronto. Project Turn Around provides quality prevention and intervention services to support at risk youth. We provide support by assisting them in developing an exit strategy and to develop a positive goal oriented lifestyle. Project Turn Around has two service delivery components:

**Prevention:** Providing services for youth at risk through interactive educational workshops, employment and training supports, substance abuse awareness and harm reduction strategies.

**Intervention:** The planning and implementation of client- centered, trauma- informed safety and intervention strategies for youth to participate in a wrap- around rehabilitative/integrative exit program in a positive, culturally affirming community service delivery program

Project Turn Around was launched in May 2016, the event resulted in approximately 200 people attending where the attendees enjoyed the line-up of entertainers, speakers, presentations, food and refreshments. The event had in attendance grassroots organizations, youth, community members, and women's groups, community leaders as well as elders. In addition, the event was covered by the Somali- Canadian Media with a strong social media presence that helped Project Turn Around reach a larger audience.

Since the program launch Project Turn Around has held over 15 Workshops for youth and parents, in collaboration with community organizations such as Micro Skills, Kipling & Westway Community, Success Beyond Limit and many more. The workshop's subject matter has dealt with a variety of topics such as Developing Excellence, Parent & Housing, Importance of Education & Schooling, and Be your own Boss. The attendance of each workshop was between 25-30 participants reaching 165 youth during the year of 2016 for prevention stage and 34 youth for the intervention stage.





# rites of passage YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

## Rites of Passage: Youth Mentorship Program

The Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program is a locally developed, culturally relevant Mentorship initiative aimed at supporting the positive development and success of African and Afro-Caribbean Canadian community youth ages 12-16, who reside in the northwest quadrant of the City of Toronto. The Youth Mentorship Program aims to support and encourage the youth through a series of culturally appropriate and relevant workshops, as well as providing consistent, caring adults, who will support youth participants to pursue and achieve goals. The Program seeks positive outcomes for youth participants in leadership, civic engagement, educational achievement, employment and training opportunities, as well as fostering a positive self-identity, self-esteem and sense of community and inclusion.

The Rites of Passage Program helps to empower youth in our communities to make positive life choices that enable them to maximize their potential. The mentoring program uses adult volunteers committed to supporting, guiding, and being a companion to a young person for a period of at least one year. By becoming part of the social network of adults and community members who care about the youth, the mentor can help youth develop and reach positive academic, career, and personal goals. The Rites of Passage provides youth the opportunity of one to one mentoring with an adult professional, elder, and or advanced university student. The mentors are highly specialized in areas of education, community engagement, science, and law.

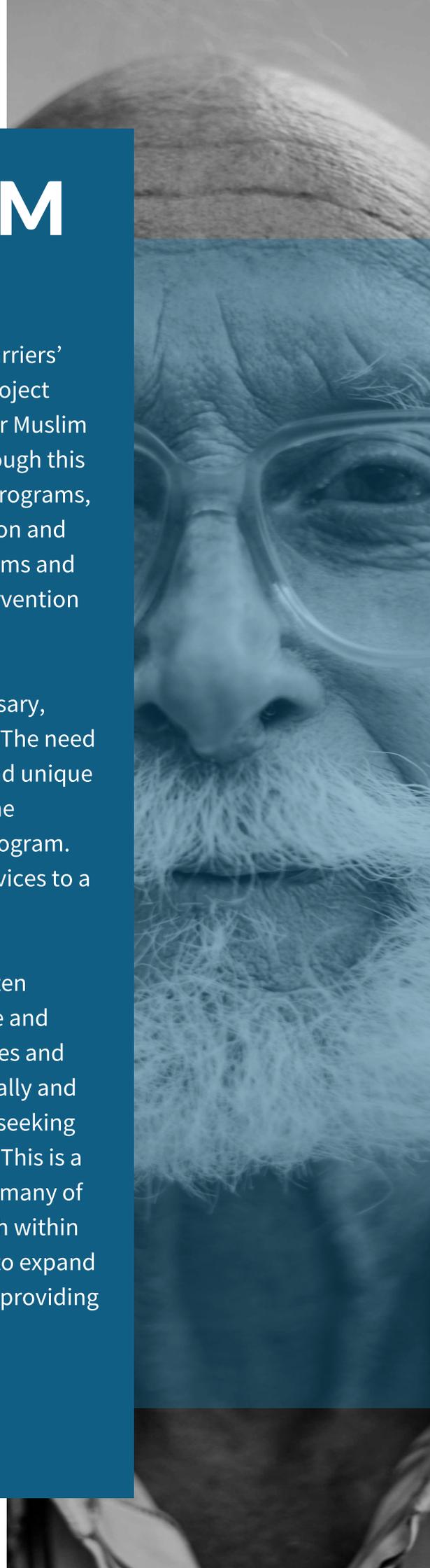
As we complete the first year of the program we would like to acknowledge the tremendous team effort ensuring the program's success and we look forward to the coming year.

# SENIORS PROGRAM

Midaynta Community Services offers the 'Breaking Down the Barriers' seniors support program under the Multi Agency Partnership Project (MAPP), in partnership with St. Clair Seniors Services and Isra for Muslim and Caribbean seniors living in the Weston-Lawrence area. Through this program, seniors have access to recreational and educational programs, community meals, various health-related services, transportation and escort, home help/home-making, respite care, adult day programs and seniors' case management (information and referral, crisis intervention and assistance).

Programming is once weekly, and has become extremely necessary, popular and in demand amongst the Somali senior population. The need for creating a larger network of services aimed at the specific and unique needs of our clients is becoming more essential, as proven by the overwhelming demand and positive response to our senior's program. We will be seeking new ways to provide these direly needed services to a larger number of clients and in a wider area of Toronto.

Many seniors in our community are living in poverty, and are often isolated from the society at large. There are also many language and literacy barriers that create difficulties in accessing many services and programs. Our 'Breaking Down the Barriers' program is a culturally and linguistically relevant and accessible program, and Midaynta is seeking to expand on this very successful model in the upcoming years. This is a very important program to us as we see daily the struggles that many of our elders are facing, and are committed to expanding our reach within this community. Going forward, Midaynta will be seeking ways to expand upon our funding to create a more comprehensive approach to providing much needed services.





# HOUSING SERVICES

Midaynta Community Service's Housing and Homelessness Program works with low-income individuals and families who face many barriers and challenges in finding and maintaining appropriate and affordable housing and who are struggling to pay market rent. Midaynta Community Services is continuing to strengthen our delivery of efficient and effective services that will meet the varied and unique needs of our clients.

In this program we take a holistic approach and look at a number of issues such as the number of children, financial status, neighbourhood physical and mental health all of which are taken into account to address the negative impact on our clients' housing status. While we serve everyone who needs the service, the main emphasis of the program is to provide culturally sensitive assistance to prevent homelessness in the Somali Community. Services also includes assistance to find and maintain affordable housing, information, referral, eviction prevention, housing stabilization and counseling, mentoring programs and peer-support initiatives. In order to provide appropriate support to clients, we work in collaboration with a number of other services providers including Toronto Community Housing and Housing Connections. We encourage home ownership when it is possible, as we want our client to fully integrate to the society.

Through the Housing First program, we serve more than 950 new and repeated clients last year for Housing stabilization, eviction prevention and housing access. Also we provide many other services that are interconnected with housing.

# YOUTH OUTREACH WORKERS

This year our Youth Outreach Workers (YOWs) have successfully worked with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the Toronto Police Service (TPS) the City and the Toronto Community Housing Commission to support Somali youth and their families with various programs and services. These include programs such as Pre-employment, skilled trades & Pre-Apprenticeship programs, Conflict Meditation, Community Crisis Response, Parent Education, and many more. Whilst also effectively responding to community crises in a concerted manner, we have continued to work within the educational system, youth justice system and other institution to support Somali youth. We aim to raise awareness of the challenges facing Somali youth by engaging key stakeholders, including youth, parents and the community-at-large.

We began the year hosting the first annual 'Rising Stars' event, where we had honoured high school students currently enrolled in the Toronto District School Board in the four areas of athleticism, educational achievement, community contribution and the most improved student. We had an attendance of 300 people including principals, students, performers, school trustees and the wider community out to celebrate young people and their new heights and our YOWs through their participation in several community round tables and committees, continue to serve as the voice of the Somali youth with and for whom they work.



Midaynta Community Services' has established a strong working relationship with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to support Somali students. Last year we delivered Somali Youth Summer Engagement Workshops from July to August 2014 (delivered 5 days a week for an average of 36 students). The workshops focused on leadership, civic engagement, art and heritage, as well as weekly recreational trips. Moreover, we collaborated with TDSB 'Focus on Youth' Program to outreach to Somali students, by getting them to apply. We also hosted and trained TDSB Focus on Youth Student Counselors at our summer program.

Moreover, our YOWs have worked with courts and detention facilities by working with referred young people to get their community service order requirements and by connecting them to volunteering, educational and employment opportunities. We have also connected with several referred young people in transition from detention to community release with finding access to education and employment services. Currently, there are no reintegration programs specifically for Somali youth and this is an area of emerging concern.

Additionally, our YOWs serve on various community planning tables, including the Ward 1 & 2 Safety Committee, the Ward 11 & 12 Safety Committee, Quarterly Roundtable on 'Youth Radicalization' with Multiple Stakeholders, and the African Canadian Coalition of Community Organizations (ACCCO) & TDSB Roundtable. Midaynta's Youth Outreach Worker Program is serving the needs of young people, working with them to build their resiliency, access opportunities in education and employment and overcome challenges and barriers to access to services and programs. We maintain, through appropriate communication and coordination, a collective working relationship with other professionals both within and outside of the organization to facilitate partnerships with community groups, and inform the Youth Outreach Worker Supervisor of emerging issues, service gaps and matters of interest and or concern to youth. They have also worked tirelessly to address those emerging issues, service gaps and matters



# THE SECOND ANNUAL YOUTH RADICALIZATION CONFERENCE

*New & Emerging Challenges*



The Second Annual Youth Radicalization Conference: New and Emerging Challenges took place on November 16th and the 17th 2016 at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto (UofT). This conference was organized through the partnership of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at UofT, The Mosaic Institute, Midaynta Community Services and the Office of the Consulate General of the United States.

The two-day conference had a total of six plenary sessions:

- I. Youth Radicalization: Lessons Learned Aboard
- II. Deepening the Dialogue: Public Safety Canada
- III. The Role of Public, Religious, Peace & Citizenship Education in Countering Youth Radicalization
- IV. Ensuring Newcomers Are Settled and Fully Integrated: Challenges & Opportunities in (Re) Settlement, Integration, Community Engagement & Cultural Competency
- V. Trauma and Mental health as it Pertains to Radicalization: Strategies for Social Inclusion & Well-Being
- VI. Raising Awareness of the Role of (Social) Media and Media Literacy in Youth Radicalization



The two-day conference was attended by 110 people, among them, academics, policymakers, faith leaders, women and youth leaders, educators, social workers, and community leaders. The conference included a number of well-known American and Canadian speakers who are experts in youth identity, education and development, interfaith relations, pastoral care, mental health, the psychology of terrorism, policing efforts to counter violent extremism, and the dynamics of the global conflict. As such, the conference benefitted from the knowledge of the subject matter experts. The conference featured Sophie Kiwala, MPP, as the keynote speaker. Ms. Kiwala is the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children & Youth Services, and Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and provided an overview of the Ontario government's policy and programmatic response to the challenges facing young people. In addition, the conference received greetings from the Hon. Eric Hoskins Ontario's Minister of Health and Long Term Care, the Hon. Mitzie Hunter, Ontario's Minister of Education, and welcoming remarks from Dr. Stephen Anderson, Director of the CIDEC at OISE/University of Toronto. The panelists' presentations were captivating and the audience was quite engaged, and asked at times very probing questions which deepened the dialogue about the causes and solutions to the challenge of youth radicalization in light of new and emerging issues. A survey was sent to panellists and audience members to provide feedback on the outcome and suggest policy and program recommendations moving forward.

Another key objective of the conference was to develop thinking around issues of education, identity development, interfaith relations, settlement, mental health, media, youth involvement and how these key areas can be used to mitigate youth involvement in violent radical ideologies. The conference also sought to build a network of concerned stakeholders interested in developing comprehensive responses to Youth Radicalization with the purpose of developing a committee that would meet to discuss ways in which to address youth radicalization through collective action.

# EVENTS

## FLAG RAISING

---

The Somali community came together to officially raise the Somali flag at Queens Park in downtown Toronto. We were joined by community members, activists, politicians and leaders to celebrate this milestone.



## RISING STARS

---

In 2016, Midaynta held an event called Rising Stars, where we invited students and professionals to celebrate excellence in our community. Winners received trophies and were congratulated by the community as a whole.



## SUMMER CAMP

---

We held an 8 week summer camp at Kipling Collegiate Institute and invited youth from the community to join us. We held workshops, classes and field trips for the youth. Furthermore we trained the youth on healthy eating, making better life choices and preparing for higher education.





# WE ARE EXTREMELY GRATEFUL TO OUR MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, STAFF, PARTNERS & FUNDERS.

The Board of Directors of Midaynta Community Services acknowledges with thanks, the outstanding contributions, support, and inspiration received from our funders, partners, clients, volunteers, and staff for the last 23 years.



## STAFF

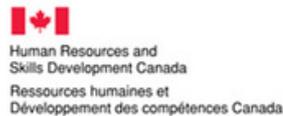
Mahad Yusuf – Executive Director  
Ubah Farah – Housing Manager  
Saido Sheiknur – Senior Outreach Coordinator  
Amina Noor – Youth Outreach Worker  
Ahmed Ali – Youth Outreach Worker  
Fowzia Duale – Youth Outreach Worker  
Rahma Hilowle - Youth Mentorship Coordinator  
Marie-Ange Ngenzi- Bilingual Case Worker  
Abdi Dayr - Case Worker  
Gerard Mead - Case Worker

STAFF (Minus Amina & Saida)

## PARTNERS

- African Canadian Community Organizations (ACCO)
- African Canadian Legal Clinic (ACLC)
- Black Action Defense Committee (BADC)
- Canadian Labour Congress
- Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA)
- Northwood Neighbourhood Services
- Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)
- Somali Immigrant Aid Association (SIAO)
- KIDS UP FRONT TORONTO
- COSTI
- MOSAIC INSTITUTE
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation
- University of Toronto (OISE)
- U.S Consulate
- St. Clair West Services for Seniors
- Islamic Social Service and Resources Association (ISSRA)

## FUNDERS



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ben Ondoro – Chair  
Safia H. Gassem – Vice-Chair  
Huda Ibrahim – Secretary  
Ayan Omar – Treasurer  
Shamis Hagar – Director  
Mohamed Mohamed – Director  
Warsame J Warsame – Director  
Abdi Yousuf – Director



## MIDAYNTA COMMUNITY SERVICES

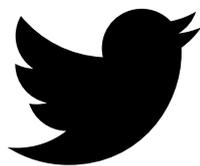
1992 YONGE STREET, SUITE 203,  
TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA M4S 1Z8.  
TEL.: 416 544.1992 FAX: 416 440.3379

## MIDAYNTA AT THE JANE STREET HUB

1541 JANE STREET, NORTH YORK, ON M9N  
2R3. TEL: 416 645.7575 FAX: 416 645.7570



[info@midayta.com](mailto:info@midayta.com)



[@midayntayouth](https://twitter.com/midayntayouth)



[@midayntacommunityservices](https://facebook.com/midayntacommunityservices)