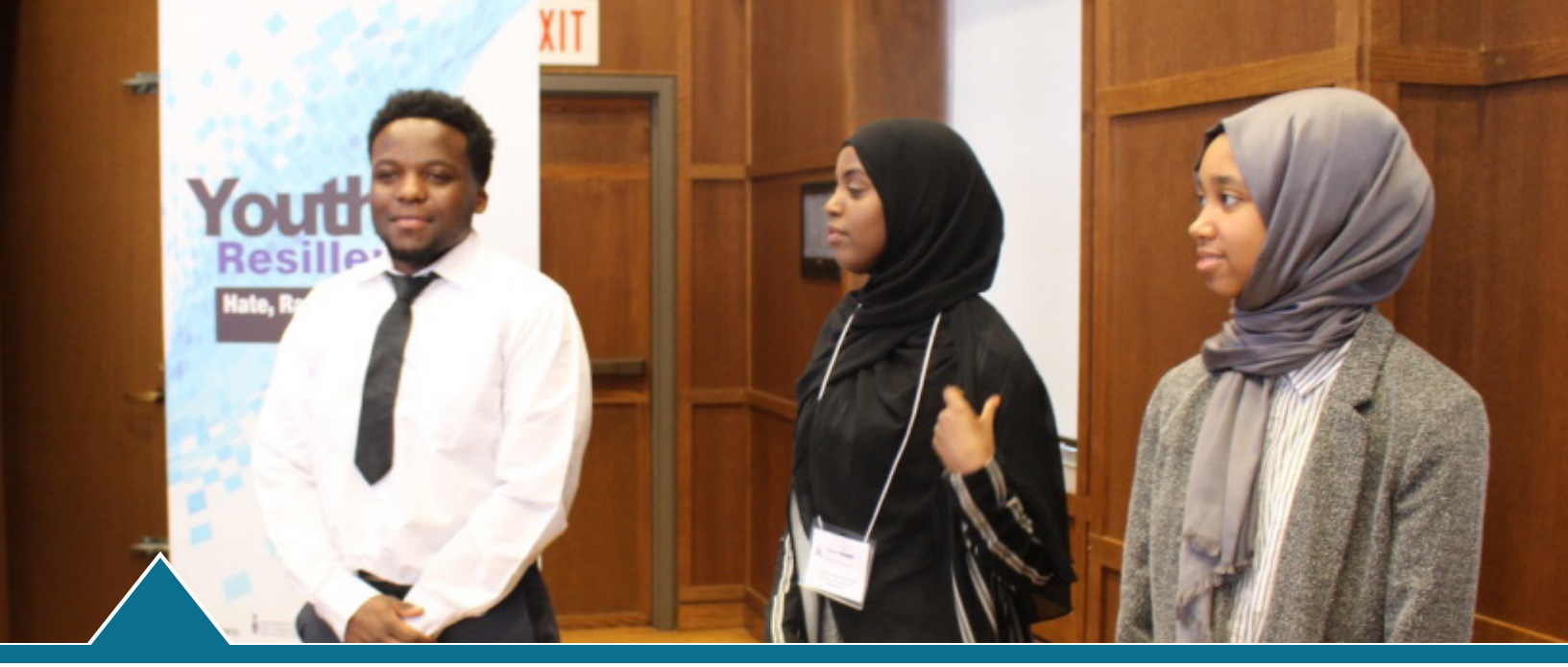
YOUTH RESILIENCY: HATE, RACISM AND YOUTH RADICALIZATION REPORT

MIDAYNTA COMMUNITY SERVICES

3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT



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Introduction

At Midaynta Community Services, we seek to empower racialized communities in Ontario, provide a platform where issues impacting the black community can be discussed, and take a leading role in addressing such issues. The 3rd Annual Conference on Youth Resiliency, Hate, Racism, and Youth Radicalization is one the many ways Midaynta provides a platform for youth and brings multiple stakeholders together to discuss and devise solutions on issues that impact the black community in Canada. This year's conference brought together a diverse group of panelists to share their expertise, knowledge and strategies on youth resiliency, hate, racism, and youth radicalization— issues that are current, continue to dominate news headlines and impact racialized communities in Canada, especially racialized youth.

Racialized youth and communities in Canada continue to face systematic barriers, racism and discrimination, trauma and grave mental health concerns that need to be addressed. Amid all these challenges and barriers, the resiliency of racialized youth in Canada is something remarkable. Notwithstanding all the barriers and challenges racialized youth face, important lessons can be drawn on how the youth cope with such adversity. The 3rd Annual Conference provided such a platform, affording different communities the opportunity to learn from the experiences of the youth and share their own success stories. Highlighting the importance of youth resiliency and including youth voices on different platform helps counter the dangerous negative narratives that tend to generalize communities. Through this, different communities can recognize the importance of promoting positive narratives, empowering the youth and collaboratively working with different sectors to address some of the issues affecting racialized communities in Canada. Violent extremism being an example of an issue that transcends different communities, nations, religions and requires collaborative effort from everyone in Canada and beyond. **According to Detective Feras Ismail, "this is not a 'Muslim' problem, this is a 'all of our' problem."**

While organizing this conference, the planning committee, mostly youth, recognized that discussion arounds the issue of radicalization are not devoid of controversy largely because mainstream perception of youth radicalization is framed around race and religion and the topic is highly politicized. In many ways, the conference offered an opportunity to address the issues of youth radicalization, debunk myths associated with this topic and offer alternative perspectives which was evident throughout the two days of the conference. Notably, panelists expressed concerns that policies addressing youth radicalization almost exclusively target racialized youth and ignore other facets of youth radicalization especially when a white youth is involved. A terror act committed by a white youth is more often given little attention or depicted as a "lone wolf" crime whereas a reverse situation involving a racialized youth is viewed as an act of terror. **According to Dr. Ghayda Hassan, "this discourse that we constantly hear when an attack is committed by the other, it's extremism. When an attack is committed by a member of the majority group it's mental health. Right? This is rhetorical, this is ideological and this hurts. It's a false dichotomy."** Such double standards and lack of cohesiveness in addressing these issues greatly impact racialized communities hence the reason why conferences like this one are very important.

Executive Summary

The 3rd Annual Conference was organized by Midaynta Community Services with the support of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE/UofT), and the Office of the Consulate General of the United States. The conference brought together government officials, educators, faith leaders, community members, community agencies, community elders, youth and law enforcement under one roof and offered a rare opportunity for all these groups to learn from each other. The conference was organized by youth, included youth on different panels, and offered opportunities for members of the audience to engage the panelists. Over the course of two days panelists explored the causes of youth radicalization, myths of youth radicalization, strategies for preventing young people from joining extremist groups, and the role of social media. The two-day conference consisted of six plenary sessions, two keynote addresses and poetry by Amani M. Omar— a young poet from Somali community in Hamilton. Each day had three panel discussion sessions with each panelist presenting for 10-15 minutes followed by a 30-minute discussion session where members of the audience asked questions and engaged the panelists. Coffee and lunch breaks also afforded everyone the opportunity to network and engage the panelists further. Attendance was open to everyone who responded to the event invite and confirmed their attendance. Overall the event was sold out and the level of interest it generated surpassed our expectations.

Throughout the two days key information and knowledge was shared including emphasis on how risk factors of youth radicalization vary across different racialized communities in Canada and how they are affected and/or share common factors such as racism, hate, and discrimination. **According to Dr. Ghayda Hassan, "The two most important risk factors for going into a trajectory of violent radicalization is a history of social interpersonal discrimination and violence**. Other factors included mental health, trauma, identity, education, interfaith relations, pastoral care, mental health, the psychology of terrorism, the dynamics of global conflict, police efforts to counter violent extremism, and the role of social media in youth radicalization. Addressing violent extremism requires understanding these risk factors and the root cause of youth radicalization. According to Dr. Caroline Manion, there is need for inclusive education policies. Marian Nur, drew from her experience as a youth and working in a Muslim community in Ontario to stress the need for social workers who are cultural brokers. According to Marian Nur, **"with culturally sensitive work, you are trying to understand the culture, you are trying to be sensitive, but with cultural brokery you are understanding that you yourself, if you are not a member of this community, you yourself have to be educated about the traumas, the experiences, and the significance of many things within that community."** Marva Wisdom, the Director of the Black Experience Project, stressed the importance of inclusive research and drew from her experience working on the black experience project. Notably, there was consensus around a lack of input from black people on research on black people, "no study about us without us." The conference saw panelists delve deeper into different themes, providing a refreshed take on the issues and deepening the audience's understanding of youth resiliency, hate, racism and youth radicalization.

Panelists on both days underscored the need to REHUMANIZE "the other" and debunk myths associated with youth radicalization. Lessons learnt include vulnerability factors affecting youth at risk for violent radicalization; the role and failures of foreign policy in addressing violent extremism; need for a public health approach; and inclusive education. Concerns of polarizing discourses that further alienate racialized youth and lack of community resources while the government continues to invest in tools that have been proven not to work were also raised. Emphasis was also put on failures of the international community and impact of foreign policies that more often than not are driven by national interests. Such failures by foreign policy create conditions that contribute to violent extremism while little is done to invest resources in restituting such communities that are destroyed by failed foreign policies. **According to David Michalski, "in Somalia, the West repeatedly broke UN arms embargoes, we vilified the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), and supported the hapless Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Ironically enough, the West got tired of pumping up the TFG and replaced the president in 2009. Who was the guy we replaced the TFG president with? He was the former head of the vilified ICU – the group we invaded Somalia to get rid of. He was called by Clinton "the best hope for Somalia", after the Western-backed invasion had destroyed the place."**

Some of the recommendations from the first day included the need to adopt a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach where resources are multiplied by reinvestment in proximal support services for families and youth in different neighbourhoods and cities. Dr. Wendy Cukier called for a public health approach to addressing violent extremism and referenced the World Health Organizations ecological model which requires interventions at multiple levels.

She noted a comprehensive strategy that includes a focus on addressing the root causes of violence, disparity, inequality etc., and the instruments of violence (e.g. guns which), increase lethality as well as responses in health care policing and the justice system. She further discussed that the many acts of political violence are facilitated with firearms and we must address the availability of firearms to extremists. Strong regulations reduce the risk of dangerous people accessing guns and reduce diversion to illegal markets. We must recognize that often the perpetrators of violence, have themselves often been victims of violence, or marginalization or discrimination. Dr. Cukier stated that, **"untreated trauma can contribute to the cycle of violence."** Panelists also emphasized the need for education reform, inclusive education, and providing racialized youth a good quality education to curb the proliferation of extremist ideology and offer an alternative route for youth.

CALL TO ACTION: AN INCLUSIVE AND COLLABORATIVE ACTION PLAN (ICAP)

Moving forward, Midaynta gathered all the information and input from the Conference and came up with an inclusive action plan (ICAP) that will help different actors address youth radicalization. In addition to the Conference, consultation was done with members of Midaynta's monthly roundtable to get further input. The action plan calls for collaboration between different sectors to address issues affecting racialized communities in Canada. It also lays ground for different racialized communities in Canada to work together and forge a way forward in address issues that disproportionately impact them. During consultation with "Mending the Crack in the Sky", a group of Somali mothers who've lost children to violence, the mother's called for more support to the community and emphasized a Somali proverb: "if people come together, they can even mend a crack in the sky." Through the call to action we are calling for:

- Allocating and Investing More Resources in Communities and on the Ground
- Increasing the Role, Agency, and Collaboration of Communities
- Public health approach
- Additional Resources for Mental Health Treatment
- Community-based Research and Effective Dissemination Strategies of Research and Information
- Changing the Narrative
- Education Reforms
- Changing Media Perception
- Role of Social Media

The Life of The Resilient

Poem Written by Amani Oman

Who are you? They all asked, as I was told to sit at a table where they feed me nothing but harsh words that are hard to swallow.

I don't know, I say.

As the first meal is served. Radicalization, a meal served best hot and steamy, like the fumes of anger and fear that come out of the xenophobes. Who are you? They ask as I swallow the accusations, burning my throat.

I don't know, I say. Am I the thousands of Muslims that are killed everyday with no mercy? Or am I a terrorist not worthy of a life practicing my religion in peace? An oppressed girl in a hijab? Or a horrible person who isn't allowed to cover up on the beach?

The server stays silent, as the empty plate was taken away.

Another server came, with a large plate, making me hold my breath.

Racism.

Tasting cold and bitter, as if it filled with resentment. Who are you they asked. I don't know, I say. Am I the hundreds of years of slavery and colonization that build the lands? Or maybe I'm the dark skinned kid who is seen with blind, yet systematic fear. Blind, enough to take a wavered shot at. Without another word the server took is plate and walked away. And yet another seeked to take up the challenge. Who are you? They asked as they served me a plate of sexism. I laughed, as I took the plate without a thought, eating it, sloppily not like a lady should.I don't know? Am I the millions of girls who are forced into marriage? Am I the thousand of girls who are denied education they deserve? Am I a modest girl who should give the boys a little less imagination, Or a slut who need to cover up because she deserves whatever happens to her. Who am I? I don't know, you tell me?

The server walked away, as I prop my legs up on the desk.

Who are you said another. Serving me with Assumptions.I don't know, eating all in one bite. Maybe I'm a disabled girl, with a chronic illness who's denied the parking space because she's not in a wheelchair. Or because she's too young, or not sick enough. I don't know, I say. You decide. Slowly I see them give up as they exit the room.

One last meal.

The waiter, serving me with much pride. Believing I wouldn't be able to swallow what they served me.

Identity. Smirking taking up the challenge. I open the lid I see all the previous dishes on one plate. Staring at me, with a vengeance. I wouldn't let them win. They wouldn't ever win. I eat and eat and eat. Bite after bite, Chewing and swallowing all of the words down. Keeping them down, trying to keep the fortress of my mind at a minimum.

Because if I overflow they would win. And I would never let that happen.

Because if they got the best of me,It would be the worst for me.They look at me, shocked. That a person like me could be so strong. That a girl no older than 16 could take what they served with pride and a big smile on her face. They asked one more time, this time with awe.

Who are you? Standing up from the chair and walking away, I told them.I'm many things. A Black, Muslim, Girl, with a disability. I am someone who is challenged everyday. I am someone who's been a fighter ever since birth because of the life I would live. I am young. I am educated. But overall, I am, resilient.

I, am a fortress, Ever taking in words and emotions of all kinds, Never bending, Never breaking. Yet sometimes overflowing.

I am a fortress, who knows the world is a harsh place and builds harder walls. Who am I? I am many things. But I wasn't made for this. Yet I built myself like I was.I am many things sure. But most of all

I am, and always will be, RESILIENT

Day 1 Keynote Address

***Hon. Laura Albanese** – Ontario Minister of Citizenship and immigration*

Good morning everyone, I would like to start by thanking Midaynta community services for its commitment to a vibrant and socially integrated and united community. When I say community I mean community at large; a society. Thank you for hosting this event. Now I know that my colleague Michael Coteau was supposed to be the keynote speaker this morning and he is the minister of children and youth in the province of Ontario. He is also responsible for the ANTI-RACISM DIRECTORATE. Michael could not be here this morning; therefore, I will do my best to illustrate how the government of Ontario is trying to look at these issues from a holistic point of view; every ministry is doing their part in its own way, according to their own responsibilities. I also want to extend, before I begin, a special greeting to his excellency John Lanyasunya, the high commissioner for the Republic of Kenya who is with us today, and all the other distinguished guest. Midaynta, this year you will mark 25 years dedicated community service, and I want to say that Toronto and Ontario and our community have continued during this time to transform themselves into a very diverse society.

We have made improvements although we still have a lot of work ahead of us, so if we look, for example, at the Canada 2016 census, it will show you that over half of Torontonians identify as visible minorities, and almost 1/3 of Torontonians were born in another country; including myself. We are all immigrants here, except for Indigenous people, some have come generations ago, some have come years ago, some have come a few weeks ago. Last year Ontario was able to welcome over 112 permanent residents and over 20,000 refugees from all over the world. The numbers are small compared to Kenya or perhaps compared to European countries, none the less they are significant for Canada and for Ontario. **We believe diversity is what makes us strong in this province and in this country. And to become successful we need to nourish our diversity. However, we do recognize, and we must recognize many diverse and newcomer communities continue to experience barriers to inclusion that must be overcome.** This is a situation that can lead to some youth to be disengaged and radicalization, as you will discuss today in this conference.

One of the ways that the government believes we can fight disengagement and radicalization, is by offering inclusion and opportunity. Our young people should feel that they belong and that anything is possible here in their city and in their country and that they can live life to their full potential, that they can expect a bright future; so this is where we have to aim, this where our work has to continue and grow in the right direction. But that's also why conferences such as this one are very important. We have to begin and continue the dialogue in better understanding the youth and how government can respond to thier issues and what we can do to improve their experiences. **Government can and should play a leading role in eliminating systemic racism and building civic engagement all around.**

I would like to talk about a couple of initiatives today that the government and my ministry is undertaking with the intent of giving more young people, but also people of all ages, the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of our Province, because society benefits when everybody is at their full potential. When our youth are engaged it is a contributing part of the social fabric of life in our Province. I want to say that in our ministry, in our government, we think that community

organizations are in a unique position to help the youth, to help immigrants, refugees, multi-cultured communities to get involved in our civic, cultural, social and economic life. For this reason, for example under my ministry in the budget of 2017, we created a small grant, it's called the Multicultural Community Capacity Grant. The investment is of 6 million over two years. So last year we funded over 3 million dollars in grants to 460 proposal for non-profit organizations in Ontario. Our host today also received a grant for an intergenerational program that is called "Raising a Dialogue" through this stream to develop leadership skills in Somali youth between the age of 16 to 29th. Our hope is that these modest grants create exciting opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills, and in this case, and engage in meaningful dialogues with one another. This grant is continuing this year with another 3 million, 420 organizations, 880 projects across the province and really a great variety of projects because the answer is not one. You have to apply it by enighbourhood, you have to apply it by different cities, different town– the way you want to tackle this may be different. And so we have to give that flexibility. We are really encouraged because there is a high level of interest in this small grant, this program, that we think can do a lot at the grass root to help the community, the youth , different multi-cultural ethnic groups to share there experiences between there community and between different communities.

It is a visible sign that we are made up in Ontario of a lot of different community in Ontario. Multiculturalism is a defining feature of Ontario and it is important for us to keep it that way because I think it is important for us to make multiculturalism work in our streets, in our neighbourhoods, in our workplaces, in our campuses, and in our institutions. **[For Multiculturalism to work] it needs to be continuously supported and strengthened. One way to do that is to eliminate those systemic barriers, to eliminated racism because they have no place here in Ontario.** That is why last year we launched a better way forward, a three-year anti-racism strategic plan to break down barriers and advance racial equality, including the creation of Ontario's first ever Anti-racism directory. We speak of our country and province as offering equal opportunity, but we do have people who still do not think that way . We need to work for our society recognizes that racism has no place here.

Our goals here are to increase public awareness and understanding of systemic racism, to reduce the disparities that are affecting Ingenious, racialized people and youth. Even in government policies offering more programs and services to strengthen the relationship between racialized communities through community cooperation. And the Anti-Racism plan, my colleague Michael Coteau would tell you that it is already bearing fruit. In February the directorate announced the Anti-Black Racism Strategy which will help root out anti-black racism by targeting systemic racism in government policies, decisions and programs. The anti-racism directorate is also working with Ingenious brothers and sisters, first nations , Metis, Inuit leaders , elders, youth, and communities to develop an Indigenous focused anti-racism strategy reflecting the government's commitment to reconciliation. In addition, the directorate is developing anti-racism tools such as race data standards and guidelines, and the Anti-Racism Impact Assessment Framework to advance our work. As part of our strategic plan we have also committed to developing and leading targeted public awareness campaigns that will deepen the public's understanding of the many forms of racism including anti-black racism, indigenous racism, Islamophobia, and anti- Semitism.

For the first time in Ontario's history, we have legislation that gives us a comprehensive framework to drive into racism work in government; that is the Ontario Anti-Racism Act 2017. One of our biggest projects this year is launching the Ontario Public Service Anti-Racism Strategy. As one of the province's largest employers, the Ontario Public Service has the responsibility to lead the way by example and by being the champions of change. The OPS anti-racism strategy, as we call it, will build on previous efforts by focusing and identifying, removing and preventing barriers created by systematic racism; so that race does not limit anyone's opportunity for employment or advancement throughout the Ontario Public Service. The strategy will also lead to better programs services and outcome; that is our hope, that is the core mandate of our civil service. Also, with consultation with the community we are working together because if we don't work together nothing is achieved to eliminate racism from our province. I want to say that it is important that for government starts from within and the data that we don't have at the moment, and I know that your organization (Midaynta Community Services) has also done a lot in collecting data; data can tell us perhaps more of a story than what we have so far.

We do recognize that as a government we need to do more work and that we need to work with communities, we need to be together at the table, we need to have these dialogue, and we need to hear from the youth. Only by working together we can solve and find solutions for youth that feel challenges and are lured into a destructive or anti-social behavior. That is why a conference such as this one is very important. So I think we are on the right track, this is a fight that is worth fighting for. The youth is our future, not only in Ontario, not only in Canada, but all over the world. I think that this is one of those times that all of us, fighting together, can succeed and I want to wish you all.

Day 2 Keynote Address

***Robert L. McKenzie** – PhD, Director and Senior Fellow, Muslim Diaspora Initiative, New America*

Let me just start by thanking Midaynta Community Services, US Consulate and University for inviting me here. I'm going to change the format a little bit, maybe the American in me wanting to change things up the last second. But I'm going to give a shortened talk and I want to open it up to questions and answers. Just understand that I usually prefer easy questions over hard questions.

Let me just tell you that my views on radicalization and violent extremism have been coloured largely by not only spending nearly 20 years in out North Africa and Middle East but also having setting up a centre in Abu Dhabi called the Hedayah Centre. The purpose of the Hedayah centre was to counter violent extremism and was supposed to draw on expertise from the region. In my capacity in leading that initiative to set up this centre, I travelled to twenty capitals across the Middle East, Europe and beyond and what I learned is that we don't know much about radicalism and violent extremism. And this was pretty universal at all of the capitals. And despite well intended, well meaning officials there was so much grappling and groping for information- how do we get at this? Over the years, I hear phrases and you'll hear phrases like "whole of government", —get someone to explain that to you, "Whole of society", "resiliency"—which I'll give you some of my views on resiliency because these are all important things but we oftentimes have a really difficult time explaining with any specificity what these things mean on the ground. I'm super excited though that we're talking about youth engagement and community-led activities as opposed to government-led which is what really is happening in most places.

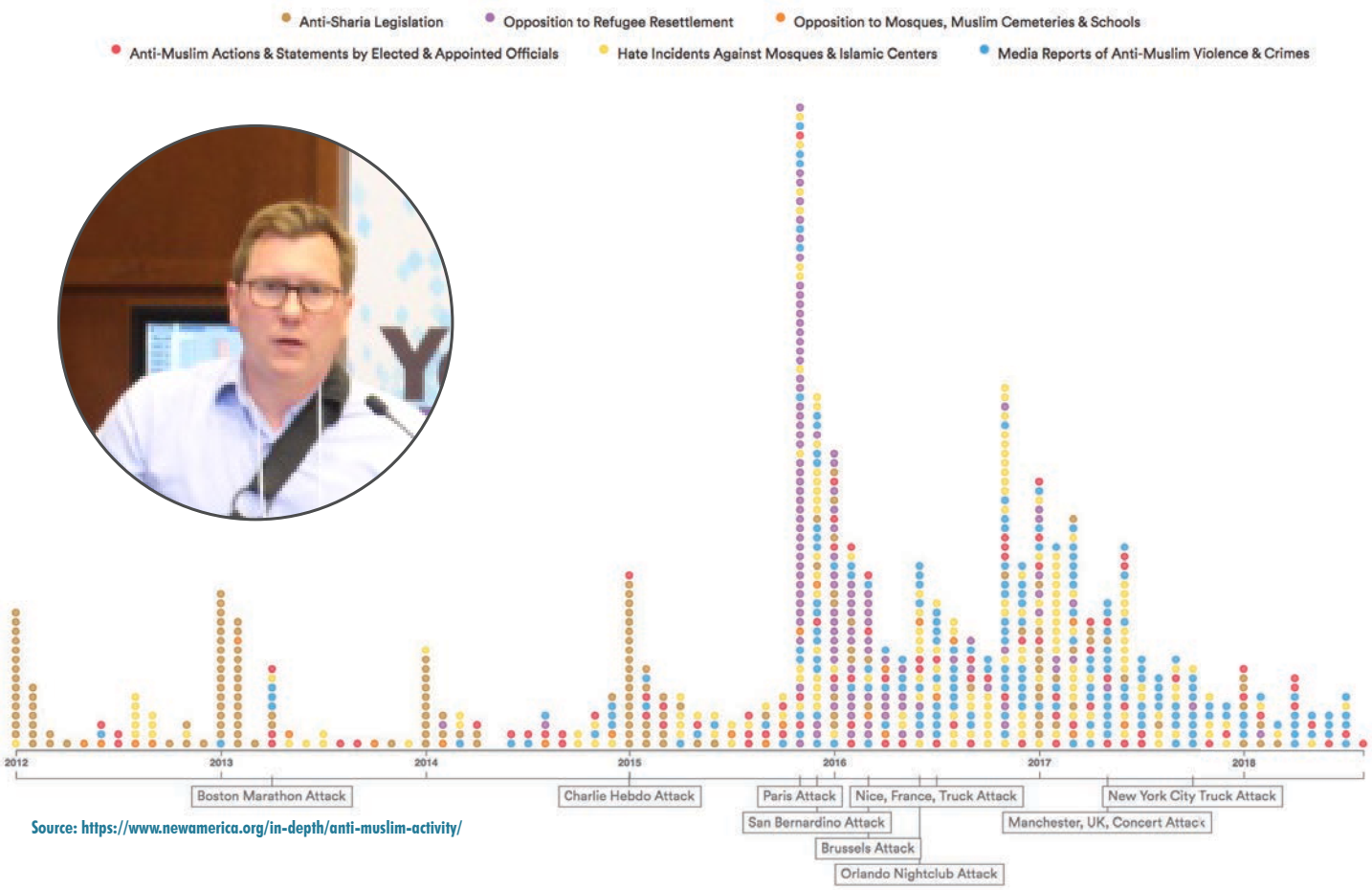
For today's talk I want to cover a couple of things. First, some of the problems with CVE. I'm gonna focus with some of the conceptual problems, which are specific to the US (but not only to the US), and then I wanna talk about a couple of things that are really problematic in the US-- but how it also relates to other issues around the world.

It is a fact that since 9/11 that the US government has spent many billions and mobilized of 1000s of ploys to thwart Jihadi terrorists plots in America and abroad. **Measured by American lives saved, the US government has had extraordinary success using all elements of its natural security toolbox to capture, arrest, prevent and kill terrorists worldwide. Yet, it is clear that kinetic operations alone will not solve the problem.** This is was evidenced by the fact that nearly 30,000 young men and women became foreign fighters and travelled to Iraq and Syria. And so, this once again reminded capitals across the world that law enforcement and military activities, and kinetic activities aren't going stop this problem. And so, again you see, one sees across the globe this ascendency of countering violent extremism. But, it has two major interrelated problems and that can continue to confound practitioners and policy makers in every single capital.

The first is the lack of empirical knowledge about the root causes and drivers of violent extremism. **You can't go to a single event on radicalization and violent extremism without hearing about root causes and drivers. But this lacuna has led to conceptual confusion about countering violent extremism.** So what does this mean? It is very difficult to design an effective policy when there is little consensus on what it means to counter violent extremism or what action should be taken. Consequently, (CVE) efforts are mostly designed and funded on the basis of anecdotal evidence with unknown results. I've seen this in Yemen, Somalia, seen it across Europe, seen it in America. And again, it's well intended, well meaning folks oftentimes in capitals who are fashioning policies that seem great in a place like DC, or in London but might not work so well on ground.

This second problem— and this is with special reference to the US—is the ways in which that the US government has engaged with an entire religious community. It's caused enormous strain. And this is not just the current administration, this goes back to Obama administration. And this isn't part because efforts are not led by youth in the community, efforts on countering violent extremism are and almost entirely led by the department of justice. Which essentially means that they do outreach to community leaders to try and keep them involved, keep them inside. But the problem with this in the US is that the community rarely knows— let me be clear on this—about youth who are radicalized in their midst. Moreover, the vast majority of Muslims do not embrace violent extremism especially in America. Of the world's Jihadi foreign fighter population in the few years, in the US, only 250 people were mobilized. 3.5 million Muslims in the US, and only 250 were mobilized. And of that, half of those actually were able to get on a plane and travel. So you're talking about a small number to put this in perspective, it is .0075%. And yet, the governments approach is community engagement, community engagement and we'll figure out to get at this. And the community continues to tell the government we don't even know who these folks are. Until they've already mobilized. The point here is that the scale, scope and complexity of the problem varies significantly by location. Just for example, two neighbourhoods in Brussels, produced nearly 2.5 times as many foreign fighter as all of America even though America has more than 5 times as many Muslims.

The problem is though governments often times see the problem or they think of this problem as being the same everywhere. And it is really not. I wanna be clear that this isn't to suggest that there isn't a threat from violent extremism in the US, my point is that it is neither the only threat nor is it the greatest threat to the



Source: https://www.newamerica.org/in-depth/anti-muslim-activity/

US and its interest. It should go without saying that alienating an entire religious community undermines American principles and values. Worse yet, this alienating could spur radicalization, thereby undermining not our principle and values but also our security. **Therefore, it is not inconceivable that an alienating CVE agenda could in fact create the very problem it is sets out to solve.** And so, if we really wanna understand how to get to these problem what we need to do in the US—and I would offer it's just in the US and elsewhere— we need to better understand the communities. How do you do this? Do you do this through scholarship and research? We don't use our Jedi forces to try and guess our way through it. This is through survey work, it's through focus groups, this would be of enormous of value but it would be of value elsewhere because you actually get to see what are people think about a full range of issues. And you can also see the differences in generation and gender, and you can start to fashion policies that make more sense.

In terms of the US, I've mentioned repeated my concerns about community engagement. A better approach would be to actually have interventions with the individuals that we have identified that have been identified and problematic. In the US, out of 3.5 million Muslims, the FBI believes; not believes, they're following or watching around 1000 young individuals. Why not try and have intervention with those folks before they cross the line? That's not what we currently do, they do it in onesies, twosies, in a few pilots projects but a better program would be to try and engage those folks before it's too late. Rather we surveil them until they cross the line and then we arrest them. And that's is largely the current approach.

These are two major issues but I want to cover something else that I think is hugely relevant to this when we think about hate, racism, and radicalization because I think of populism and violent extremism to be natural allies. They dance together. Over the last year and a half I've travelled all over the US and I've heard from Muslim community leaders that things were really bad. And I said can you give me a couple of examples and I've heard of some extreme examples of someone being punched, someone being attacked, someone's hijab being ripped off. Heard this and I thought but are things actually worse? The scholar in me thought maybe, but also the nature of social media that it's possible that people are sharing the same incidents so it feels worse. And then also the time we had folks running for president who were saying some pretty nasty things about Muslims with a megaphone. So that plus the combination of social media may make things feel worse than they are actually are. I pulled together a team, got a grant, pulled together a team of researchers and we wanted to collect different kinds of activities that could be broadly included underneath the rubric "Anti-Muslims Activities in the United States". And these categories include: anti-Sharia legislation; opposition to refugee resettlement— and I'll explain in a minute because not all refugees are Muslims, so why include this? Opposition to mosques and cemeteries and schools: this is largely zoning, to try and obstruct someone from building a

mosque or a Muslim cemetery, for example. Anti-Muslim actions and statements by elected and appointed officials and I should add that this is all the state and local level. Why do we include this category? We include this category because elected and appointed officials are voices of authority and when they speak up on any issue, often times their community looks to them. Lastly, media reports of anti-Muslim violence and crimes. To actually understand what is going on, and to see how things are getting worse because I wanted to make sure this didn't become a political activity, I wanted to go back a few years before this current election cycle to see if there is a trend or no trend.

In these 5 categories, you see all of these [anti-Muslim] activities spiking. You've got the major, the rise of ISIS, and their declaration of a caliphate in August of 2014 and a very active social media presence by ISIS right after that. But you also have folks running for president, who with a megaphone are talking about the dangers of Muslims. To be clear, if it were just terrorist attacks that were driving the spike in these activities— of anti-Muslim activities— we would see more after the Boston Marathon attack, and after the Charlie Hebdo attack because these received enormous media attention. But you don't see the same kind of spikes. What you have, after the first Paris attack, is a number of things. So if we wanna look at anti-refugee settlement, this is very specific to keeping out Muslim refugees. Chris Christie, who was running for president suggested he wouldn't take in a 5 year old orphan from Syria, suggesting that there is something fundamentally wrong with Muslims so much so that we shouldn't take in children—orphan children. If you wanna look at the category of "violence and crimes" and these things spike here (2016)—and by violence and crimes I'm talking about everything from the severed pig's head thrown through someone's home window, to mosques being burned down to a few incidents of murder—and so. There is no question that a combination of terrorists attacks and political rhetoric leads to a really toxic equation. And if we go down here, so I'll just pull up, we're on Michigan, so this pulls up all the acts, but I want you again, if we're looking at the category "anti-Muslim actions and statements by elected and appointed officials", this is the village president in northern Michigan (Kalkaska Village President Jeff Sieting and he posts on Facebook [espousing anti-Muslim views] calling for the killing of "every last Muslim". He's still in office, and he's up for re-election coincidentally today. And so what kind of message does this signal to the folks in his village? And what kind of impact does this have? This should concern us for a bunch of obvious reasons.

First, and foremost, because this grinds against American values and principles. But we don't include, just to be clear, statements and actions by non-elected officials; I'm not talking about the person on the street who shouts something horrible, these legislators. And so, what really concerns me is that not only does this grind against our values and principles but what does this do to young Muslim men and women who are hearing and reading about this? And many of whom were born and raised in America. They're being told by elected and appointed officials that they're not welcome in the country that they are born and raised in. And if we go back to my earlier point, about I do believe that racism, and more specifically lets talk about or something less specific, I guess populism and violent extremism, Sunni violence become really close natural allies. Both sides get fired up. It leads to truly a dangerous a place. It would be hard to imagine that in this environment with these kinds of activities going on, we tracked over nearly 700 so far, there's no question that we will have more attacks, but the whole purpose of creating this map is: 1) I wanted to see if things did get worse or was this a perception among Muslim community members, and in fact things have gotten worse. And so there's no question that things have spiked. But, what we don't know is the full impact of all of this. But it should concern us. I hear so much all the time when I'm traveling about how do we deal with the community inside? How do we ensure better resiliency within the community? How do we engage youth? I think we ought to be also be asking why is this going on? And this should concern us, it concerns me. I think that if we want to counter violent extremism, we also need to counter racism, and this all happens really truly at the local level, and it means that we have to embrace sometimes people that we don't agree with their ideologies, and we have to talk to them and the great thing about this room is that, everyone in this room, I presume is on the same side, the downside is that the folks that probably need to be in this room are never in this room. And so how do we reach those folks? And that really is the sort of the harder question to answer.

DISCUSSION SESSION

Question: So just to clarify, the village president, his comments, that posting about killing all Muslims, is there no, nothing in law in the United States to deal with that?

Robert: The short answer is, I don't think that there is. The First Amendment, freedom of speech, you know we're not supposed to be inciting violence but he, (Jeff Sieting) argued they weren't setting violence but he's up for election literally today. I'm mean the New York Times covered this, the CNN covered, this one's got a lot of coverage and he remains in his seat. And let me just tell you that what you also have going on, I just picked one example here, you also have across the U.S. you've got 50 state capitals, and most state capitals have different days of the year where many different kinds of communities go and meet their legislators. What you've had is a number of capitals legislators who will not meet with Muslims until they take up a test demonstrating American-ness. I mean, that is not right, it's problematic but you can imagine what kind of feelings one gets from such a thing if you want to go up and meet the people you've elected and they won't meet with you until you take a test to demonstrate your American-ness.

Question: I know certainly that one of the things that seems to come out is that the mainstream media coverage of some of these issues definitely seems to take a slant that is kind of more supportive of some of that populist message and that doesn't necessarily demonstrate some of the evidence to counter that. And so, have you had any success in the US in terms of having coverage that might broaden that message and get it to some of those people who are not in this room and who are perhaps not on board and need to hear it?

Robert: It's super hard, because we're now, I don't know if we're in a fact free environment, but we're in an environment where if you don't like your facts you can say these are fake facts and this is fake news. I pulled together an event yesterday I had a democratic member of Congress and something I thought was insightful, he said listen sometimes our president is right on some things, but he said the political environment is so toxic, that we can't even hear that. And he said when we take it down to the local level he said it's the same sort of feeling. So if I don't like you or your views it's fake facts and it's super problematic.

Question: Thank you Dr. Mackenzie, that was really sobering. I think we have knowledge of this whether through the news, it's really hard when you see it like this. I wondered about the rise of the alt-right and the measurement of their rise, if there might be a similar pattern in terms of timelines when we look at the rise of other extremism, that is not necessarily alt-right there's less coverage given to that often and often than not and it's not noted as terrorism, it's noted as somebody that might be mentally ill or had other issues or angry as opposed to terrorism - can you comment on that?

Robert: Yeah, totally these are great points. This only focuses on anti-muslim activities but my colleagues's work on anti-LGBTQ and anti-Semitism are seeing the same kind of trends because the people who hate Muslims, also hate gays and hate blacks and so on and so forth. This is not happening in a silos, I mean these folks are engaging this. It's really problematic.

I've just started to work on a project looking at anti-muslim hate speech on YouTube and it's remarkable what you can find without a lot of effort. The folks that are sharing this stuff—you know there's no educational value because YouTube, as a policy they have their terms of service you cannot engage in hateful conduct. But they will not identify material themselves and pull it down, I don't even know that they have the ability to do that with machine learning, so one of us has to identify and then they will pull it down. The social media companies have been really good about pulling down pro-ISIS, pro all kinds of material, that comes down fast, I mean really fast. You can find a videos on YouTube of people showing you how to run a Muslim over with the car, I'm not making this up. And that stuff stays up. And it's to what end?

I think we should be concerned about these things but there's no question that it's not just the alt-right, it's really problematic because once these misinformation get out there they spread. And as we seen with all this come out now on Facebook. There was a protest in Houston against Muslims that was generated in a factory with young men and women in Russia. In Twin Falls Idaho, another, there was an anti-Muslim Refugee protest there— same thing! It really makes things problematic about who actually is generating these ideas but these ideas spread fast and people act on them. In Washington DC where I live a man showed up with a gun to go into a pizza parlor because he had read on social media that John Podesta and Hillary Clinton were running a sex ring out of the basement. This stuff would be laughable if somebody didn't actually show up with a gun. And what I worry about is our focus is so much on how we engage the Muslim community—I think that we need to broaden the aperture and think about also much wider set of issues that I think are largely overlooked and in part because of the muscle memory from 911 and frankly a lot of fear about Muslims.

Question: The topic of today is youth resiliency, from all the research you've done already what type of programs can you possibly do for not only for like people, communities in America and like all the youth, but also other countries to build youth resiliency?

Robert: I'm going to talk just about the US cause I don't want to conflate the US with Canada and even in Canada I suspect what's happening in Toronto is very different than what's happening in Windsor, or from Montreal. But I think in the USA, I like the idea if it's Community-led and driven and shaped. I get really concerned when capitals are deciding that what should be done but I also get why capitals do this because they have the resources, they have the access, they have the reach, but it really is at the local level where folks know what's going on. It's where the rubber hits the road, it's the mayor's office in many instances and local communities and where lots and lots is going on. But when I think of Muslim communities I don't just think of the Mosque. In the US it's something like 40% of Muslims visit mosques. This is pew's research, they've done many studies. So most Muslims like most Christians aren't going to a place of worship for Jummah prayer, on Sunday in the case of Christians, and yet our focus is pretty mosque-centric. I think there's a lot going on outside and I think I guess my suggestion would be how do we reach folks beyond what we can see both as the community and think about how do we get more voices involved.

Question: It's just an observation but one of the things that struck me about the title of this conference was that it was more comprehensive and it's look in terms of youth resiliency, hate racism, and radicalization. yet I think-– and it's not just here but it's everywhere-– what we do is focus on the problem

in the most extreme version of that problem rather than really looking as much upstream and so I appreciated the question about the alt-right. If we actually look at the impact of hate and racism and radicalization on various populations, in both the US and Canada, the impact of those other two is so far greater on all kinds of populations and yet in our research in the way we look at these things even when we get down to specific communities we get so silo-ed that we don't see the impact on another things. So to the question about youth resiliency, when I look at that and think about what happens when young people actually know about their strengths, when actually a particular community of youth realizes that they're much stronger, that they actually aren't all those things that they're being characterized. If we spent more time-- even I think as experts and speakers in balancing out how we talk about these things-- I think the young people in the communities that we're talking about would focus more on their strengths, than on how they're being characterized and we don't do enough of that in the public discourse in my view.

Robert: I think those are excellent points and it's a completely different talk, but one of the things that I'm working on right now is a major set of studies where we look at five major cities in the US and look at the impact and contributions of Muslims at the local level. How are they impacting their neighbours and their neighbourhoods. How many physicians are there? How many doctors, lawyers, engineers? How many jobs are they creating? Because it's hugely valuable for people to pull this apart right now in this toxic environment in the US. On one side— and I'm that's not like we only have two sides— you have a lot of negativity about Muslims, but on the other side it's a lot of good sentiment. And that's great but it's not backed by scholarship or data because we know very little about Muslim communities across the US.

I think it's hugely valuable to know more, and to your point, I think it's usually valuable to focus on some of these other things, some of the positives, but there's no way that one can we can overlook it. I mean the impact that is happening at the state level, the local level across the country is really problematic and you know— I talk to, before, we pulled this together— I talked to a journalist at the New York Times, another at the Washington Post. And I asked them can you give me a sense of what's going on in terms of anti-Muslim activities and they can give you the most extreme examples. They don't know but I would also tell you that folks couldn't tell you with any specificity the positives that are going on. And there's lots and lots of positives that are going on in the US all over the country that are led by Muslim Community leaders. In Flint Michigan where there is a water crisis, Muslims rallied and raised a million dollars to help poor folks in Flint. It had nothing to do with Islam, It has to do with the fact that it was the right thing to do. And you have all kinds of [positive] things that happen everywhere but we you just don't know. I worry that the focus is often times, in too many discussions, on how do we prevent violent extremism. I think that a wider aperture would lead to a more informed discussion. It might not fix everything but it would be real good to know more about the impact and contributions but also not to forget that Muslims are taking the brunt of some bad stuff right now.

Question : Thank you very much, it's very informative. I have a question for you. Some of the lawmakers, people at the top, do not want to meet with us. They don't want to meet with Muslims and so on. And then they're also writing the policies, for example one that really hurts now is on all the hawala; the money transfer system, were closed in Toronto, the United States and probably around the world. And now there is a drought, a flooding for example in Somalia, and none of us can send money, and the diaspora used to send 1.5 billion dollars that was a lifeline for the country. How do we solve that problem if people (Law makers) do not want to meet with us?

Robert: Well, I've got an answer for the US, I don't know about Canada because I don't know about the political system in Canada, but in the US, money matters to run a campaign. So one of the things that you're saying with Muslim communities, more and more than ever before is heavy fundraising across the country. I mean there are certain communities that raised, on both sides of the aisle for president, over a million dollars— bundled a million dollars—because that money buys access. It is not going to fix everything, so what you're seeing on US is more broadly at the local level and this is one of the positives is that Muslim community members are realizing that if they want access at the local, state and federal level is that they got to get involved. Getting involved means raising the money, it means registering people to vote, it means getting people out to vote; it means if you've got a sheriff who's elected, whose a racist or bigot, you mobilize the community to get out and vote. A lot of cities in the US people win or lose on the margins. So, these votes matter! I don't know enough about the political system in Canada, and this is something more recent that you have communities realizing—Muslim communities realizing— how important it is to engage in the system as opposed to step back from it. And It doesn't mean they get everything they want, I can tell you on the issue of remittances especially to Somalia, it's super hard. I can tell you it's also super hard in Syria, because the US government is concerned about even $1 going to Nusra or Al Shabaab, and so for that the policy is not good. But I mean, this is you know, in the US we have the ability and people are doing it more often than not to engage. It's not easy though but yeah, so I mean, I can't overemphasize in US this is one of the unknown huge positives and I will tell you probably on a positive note that I suspect that in the US that this period will

> "The first is the lack of empirical knowledge about the root causes and drivers of violent extremism. You can't go to a single event on radicalization and violent extremism without hearing about root causes and drivers"
>
> ***Robert L. McKenzie***

be enormously transitional or transformational period but we won't know until the future. I think that you're going to have people looking back and say I decided that I'm going to run for Congress in 2016 when somebody said something to my mom when she was hijab. I think that's coming. In the state of Michigan, just across the water, we've got a Muslim running for governor. He's running a fantastic, I don't think he's going to win, but I mean he's running a fantastic campaign. People love him, he is a Rhodes scholar, Ph.D, Columbia MD, ran the health system for the city of Detroit, and he's 32 and running for governor, not bad! He's raising a million dollars a quarter, which I can assure you, is super hard. And so, you know, I'm getting you one example but there's a lot of folks who are fired up in a positive way, saying what can I do to get out and help my community and more broadly you know, the community at large beyond Muslims. I suspect that 10 years from now, we will look back and view this as a transformation period, at least in the US where people said, you know what, there's a lot of negatives but I use that as an energizing force to get out and be a positive change agent and I think that's definitely going to happen.

Question: We spoke before your remarks about your access to US government officials and so I just wanted folks to know can you talk about how the role of your things and who you're talking to and how your ideas are being received?

Robert: So let me tell you this, this is one of the things that folks don't realize outside of DC and it doesn't matter who's in office, particularly in this environment. I think people have this idea that, you know, we see these Tweets, we've got the Tweet of the ay, whatever it is. But I'm going to tell you there are men and women across the US government who are passionately committed about improving America everyday and they show up because they're passionately committed to try to make a difference. And so I think it's one thing that's important to highlight here is that just because we see the president tweeting things that doesn't mean that's what's happening at the state department or the Department of Homeland Security or DOD where people are committed to improving the country. It just means that their jobs are harder because people don't understand what exactly is going on, but I will tell you that—I say this as a US Citizen—we are very fortunate to have the kind of dedication we have, because people go and they stay, and they're committed to trying to make a difference. So it's not easy.

I will send this link on to the organizers, it would be great if you could share it. I will end on this final point that I've just created this project here which maps and anti-Muslim activities at the state and local level. I'm now working on a huge project which I'm launching with a leading Jewish community looking at anti-minority behaviour on Twitter. The third bucket of activities looks at the impact and contributions of Muslims at the local level and I will share this with you. I want to shine a light on the negatives, anti-muslim activities so that people know what's going on but I also want to shine a light on the positive because my impression is that— and I bet my right arm on it in this cast— most Americans, certainly folks in DC by no fault of their own, don't have a real grasp of the enormous positive impact and contributions that Muslims have, every day across the country and I think it's something that will help pull apart some of the enormous myths and hatred out there.

Panel Discussion I: Youth Radicalization - Lessons Learned Abroad

MODERATOR: SAMIA MOHAMED

***Dr. Ghayda Hassan** – Director and Founder, Canadian Practitioners Network for the Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence.*

Dr. Ghayda Hassan discussed vulnerability factors affecting youth at risk for violent radicalization. She emphasized that "The two most important risk factors for going into a trajectory of violent radicalization is a history discrimination and of social or interpersonal violence." Other important risk factors mentioned were hate crimes, depressive symptoms, general anxiety, a loss of hope at seeing oneself as an active and happy citizen, exclusion in school, stigmatization, and family and social violence. She noted that a study with Canadian college youth showed that having a faith system was a protective factor, in addition to high collective self-esteem (i.e. strong group identity). The latter is also however a risk factor when it is combined with experiences of discrimination.

Next, she discussed myths concerning youth violent radicalization, arguing that the youth most at risk in Canada were lone actors and suggested that we stop stigmatizing communities based on neighbourhood or religion. She then discussed the myth of mental illness vs. violent radicalization. Stating, "There is no such thing as is it a mental health problem or it is a violent radicalization problem. It's often a complex interweaving of these two forms along with other forms of distress, where violent radicalization has become the only route." She also highlighted "this discourse that we constantly hear when an attack is committed by the other, it's extremism. When an attack is committed by a member of the majority group it's mental illness. Right? This is rhetorical, this is ideological and this hurts. It's a false dichotomy."

Next, she touched on ideology, stating that while ideology in some countries might be used at the core, it isn't in North America and Europe. She said, "If you look at the trajectories of most youth who are engaged into a violent radicalization trajectory, over the life course, you see that the ideology comes into play much later in the process of radicalization often in order to capitalize violence. Most trajectories thus show that radicalized individuals shift ideologies." She suggests "that ideology connects pieces that have been shattered by disaffiliation and it gives a direction and it gives motivation to act, in most cases, in a very suicidal manner. That becomes also a form of social protest or attention to one's suffering."

Further, she argued that radicalization from the internet and social media is less about indoctrination and more about conversation and intimacy. She says, "Extremist groups succeed where we have failed. They succeed where our societies and our systems and our neighborhoods have failed in providing a space where youth feel that they belong, where they feel they contribute to a group, and that they are contributing to something bigger than themselves. And this is what recruiters have understood very well. And unfortunately, some have the financial means that goes with it."

She recommends that screening tools be put away as they don't work. Instead, what is needed is a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach where resources are multiplied by reinvestment in proximal support services for families and youth in different neighbourhoods and cities.

***David Michalski** – professor at the Munk Schools of Global Affairs and Advisor to the Office of the General Director at MSF*

David Michalski spoke as a private citizen with much experience working in war zones. He argued that Canadian society and even some involved in counter-terrorism and anti-radicalization efforts lacked curiosity and knowledge about the situations in relevant countries.

His first premise was that people working on youth radicalization and counter-terrorism have a tough job that is partially thwarted by the Western foreign policy that has existed since 911. He argued that Western foreign policy has caused significant humanitarian tolls and "International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is in the dust bin in some current conflicts."

Since 9/11, the West has spent a lot of money on the global war on terror, though he said we are quite safe here. He said, we have been killing at a rate of 30 to 1 in terms of direct combat deaths. Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia have lost a minimum of 330,000 people from direct conflict, while millions of people have been made homeless, and the wreckage of infrastructure has damaged basic health care and created delays in emergency situations causing many more deaths from preventable diseases and malnutrition.

Further, he spoke about the political hypocrisy from the West surrounding the invasion of Somalia in 2006 which caused the situation in Somalia to worsen leaving millions of people in need of emergency assistance, more malnourished children, more people in refugee camps, rapid inflation, and increases in human rights abuses, piracy, and deteriorating security conditions. He said, "We broke arms embargoes, we vilified the ICU and supported the TFG. Ironically, after invading and destroying the country, we then re-installed the guy who we invaded to get rid of. The height of hypocrisy was Hillary Clinton calling this former villain "the best hope for Somalia".

He also spoke about the recent summit in Kuwait, where the US gave no grants to rebuild Iraq even given the prescribed threats of increased radicalization without such actions. The same week the US grew their military budget by 165 billion. He said, **"If you put these together, it's very hard to make a case that we aren't in for perpetual war. We blow things up, we don't rebuild it and we put aside more money into defense and armaments."** He recommended that if we want to engage with communities and youth leaning towards radicalization, we need to we need to stress the social services that already exist (imperfectly) although the communities may not be accessing, mental health issues, and an acknowledgment of the situation in their home countries within a frame of a multidimensional approach to both prevention and enforcement.

***Dr. Wendy Cukier** – Founder of the Diversity Institute and a Professor at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management, & Co-founder of the Coalition for Gun Control*

In their book, War and Public Health, Barry Levy and Vic Sidel, define terrorism as "politically motivated violence or the threat of violence, especially against civilians, with the intent to instill fear." At the same time, they problematize the term noting that it is politically constructed: ""One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter". Certainly in Canada, while much of the discussion around terrorist threats and "anti-radicalization" is focused on Muslim extremists, the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service noted that worldwide, right wing extremists actually represented more of a threat (CSIS, 2015). In recent years, Canadian political violence has been motivated by misogyny as well as Islamophobia among other forms of hate.

A public health approach to addressing political violence is to understand its complex nature and the interactions between individual, community and societal factors. A prevention strategy must address the root causes, intelligence led policing and enforcement as well as access to the means of perpetrating violence, for example, explosives and firearms. To break the cycle of violence, we have to combat Islamophobia, racism, misogyny, homophobia and other forms of hate and exclusion.

We also must recognize that often the perpetrators of violence, often have themselves have been victims of violence, or marginalization or discrimination."Untreated trauma can contribute to the cycle of violence." Quoting, "A Public Health Approach to Understanding and Preventing Violent Radicalization", she noted that "Counter-terrorism approaches grounded in the criminal justice system have not prevented violent radicalization. Indeed, there is some evidence that these approaches may have encouraged membership in radical groups by not recognizing Muslim citizens as ally citizens, victims of terrorism, victims of discrimination, but only as suspect communities who were then further alienated, informed by public health research and practice a new approach is proposed." They say, "thus a public health response to political violence will need to consider that the majority of victims globally are in fact, Muslim citizens." She concluded that we need to do a better job of ensuring youth feel welcome and included in school as well as well as recognizing the global connections of many Canadians. She noted that we will see massive outpourings of sympathy and grief for attacks on certain populations and complete blindness and ignorance about attacks on other populations globally. She said that "There are no simple solutions to complex problems. Dr. Cukier briefly spoke on illicit trade in small arms and public health approaches to combating political violence, if you look at how guns are used worldwide they're used in a variety of

different kinds of violence. She further stated that, there are "intersections between right-wing extremists and extreme elements of the gun lobby; and we see that in the US". In 1993, the Conservative government released a report called "Crime Prevention in Canada Towards a National Strategy" that recognizes the multiple causes of crime and advocated a multilevel and jurisdictional approach. She continued by stating, "I would argue that to develop a comprehensive strategy one of the biggest barriers is fragmentation. Public Safety, Justice, Health, Economic Development and IRCC all have pieces of the solution. In addition there are provincial jurisdictions and when it comes to education it is municipal. Dr. Cukier also stated that the Federal Government "should promote and support partnerships at the local level between agencies and services that have an impact on crime. They include schools, recreation, urban planning, housing, police and social services".

In conclusion, Dr. Cukier stated that (we need to return to an evidence-based intentional strategy to prevent violence. That recognizes these multiple layers, that addresses the root causes in a serious way, that addresses the facilitators and also the enforcement side. And we have to ensure that this is viewed as a community issue. Community safety requires community engagement."

***Dr. Caroline Manion** – Lecturer at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education with extensive professional experience in East and West Africa.*

Dr. Caroline Manion discussed the issues and relationships between schools and youth radicalization from an international review of the literature on formal education. She argued that schools don't have to operate in ways that increase risk factors for radicalization, instead, schools and classrooms can be sites and tools for wider transformation both at the individual and collective level. She stated "Formal schooling is one of the most and increasingly important social institutions in societies around the world." And asked, "Can schools change society or do societies have to change first for schools to change?

She claimed "There is not a direct relationship between education and radicalization. In fact, a lot of perpetrators of extremist violence have been well educated." However, she said schools can be part of the problem, when people feel excluded and when schools perpetuate inequalities in terms of essentialized stereotypical representations of the "other" in their pedagogy, curriculum, interpersonal dimensions, organization, and governance. Additionally, learners can experience assaults on their identities through bullying. She also noted there is evidence to suggest that risk factors for radicalization come from the isolation, marginalization, disappointment, and frustration that comes from underemployment and lack of employment and stressed the importance of structural equality in educational opportunity including access to, within, retention and outcome.

She said that schools can be part of the solution and radicalization risks can be mitigated through educational reform, where schools and classrooms provide youth voice representation and recognition. Stating, "Education cannot prevent an individual from committing a violent act in the name of a violent extremist ideology. But the provision of education of good quality can help make the conditions that make it difficult for violent extremist's ideologies and acts to proliferate. More specifically education policies can ensure that places of learning do not become a breeding ground for violent extremism. They can also ensure that the educational content and teaching and learning approaches develop learner's resilience to violent extremism."

She concluded that "We need to center democratic and inclusive education principles in our education systems including pedagogy, curriculum the organization of schools, teacher preparation, and support. We need to avoid essentialist representations and we need cultivation of skills and competencies relevant to dialogue, productive conflict collaborative problem sharing and problem solving."

DISCUSSION SESSION:

The discussion period first focused on a youth resiliency framework. Where Dr. Wendy Cukier argued one of the biggest barriers to developing a comprehensive strategy is fragmentation and suggested that we need to articulate what the overall goals are and to better map what the problems are by building bridges to bring people together across provinces and jurisdictional levels, and most importantly the government should promote and support partnerships at the local level between agencies and services that have an impact on crime.

David Michalski clarified his goal was to point out that the losses in the other countries are much more than in the West, and that our foreign policy decisions have a detrimental consequence to the people that are trying to work on issues of youth radicalization and counter-terrorism. He said, "The consequences of our actions have not only affected the humanitarian situation in those countries but affected our security goals. I know Somalia and Afghanistan quite well and there is no question these societies are more radicalized now then they were before 9/11."

Dr. Ghayda Hassan agreed fragmentation is a problem and spoke more about how multiplying resources can be accomplished. She said the idea of CPN PREV is to map out where the resources are and to link that to policymakers to better understand how to distribute the resources back within the communities, organizations or groups that are doing the work on the ground.

Dr. Ghayda Hassan also spoke more about how we can help with mental health issues in our schools. She said the three main issues to be fixed are that a lot of kids don't see schools as a safe environment anymore where they can be themselves. We also need to put more resources into fighting against racism and discrimination in schools and increase proximal social services within the educational system for youth.

Panel Discussion II: Youth Resiliency, Hate, Racism and Radicalization

MODERATOR: RUBY LATIF

***Dr. Matthew Levitt** – Senior fellow and director of the Reinhard Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence.*

Dr. Matthew Levitt discussed community resiliency, outreach to youth, radicalization, law enforcement and counter-terrorism. He argued when we are countering violent extremism of whatever type, what's going to stop people from engaging in violence is good governance. He then asked, "How do we build resilient communities?" Not just to stop terrorism, but to be a functioning society, and to be able to bring in immigrants and make them feel part of the society and let the entire society benefit and be uplifted by it.

He argued that it is problematic that everything that could be described as countering violent extremism (CVE) is lumped into one big basket. He recommended that we should think about what is CVE specific and what is CVE relevant, what is preventing violent extremism, not just countering it. This would allow thinking about which agencies, which community organizations and activists can help solve any part of the problem. He stated, "Ultimately, I think countering violent extremism is what happens when you fail at preventing violent extremism." He explained that countering violent extremism is going to be focused on individuals that are going down a dangerous path, which could be could be gangs, drugs, or violence. Instead, he argued, "Where we will have the biggest bang for our buck, doing the greatest service not only to society but to the individuals at hand is in the area of preventing violent extremism. Moving the needle as early in the process as possible."

He argues that preventing and countering violent extremism is not counter-terrorism. It is a necessary and important complement to counter terrorism. Further, he said law enforcement should have local partners so when they come across a youth at risk, the local partner will have that connection to law enforcement and law enforcement can refer people to help individuals who aren't breaking the law yet but seem to be going down that path.

He concluded, to build resilient communities and ensure public safety and violence prevention, what's needed is good governance and more communication with and across government, public, private, and non-profit sectors. As well as more clinical social workers, teachers, and people who work in communities to the benefit of those communities. He recommends that we need to think about ways to provide an opportunity to people who are upset with foreign policy, to enable people, empower people to have ways to express their feelings and feel they can affect that foreign policy in a positive way so that they don't feel they need to engage in other activities.

***Michael Kerr** – Coordinator at Color of Poverty- Color of Change*

Michael Kerr discussed racial justice and suggests how race in many ways defines life chance, life opportunities and life outcomes. He spoke about Color of Poverty Color of Change, which since 2007, is a province wide network of community-based organizations, ethno-specific groups, and community service providers. He said their work has focused on discussions

focused on how we understand different dimensions of shared experience and also the different dimensions of unique and different experience of racialization, structural racism, and systemic racism and how they impact both first peoples and peoples of colour.

As of 2013, they have 16 policy priority, some have been carried forward from 2008. The first one, which they have achieved is to establish an equity and anti-racism directorate at the provincial government level. The second one is the establishment of an employment equity secretariat to define and implement an employment equity framework which they refer to as a fair labour market outcome or opportunity strategy. He recommends the establishment of an equity and education grant at a provincial level. Also, to end the three month long wait time for OHIP as it may negatively impact newcomers that experience health challenges.

Much of his presentation focused on reviewing statistics part of their educational effort. He said, at a provincial level as of May 2016 peoples of colour made up 29.3% of the peoples of Ontario. When you add the Indigenous piece to that which is 1.8%, the province of Ontario is over 1/3 racialized. Further of that group, the ethno-racial makeup was 29.6% South Asian, 19.4% and 16.2% black.

He then discussed the general rate of poverty for peoples of colour which he said is 21.3%, compared to someone who is white which is 11.5%. Next, he discussed ethno-specific rates of poverty from 2006, which he said is a key visual of social economic disadvantage, exclusion, and marginalization. He noted people within communities that had Caucasian or European background had roughly about 10% poverty rate, where the Somali Canadian community rate of poverty was at 70%. He said these statistics are indicative of that intersection of newcomer status, of racism, structural systemic racism, of faith and the islamophobia that members of the Somali Canadian community encounters.

He concluded that one of the key drivers of the alienation, exclusion, marginalization and disaffection of members of Somali youth in the context of this conversation but other youth of colour and Indigenous youth, is the inequities and the barriers that exist on the path to employment. He recommended that we need policy goals, and program objectives to work together to bring about structural systemic change to help change people's' life chances and life outcomes.

***Dr. Sara Thompson** – Associate professor of Criminology at the University of Toronto.*

Dr. Sara Thompson spoke about hate crime victimization and concerns over the radicalization of violence among young Somali Canadians. She drew on her research from 3 studies that aimed to examine risk and resilience among Somali Canadian youth and young adults through in-depth interviews with 556 young Somali Canadians age 16 to 30 in Toronto, Edmonton, and Surrey, BC.

She said, interview respondents reported having experienced hate victimization and feeling discriminated against because of their race and religion, the neighborhoods in which they live, stereotypical assumptions that Somali people are violent, and/or they are involved in crime or terrorism. Examples of incidents include Racial and anti-Muslim slurs, threats, and low-level assaults, particularly against young Canadian Somali women which often centered on the wearing of the hijab. Discrimination was commonly experienced in the educational system, the labour market, in public spaces, and at the hands of police and border officials. Further, she said, discrimination experiences can have very serious and profound impact on young people's sense of belonging and their sense of safety and result in high levels of fear. For example, many of the young women they interviewed restricted the amount of time they spent alone and in public spaces, because they were fearful, others made a conscious choice to stop wearing the hijab to draw less attention to themselves as they moved through public spaces. Most of the interviewees said they didn't report their victimization to the police because they felt there was nothing the police could or would do, and/or they felt the police didn't care about helping them.

> Many of the young women they interviewed restricted the amount of time they spent alone and in public spaces, because they are fearful, others made a conscious choice to stop wearing the hijab to draw less attention to themselves as they moved through public spaces.

She emphasized that interview respondents overwhelmingly expressed anti-Al Shabaab and anti-ISIS sentiment and concerns over radicalization of violent extremism among young people in their communities. They viewed support for these groups as a sign of confusion and because of exclusion and or alienation from Canadian society. Young Somali Canadians are largely resilient to the recruitment narratives and the propaganda that is produced by groups like Al Shabaab and DAESH, despite being exposed to them, usually online. She said, "Prominent counter-narratives are in place that work against not only the radicalizing strategies of groups like Al Shabaab and Daesh. But also rail against and place culpability squarely on the shoulders of that very small number of co-ethnics who in the language that was often used by study participants allow themselves to be brainwashed and radicalized by these groups."

She concluded that fragmentation along clan lines, concerns over stigmatization that link the Somali diaspora and terrorist groups, and treating Al Shabaab and ISIS as taboo subjects were three barriers affecting the strength of the counter-narratives and maybe preventing some families from seeking assistance from community-based support networks if and when they become concerned that a young person may be radicalizing to violence.

***Dr. Pamela Divinsky** – Executive Director at the Mosaic Institute*

Dr. Pamela Divinsky discussed the concept of radicalization, arguing youth rebellion is not new and there are many examples of youth rebellions that were radical rebellions and they often created disruptive inhumane violence. Youth rebel, she says because they want to have a purpose, want to change the world, want to define the conditions of the existence in which they live. Because they feel disaffected, feel excluded and feel frustrated at injustice.

She asked then what if anything is different about today? She said there are a few interesting differences, the first is the depth of loneliness. Second, we live in a screen culture that gives us immediate responses. Third, we live in a screen social media culture where extreme wins. Lastly, is the desire for fame. She says those things combined with the natural course of youth wanting to rebel it feels more threatening, unpredictable because it is both more visible and invisible.

She asks how do we dismantle the kind of alternative narratives, ideologies, threats, feelings of disaffection and isolation that take people down a dangerous path? She discussed the lessons learned by The Mosaic Institute in their 11 years of operation and efforts to dismantle prejudices. She stated that the first thing they've learned, "is none of this prejudice, stereotype, racism, islamophobia, anti-Semitism, none of it operates in the rational territory. So, thinking we are going to dismantle it rationally is a myth. This operates in the emotional territory, so we have to think about this emotionally. One of the core features in this world in which we live is we hold tightly onto our prejudgments and our prejudices."

The second thing they've learned is how prejudice works. She said, "And it works as a contagion. It starts with some sort of a threat, real or imagined, it doesn't matter. One experiences a threat and one has an emotional response to that threat. And out of that emotional response to that threat people start to talk. They talk, and they behave. And as that talk and that behavior spreads like a contagion it creates social permissions. For how to talk, what language to use, what behaviors are acceptable, what behaviors are now the cool thing to do. And those social permissions turn into social habits, and those social habits turn into social truths. And those social truths exist as if they are not to be questioned."

She concludes, just as we are all carriers of the contagion, we are also carriers of the cure. Just as we pass on discriminatory social truths we can pass on laudatory social truths and respectful social truths. Because foundational to all of this is we each want to be respected and we want other people to like us. She argues, solutions to these problems of radicalization, of terror, of deep seeded "systematic prejudice and racism" is a human-to-human approach. Prejudice is a contagion and we can be the cure of that contagion.

***Jamila Aman** – CEO and Managing Director of Premier Canadian Business Solutions.*

Jamila Aman discussed challenges and resiliency factors affecting youth. She also spoke about some of the successes and some of the challenges in the settlement work she has done. She focused much of her presentation on how black youths face many challenges, including discrimination, bias and microaggression, emphasizing that sometimes powerful and damaging microaggression is built in our vocabulary. Further, she spoke about gun violence, imprisonment, youth suspension, poverty, and shortage of jobs.

She discussed how she had been working with Somali women who lost their children, and how to strengthen the resiliency of the other youth so that this is not repeated. Some resiliency factors mentioned included; feeling cared for by their families, feeling connected to school, having a caring adult to turn to with problems and faith.

However, she said that we are not strengthening the faith of youth in Toronto and discussed how difficult it is to get a mosque. She told a story about how one generous Somali man, ten years ago, bought four condos and converted them to a mosque, and though other people in his building fought him, he won the right to have a mosque. However, when the youth from the other two buildings came to the mosque, it was considered trespassing and they were jailed, given criminal records and now they can't get jobs.

Next, she spoke about how the Canadian government banned the Hawalas, so a lot of immigrants could no longer send money home to their families, and how that was particularly harmful during the East Africa flood. She said, "We don't need foreign aid if the government foreign policy allows us to collect money when there is crisis and to send home." She asked, how can a mother raise a resilient child when she is so worried about livelihood of the people back home and the violence here in Toronto and at home?

She concluded that we need to have a vision, to be united, to get involved and engaged, to hold the government accountable to be able to change these things, to change systemic racism. Citing for example, that the board of education decided to hire more black teachers but there was no mechanism to follow up and hold the government accountable. She also highlighted how we need teacher education, using the example of how our education system failed a child from a war-torn country, misinterpreting his fear of planes as behavioral issues. To stop violent behaviours, she said we need to be responsible as individuals, parents have a role to play, community has a role to play, governments have a role to play and foreign policy has a role to play.

DISCUSSION SESSION:

The discussion first focused on how there is a concern among members of the Somali community that they are over researched, and a lot of the research findings are not shared with members of the community, highlighting practices of non-accountability potentially causing distrust between the community, researchers and government. Dr. Sara Thompson agreed she had heard that perception many times said she had disseminated the final reports back to everyone who participated in her research and was willing to share her reports.

Next the conversation focused on youth resilience in America. Dr. Matthew Levitt acknowledged the turmoil in America right now and said America can learn from its friends and neighbours, but it is an extremely vibrant democracy. He said, "The most important thing they can do is to get involved in organizations, in voting, in sharing their ideas." Further he said it is important to make people feel empowered and enabled to be able to do something and get involved in some way, to know how to participate and effect change.

Next the conversation focused on how to get youth to become mentors and write their own story. Jamila Aman discussed how though we need to hold people accountable, we also need to be in charge of our lives, educate ourselves better, be empowered and we need to empower our kids. We also need to support each other and be united. Dr. Pamela Divinsky added that "it is absolutely the case the victors write our history." She asked the audience, "What is the point of the story you want to tell?" She argued that if we continue to write stories that are predicated on conflict that removes the individual responsibility for human change and perpetuates a number of the categories whether they be clan, ethnocultural, geographic that we only perpetuate a framework that we will never move beyond our prejudices and emphasized that our differences are not the problem they are the source of our solution. Michael Kerr added, "That we have to do better in most places and spaces in better reflecting the nature of the diversity of our community."

Panel Discussion III: Youth, Violent Radicalization and The Online Environment: Dispelling Myths and Countering Hate

MODERATOR: UBAH FARAH

***Alexander Corbeil** - Senior Research Analyst for The Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence*

Alexander Corbeil discussed the operations of The Canada Centre (Public Safety Canada) and how it was established. He noted that Budget 2016 provided the Canada Centre was given 35 million dollars in funding over 5 years to prevent radicalization to violence in Canada. He stated that The Canada Centre's approach is to prevent radicalized individuals from turning to violence rather than countering radical beliefs in general. Mr. Corbeil pointed out that holding radical beliefs is not a crime, however acting violently on those beliefs or thoughts is. He then explained the three pronged approach that The Canada Centre uses to counter violent radicalization.

The three approaches are policymaking, funding research, and programming. Mr. Corbeil elaborated on the importance of local intervention and support programming and the importance of addressing radicalization to violence at the local level. Mr. Corbeil noted that The Canada Centre is funding research and programming through a grant and contributions program the Community Resilience Fund.

Mr. Corbeil also noted the four areas that The Canada Centre is focusing on in preventing and countering radicalization to violence. The first involves policy development at the federal level. The second area is through the research and programming funded by the Community Resilience Fund. The third are involves international efforts to develop good practices for addressing violent extremist and terrorist exploitation of the internet. The last area involves engaging with social media companies to ensure that progress is being made to prevent and counter violent extremist and terrorist use of online platforms. Mr. Corbeil described how the Canada Centre is engaging with cities and a multitude of local stakeholders (such as law enforcement and civil society) to establish preventative measures (such as alternative narratives) and best practices that incorporate social media into intervention programming. He noted that community resiliency and local-level interventions are key to preventing individuals from radicalizing to violence in an environment of online engagement.

Another area that Mr. Corbeil focused on was the collaborative efforts with other countries to establish best practices and results-driven approaches to counter violent extremist and terrorist use of the online space. Mr. Corbeil described how social media companies are being asked to increase transparency with governments and the public on efforts to remove violent extremist and terrorist content, as well as provide information on the success of these countermeasures. Mr. Corbeil noted that social media companies and civil society are critical to understanding the online environment and its impact on radicalization, the creation and promotion of legitimate counter-

narratives, as well as the quick removal of nefarious content. Mr. Corbeil concluded this section by articulating that social media companies need to collaborate with governments to ensure the human rights and fundamental freedoms are protected when taking efforts to limit violent extremist and terrorist use of the online environment.

Mr. Corbeil concluded his presentation by speaking about the future projects that the Canada Centre will be working on. Areas include focusing on Canadian-centric, establishing measurement and evaluation metrics, and, ensuring researchers are provided with the appropriate data to understand how those vulnerable to radicalization to violence use the online space. Mr. Corbeil also noted that there are questions that the Canada Centre would like to answer that include how and what online content impacts offline behaviour. He ended his discussion by stating that people, who are at high risk of radicalization to violence, must be provided with applicable interventions and online responses when coming into contact with extremist content.

***Matthew Johnson** - Director of Education at MediaSmarts*

Matthew Johnson discussed preventative strategies and media literacy that youth can be taught in order to be better prepared to interact with hate groups when online. In addition, Johnson reviewed the persuasive techniques, such as misinformation and different narratives, employed by these hate groups that may impact youth seeking "a sense of identity."

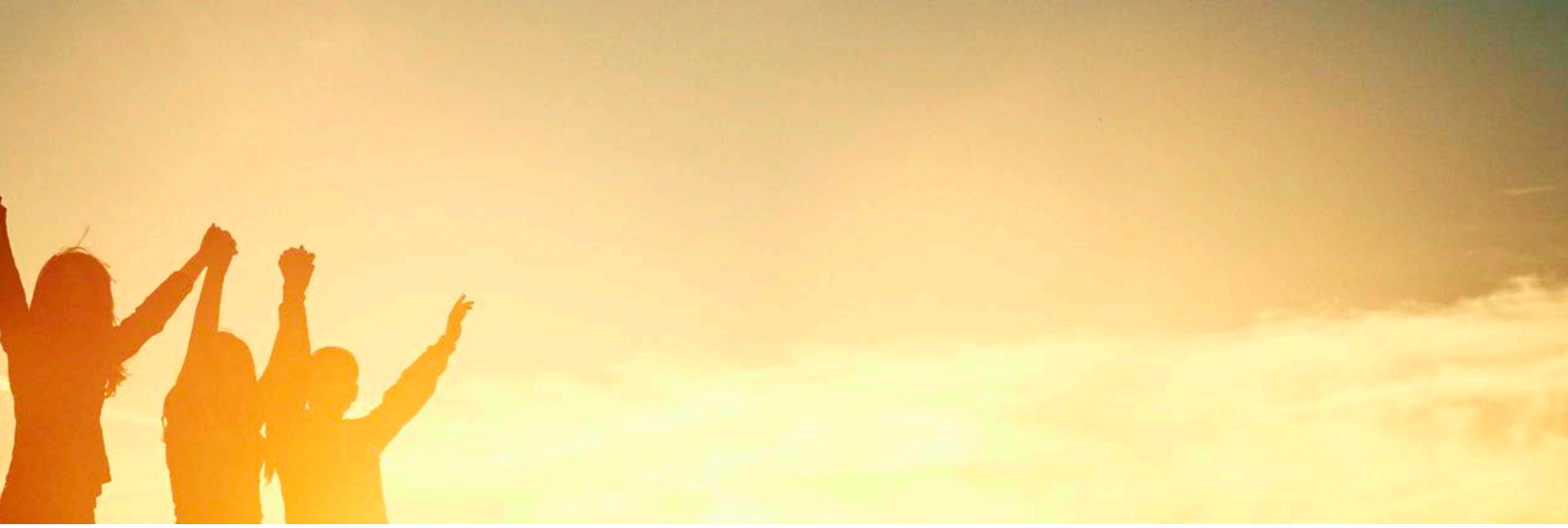
The first strategy that Johnson noted is developing an understanding of the agenda setting function of the media. Young people need to understand how the perception of reality is orchestrated by the media as well as the ideological messages that may be construed by the media. Johnson emphasized the importance of media literacy because the structure of digital media is much different than traditional media. By being network based, digital media has made the reader both the creator and consumer creating implications on content development. Johnson emphasized that, due to digital media, it is harder to know what content is factual and what is not.

Building on this new structure, Johnson used the example of radicalization and online news media. Johnson noted the use of "cloaked hate" by hate groups to misinform the public, specifically young people. With this online technique, websites seemingly pose as legitimate sources of information (ex. by using a .org website address), while passing off subtle hate messages in the articles featured on the site. Detection of these sites has proven difficult as Johnson noted that studies of university students showed an inability to find bias in some cloaked websites. Johnson noted that media literacy skills need to include "evaluation and authentication skills" to determine when a website is questionable.

Another consequence of digital media is the rise of online communities through online platforms that have allowed norms of these hate groups to exist. Johnson stated that these online social platforms have elevated voices that would have not normally garnered attention in a traditional media landscape. Hate group community norms can impact larger social spaces because of the ease of use in moving between website links and different social networking sites.

Johnson also described a third consequence of digital media being the unintended use of online tools such as the use of 'likes' or recommended videos. Using the example of YouTube's recommended videos, Johnson highlighted how the YouTube's search algorithm would recommend both CNN media as well as far-right media such as Alex Jones related videos. Johnson stated that YouTube's algorithm is not neutral as videos were recommended based on reaction.

Building upon these three digital media implications, Johnson noted that as the digital landscape is more connected, allowing online users to become increasingly linked with hate speech. This connectedness has made it easier for hate groups to be seen as actors who possess legitimate discourse topics, making it easier to persuade online users to become "sympathizers" to the cause. This allows for easier recruitment of radicalized individuals as well as making it easier to target anyone opposed to these extreme views.



Moreover, the connectedness of the digital landscape means that online interactions hold the same clout as in-person interactions. However, unlike in-person interactions, it is harder to determine the tone of online content or create empathy for others. Johnson noted that online interactions can be dehumanizing as individuals do not actually know who they are interacting with.

Johnson concluded that preventative measures needed to be enacted to address the spread of online hate as well as prepare youth. Johnson stated that the community should step in to teach youth preventative strategies as well as to emphasize that hateful behaviour is not a component of society, but rather a rare behaviour. Overall, the community is important for youth to learn strategies from instead of an unfamiliar source.

***Amarnath Amarasingam** - Senior Research Fellow and Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue and the University of Waterloo*

Amarasingam's discussion focused on the impact on and use of social media by extremist individuals and groups and how governments have responded to this technological development. Amarasingam noted that extremist groups have used social media to speak directly to an audience as the barriers held by traditional media no longer exist. This has allowed for increased access to a large number of people, which has given these groups the ability to set the narrative on how issues are framed. Amarasingam used the coverage of 9/11 on television as an example of the increased proliferation of information. The television was the sole narrator of 9/11 as Twitter and YouTube were not used in 2001. Amarasingam noted that as social media platforms emerged, events, such as the campaign against ISIL, had multiple narratives. With new technological platforms, the dissemination of news increased as the mainstream media no longer held the sole narrative to a story.

The increased access to online content has also fostered a change in the administrative structure of websites. Amarasingam noted that, like traditional media, websites used to have a top-down structure with administrators producing and editing content posted. However, online forums led to a change in this structure as users were producing content and analyzing it at the same time. This also led to the rise of the online community. Amarasingam used this in the context of the events, such as the Arab Spring and the Revolution in Syria, as online communities became tightly knit communities where individuals organized and strong friendships emerged.

A second characteristic that Amarasingam noted was how the online community has made extremist groups more accessible to online users. Trust has become easier with online platforms as "involvement became normalized" because it is easier to become involved in a terrorist organization than ever before. Time and distance are no longer definitive factors for involvement. Youth are "integrating their involvement in these terrorist organizations into their everyday life" because participating in online activities for terror groups can be done from a local computer.

To combat this normalization of involvement by youth, Amarasingam concluded that there are two ways that may be utilized by law enforcement. The first is "content removal" which involves removing terrorist literature from these platforms because removing access may decrease an individual's interaction with the content and therefore limit the chances of becoming radicalized. However, this method has been criticized by civil liberties groups. Amarasingam noted that a more feasible option is a counter-narrative approach, where non-extremist content is produced and posted online at the same rate as extremist content. Amarasingam stated that this approach may teach youth to review and compare the different narratives online and encourage media literacy. The final approach Amarasingam described is the "re-direct approach" which may also be used because it would redirect individuals searching terror related content to anti-terror literature.

***Stoney McCart** - Director for Strategic Partnerships at the Students Commission of Canada*

Stoney McCart discussed the relationship between youth, online, and offline engagement with radicalization processes and pathways. Her current focus is on the project titled "Social Identity Formation," which is funded by Public Safety Canada and reviews the formation of social identity and its relationship with engagement among young people. Radicalization, specifically, in this context, is viewed "as a continuum of engagement." She stated that the study is looking at how youths answer the question, "who am I?" by reviewing the context from which identities emerge. The project has found that the pathways behind identity formation are from a combination of offline and online factors.

McCart discussed how several themes emerged from the study's review of intervention approaches and from the panel discussions. The first theme was "strength," which she defined as methods that stressed strength-related techniques, through the use of the community, for prevention and intervention. She noted that a two pronged approach must be utilized to understand how young people are influenced by experiences faced and to understand how the relationships developed both online and offline impact identity. She described that the experiences that young people face as well as the community they grow up should be reviewed rather than be focused on term labels.

In addition to the theme of "strength," McCart reviewed the theme of "safe-spaces." She noted the importance of these spaces for youth to hold contentious conversations on difficult topics, with friends rather than family, in order to explore different points of views as identities are formed. McCart noted that she was studying how these spaces are produced to promote these tough conversations. She used the example of using a health approach to review policies of "safe-spaces" in schools and community organizations, where she found that support for identity formation was not being addressed as the focus was focused more on "risk management, liability, and physical safe-spaces." Rather, the "Social Identity Formation" project reviews the motivational factors behind the emergence of "safe-spaces."

Lastly, McCart touched upon structural racism as the third theme that requires review to understand identity formation. She tied this into the pillars of the Students Commission of Canada, where she emphasized listening and respect as key pillars to have a positive impact on the external environment. She concluded by stating that in her research, she focused on the impact of diversity and the importance of altruistic actions.

DISCUSSION SESSION:

Q: Thank you Midaynta for putting together this conference and the panelist for addressing this topic comprehensively. My question goes to Amarnath. From your Interviews with some members of ISIS or ISIL what do they say is there a long-term goal? Do they want to capture the whole world or something of that nature?

Amarnath: Their goal— if they were to survive, is to fight and die as a martyr— but if they live, they want the flag of Islam to fly on the White House lawn as they say. Unlike a lot of these other jihadist groups that are smaller and have much more limited goals, ISIS is very much an expansionist organization which has no qualms about taking over. I mean their goal is to take over as much land as possible. Of course they lost quite a bit of land now; so it's not about it's not an ongoing threat as it used to be— let's say in its heyday in 2014-15. But their goal is always to take over as much land as possible

Q: My question is for Alexandra. What, if any, work or connection does your Center have with the RCMP and their intelligence and their inside team?

Alexandra: That's a great question! I just wanted to talk about some of the engagement work we've done and then I'll get into answering your question. I think a lot of the criticism of the government is that we don't actually talk to the people on the ground, we don't talk to communities or we don't talk to communities in a beneficial way or our stakeholders. We've carried out engagement sessions over last fall in 14 cities across Canada. We've met with 275 organizations or individuals. Stakeholders in the medical profession, religious leaders Community leaders local police RCMP, Civil Society, academics etc. Our relationship with the RCMP—and this the one I get asked alot, I did my first engagement session in a Edmonton, I am doing my second one here in my hometown Toronto—is based on one where we do get read from them of the overall threat environment; so, they may say, you know on a high level— this area of Canada. No individual cases or anything else. We don't ourselves deal with any individual cases; what we do in terms of our work to support frontline practitioners, psychosocial support, housing— we supported a number of, what they call intervention tables— there is one here in Toronto and another one being set up in Calgary a and there are a number other ones cross country as well.

In some cases, local police can bring, if someone comes to the criminal justice system or gets sort of involved cross the criminal justice system, they can bring that individual to that intervention table. Sometimes local police are made aware of that issue by the RCMP. We ourselves do not interact with the RCMP in terms of providing information or intelligence to the RCMP and outside of just that kind "high level "this-is -the -threat

-environment" in terms of people radicalization to violence. It's very high level! So we don't have an ongoing relationship with the RCMP in terms of providing intelligence to them; they're not providing any individual intelligence to us.

In addition to that, as a national coordinating body, what we do is provide not just only the RCMP, but all federal departments and agencies what is the best practices in encounter radicalization to violence. We say, based on domestic research around the different pathways into radicalization to violence and based on what is being done internationally, these are things that you should take in mind or take into consideration when you're doing your investigations or when you hear about someone who may prove to be an issue or may not be the case that person is radicalizing towards violence

Q: I am just asking Amarnath. They are too many conspiracy theories about ISIS and we don't know who they actually are. And also, the information you gather, do you stumble [across] or find out or explain how they get access to passports and funds? For the youth [who are radicalized] how do they get access to funds without anybody knowing? How come the organizations that monitor security don't catch these kinds of activities?

Amarnath: By conspiracy theories do you mean the ones that ISIS was created by Israel or something? I know I don't think that's true and like with all conspiracy theories, I don't have any evidence to provide you. You can't prove a negative, so it's kind of difficult.

In terms of the passports and funds, I am not exactly sure what you mean by passport; I mean, a lot of these guys brought their passports with them when they crossed— I'm talking strictly about Western fighters at the moment. It's's also true for a lot of North African fighter as well, they brought their passport with them; some of them burn their passports, others had their passports taken, others left them with the kind of Admissions Office of IISIS, so to speak.

There's been some fear any way that a lot of these passports are being refashioned and sent or given to fighters who trained and dispatch to go launch attacks in Europe or something. Part of this fear comes from two passports that were found at the site of the Paris attacks in November 2015 which had two names on them; both of who I'm forgetting at the moment, but there was no evidence of these people exist or the names of the two attackers. So people assume that these were refugees that had left and these passports were somehow planted or given two fighters to enter the refugees stream to go launch attacks. That's the only two cases that I know of actual evidence of the passport being found but there's other evidence of random things happening. I won't get into all of that.

In terms of funding, one of their main sources of funding is taxation; so, they tax the local population for all kinds of agricultural things, all kinds of importing, exporting oil is important and those kinds of things. They're largely or they used to be largely self-funded; it's not true or haven't seen any evidence to suggest, much like with Jabhat Al-Nusra or other rebel groups that are active in Syria, that they were receiving funding from Qatar or the Gulf States. I don't think there's any evidence that Isis received funding from the Gulf States may be Matt Levitt can know.

There is a suspicion also that individual kind-of-people in place like Saudi Arabia have been funding ISIS, but it's not large enough to make any kind of real difference. I think they were fine financially making money through population that were under their control. Where this goes I am not entirely sure.

And your third question about foreign Fighters, was it why the countries did stop them from leaving? That's a tricky one! I think early on, the earliest Canadian that left that we know of, was throughout 2012. At that time, based on my conversations with some law enforcement people, it wasn't really on their radar. They didn't think that this Arab Spring, birth of ISIS thing, was going to actually attract foreign Fighters. They were under the assumption that there was going to be attacks locally maybe or that they might be protests or certain things might happen in country. But the idea that a whole bunch of kids— and by my account there's about a hundred and five who've left across from Canada to Syria and Iraq; the idea that a hundred of them would get up and leave wasn't really on the radar, so a lot of them left without much difficulty. it was also not illegal to travel to places like Syria and Iraq or buy a plane ticket to turkey. You had no real reason to stop them, you had no way to stop them. It was only very recently that kind of changes in legislation, particularly in places like Australia where they basically said that any area under the control of Isis is a "no-go zone". Even if you wanted to travel to Mosul when it was under the control ISIS that itself was illegal; so, I don't have to show as a government that you're joining Isis, I just have to show that you're going to a place controlled by ISIS and that's enough. Canada hasn't gone that far. The legal mechanisms by which you stop people from traveling, you have to have a lot of pieces of evidence and that's not always available.

Some of the evidence has been used for the guys who left from Montreal. For example, 15 kids were stopped at the Montreal Airport and sent home. Part of what was used I think was their online profiles and what they've been tweeting and saying to other people. For example, if you empty your bank account posting pro-ISIS content and doing a whole bunch of other things, the government has enough kind of suspicion to say you're probably going to go do something and that's enough to stop. But again they weren't charged, they were just stopped and sent home. It's much more difficult than simply arresting anybody who tries to leave in the actual evidence.

Panel Discussion IV: Ensuring Newcomers are Settled and Fully Integrated: Challenges and Opportunities in (Re)Settlement, Integration, Community Engagement, and Cultural Competency

MODERATOR: ARIJ SHARIFABOW

***Detective Feras Ismail** – Diversity Relations Bureau, Peel Regional Police*

Ismail thanked Midaynta Community Services and the Munk School of Global Affairs for providing the platform to address issues including, "hate motivated crimes and incidents, and to talk openly about the impact that it is has on the community." Ismail explained that he will be discussing the work the Peel Regional Police does to deal with these issues, and the nexus between hate motivating crimes and incidents, and the radicalization process.

In 2014, the Peel Regional Police established the Countering Violent Extremism Initiative. This is a program that was put into place to identify individuals who were starting to exhibit behaviours that would suggest that they were going down a pathway of radicalization to violence (RTV). Ismail emphasized that this initiative was aimed at developing a deeper understanding of the root-causes of RTV, while providing a social solution to a social problem. A big part of training focuses on, "cultural awareness, empathy, understanding and early intervention and engagement. Those are the grassroots, the root causes of how we can address these issues." Ismail further explained, "we tend to forget when we talk about radicalization to violence, when we talk about the big T word, 'terrorism', is that it has a stigma, just the word on its own has this connotation, and can further stigmatize, further alienate, further vilify, certain segments of our population. And we're quite aware of it, so at the root of all our presentations, which are always being modified over time, cultural awareness, empathy, understanding, and early identification and engagement- are always at our fundamental core."

Ismail pointed out that hate crime numbers spiked between 2016 and 2017, against the Jewish, Black, LGBT+ populations, with the Muslim population being targeted the most within that spike. This means that hate rhetoric cannot be ignored as it further propagates discrimination. In turn, Ismail explained, terrorist entities create online propaganda videos that builds a "it's us versus them" narrative, which can be captivating for some youth because they see this as a reality on a daily basis. This feeling can manifest and translate to a series of issues. "This is not a 'Muslim' problem, this is a 'all of our' problem."

Ismail thinks that to build resilience we need to address these issues and, "we need to tackle it, we need to talk about it. Which is why it's fortunate that we do things like this. You know, community groups can come together. And have these discussions, and have proactive solutions in order to address these issues, at the grassroot levels, before they manifest into a bigger problem, before they manifest into a criminal threshold.."

Through the Countering Violent Extremism Initiative, the Peel Regional Police has had the opportunity to educate 9000 police workers, government officials, people who work in NGO capacities, and members of community groups. The main concept, Ismail said, is to deliver out of community support, and talk to community members about these issues, which not only focus on hate crimes, but hate-related incidents as well. That way, community members understand that it's important to contact the police during hate-related incidents and not just during hate crimes. Ismail explained that this is important because hate crimes are the tip of the iceberg; in reality there are a lot of issues underneath that the police cannot see on a day-to-day basis. "Just because it doesn't meet a criminal threshold, doesn't mean that it is not important for us." Ismail emphasized that it is fundamental to educate police officers on reassurance policing, to treat hate incidents seriously. Many of the victims are between the ages of 14 to 26 and they have been impacted by these incidents daily. "It is important that we communicate with and provide that support and provide victim support service to these individuals. Let them know that this is important information for us. This is data that we can potentially leverage, in to developing and creating proactive initiatives so that we can go out in the community and deal with these kind of issues at the grassroots"

Ismail noted that there is a change in the mind and lens of police officers when we demystify, destigmatize these issues on terrorism, talk about what it really is, what we can do to address it and they start to see how they can relate to people, and how they can develop these community sources. Officers have had positive interactions with community members because of the training they have received on countering violent extremism. Ismail and the Peel Regional Police found it was incredible the amount of collaborative work that was occurring among different multi-faith group members. A particular instance was when members from the Jewish community at Thornhill, and individuals from York came down to the Peel region, put on security uniforms and provided security for the mosques of that region. Ismail, reinforced the concept of collaboration, "You develop it, you work with the community, we become facilitators, we enable them to do good work, we help them, and we provide that guidance and support, when required. But at the end of the day, only together can we genuinely solve this problem. It's not just a police matter, it's not just in this room, it's everybody and beyond and I think, it's important that we understand that fundamental difference."

Ismail concluded with how the media plays a role in the discussion: "The media needs to understand that they need to provide a balance in the narrative when these issues happen both internally and externally, both nationally and internationally, and that what they put in their papers, what they broadcast also has a resonating impact on the majority of our community, youth included."

> "We tend to forget when we talk about radicalization to violence, when we talk about the big T word, 'terrorism', is that it has a stigma, just the word on its own has this connotation, and can further stigmatize, further alienate, further vilify, certain segments of our population. And we're quite aware of it, so at the root of all our presentations, which are always being modified over time, cultural awareness, empathy, understanding, and early identification and engagement- are always at our fundamental core."

***Marva Wisdom** - Director for the Black Experience Project*

Wisdom began by speaking about the Black Experience Project. The Black Experience Project was initiated by the Environics Institute in 2010. Wisdom was on the board of the Canadian Centre for Diversity when Michael Adams presented the Institute's survey of the contributions of immigrants to Canada. Wisdom found the presentation positive and respectful and exchanged business cards with Adams at the close of the presentation.

Wisdom explained that the Black Experience Project Institute had completed a project called Urban Aboriginal Peoples Project which looked at the experiences of the Indigenous community in cities, and three months after his presentation on immigrants, he contacted Wisdom to explore the possibilities of a project focused on the Black community in Toronto.

The pre-work (community engagement) of the Black Experience Project commenced in 2011 and the report was released in July 2017. Wisdom emphasized that this type of project was important for the community and as some have observed, "our community has been studied to death". However, this study's underlying principle would include, respectful and extensive community involvement and engagement, publicly accessible data, looking at both challenges and opportunities. Further this study examines our lived experience from our perspective from design through to results delivery. As one individual in an engagement session shared, "no study about us without us." The Black Experience had about 25 collaborating partners including the Midaynta Community Services, the JCA, Tropicana Community Services, as well as trailblazers who provided direction and advice. In addition to the Environics Institute, the lead partners were, YMCA, the United Way, the Diversity Institute from Ryerson University and York University's Jean Augustine Chair.

Midaynta hosted the first outreach engagement sessions on how to do a study respectfully, including what to include and who else should be at the discussion table. What stood out to Wisdom was that the "room had a myriad of demographics", including people of all ages, and the fact that the discussion was being led by young people. Wisdom commended the resilience, brilliance, and commitment of the community which has remained consistent over the years.

Wisdom outlined one of the more distinctive perspectives in the findings and that is Black youth are more, not less, sensitive to the racism affecting their community. In this 16-24-year-old cohort, one in two is more likely than others to identify challenges relating to racism and the perpetuation of stereotype as a barrier. That young people who were born in Canada on average feel less accepted by broader society; and racism and discrimination seem to be worse than it was for previous generation is jarring.

According to Wisdom, "that's very sad, for my children, my grandchildren, and we would think that with our work we will make things better. But this study says it hasn't made things better. So what we hope with this information is looking at the assets but also looking how do we make things better. Rather than, anecdotal info, or someone saying "Oh my goodness, this is happening to me and I'm feeling isolated". This survey will help to support the work needed to make transformative change for the better; work like that of Midaynta and the many organizations serving the black community

Wisdom hopes that empirical information will help start discussions about how to find solutions because, "when we listen, when we talk, and when we advocate for better policies, we bring about change. We become better at electing leaders committed to building a better, stronger, more equitable country for us all to strive."

Wisdom proceeded to show The Black Experience Project launch video which provides highlights and clips on the information and data that was gathered from community members: https://www.theblackexperienceproject.ca/

***Scott Mckean** – Manager, Community Safety and Wellbeing at City of Toronto*

Mckean began by acknowledging Toronto's diversity, with its ethnically driven neighbourhoods. There are over a hundred and forty languages spoken in Toronto, 50% of the population as of last year are foreign-born, and one in five residents has arrived in Toronto in the last 10 years. As such, diversity needs to factored in when thinking about service delivery, from the City of Toronto's perspective, by embracing the day-to-day life experiences of the community.

Mckean explained that he is housed in the social development division and his particular lens is community and neighbourhood development, safety and wellbeing. He acknowledged Robert McKenzie's comments on creating locally driven solutions and how the City of Toronto also uses that lens to create solutions in relations to anti-black racism, youth equity, etc. He noted that there are higher levels of equity in 31 out of the 440 neighbourhoods in Toronto. This means that solutions need to take into account the spaces and places of individuals.

Mckean outlined a few programs, and started with the Community Crisis Response Program. If a violent traumatic incident occurs, the Toronto Police have the most important role in attending to it, but the City of Toronto facilitates the healing of the community after those incidents. "Trauma is at the heart of a lot of these issues and so our first and foremost action is to meet people where they're at by culture, where they are within our systems, and look at how do we heal, how do we leverage support services, and coordinate support services since that exists in an inner service system, to respond to local need as part of that healing." These efforts, in turn, increases resident engagement, and grassroots and community mobilization to advise the city, and other levels of government about to do in the communities to make things more accessible and representative of the needs of the neighbourhood.

Mckean explained that the Community Crisis Response Program has achieved great success in working on the ground with mothers and young people from the communities particularly in the West end of downtown Toronto. There were a lot of youth from that area who were either removed from school or banned from community centers because of lack of inclusion in their schools. The local mothers wanted to figure out how to address the issue, because they were reporting that their children were getting involved in gangs, or was selling narcotics, or just causing trouble in the neighbourhood. The first step was to identify risk factors. As such, Mckean's staff trained in gang awareness and gang knowledge, and they developed workshops across the system. The staff reached out to mothers in communities and caught them basic safety tips including checking under the bed, in the shoe boxes, etc.

Outside of the crisis work, Mckean and his staff also work on risk mitigation. In 2013, McKean and his staff, alongside the United Way and the Toronto Police Service, launched an initiative called Focus Toronto. Focus Toronto is an intersectoral approach to addressing situations of acutely elevated risk, by having a platform and mechanism for intervening and interrupting the escalation of a crisis. A situation table was first launched in the Rexdale area and the model has expanded to the North-Northwest, the Northeast or Scarborough, Downtown East, Downtown West, where the situation tables meet weekly. Through this model Mckean and his team are able to collect data on how to build future investments, create partnerships, and work on continuous service improvement.

The staff team that are working with community partners with young people across the city to develop a plan that focuses on five key areas. The first one is the youth equity, where Toronto has a strategy in place with over 100 actions the City takes to meet new young people, check where they're at, and make city services accessible to them. Second, the City is looking at youth employment. Mckean explained that there is a wealth of employment resources across the city both, led by community-based organizations and by the City of Toronto. The City is taking a deeper look at how to leverage entrepreneur experience as it may or may not be required due to street activity or street knowledge, and investing in building those skills, harvesting them and building effective entrepreneurial supports to transition young people out of criminal activity.

Third and fourth, the City is looking at spaces to create facilities for youth and how to engagement them within those spaces. Lastly, the City is focusing on mental health and wellbeing. "Trauma plays a huge component, and there's a lot of healing that needs to happen in our city as a result of some of the dynamics and inequities going on. There are some of the systemic or institutionalized racism that happens within the inner-city and so we're combining this work and learning from our intervention models to advise how we do this prevention."

Mckean emphasized the importance of including the voices of everyone in the community including into decision-making processes. He referenced the Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy as an example of an inclusive model which was built in conjunction with local residents and funders. The City of Toronto also launched a campaign called Toronto for All. "This campaign has been revolutionary inside the city system because it's mandated training and awareness around how we conduct business. And on the Toronto for All website, their media campaign focuses on homelessness, anti-black racism, islamophobia, and trans youth of colour and this campaign had a ripple impact." Recently, the City of Toronto created an anti-black racism office and Indigenous office, and there are mandates to follow which were created by integrating top-down and ground up approaches. Mckean concluded by pointing out that we have the ability to merge these two things and gatherings like this conference is what brings the community together.

Panel Discussion V: Trauma and Mental Health as it Pertains to Youth Resiliency, Hate, Racism and Youth Radicalization: Strategies for Social Inclusion & Well-Being

***Ahmed Abdulkadir** – Director, the Organization for Prevention Violence (OPV)*

Abdulkadir is a community activist. Abdulkadir wanted to share his experience of the Somali community in Edmonton to compare it to the experiences here in Ontario. He tells of a 2nd grade kid whose mother was receiving complaints about him urinating in class. It turns out, the teacher was singling out and bullying the kid. There was a 6th grade student in a comparable situation that couldn't read or write. There was a 9th grade student that was yelled at and choked by the vice principle of his school. This teacher proceeded to call his mother and suspend him for 5 days. No child should go to the next grade without getting the support they need.

A member of the audience asked Ahmed about the cultural importance of having culturally sensitive teachers noting that one finding of the black experience project was that having a black teacher contributed to a more positive high school experience. School board's need to pay close attention to how they recruit and train teachers.

In response Ahmed noted that in the Aboriginal Culture we see a respect for elders that is not present in the Canadian culture. When you look at the education system, everybody needs to be empowered but a white teacher will always be biased by their upbringing and this bias will spill into the classroom. There is no cultural educational training for teachers. Cultural brokers are needed to break this barrier; they would be the trained individuals that would serve as a guide for teachers. Ahmed prefers that teachers should reflect the community they are teaching.

Another member of the audience asked how do we provide 2nd or 1.5th generation black youth with the resources and opportunities to develop themselves with the understanding of the significant effort the has been put forward by countless activists? In his response, Ahmed noted that weakness in solutions posed should be brought to light by members from the community, however the communities are not being invested in. Solutions should build the capacities of pre-existing organizations within the community. Funders should address those who have the problems.

***Ken Jeffers** – Founder of The Harriet Tubman Centre and Board member of the Toronto Police Services Board*

Ken Jeffers has been around the black community and working in the community for over four decades. He recalled getting a scholarship to go to South Carolina where there was extreme

form of hate by the Ku Klux Klan. During this time, was involved in protests against the killings of students. February 8th this year was the 50th anniversary of the Orange Book Massacre. Three of his friends were killed by the police during that time. He recalled protesting Jim Crow south and the signs that were up there saying "no niggers allowed, white people only". Looking back, he is proud of the great fight he put against the Ku Klux Klan which became a defining moment in his life.

Ken would go on to found The Harriet Tubman Centre, which was one of the first black multi-civic centers in Toronto which has been existence about forty years now. As a manager of access and diversity, he started a number of programs with the city of Toronto, he worked with several mayors on special projects, worked with the province, worked with probation and designed a program called Heritage Counselling. This remarkable program still exists today and has been the basis of change for a lot of young black people, particularly in understanding and accepting their beginnings and some of the mental health issues and trauma that they face.

One key observation Ken Jeffers has made—through various interactions with black youth—is that racialized youth feel a sense of hopelessness but don't tell anybody. It's quite tragic that the many studies ignore the trauma that black youth face in a major way. Ken notes that they are not enough mental health resources and program for black youth and those that exist are dependent on government funding. As previous funder of the city, he notes that "there isn't one black community group that is resourced by the city of Toronto with co-funding, never has—right now there aren't and that may seem strange but there are always lots of progresses.

We have funding for programs but we don't have funding for programs that are sustained. The result which is hopelessness and lack of trust and confidence and faith in what community groups can deliver. According to Ken Jeffers, "we provide jobs, and I say jobs——a job tends to be temporary, for example—we don't design plans for career development". In his capacity as member of the Toronto Police Services Board, he continues to advocate for more community resources and mental health awareness. "I was saying to the board maybe what we all should be doing is advocating for community groups to be resourced so that they can deal with this situations of young people, particularly black youth.

He recommends that we need to look at different methodologies in intervening in the lives of these young people. They have lost confidence and they have a hopelessness and a veneer that "I am okay" and they are not. In these conferences, we have to look at the implementations and we have to measure the outcomes. Ken Jeffers underscored, "**40 years ago in the TDSB, young black people were failing, 40 years later they are failing. That say something is wrong with that picture. We have more black people and people of colour in the boards and in different positions in the government than we have ever had before but collectively we are worse off so something is wrong**"

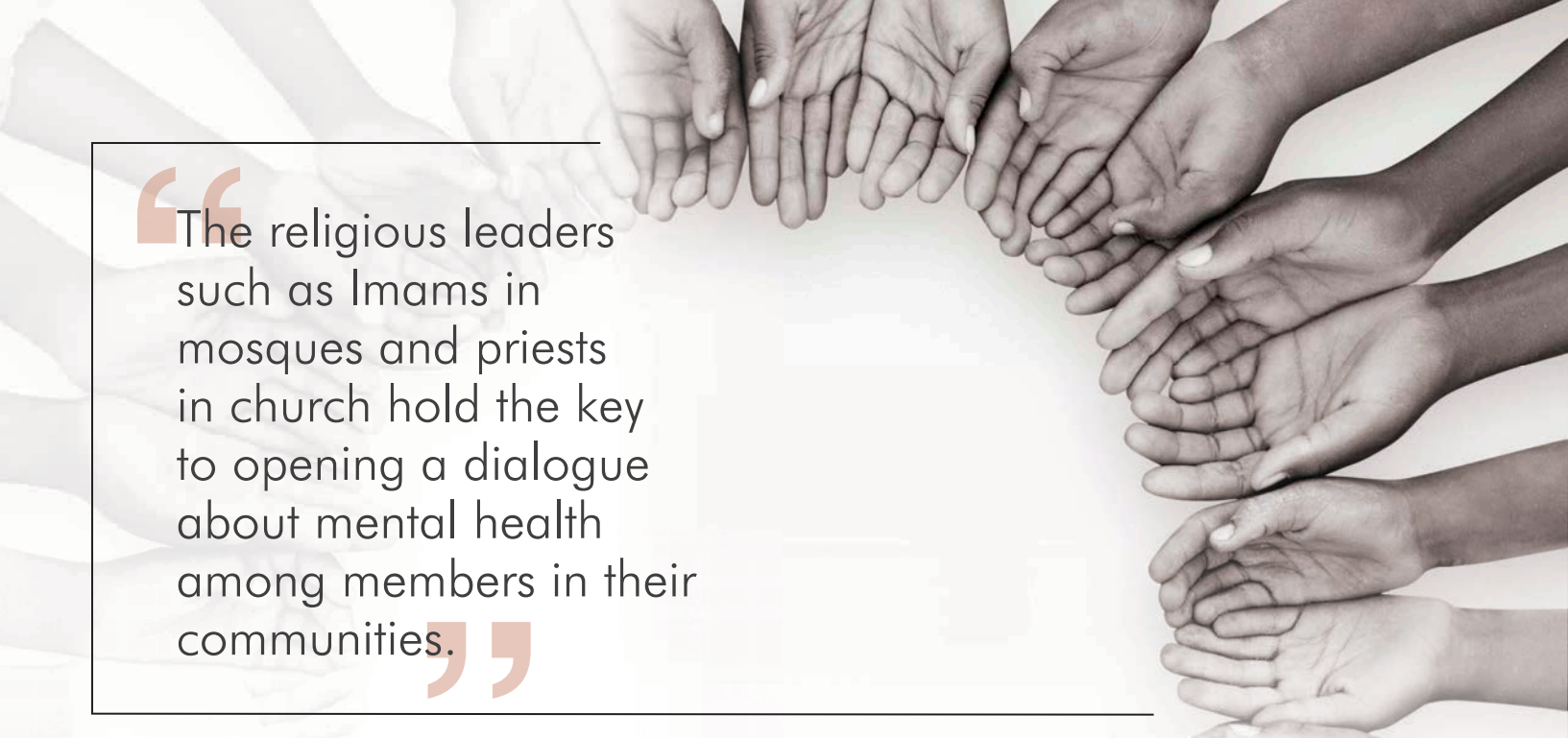
***Babur Mawldin** – Executive Director and President, Jane Alliance Neighbourhood Services and Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee and Afghan Network of Ontario*

Babur was born in Afghanistan and has worked in several countries like China, Pakistan, Iran and Tajikistan. Babur talks about radicalization in Islam, however the concept can apply to other religions.

Islam is known from two different viewpoints. Firstly, Islam is a religion of peace, tolerance, social justice and respect; the other view is political Islam. In which there is the belief that there is a moral and religious duty to spread Islam, inviting others to convert and guide them on the right path. Pakistan now hosts over 5 million refugees from Afghanistan and they teach the refugee children Islamic concepts of jihad. At a time, everyone's focus was on the Russians in Afghanistan. No one cared about the future of theses refugee children. In fact, the more extremist one was the more support they gained, due to the belief that extremists were more willing to die fighting against the Russians. Everyone celebrated the collapse of the Soviet Union; they considered it a victory. They were not aware of the real problem that would soon emerge; that being the fully armed Mujahideen and Islamic extremist groups.

When Mujahideen parties started fighting over who should form the government, the Taliban movement was introduced. 'Taliban' literally means Islamic students. The Taliban started a crusade to remove the corrupt Mujahideen parties and form an Islamic government. By the mid 90s the Taliban became the most powerful group in Afghanistan. The Taliban turned from a local militia group to an original terrorist group. After September 11, 2001, Taliban and Al-Qaeda were forced to leave Afghanistan but the found safe havens in Pakistan. The important thing to remember is that Isis, Taliban, Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, and Hezbollah all have different names, but the same agenda; Their ideologies are the same, but their tools and techniques are different.

The common nature of terrorist groups is to change their name and rise again once defeated. No country is immune to the virus of radicalization. There is no way to eliminate radicalization, we can only educate youth keep them under surveillance.



> "The religious leaders such as Imams in mosques and priests in church hold the key to opening a dialogue about mental health among members in their communities."

Babur's suggestion to prevent youth radicalization is to promote civic engagement amongst Muslims and to continue building democratic institutions. Youth need support to deal with issues of mental health, depression, anger and social isolation. Muslims need to see themselves as part of the society.

***Mariam Nur** – Community Memeber*

Mariam is a black Muslim. She grew up in a Somali community in Ottawa where she attended the University of Ottawa for economics and development. She worked as an analyst in the federal government with indigenous affairs before working at Social Development Canada as a policy analyst for temporary foreign workers. Although her background is in Policy, she recently transferred to community work. As a child growing up in a white community, her parents decided to put her into a private Muslim school; this was the first time in her life that her teachers looked like her and were able to understand her experiences and culture. In the Somali community there are no words within itself to describe mental health or trauma. As result language posses a large barrier. Like Mariam, other kids have lack of access to service providers that understand their culture, family background, and trauma. Mariam has encountered kids saying that they want to stay in the hood because that is where they are comfortable and where they see people like themselves.

In terms of representation in Education, Mariam notes that all teachers require cultural brokering. Just because two people are black, it does not necessarily mean that they understand one another's cultures. If a child feels that they cannot relate to their teachers, there should be someone who comes in that does not work for the school board with whom the child can comfortable express their experiences. Many children feel like their teachers are not there for them. Being a black Muslim, Mariam has experienced teachers asking her why she isn't eating, and she had to explain Ramadan. According to Mariam the biggest solution that there can be is access to service providers that are cultural brokers, access to service providers and services in which people look like them, and the means in which service providers need to be trained and understand the significance and experiences of the Somali or whichever community that you 're trying to help".

***Murad Javed** - Master of Affairs Student at Munk School of Global Affairs*

Javed is a recent graduate from the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. He has had experience working with the UN Development Program in South Asia, focusing on preventing extremism amongst youth. As a graduating student, Javed took part in a 12-student co-op initiative, in which they did consulting for a client from the public, private or non-profit sector. Javed's group worked with Tele-Medicine Network in alliance with Midaynta and others as a client. Their focus was mental health issues faced by diasporic communities from Somalia Kenya Eritrea and Ethiopia in Ontario. Their focus was explored in three stages—part 1 was researching literature; part 2 was speaking to key stakeholders and informants to get an account of what these diasporic communities are experiencing; part 3 was to come up with recommendations or solutions to solve the key mental health issues faced by these communities.

It was found that a number of mental health issues are kept quite due to the stigma that is associated with them. Javed's group spoke to officials that had done work on the ground in Somalia and Ethiopia, but they did not seem to have any working knowledge of the communities in Ontario or specifically Toronto. It was recommended that a technological platform be

set up to give community members a forum from which they can get knowledge from health professionals and to network within the community.

In many European countries they have begun screening immigrants at the port of entries by completing a mental health assessment. These assessments serve as an early warning initiative, that will subsequently target individuals from diasporic communities to access mental health services. Usually knowledge given to these individuals needs to be delivered with a religious angle. It is very important that religious leaders be brought on board with the mental health issues in these communities. The religious leaders such as Imams in mosques and priests in churches hold the key to opening a dialogue about mental health among members in their communities.

Murad was asked about the early warning systems for addressing mental health. "Is there any concern that migration experience may become pathologized? How do you counteract the media narrative that immigrants are unwanted or undesirable people? In response, Javed brought up about the example of Europe as a work in progress. Controlled brokering in psychological research is needed. Psychologists and psychiatrists could rely on a DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) manual to create cultural formulation. The DSM manual would serve as a typology of an individual from a place.

DISCUSSION SESSION:

Q.1: Ahmed, you spoke about the cultural importance of teachers for culturally sensitive and a school system that's culturally sensitive, I'm going to just share a little bit about the data (from the Black Experience Project) first of all and then talk about where you see the solutions and how this information can be used. So, one of the findings of the black experience project is that having black teachers in the classroom is a key factor in positive high school experiences, but it is not the norm and we know that. It talks about 91% of high school students felt accepted at school because the teachers were sensitive to them and it goes on farther, and those who felt that they received a good education when the teachers were black, the total was 84%. When the teachers are black and not just black but culturally aware and can relate to them. I'm going to stop right there, there's a lot more and it's a lot deeper in terms of the research and the data that school boards can use to say that we need to look at how we recruit and how we train and how we understand our students

There's also data around streaming and we know that that's been going on for many years, but this has not been necessarily the public forum and really accessible to parents. And this is accessible to parents and to community groups I know that I was streamed, they wanted to stream my kids. I thought in the back of classrooms that the teacher thought that I wasn't in the room anymore and that I could see how the teachers behave toward my kids. How do we educate parents and how they intervene with teachers; perhaps using some of the data they can have on hand to be better advocates so that we can have the chance to change things that have been happening since my day, and I won't tell you how old I am and I know it was happening prior to that and since I don't want my grandkids to have to go through this as well.

Ahmed: I will give it a shot first. Another mistake with a lot of research is that they say that we need to go to engage with the youth and moms but if you look at it— I just want to make sure that clarify it; when you look at the Aboriginal experience, you see that you respect your elders by empowering the grandfathers, moms and dads and that we always deal when there's a death in the family. When there's a funeral, when there's a wedding, when it comes to all that, the respect is not being respected within the Canadian structure. We need to be very careful when we are prescribed solutions and look for a holistic solution and we need to empower everybody else. Coming back to your question on how and what we need to do in terms of educating the educators. If the educator comes from an area where the only people that they have ever been in contact with are white individuals and that's the way they grew up, if that's their culture, they will bring those biases into class. Even though they had the best intention to do the right thing there is still that bias within the organizational system. There is no cultural educational training for the teachers who were supposed to be teaching different areas. Cultural brokers should be the ones who know about sensitivity and the concerns of different communities. For example, if you have 10 different kids with different religions and a Buddhist person might celebrate something, you should know that. The Muslim calendar, you should know it. So cultural sensitivity and awareness starts not only in the classroom but before they even go to the classroom. They need to be educated and then the teacher conferences need to be another place where the teachers need to be educated. I prefer that individuals who are teachers reflect the community that they represent. You don't have to teach this area and if you have no vested interest in where you are teaching because you live in a nice neighborhood or you drive one and a half hours to come to work, you shouldn't be teaching in that area. So there should be a vested interest within the schools as well.

Mariam: Mariam further added to Ahmed's answer and agreed that all teachers should require cultural brokering regardless of their background or even if we do not have teachers as diverse as we would like them to be. Regardless of teacher's ethnic background, everyone requires cultural brokering. There is no uniformity of blackness and can not the significances of every culture. Just because two people are black, it does not necessarily mean that they understand one another's cultures. If a child feels that they cannot relate to their teachers, there should be someone who comes in that does not work for the school board with whom the child can comfortable express their experiences. Many children feel like there teachers are not

there for them. Being a black Muslim, Mariam has experienced teachers asking her why she isn't eating, and she had to explain Ramadan. According to Nur, cultural is important for all teacher regardless of your cultural or religious background.

Q: My question is for Murad. You have discussed early warning systems for addressing mental health issues discussing the European experience. Is there any concern that this might pathologize the migration experience to reinforce the media narrative? You know, the unwanted or undesirable folks are at our doors and so how do you count to prevent that? It's great that there are those services at those borders and there is early intervention but how do you counteract that?

Murad Javed: The example that I brought up from Europe is still a work-in-progress so that is a very legitimate concern there. But at least the stuff that they've done to try to prevent and diagnose early on seems to work. On one of the things that is very significant, you talked about it, "Cultural brokering" we discover this in psychological research. The DSM manual (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) has something called "the cultural formulation". So, psychiatrists and psychologists can rely on the DSM manual to create a cultural formulation which is a typology or a vignette off a particular individual from a particular place, which gives them some information on what that individual has gone through, what is their background, what kind of intersectionality comes into their identity and that's sort of the thing that has been implemented in in Europe, in the Netherlands specifically. We heard here in our research at Munk school, we spoke to people who told us that they're patients —and there are not that many patients from these communities actually who access mental health services— who did make it to the middle health physician or service provider and by the second round of therapy they dropped out. The reason being that the line of questioning which is very normal for the physician, in how they question and how they diagnose, seem to be very culturally intrusive and inappropriate for those patients so they dropped out. So we suggested to look at it a little bit more closely to help physicians and service providers, particularly from the service providers' point of view, to create the resources necessary to have that kind of cultural knowledge in the system. If you can maybe avoid that ideology that these people come from this place. So I think there are things to circumvent that and we recommended that the resources need to be put towards understanding that better.

Q: I'm really glad that the topic of culture has come up. Ken you mentioned how 2nd generation or 1.5 generation black youth have this "third culture". People have talked about them occupying a certain kind of third space. Marian you mentioned Cultural brokerage, I was just in New York actually as well, just a week and half ago and I was in Harlem. I was at the Schomburg Center for research in Black Culture and I spent about a day there going the archives. This is a public library–– operated by New York Public Library–– and it archives the work of important black intellectuals, scholars, etc.

They have a Junior Scholars fellowship program; kids in local neighborhoods in Harlem are coming, they are learning about their history: black culture, the black experience in North America, particularly in the United States..

It was such a wonderful area, they had to do that a gallery, there was a particular exhibit on the Black Panthers and kind of contextualizing that whole experience. In the atrium there was the ashes of Langston Hughes, they were interred there. It's a kind of secret space where young people can come, researchers, scholars, university students are invited for summer internships. I think that these are the kinds of imaginative solutions that we need to think about— when we think of engaging young people. Young people like Marian and others are really ahead of us in these conversations. How do we provide them with resources and opportunities to develop themselves, to really bring the conversation to a different level? I think that—I hope someone is here from the city of Toronto, if not many of you are from different levels of government–. I can't imagine that it would be that difficult to put together a public library where the black Canadian experience can be documented, where you can have the Bblack Experience Project there to document the 400 years of black history. So that young people can understand that really and truly they stand on the shoulders of the great work that's been done by countless activist like yourself Ken and many others.

I think these are the kinds of solutions that we need to think about outside of the securitized policing-kinds of solutions. So I'm really glad that we're talking about culture.

Ken: Your comments are very well taken. I just wanna tell you that we have actually, as part of training of young people— we use pride as a motivator for positive change. For young people It is so important for them to understand that the basis of their existence is what should be public knowledge. Once we

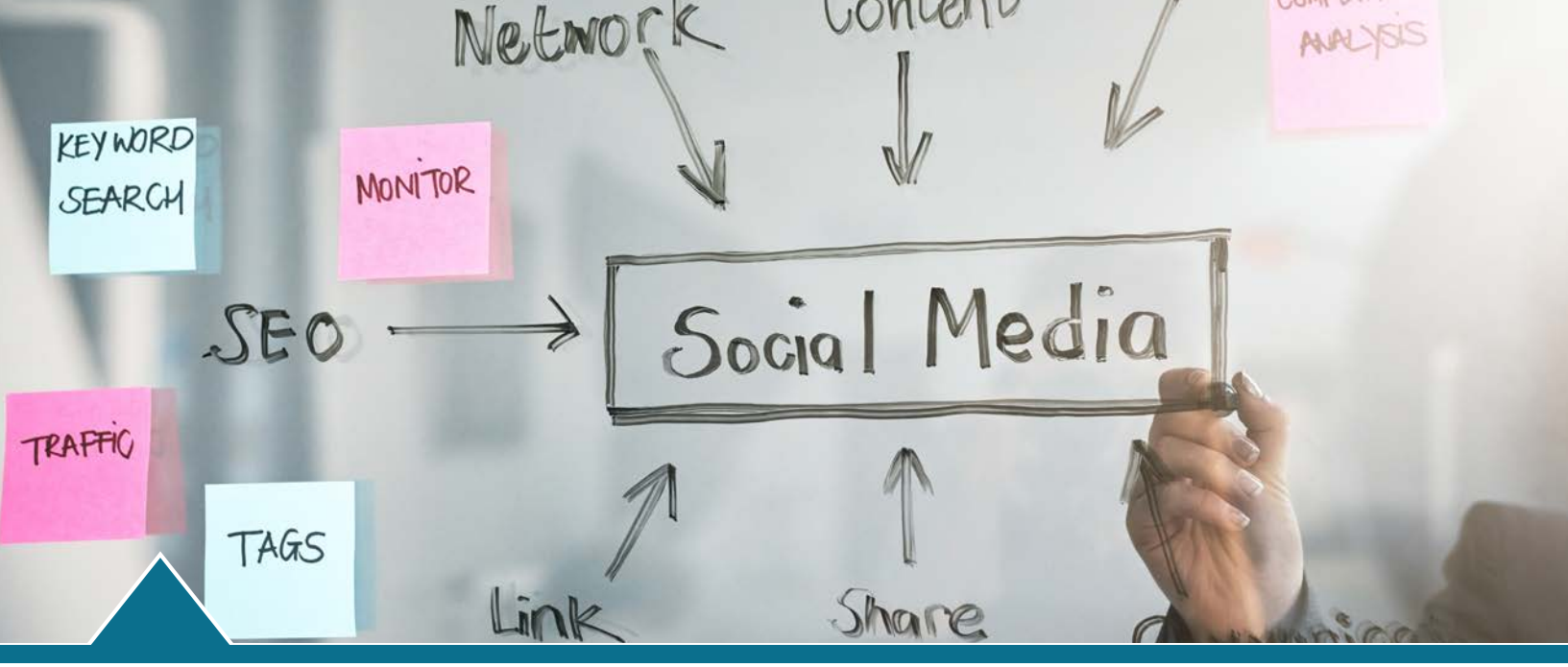
were doing a session on heritage counselling and I had done some on Mansa Munsa, who of course was a great Muslim Leader. T¬¬he probation services were a little taken back by that because you are introducing religion. But I am saying this is an African, who is Muslim, who has made such great contribution to civilization and when these young people who are Muslim and non-Muslim heard that and felt the power of Mansa Mussa, it really inspired them. That's why at the city we worked with Abdulhakim, the imam, to introduce swimming for Muslim women, we educated the Toronto District board that yes they are special needs for Muslim women. They cannot and will not participate unless they are terms acceptable to them. So we worked with the Imams in providing those programs. I think it is import that schools and others introduce and integrate into history the accomplishment of people of African descent.

Q: This panel resonate a lot with the volunteer work that I do in mental health advocacy and suicide prevention, and a lot of things that have been said around cultural brokers.I do a lot of culture brokering myself in hospitals, in helping families navigate the system. I think the work Murad and his team has done is really unprecedented and exciting, and brings the experiences of diaspora communities with specific recommendations, some of which Murad mentioned gives as the possibility to start saying that how can some of the recommendations that Murad shared with us allows us to start imagining and see some of the work the other members of panel are doing. For example, sister Marian has spoken about some of the work she is doing in Ottawa. One of the things that Murad spoke, is that this whole community suffers from siloes. How do we again enable, whether it the technological platform that Murad is talking about, or any other mechanisms, to bring those limited community-based resources we have around mental health and trauma to connect and build what I feel is lacked; a community-based mental health system? By that I mean not to build a parallel system–– In Ontario we two billion dollars in this current budget around mental health services. We have huge investment in the mental health system––the clinical mental health system. What is lacking is a comparative community-based capacity to engage in a smart way with that funding system. And some of the recommendations that were shared and some of experience folks spoke could allow us to start building system capacity at community level. I am looking for some suggestions or reflections on that point.

Ahmed: Ahmed 100% agreed with the comment from the audience and further emphasized the need for community-based solutions. "One thing that we forget, we say that solution should come from the community but a lot times the communities are not being invested in; It's always others will do the job and the community will be either the connector or brokers and all that." He also addressed the idea that the Somali community is divided and pointed out that the same applies to different communities including the white community. What we ought to do is rally behind the important work happening at the grassroots level, support people in your community that are driving change and invest into the community.

Ahmed underscored the parallels between what's happening to the Somali community across different cities in Canada. "What's happening in Toronto in no unique; it's happening in Ottawa, It's happening in Winnipeg. "When there is a death in Toronto where a Somali kid dies I guarantee that a week later another one dies in Edmonton." We must think of how we can collaborate and make change for the future generation.

Marian: Marian emphasized the need for customized programs that meet local needs. "the one thing I've learned is that whatever new organizations or new community group comes ahead, it's always dangerous to mimic another program that's already in place." She expressed concerns of competing interests between organizations working in racialized communities. In this regard, it is important for community organization to form partnerships and work together instead of competing for funding. "Let's be honest funding is hard to find, funding is limited, so you have to make the most out of your funding and I feel I like it's extremely important in order for Community services that are already in place to able to connect and link themselves with each other and build partnership because that's how you guys make the most out of each other. It's not a competition!"



Panel Discussion VI: Raising Awareness of the Role of (Social)Media and Media Literacy in Youth Resiliency, Hate, Racism and Youth Radicalization

MODERATOR: AMANI M. OMAR

***Rizwan Mohammad** - National Coordinator for the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)*

Mohammad began by explaining that he will be talking about social media and media literacy, in building youth resiliency and youth led civic engagement with the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW). Mohammad described a project CCMW worked on to better equip civically engaged youth to address hate and racism. The two-year project which ran from 2013-2015 called Project Communitas was funded by Public Safety Canada. Mohammad and CCMW used the term "youth at risk of civic disengagement" rather than, "youth at risk of radicalization to violence", because the CCMW determined that a better way to strengthen community resilience was to civically engage diverse youth.

Funded by Public Safety Canada, the Canadian Council of Muslim Women worked on a two-year project called Project Communitas. Individual and community resilience can take on many forms. This project analyzed the role of young people in building resilience by developing various inter-religious and inter-community initiatives. This project focused on cultural and faith-based groups and organizations. Project Communitas strengthened individual and community resilience through the development of inner-cultural and inter-faith community-based resilience projects that fostered social interdependence, active citizenship, dialogue and youth leadership. The project engaged 7 cities (Montreal, Ottawa, the Greater Toronto Area, London, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver) and 300+ diverse youth (18-30) from across Canada in training, knowledge building and community development.

These youth advisors had the opportunity to build a national network, engage in meaningful discussions on resilience and community building, and develop strategies to build stronger communities in their own cities. Each city hosted resilience training for these young adults and participants received training in areas of intercultural engagement, community mobilization, which often had a social media component. CCMW was looking at social media tools as tools for community mobilization. The youth advisors also received training in the areas of community resilience, approaching it from a community perspective and also from an individual perspective, which involved looking at existing models and best practices.

After that initiative, each of these young people went back to their home city and rolled out a community resilience initiative based on what they had learned. Each project reflected the distinctive needs of each particular community and following this initiative, the youth connected with various community leaders and shared their project. Another national forum took place, which sought to invite professionals from each community to share their vision of what a resilient community looks like. The project culminated in the creation of a final publication which, among other things, provides readers with information on individual and community resilience. It also provides information about how the seven local youth-led initiatives addressed challenges and generated strategies for developing their resilience initiatives. The toolkit was developed in this way to serve youth interested in building their own community resilience initiative from scratch themselves and to provide guidance about how to engage in community mobilization using social media and other tools

Mohammad described the Civics Work Project which was more recent. "What we focused on, rather than talking about radicalization, was on the grievances that young people have, that young activists have had that showed an interest in our programming, and we focused on how to equip them to deal with these grievances." The Civics Works Project took place in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto. CCMW piloted it from September 2016 to March 2017 with support from Canadian Heritage's Multiculturalism Program. CCMW focused on improving civic engagement skills for youth while providing mentorship to improve employability skills. The participants included youth of more than 13 different ethnocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, identifying as Muslim and non-Muslim, and they all came from a diverse range of academic backgrounds and political ideologies.

CCMW organized a series of four workshops or "Civics Labs". The first one was on 4 kinds of literacy that they determined were important for practical civic engagement. The second workshop was on media literacy which focused on identifying the difference between fake news, flawed news, propaganda, and the relationship between democracy and the free press. The third workshop focused on financial literacy, such as understanding debt, tax, and budgeting. The final workshop was a technological literacy workshop that paid special attention to digital and social media tools for social change. These labs culminated in a policy assignment at the Parliament of Canada. Mohammad emphasized that, "it was the first time that these youth had the opportunity to work collaboratively inside the Parliament spaces where decisions shaping the whole country take place."

Mohammad noted that out of the four Civics Labs, the favourite one was the media literacy lab led by Steven Zhou, who is an award-winning journalist and writer based in Toronto covering global politics, extremism, and right-wing populism. In one of his first exercises, Zhou challenged the young participants in the workshops to take turns to discuss what they cared about deeply, including political sentiments, and then each of them had to say three things that they had heard their partner say, and their partner would get to see if they remembered accurately/correctly or not. Mohammad observed that "It was fascinating to notice how people who are even attempting to actively listen often misconstrued, misperceived, and misunderstood their partner's viewpoint, even amongst their other peers. We especially noticed the gap between people who were already polarized in terms of different political views, and this was in person. So how distortive must it be when you use social media literacy tools to try to communicate about very complicated grievances? That was one of the things that came out of that conversation."

Mohammad described another exercise he did with youth to develop their media literacy skills by focusing on some specific strategies and tactics. He focused on engaging young people who identify or report themselves as relatively civically disengaged but he wondered if some of these strategies or tactics could be adapted to build stronger media literacy among youth at-risk of radicalization to violence. Mohammad used a tool called "On the Media: the Fake News Edition", to teach youth 11 tactics to more effectively identify fake news. He described the tactics listed below:

Mohammad concluded by pointing out that there are many other resources like this one easily accessible to community members online to make interventions effective, and to develop digital media literacy and social media literacy. But instead of these resources being used effectively, Mohammad observed: "I think what's often happening is that people are very isolated and their parents don't know what's going on, their teachers don't know what's going on, their community mentors don't know what's going on, and all of a sudden, the police are there, and by then it's often too late for concerned community members to help."

***Detective Scott Purches** – Investigator with the Security Section of Toronto Police Intelligence Services*

Purches has been with the Toronto Police Service for the past 21 years. He is currently in the intelligence branch and the security section. Within that section, he is an investigator of extremism, hate crime, international assistance, as well as providing protective services when in partnership with the RCMP. Purches explained that he would be talking about extremism, how the Toronto Police Service investigates extremism, and what steps to take to further address this problem. Purches and his team currently works on cases that are "much greyer". Community members bring forward concerns that are not necessarily criminal activity; some of these concerns are about people watching YouTube videos at the library, people who overhear conversations on the buses, or crime stoppers tips about neighbours that they have concerns about.

The main issue at hand is how the police can respond and support whoever is engaging in this behaviour. Purches noted, "What we're finding is that the people who are engaging in this behaviour are quite similar to the people who are falling into the gang life and the human-trafficking life; people who are suffering from aspects of their personal lives that is making them susceptible to risk factors. Whether they are marginalized or disenfranchised, they are feeling as though they don't have a sense of belonging, and they're manifesting all of these things within many areas that the police are coming across."

Purches then discussed the work the police do on social media activity. "When it comes to social media and any sort of internet crimes we have a challenge. Whether it be someone who is engaged in human-trafficking, child exploitation, there is an element of anonymity that people can subscribe to online that makes it very difficult for the authorities to take action or take it to the next step." A significant problem with online activity is the transient nature of the internet. Purches used an example of how there might be a post on Twitter and by the time the police investigate that post, it will be gone and replaced by 10 other similar posts. Another issue is that many internet service providers, a lot of the main ones being Google, Twitter, or Microsoft, are all based in the United States. According to the law, if there is a criminal offense in Toronto but through an American platform, then the police have to go through international channels, which is time consuming.

Purches clarified that his office investigates radicalization of all forms, including right-wing radicalization, and radicalization and extremism, and not just religious ideological radicalization which is the most common form reported by society. He also pointed out that not all forms of radicalization is bad. For example, there are many radicals who shaped Toronto to be the way it is today. It becomes problematic when radical thoughts moves to an ideologically driven criminal event.

Purches concluded by explaining that the police addresses grey areas, including reports that do not meet the threshold of criminality, through the Counter Violent Extremism program. This is a city run program that the Toronto Police Services is a member of. It is a initiative in the City of Toronto in which there are four areas within the city that the police have reported and they bring these issues to focus tables. It started up in the North-West area, which is called "Focus" (Furthering Our Communities and Uniting our Services) and the police is one of the many members at these tables, with Public Health , City of Toronto, the school boards being a few others as well. The problem which is being reported to the police is brought forward so that the services at the table can provide enhanced support. For example, if there is a young person who may be lashing out or having issues at school, the school boards get engaged. It's not necessarily a police problem because there is no criminality. However, it does not mean that the police are not going to bring that issue to the table, and these focus tables provide the police with the opportunity to bring the issue forward in collaboration with others.

***Dr. Ken Menkhaus** – Chair and C. Louise Nelson Professor, Political Science Department at Davidson College*

Dr. Menkhaus began by exploring perceptions on radicalization. There is generally a presumption, when talking radicalization, that it's a bad thing. The reality, Dr. Menkhaus explained, is that for plenty of people in our society and around the world, what some see as radicalization, others would see as, "an awakening, as mobilization, as a good thing, and not a bad thing. By definition, anyone who is looking to revolutionize is also looking to radicalize conventual thinking about the way society exists." Dr. Menkhaus assumed everyone in the

conference was operating on the assumption that the role of social media radicalization is something to be avoided, and he took that perspective for the conference as well.

The use of social media in radicalizing youth is a significant global issue. Dr. Menkhaus chose to reflect on the case of Al-Shabaab in Somalia, which is in the Horn of Africa. Al-Shabaab has been very active and innovative, in the use of social media, internet and other new technologies. It began about six or seven years ago primarily with the use of the production of film. There were propaganda films designed to mobilize, which were of mixed effectiveness. Some of them were low quality and sometimes the messaging was poor. Over time, Al-Shabaab started creating chat rooms and was being active on Twitter, both of which were more effective. Dr. Menkhaus pointed out that Al-Shabaab conflated Somali nationalism and Islamism which worked very well. A lot of their messaging was a call for Somali unity, which has been effective in targeting individuals from the Somali diaspora and other Muslims around the world. Al-Shabaab has used Twitter's limited word count to appropriate existing grievances and redress them in their own ideology such as making short references the Ethiopian occupiers or the Kenyan infidels. Dr. Menkhaus noted that Twitter can explicate where grievances exist and invite us to explore these grievances and the extent to which these grievances are real. "Grievances can be addressed and to address them is to almost neutralize the risk of radicalization that some of that messaging can convey."

Dr. Menkhaus elaborated on how it is important to understand that Al Shabaab and similar groups radicalize and polarize by focusing exclusively on what they are against. "We knew very much what they were against. They were against the transitional federal government, they were against the United States, they were against Ethiopia and Kenya, they were against federalism. What they were for, they didn't spend a whole lot of time on. And that's not surprising because when groups are forced by circumstances to articulate what they actually stand for, that's where their messaging loses the audience."

DISCUSSION SESSION:

First, Det. Purches asked Mohammad what people can learn about future sessions. Mohammad explained that everyone can visit them at ccmw.com/youth and get access to information about projects that they are working on as well as publications written and co-written by youth.

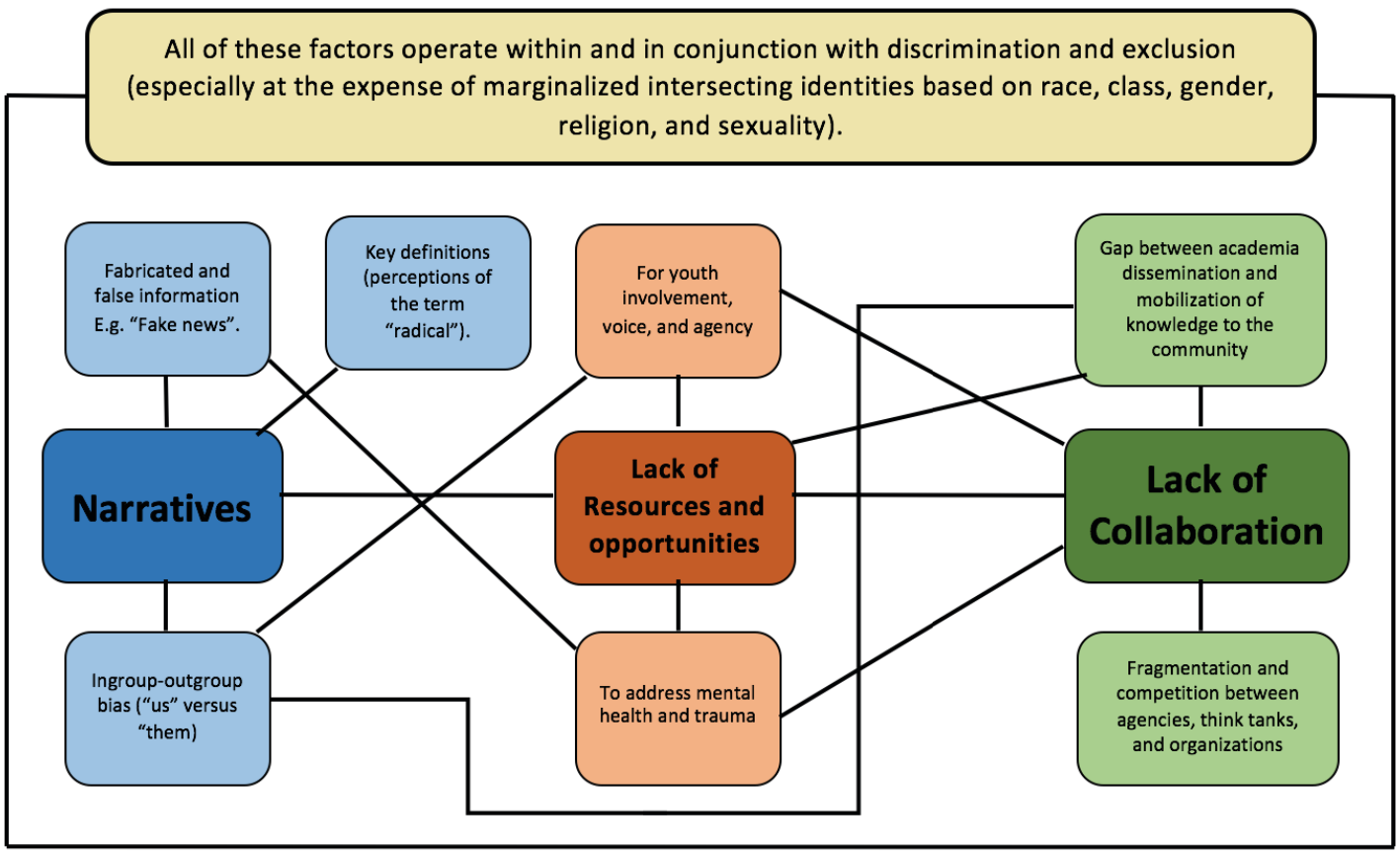
Second, Mohammad asked Purches if he can comment about the landscape of right-wing populist extremism and radicalization in those circles that he sees. He cited the case of a person who posted on social media as Charles Ziger, who is apparently a Montreal neo-Nazi and he cultivated a web of hate online that's been linked to real world violence. Purches explained that we're seeing radicalization and radical thought moving towards potential extremism in many spheres or many realms. One of them is in the far-right, in the current political climate, moreso in the States and in Europe. You do have the populist movement filling the internet with ideas and narrative which everyone is hoping to provide a counternarrative to counterbalance.

Third, an audience member asked the panel speakers for some solutions in relations to to the topic of the panel (raising awareness of the role of social media and media literacy in youth resiliency, hate, racism, and youth radicalization) and how they think social media can have a positive impact on youth resilience in every community. Purches emphasized the importance for everyone to continue standing up and speaking out against people who post hateful messages or who express views that suggest that they subscribe to radical or extremist thinking. If it happens in a school, then report it to the school staff and if necessary, report it to the police. Mohammad thinks there is a disproportionate amount of resources dedicated to Muslim youth and extremism, versus right-wing populist extremism amongst some youth in Canada. He encouraged people to notice how different the landscape is for both Muslim extremists in Canada and right-wing extremists in Canada, in that right-wing extremists have access to more resources than Muslim extremists to spread hateful messages online (e.g. websites, podcasts, social media accounts)

Fourth, an audience member commented on the word "radicalization" and the acceptance of the term and how it is important to use the term, ""hate motivated violence" " instead, to promote inclusivity. This is because using the word "hate" does not stigmatize the community. "When it comes to policies of awareness, terminology matters." The audience member posed a scenario and a question to the panelists: If a mom sees that her son or daughter is looking at some kind of website and they want to help, the first people they normally contact is the community, if they are willing to do that step. What assurance would you give to a mom who contacts you and whose son or daughter is looking at websites they should not be looking at? Purches explained that there are two sides to the coin: the police investigate the matter itself, and through the community partnerships and engagement unit, those officers bring that information to the table just as a facilitating agent. The police review the information that has been reported to them as it is, and they deem it to be criminal or not criminal. If it's not criminal and it meets the threshold or the criteria to go to the community-led tables, then it gets passed on to that.

Call to Action: An Inclusive and Collaborative Action Plan (ICAP)

After analyzing the panelists summaries and feedback from the conference, we created a list of salient factors that exacerbate youth radicalization. From these factors we derived the Call to Action. Youth radicalization is an intricate and complex issue; as such the factors are also at the nexus of complexity. Below is a diagram to highlight the nature of the interconnectedness of these factors:



The Call to Action is a call to all—a call to work together by adopting a collaborative framework that addresses youth radicalization from all angle under clear and attainable goals. First and foremost, the Call to Action recognizes that efforts to counteract youth radicalization cannot come from law enforcement alone; it require active engagement from multiple actors especially racialized communities and front line community organizations. While the conference provided the opportunities to share of ideas, have in-depth discussion, and learn from each other, the hardest part is turning all that into action. And that is where the Call to Action or Action Plan comes into play. As we look to apply the recommendations from this year's conference with background knowledge gained from previous years' recommendations, the best way forward is to take a more inclusive and collaborative approach and proactive tone. Therefore, the best way forward is to characterize the information from the panel discussions as a "Call to Action". Presentations and discussions of the two-day conference provided insightful knowledge that underscored the need to:

- Allocate and invest more resources in communities and on the ground
- Increase the role, agency, and collaboration of communities
- Provide additional resources for targeted mental health treatment
- Increase community-based research and effective dissemination strategies of research and information
- Change the narrative through education reforms, media perception, and the role of social media.

It is our hope that different communities in Canada, policy makers, law enforcement, educators, frontline workers, and individuals alike will use this Call to Action and information contained in this report to become catalysts for change and adopt some the recommendation and goals set in this report.

SHORT TERM GOALS:

Goals in this section are characterized as items that can be attainable in the next few years.

Allocate and invest more resources in communities and on the ground

The first and foremost call to action to invest more resources in racialized communities where poverty levels are very high. Though multisectoral approach, the government can ensure that resources are multiplied by investment in proximal support services for families and youth in different neighbourhoods and cities instead of other mechanisms such as screening tools that have been proven to fail. The problem is not that the government lacks resources but that it needs to properly allocate resources considering that racialized communities lag behind everyone else and need the support the most. This will ago along the lines of what Dr. Ghayda Hassan defined as increasing the amount of resources available to the community as well as not stigmatizing a community based on neighborhood or religion. This will also entail increased funding for grassroots, frontline community agencies, and youth programs. Ways that this could be actioned are through phasing out screening tools, creating spaces for youth to interact offline and online (e.g. life skill programs or leadership spaces), and aiding with youth employment. Overall, these interactions must develop ways for individuals to become better prepared for dealing with and preventing radicalization related issues.

Increasing the Role, Agency, and Collaboration of Communities

A key barrier to addressing issues impacting racialized communities is lack of collaboration between different actors working in these communities. On one hand trust between member of racialized communities and law enforcement is very low. On the other hand most community agencies operate in silos and have no mechanism to work together, share information and operate as single voice. As such the second short term call to action is for an increase in collaboration between community members and local law enforcement, between different racialized communities, and between communities agencies for better collaboration. This call to action call upon many sectors and stakeholders to collaborate because the current siloed working style has proven inefficient and as we learn that communities are critical to promoting a safe community.

Notably, Law enforcement should work hand-in-hand with front line youth-targeted organisations that are dedicated to address the issue of youth radicalization. This will enable an early intervention whereby youth programs helping at-risk youth start working with the youth the moment law enforcement sees sign of radicalization or the moment they are in conflict with the law instead of waiting for a youth to go jail and before front organization get referrals. This level of collaboration will also help increase trust between law enforcement and racialized communities as more people will come forward given that their perception of law enforcement as "police lurking in shadows wait to pounce and take you to jail" would have changed. Collaboration between different actors on this level will ensure rehabilitation and prevention that takes into account one's condition is implemented. This call to action also calls for more diversity within law enforcement and having police that from the community they police who understand the local context and challenges of his environment. Jail should be the last option for youth after all the resource have been exhausted.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

Through this call to action, we call for increased resources for mental health treatment as well as increase support for trauma treatment. According Ken Jeffers they are not enough mental health resources and programs for black youth and those that exist are dependent on government funding. Targeted mental health resources for racialized youth would, to great extent, bridge this gap in service. It is important to note, as emphasized by Ken Jeffers and other panelists, that racialized youth feel a sense of hopelessness and rarely open up about mental health because they do not relate to current services.

COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EFFECTIVE DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES OF RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

Lastly, researchers and communities need to become more collaborative in sharing and promoting research, especially when research findings could be beneficial to the community. Marva Wisdom stated that while communities are often extensively studied, there is little research on community-based research where the perception of the community is reviewed. Scott Mckean emphasized that solutions should be locally driven, Dr. Cukier spoke on how fragmentation continues to be the biggest obstacle to developing strategy, and Matthew Levitt spoke on how communication is key amongst diverse stakeholders to build resilient communities to ensure public safety. Further research must be integrated with community development and growth.

LONG TERM GOALS:

The call to action items here are categorized as long term goals as the scope of work for each is much more extensive and consists of intricacies. It may require years, multiple stakeholders, and additional resources in order to achieve these goals.

CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

Changing the narrative is defined as reorganizing the narrative to change the discussion to be more beneficial to the involved stakeholders. Detective Feras Ismail spoke about how communities need to reframe the narrative from an 'us vs them' problem to a problem that is driven by an ability to see it as an 'our' problem. To address this, a multi-faceted approach is needed that involves:

1. Education Reforms (educators and government officials) to provide opportunities that allow a greater voice to youth as well as ways to create a curriculum that teaches resilience to violent radicalization while promoting greater empowerment amongst youth. This action promotes youth voices to be better heard and ideas shared through classroom discussion, conferences, and roundtable topics. Overall, efforts need to be increased to promote greater school inclusivity which includes school boards reviewing recruitment and training techniques, allowing for spaces for students to address grievances, and removing systematic barriers of racism (similar to the OPS anti-racism strategy).
2. Changing Media Perception - an understanding needs to be developed in the media that the perception of radicalization has an impact on definition of the issue both at the community level and internationally. Discussions need to be initiated regarding how media organizations can better address radicalization in an inclusive narrative rather than an 'us versus other' narrative. Discussions and actions need to initiated with the press regarding how radicalization is portrayed.
3. Role of Social Media - as social media becomes increasingly prevalent, there is a greater need to facilitate its interactions with youth. Actions need to be taken to prepare youth for interacting with extremist material online. Strategies include educating youth on how to identify extremist websites posing as legitimate sites, identifying fake news stories, as well as avoiding online ecosystems of terrorist organizations that facilitate extremist propaganda.

> "Trauma is at the heart of a lot of these issues and so our first and foremost action is to meet people where they're at by culture, where they are within our systems, and look at how do we heal, how do we leverage support services, and coordinate support services since that exists in an inner service system, to respond to local need as part of that healing"

- Changing the narrative
- Radicalization to violence instead of Violent Radicalization
- Promoting positive stories from the community
- Role of Social Media

- Education reform
- Increased investment in proximal support services for racialize youth and families
- Allocate and invest more resources in communities and on the ground

- Increased collaboration and sharing of information among community agencies
- Increase collaboration between community members and law enforcement

- Inclusive research
- Evidence informed community solutions
- Increased collaboration with community agencies
- Inclusive carriculum
- Teachers

MEDIA | **GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS** | **LAW ENFORCEMENT** | **ACADEMIA**

AN INCLUSIVE AND COLLABORATIVE ACTION PLAN (ICAP)

COMMUNITY SERVICES | **PRACTITIONERS** | **YOUTH VOICES** | **GENERAL POPULATION**

- Increased collaboration and sharing information among community agencies
- community-based research and effective dissemination strategies of research and information

- Increased collaboration and sharing of information with community agencies
- Provision of auxiliary support services
- Provision of holistic and cultural sensitive services

- Including youth in decision making process
- Privatizing input from youth

- Increased community engagement
- Increased awareness of issues impacting racialize communities
- Increasing trust between reclaimed peoples and the law enforcement

Appendix
Appendix A: Conference Agenda

	DAY I: MAY 7TH, 2018
8:30 – 9:00	Registration and Welcome Breakfast
9:00 – 9:20	Welcome & Opening Remarks: Amani M. Omar – Youth Poet ▪ Mahad Yusuf –Executive Director, Midaynta Community Services Dr. Caroline Manion –Lecturer at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education with extensive professional experience in East and West Africa
9:20 – 9:30	Greetings from Dignitaries: ▪ H.E. John L. Lanyasunya, High Commissioner, Kenya High Commission
9:30 – 09:45	Keynote Address: Hon. Laura Albanese, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and immigration
9:45- 10:00	COFFEE BREAK
10:00 – 11:30	PL Panel Discussion I: Youth Radicalization: Lessons Learned Abroad Moderator: Samia Mohamed ▪ Dr. Ghayda Hassan – Director and Founder, Canadian Practitioners Network for the Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence. ▪ David Michalski – Professor at the Munk Schools of Global Affairs ▪ Dr. Wendy Cukier –Founder of the Diversity Institute and a Professor at the Ryerson University Ted Rogers School of Management. ▪ Dr. Caroline Manion –Lecturer at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education with extensive professional experience in East and West Africa.

11:30 – 12:50	**LUNCH BREAK**
12:50 – 2:20	**Panel Discussion II: Youth Resiliency, Hate, Racism and Radicalization** **Moderator: Ruby Latif** ▪ Dr. Matthew Levitt – Senior fellow and director of the Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. ▪ Dr. Sara Thompson – Associate professor of Criminology at the University of Toronto. ▪ Dr. Pamela Divinsky – Executive Director at the Mosaic Institute ▪ Jamila Aman – CEO and Managing Director of Premier Canadian Business Solutions Inc. ▪ Michael kerr – Coordinator at Color of Poverty- Color of Change
2:20 – 2:30	**COFFEE BREAK**
2:30 – 4:00	**Panel Discussion III: Youth, Violent Radicalization and the Online Environment: Dispelling Myths and Countering Hate** **Moderator: Ubah Farah** ▪ Matthew Johnson - Director of Education, MediaSmarts ▪ Amarnath Amarasingam - Senior Research Fellow and Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute for Strategic Dialogue and the University of Waterloo ▪ Alexander Corbeil - Senior Research Analyst, Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence ▪ Stoney McCart - Director of Strategic Partnerships, The Students Commission of Canada
4:00 – 4:05	**Closing Remarks** ▪ Mahad Yusuf – Executive Director, Midaynta Community Services

	DAY II: MAY 8TH, 2018
8:30 - 9:00	Registration and Welcome Breakfast
9:00 - 9:05	Opening Remarks ▪ Mahad Yusuf –Executive Director, Midaynta Community Services
9:05– 9:30	Youth reflection of day one of the conference
9:30 – 10:00	Keynote Address: Robert L. McKenzie, PhD – Director and Senior Fellow, Muslim Diaspora Initiative, New America
	PLENARY SESSION
10:00 - 11:20	Panel Discussion IV: Ensuring Newcomers are Settled and Fully Integrated: Challenges & Opportunities in (Re)Settlement, Integration, Community Engagement, & Cultural Competency Moderator: Arij Sharifabow ▪ Detective Feras Ismail – Diversity Relations Bureau, Peel Region Police ▪ Marva Wisdom – Director for the Black Experience Project ▪ Scott Mckean - Manager, Community Safety & Wellbeing - City of Toronto
11:20 – 12:50	LUNCH BREAK
12:50 – 2:20	Panel Discussion V: Trauma and Mental Health as it Pertains to Youth Resiliency, Hate, Racism and Youth Radicalization: Strategies for Social Inclusion & Well-Being Moderator: Dr. Francois Yabit ▪ Murad Javed – Master of Global Affairs Student at Munk School of Global Affairs ▪ Ahmed Abdulkadir – Director, the Organization for Prevention Violence (OPV) ▪ Marian Nur – Community Member ▪ Babur Mawladin – Executive Director and President, Jane Alliance Neighborhood Services and Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity committee and Afghan Network of Ontario. ▪ Ken Jeffers- Community Activist, founder of The Hurriet Tubman Youth Centre, and Toronto Policy Board Member
2:20 – 4:00	Panel Discussion VI: Raising Awareness of the Role of (Social) Media and Media Literacy in Youth Resiliency, Hate, Racism and Youth Radicalization Moderator: Evelyn Malemo ▪ Det. Scott Purches – Investigator with the Security Section of Toronto Police Intelligence Services ▪ Dr. Ken Menkhaus – Chair and C. Louise Nelson Professor, Political Science Department at Davidson College ▪ Rizwan Mohammad – National coordinator for Canadian Council of Muslim Women
4:00 – 4:05	Closing Remarks ▪ Mahad Yusuf –Executive Director, Midaynta Community Services

Appendix B: Speaker's Profile

DR. GHAYDA HASSAN

Director and Founder of Canadian Practitioners Network for The Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence

Dr. Hassan is the Director and Founder at Canadian Practitioners Networks for the Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence. Dr. Dhayda Hassan is a clinical psychologist and professor of clinical psychology at UQAM University in Montreal and has several research, clinical, and community based, national and internal affiliations. She is the UNESCO_PREV Co-Chair (Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence), a worldwide first. She is also a researcher and senior clinical consultant at the SHERPA_RAPS (RAPS for Research and Action on Radicalization and Social Suffering at the CIUSSS-Centre-West for the island of Montreal.

DR. WENDY CUKIER

Founder of the Diversity Institute and a Professor at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management, & Co-founder of the Coalition for Gun Control

Dr. Wendy Cukier is a Professor of Entrepreneurship and Strategy at the Ted Rogers School of Management. She is also the founder of the Ryerson Diversity Institute, where she has developed research-based strategies to promote inclusion by focusing on developing "the business case" and applying innovation models to driving change beyond human resources.

Cukier also co-founded the Coalition for Gun Control, a network of more than 200 organizations ranging from police to women's groups, in the wake of the Montreal Massacre. She has since been engaged in the Coalition's advocacy for evidence-based gun control in Canada. She also co-founded the International Action Network on Small Arms, which has been active in global efforts to combat the illicit trafficking and misuse of firearms. Among her more than 200 publications, Dr. Cukier coauthored the book The Global Gun Epidemic with Dr. Vic. Sidel, contributed to several other books focused on political violence as well as a range of peer-reviewed articles on the nature of gun violence and its prevention.

Wendy chairs the Board of Women's College Hospital, the Information and Communications Technology Council's Diversity Committee, and serves on the board of a number of start-ups, and technology and social enterprises. She was named one of the University of Toronto's 100 Alumni Who Shaped the Century, was selected in 2013 as one of Canada's Top 25 Women of Influence and in 2010 was selected as one of 25 Transformational Canadians by The Globe and Mail, La Presse and CTV. She received the Black Business Professional Association's Harry Jerome Diversity Award and in 2017 was named the Female Professional of the year by the Canada Pakistan Business Council. She is also the recipient of the Governor General's Meritorious Cross, one of Canada's highest civilian honours.

Wendy holds a PhD in Management Science, an MBA, an MA, and honorary doctorates from Laval and Concordia.

DAVID MICHALSKI

Special Advisor to the Office of the General Director at MSF

Dave Michalski has over 14 years working and living abroad in both secure and insecure locations for MSF (Doctors without Borders) in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, Botswana, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Turkey. Libya, South Sudan, Guinea, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Bahrain, Lebanon, Thailand, Burma, Belgium, and United Arab Emirates. His Masters dissertation was on the consequences of the West's failure to engage with the Islamic Court Union in 2006 in Somalia. He has been involved in several crisis response teams including ones involving kidnappings, most recently as head of the crisis management team at the Turkish border that secured the release in April and May of 2014 of 5 MSF hostages held in Syria.

MATTHEW LEVITT

Senior Fellow and Director of the Reinhard Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence (Formerly the Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence) at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Matthew Levitt is a senior fellow and director of the Reinhard Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and professorial lecturer in International Relations and Strategic Studies at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.

From 2005 t0 early 2007 he was the deputy assistant secretary for intelligence and analysis at the U>S Department of Treasury. In that capacity, he served both as a senior official within the department's terrorism and financial intelligence branch and as deputy chief of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis. From 2001 to 2005, Levitt served the Institute as founding director of its Terrorism Research Program, which was established in the wake of the September 11 attacks. Previously, he provided tactical and strategic analytical support for counter-terrorism operations at the FBI, focusing on fundraising and logistical support networks for Middle Eastern terrorist groups. During his FBI service, Levitt participated as a team member in a number of crisis situations, including the terrorist threat surrounding the run of the millennium and the September 11 attacks

Levitt has also lectured on international terrorism on behalf of the Departments of State, Justice, Defense, and Homeland Security, consulted for various U.S government agencies and private industry, and testified before the Senate and House on matters relating to international terrorism. He is a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a member of the international advisory board for both the Institute for Counter-terrorism in Israel and the International Research in Singapore, and a CTC fellow with the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at the U.S Military Academy (West Point).

He received his BA from Yeshiva University and His MA and Ph.D from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. He was a graduate research fellow on Negotiation, and has taught at Johns Hopkins University.

DR. CAROLINE MANION

Lecturer at OISE

With extensive professional experience in East and West Africa as well as North America, Carly's research interests include equity and social justice, gender and education, civil society, social movements, public policy, school improvement, teacher development, the politics of education, and educational multilateralism and governance. Dr. Manion's research has been supported by a variety of agencies and organizations, including the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the International Development Research Centre of Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency (now Global Affairs Canada), and she has provided contract services, including educational program development and evaluation for such groups as the Aga Khan Foundation, Canada, UNESCO, UNICEF, British Council, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, the Hewlett Foundation, and Open Society Foundation.

DR. SARA THOMPSON

Associate Professor at Ryerson university

Dr. Sara Thompson holds a BA (Hons.), MA, and Ph.D. in Criminology from the University of Toronto. Her research and teaching interests fall in the areas of social inequality, exclusion and marginalization, the social and spatial distribution of urban violence, community resilience, 'pathways' to radicalization/violent extremism, and the negative effects that state-based policies and practices may have on those directly affected by them. She has been with the Department Criminology at Ryerson since 2008. In 2014, Dr. Thompson was named Associate Director of the Canadian network for research on Terrorism, Security and Society (TSAS), which engages in policy-relevant research and dissemination on issues related terrorism, security and society. Dr. Thompson is currently Principal Investigator for a major research project entitled "Design and Performance: Developing Canadian Partnerships for Countering Violent Extremism" funded by Public Safety Canada's Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Violence Prevention.

MARVA WISDOM

Director for the Black Experience Project

Marva is the Director for the Black Experience Project, a study initiated by the Environics Institutes with partners, Ryerson University and the Atkinson Charitable Foundation. Marva Wisdom is a community leader who blends her personal and professional passions to helps her clients and community build on the strengths of a strong and collaborative team. A highly respected and sought after facilitator and speaker, Marva, though her company, Wisdom consulting, provides clients with the tools and courage they need to facilitated meaningful engagement, diversity and inclusivity. She chaired the 2010 and 2011 United Way campaign for Guelph-Wellington where she led the team that raised nearly $5M for social services in her community, setting records for funds raised in 2010 and 2011- a leading campaign in all of Canada.

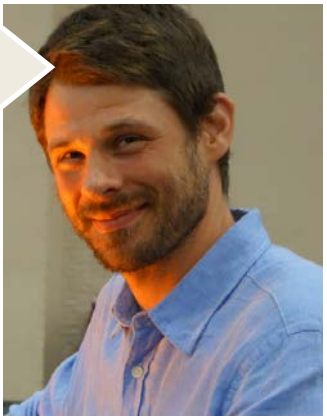
DR. PAMELA DIVINSKY

Executive Director at the Mosaic Institute

Professional life started with a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. First real job was Professor at the University of Toronto. Cultivated business strategy and speech writing at Bank of Montreal. Developed consulting skills and practice expertise at KPMG. Created Ethos JWT, the social purpose division of the international ad agency. Area expertise includes health care, start-up social enterprise, luxury retail, international development, financial services and socioeconomic issues. Depth of experience includes corporate strategy, issue and reputation management, research and anaysis, social purpose and citizenship strategies, executive coaching and employee ambassadorship. Special sauce expertise is uncovering salient strategies that drive profitability, participation and social impact.

MATTHEW JOHNSON

Director of Education, MediaSmarts



Matthew Johnson is the Director of Education for Mediasmarts, Canada's center for digital and media literacy. He is the author of many MediaSmarts' resources including Facing Online Hate, a professional development and lesson series that prepares youth to recognize and respond to hate material online, and was the lead on several of MediaSmarts' research projects including Young Canadians' Experiences with Electronic Bullying and Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexts. He has presented on topics as diverse as cyberbullying, body image and online hate to parliamentary committees, academic conferences and governments and organizations around the world and has served on expert panels convened by the Canadian Pediatric Society, the Sex Information and Education Council of Canada and others.

JAMILA AMAN

CEO and Managing Director of Premier Canadian Business Solutions Inc.

For 25 years that ended in December 2014, Ms. Aman served as Executive Director for Northwood Neighborhood Services, a Canadian based non-profit. She also taught Conflict Management part-time in Humber College. As well Ms. Aman served a one-year secondment at York University- TD Community Engagement Center in 2011-2012.

Currently Ms. Aman is pursuing her Doctorate Degree in Education with the University of Liverpool 2014 – 2018 (Expected). Ms. Aman obtained her Master's Degree in the Arts of Leadership from Royal Road University in 2013. Ms. Aman obtained a post graduate certificate in Marketing from York University, Schulich School of Business in 2009. Attended as well Executive Directors Institute at York University in 2008. Ms Aman undergraduate studies includes Business Administration majoring in General Management, Teaching English as A Second Language, Settlement Counselling, and Public Administration. As a hobby Ms. Aman obtained a diploma in Fashion Designing in 2007.Activities and interest include but not limited to volunteering in non-profit organizations that assist to improve the lives of less fortunate and educational institutions. Over the last 20 years Ms. Aman served on numerous Boards of Directors; including the United Way of Greater Toronto and Peel Region membership Committee and Cabinet; Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI); Toronto Neighbourhood Centers (TNC); The Canadian Council of Refugees (CCR); Advisory Committee on George Brown College; Humber College Advisory Committee in the School of Social Work; Sheridan College, Advisory Committee in the School of Social Work and York University, Presidents Community Engagement Task Force to name a few.

AMARNATH AMARASINGAM

Senior Research Fellow and Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute for Strategic Dialogue and the University of Waterloo

Amarnath Amarasingam, PhD, is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, and a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Waterloo, where he co-directs a study of Western foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq. He is the author of Pain, Pride, and Politics: Sri Lankan Tamil Activism in Canada (2015). He works in terrorism, diaspora politics, post-war reconstruction, the sociology of religion, and has, more recently, been examining how extremist groups, across the ideological spectrum, operate in online communities. He has conducted field research in Morocco, Turkey, Somalia, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, and Israel/Palestine. He has published several peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, has presented at 100 national and international conferences, and has written for The New York Times, Politico, The Atlantic, and Foreign Affairs.

ALEXANDER CORBEIL

Senior Research Analyst, Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence

Alexander Corbeil is a Senior Research Analyst with the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence where he focuses on preventing and countering violent extremist and terrorist use of the internet. He is the author of an upcoming chapter for Oxford University Press on terrorist use of the internet for radicalization, recruitment, training, incitment and operations. He has conducted field research in Lebanon, managed a team of open source intelligence analysts at a private firm, and holds a Master's Degree in Political Science from the University of Toronto.

STONEY McCART

Director of Strategic Partnerships, The Students Commission of Canada

Stoney McCart helped found The Students Commission of Canada in 1991 with a mandate to support young people to express their ideas for social change and assist them to put those ideas into action. The Students Commission incubates and evaluates new program models and practices based on the input of youth and their leadership in implementation. As Director of the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement since its inception in 2000, Stoney McCart has provided leadership around the investigation into youth engagement, working closely with organizational and academic partners across the country and internationally. Current projects engage youth and academics to explore influences on social identity formation (online and offline), structural racism and gender-based violence.

DETECTIVE FERAS ISMAIL

Diversity Relations Bureau, Peel Region Police

Detective Feras Ismail is a 17-year member of the Peel Regional Police and has worked in various areas including Uniform Patrol, Street Crime Unit, Gang Unit, the Intelligence Security Section, and is currently working in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Bureau. Det. Ismail has been involved in a wide-array of terrorism and extremist-related investigations with Peel Regional Police and the RCMP – Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET), and is a core group member of the RCMP - National Security Integrated Interview Team. As a member of this team, he also participates in national security-related interview training, as both an Instructor and Facilitator.

Det. Ismail is a nationally recognized expert in the field of counter-terrorism and has played an integral role in the development of Peel Regional Police's 'Countering Violent Extremism Initiative' (CVEI). He has presented the educational component of this initiative to over 9000 police and peace officers, civilian police personnel, as well as private sector security service and regional school board employees. Det. Ismail has delivered modified versions of the presentation, including case studies and topic-specific discussion, at a range of domestic and international practitioner and academic symposia, and has briefed high level government and police officials on counter-terrorism/countering violent extremism training, policy and practice.

Det. Ismail holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from McMaster University, and a Master's Degree in Leadership from the University of Guelph.

MICHAEL KERR

Coordinator at Color of Poverty- Color of Change

Michaek kerr is a community development workers and equity and human rights advocate now serving as a Coordinator with Color of Poverty- Color of Change- the racial justice education and advocacy network Ontario. He also teaches at Seneca College in the Social Service Worker program.

Having worked in a number of capacities with several newcomer settlement and refugee advocacy groups and organizations over many years, as well as being active in a broad spectrum of equity, human rights and racial justice advocacy efforts and community-based campaigns- he was the Coordinator (for its first five years) of the National Anti-Racism Council of Canada- NARCC (2001-2006).

Color of Poverty-Color of Change is a joining province-wide effort by a growing number of groups, agencies and organizations- ethno-specific and other health and social service providers as well as human rights, anti-racism and racial justice advocacy-mined groups and individuals—Jointly working to address and redress the growing racialization of poverty and other related expressions of colour-coded inequality and marginalization- of both First Peoples and people of colour.

SCOTT MCKEAN

Manager, Community Safety and Well-being- City of Toronto

Scott Mckean is the Manager of Community Development, Safety & Wellbeing for the City of Toronto. In that role, Scott works to enhance community safety and reduce vulnerability for people, families, and places in Toronto's neighborhoods. While at the City of Toronto, Scott has led the development and implementation of many strategies and initiatives such as the Community Crisis Response Program and the Toronto Strong Neighborhood Strategy.

Prior to joining the City of Toronto, Scott worked in the community sector where he developed programs and services for vulnerable, high-risk, gang involved young people as well as developed the support model for the Out of the Cold emergency shelter program.

MURAD JAVED

Murad Javed is passionate about achieving a real, measurable social impact through development work. Before his move to Toronto in 2016, he worked in Pakistan at the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit of the United Nations Development program. Javed developed and implemented employment and social cohesion programs aimed at preventing the spread of violent extremism among young people. He has continued to work as a consultant for the UNDP while he studies at the Munk School of Global Affairs.

MARIAN NUR

Community member

Marian Nur hails from Ottawa where she found her love of community development/volunteer work at a young age, she holds an honours bachelor's of International development and Globalization from the university of Ottawa. She began her journey of community work by volunteering within a wide array of programs including recycling programs/health promotion. While attending university she began to volunteer within the Muslim Student Association eventually becoming an executive as well as becoming an organizer for the Run for the Horn an organization that works to gather funds for the Habeeb mental health hospital in Somalia. After completing her degree, she worked in the public sector for three years as a policy analyst within indigenous affairs as well as Employment and social development Canada. She has recently left the public sector, to work within the community as an analyst for, a non-profit that looks to de-stigmatize and bring awareness to mental health within the Somali community. In her free time she is a co-host on the Ottawa based podcast OTEAPODCAST.

RIZWAN MOHAMMAD

National Coordinator, the Canadian Council of Muslim Women

A graduate of the University of Toronto specializing in Islamic history and philosophy, Rizwan coordinates youth-led community building projects with the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW). His work focuses on mobilizing young people to engage in experimental activities to strengthen civil society. Rizwan specializes in civic literacy education, civic engagement training, and community capacity building.

BABUR MAWLADIN

Executive Director and President, Jane Alliance Neighbourhood Services and Canada-Afghanistan Committee

Babur Mawladin was born in Mazar-e- Sharif, a city north of Afghanistan. When he was 6 yrs old, Soviet Unions invade Afghanistan and he was forced leave his country and seek refuge in Pakistan and then Iran along with his family. After Russian withdrew its military forces, Babur and his family returned to Afghanistan in hope of building a new live. Shortly after they returned home, the civil war started in Afghanistan Babur was enrolled in faculty of medicine and he studied general medicine for 5 years. By invasion of Mazar Sharif in 1997 by Taliban, he once again run away from his homeland and see refuge this time in Tajikistan.

Babur worked with other refugees in Dushanbe-Tajikistan and with the support of local and international NGOs he established Istiqlal High School for Afghan refugees where 65 teachers were teaching 350 Afghan refugee's children. In addition to school for children he opened several English and computer centres for adults.

Babur is working as Executive Director since 2011 at Jane Alliance Neighbourhood Services, a small charitable organization serving newcomers and immigrants and residence of Rockclif Syth Neighbourhood. As a board member, Babur served as president of Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity committee and Afghan Network of Ontario.

KEN JEFFERS

Ken Jeffers has over 35 years' experience in working as a community engagement specialist and manager of Access & Diversity in the City of Toronto. He has provided leadership for the entire Recreational Budget in the City of Toronto as the Community Services Administrator. Utilizing strategic leadership, Ken excelled as a public service manager, by initiating and directing successful strategies through program planning, development and policy formulation for the City at the Municipal, Provincial, Federal and International levels. Through his organizational development and change management experience, Ken has an in-depth strategic knowledge with both small and large scale systems of complex environments. He has initiated and developed the Rights to Human Rights video training program as a learning tool for the Parks and Recreation staff in Canada. For several years, Ken successfully monitored the grant budget allocation for Parks, Forestry and Recreation services. He is an advocate of creating programs to help youth find meaningful work and engaging employment, to minimize the poverty line. As a diversity and community activist, Ken has significant knowledge of strategic and operational issues to help implement concepts of interculturalism and diversity in Toronto. Ken was born in Trinidad & Tobago and in 1968 migrated to the USA on a track scholarship to the state University of South Carolina. In 1969, Ken moved to Canada. Ken is family oriented, straight talker, man of his word that delivers on his promises. He is a passionate advocate for Civil & Community Rights, Youth initiatives, economic development and promoting interculturalism & diversity. In the span of over 40 years, Ken has excelled as a leader, activist, economic developer, youth program initiator and budget manager.

AHMED ABDULKADIR

Director, The organization for Prevention of Violence (OPV)

Ahmed Abdulkadir is a community organizer; Director of the Organization for the Prevention of Violence (OPV) where he manages the project Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in Alberta and the organization's role in the partnered Resiliency Project (in conjunction with the Edmonton Police Service and City of Edmonton).

Ahmed is also the Executive Director of OSCAR, a non-for-profit organization committed to advocating, supporting and positively steering underprivileged Edmontonians of different backgrounds through the system.

Ahmed believes in co-operation, partnership, and volunteerism as he understands that one organization cannot solve all issues facing underserved communities. His background enables him to bring many different communities together and gives him a role in community leadership. Since 1996, Ahmed has worked and builds bridges between new Somali Canadians and Indigenous communities in Edmonton. As well, he enhanced the relationship between Edmonton police and Somali Canadians in Edmonton. Ahmed has worked with numerous international human rights as well as civil rights organization

DR. KEN MENKHAUS

Chair and C. Louise Nelson Professor of the Political Science Department at Davidson College

Dr. Ken Menkhaus is Chair and C. Louise Nelson Professor of the Political Science Department at Davidson College. He received his Ph.D. in International Studies in 1989 from the University of South Carolina, where he was warded a Fulbright Scholarship fro dissertation research on southern Somalia. His subsequent work has focused on development, conflict analysis, humanitarian response, peace operations, peace building, involving both academic research and policy work with the US government, the united Nations, the World Bank, and non-government organizations. He is author and co-author of over one hundred reports, articles, book chapters, and monographs on the Horn of Africa.

DETECTIVE SCOTT PURCHES

Investigator with Toronto Police Services

Serving for more than 20 years with the Toronto Police Service, Detective Scott Purches has had a diverse career in Uniform, Community Response, Major Crime, Child Exploitation, Homicide and most recently Intelligence Services.

In his current role, Scott is an investigator with the Security Section of Toronto Police Intelligence Services. The Security Section mandate includes investigations into Hate Crime, Extremism, VIP Protection and International Assistance.

In this position, Scott has been involved in a variety of extremism investigations, which have included co-operation with partner agencies including the Ontario Provincial Police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and CSIS.

In addition to providing investigative support to front line officers and partner agencies, Scott is a part of a team leading the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiative through early identification of vulnerable persons and engaging a multi-faceted, community focused intervention strategy.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About Midaynta

Midaynta Community Services is a registered Canadian charitable organization that provides settlement, housing and youth services. The organization provides meetings, counselling and other support services for refugees, immigrants and youth.

The organization was established in July 1993 as a family reunification project and incorporated in August 1995 as a non-profit organization 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 for free of charge. At Midaynta we pride ourselves with a team of passionate and knowledgeable professionals who are dedicate to their work, delivering excellent and quality services to the community. Our diversified services are specifically tailored to empower the youth and help newcomers from their initial start-up process upon arrival until their full adaptation in the society. Since establishment of the organization we have grown to provide multi-services through grassroots approach that prioritizes engagement and youth empowerment.

Through "Project Turn Around"- a holistic, culturally appropriate and responsive community-based gang prevention and intervention program, our organization does outreach, mentorship and helps at-risk youth exit gangs through intervention and prevention. The Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program matches black students aged between 12 to 16 with mentors and organize workshops throughout the calendar year.

Midaynta is also committed to tackling youth radicalization and uses education tools that emphasis education equity, inclusiveness and culture relevance to promote excellence among radicalized youth and communities.

Midaynta Community Services
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Tel: 416.544.1992 Fax: 416.440.3379

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