



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2024-25

### **POLARIZATION AND HOW TO BUILD A SENSE OF BELONGING**



**“  
DREAMS TRANSFER INTO THOUGHTS  
AND THOUGHTS RESULTS IN ACTION  
”**

- Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam



**RASHMI SHETH**

**Board President**



**PRIYANKA SHETH**

**Executive Director**

**2024-25 has been one of growth, transition, and reflection at DBNC.**

We navigated key political changes, including elections at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels. A major milestone was the successful renewal of our largest funding agreement with IRCC — a testament to the trust placed in our work and the team's hard work and perseverance.

Our programs expanded meaningfully, especially in Financial Empowerment and Poverty Reduction, and we re-energized our youth programming at Queen Frederica. We also participated in an evaluation of our Community Health Ambassador program through Trillium Health Partners, highlighting DBNC's role as a trusted Health Service Provider.

This year brought staff transitions — both longtime team members and new faces — and leadership development through coaching with Parm Chohan. We welcomed a new Finance Director Bill Kennedy and new board member, Deepak Sharma, while bidding farewell to our Co-Chair, Saleem Chattergoon, whose contributions over the years have been invaluable.

Most profoundly, we mourned the passing of Wendy Mullinder, who had been with DBNC since the early days. Wendy was the heart of our community, and her legacy lives on in all we do.

Our reflections this year are about hustle, growth, and loss. Through all the changes, DBNC remains committed to building belonging and supporting our community — from newcomers to long-time residents.

Thank you to our staff, volunteers, funders, community members, and fellow board members for your unwavering support.





## MISSION

To enhance quality of life with impactful services and engaging programs that build stronger and progressive communities.

## DEI STATEMENT

We uphold and advance principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion across the organization. Every individual who engages with DBNC should feel that their diverse perspectives, experiences, and cultures are valued. We create safe spaces and opportunities for all to voice their thoughts respectfully, to learn, and develop a deeper understanding of one another.

## VISION

To build a stronger, progressive community.

## WHAT DO WE DO?

Since 1988, we have been providing free & accessible programming and services for people living in Mississauga and beyond.

All our services are responsive to community needs and informed by our service users directly.

With almost 200 staff members and volunteers, we have 18 locations and offer services in 22 languages.

Learn more about  
services DBNC offers





## **JADRANKA, IRENE, SARAH**

### **Administration Team**

At DBNC, the front desk staff are the first point of contact for the community. We are privileged in being able to meet, welcome and engage with many faces and diverse cultural backgrounds in our community and as well, visitors from other countries.

DBNC front desk not only extends to services that our departments assist with, but we also go beyond the typical experience and being able to capture pinnacle moments that change the lives of the clients.

At front desk, we collect daily, weekly and monthly statistics that allow us to track how many clients are being served. In 2024, we have estimated serving nearly 54,000 clients in our community as frontline workers.



## RAQIBA YAZDANYAR

“

I've been in Canada for four years. Through DBNC's SALAMATI Sessions for Afghan women, I've gained valuable health education and connected with my community. I've also benefited from LINC classes, tax support, yoga, and help applying for citizenship. Joining the Knitting Sisterhood program improved my skills and introduced me to many new friends. DBNC has truly made a positive impact on my life in Canada.

”

## SHERIFE VUKSHINAJ SELIMI

“

I met Walaa from DBNC at the Muslim Welfare Centre, where she introduced me to the support DBNC offers newcomers. I needed help with employment and housing, and was connected to their consultants. They helped me improve my resume, guided me on job searching, and shared affordable housing options. I'm now actively job hunting and enjoy attending DBNC's free employment workshops.

”



## COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM

20,229	8,240	2,432	4,765	4,792
Community Engagement	In-person Interactions	Educational Sessions	Virtual Interactions	Media Interactions



Learn more...



## PUSHPA, STENA, HANNAH



“

Pushpa, “I joined DBNC just two days after arriving in Canada in 1992, and it quickly became like family to us. Through their play school — now EarlyON — my children not only learned through play but also gained confidence, social skills, and even a head start in school. As a newcomer, DBNC also helped me navigate life in

Canada, from finding doctors to building a community. Now, my daughter brings her own kids to EarlyON — it's a legacy I'm proud to pass on”

Stena, “When I first brought my son Andrew to EarlyON at DBNC, he was shy and hesitant in social settings. Over time, he blossomed into a confident, social child who now helps lead activities and truly feels a sense of belonging. The welcoming educators, diverse community, and long-term friendships we've built have made DBNC feel like home for our entire family. It's a place where both children and parents grow together.”

”

## HODA KHALID

“

As a parent, I found DBNC EarlyON a very nurturing environment that helped me recognize my child's strengths and support his areas of growth. The programs gave my child the chance to build social skills while interacting with other children and caregivers. Now, as an EarlyON educator at DBNC, I truly appreciate the impact EarlyON has had on every family's journey.

”



## EARLYON PROGRAM

**51008**  
Total Program  
Visits

**5681**  
Program  
hours

**3400**  
Families  
Served

**Unique people served**  
Adults 4959  
Children 5093



Learn more...



## RANA ABDULJAWAD

“I’ve been attending Growing Together in Peel program for 8 years. It has helped my children prepare for school and supported us with donations and other resources. I’ve made friends, and my children always have fun. I’m thankful to Sofia and the whole team for their support.”

### GROWING TOGETHER IN PEEL PROGRAM

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>Unique people served</b>
Adults 451	Program hours	Adults 24
Children 509		Children 37



## PUNEH JAMSHIDI MOGHADAM

“After completing my Master’s in Urban Development, I faced challenges in a difficult work environment that left me discouraged. Choosing to leave was hard, but it gave me space to refocus. With support from Aiman at DBNC, I rebuilt my confidence, improved my job search skills, and found clarity in my goals. Her guidance reminded me that starting over is okay—and with the right help, brighter days are possible.”



### EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

<b>2,222</b>	<b>4,366</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>73</b>
New Clients	One-on-One Counselling	Job search, Training, & Networking Group sessions with 917 participants	Mentor-Mentee





## FARHANA SHARMIN KHAN



“Since moving to Canada, the LINC program has been one of the most helpful supports for me. It improved my English skills and helped me understand Canadian culture. I now feel more confident speaking in daily situations like at the store, school, or doctor's office. My teacher has been a great mentor, and I feel more comfortable and happy living in Canada because of this program.”

## MINA SAFI

“When I came to Canada at 17, everything felt unfamiliar and overwhelming—I didn't speak the language, and adjusting to life here was tough. DBNC was one of the first places that made me and my family feel welcome. They supported us with free English classes, youth programs, and settlement help. Through their support, I found confidence, community, and hope. Today, I'm a college student, working part-time, and mentoring other newcomers—just like others once did for me.”



## LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA

<b>66,373</b>	<b>1469</b>	<b>115</b>	clients benefited from the Chrome Book loan program
Total	Unique	32	participants Home-Based Childcare Certificate sessions
Client	Clients	54	participants Citizenship Test Prep Circles
		165	children - Care for Newcomer Children
		54	children LINC Summer Camp
		39	LINC Classes





## HANNIA GARCIA

“ I arrived in Canada in November 2022, not knowing anyone or speaking English. With the support of DBNC, I slowly gained confidence, made friends, and found a sense of belonging through programs like EarlyON, NYCE, and Youth on the Rise. These opportunities helped me build skills, feel supported, and eventually land my first job at the DBNC Summer Camp. It was a life-changing experience that showed me I could grow, adapt, and achieve my goals in a new country. ”

### NEWCOMERS YOUTH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

#### NYCE

Registered youth **60**  
Volunteers trained **20**

#### MyPLAY

Summer Camp **120**  
After School  
Program **30**

Completed youth on  
the rise program - **38**  
Hired as seasonal  
summer camp staff - **12**



Learn more...

## ALINA DUDII

“ When I came to Canada three years ago, I didn't speak any English and lacked confidence. Through DNBC and the WOW program, I had my first chance to be a leader and got the support I needed. I made friends, improved my English, and gained valuable experience. Now in college, I'm truly grateful for everything DNBC has done for me. DNBC helped me believe in myself and grow in ways I never expected. I encourage every newcomer to join this amazing community. ”



### SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOL PROGRAM

**2,261**  
New  
Clients

**11,181**  
One-on-One  
Counselling

**341** Total  
Workshops with  
**3,263** participants

**125** Conversation  
Circles  
**1,876** participants

**42**  
Schools  
Served



Learn more...

“Community Care Closet has been a lifeline for my family of seven. Every month, they help with whatever they can, and it truly makes a difference. With most of our Ontario Works benefits going toward rent, we often struggle to afford basics like milk. I've had to give my kids cereal with tea—but thanks to Community Care Closet, we feel supported and seen. Your help means the world to us. Thank you.”

“I am deeply grateful for the financial assistance you provided during a time when I truly needed it most. Your generosity not only eased my burden but also reminded me that there are compassionate individuals and organizations out there who genuinely care. Thank you for making a meaningful difference in my life.”

## POVERTY REDUCTION

### Community Care Closet

1105	3,200 pounds
Clients served	Food Provided

### Conflict Resolution

350	60%
Clients served	Cases that went to mediation



### Tax Clinic

2197	\$4,093,858.91
Clients served	Benefits Secured through tax filing

### OESP

171	\$16,100
Clients served	Grants Dispersed

### LEAP

429	\$194390
Clients served	Grants Dispersed to clients

44 clients - Gift of Sight program

## Financial Empowerment

Our growing Financial Services are now offering educational workshops on financial literacy, 1:1 financial counseling sessions, benefit application support and referrals to numerous resources!





“My family and I are deeply grateful for the incredible support we received from DBNC. As newcomers with limited English, adjusting to life in Mississauga was challenging, but DBNC's Settlement Counsellors guided us through every step. They helped my elderly parents access health and dental care in our language and connected us to vital community services. During a difficult time in 2024, their support helped me regain stability and hope. Thanks to DBNC, we feel more connected, supported, and at home in our new community.”

## ROAA ALNOUSH

“After my separation, I felt anxious and overwhelmed as a new single mom with limited English. I visited DBNC for help with my Child Benefit application, and Maryam Zaiya guided me with incredible patience and care. She handled communication with CRA, helped me access legal and community resources, and supported my PR process. Thanks to her, I felt truly supported and relieved. I'm deeply grateful to DBNC.”



## SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

**12,740**  
Services  
Offered

**6,204**  
Unique  
Clients

**128 Total**  
Workshops with  
**1,740 participants**

**523**  
Housing  
Clients

**380**  
African Asylum  
Claimants



Learn more...



“Joining the Tight Knit Seniors Club has been one of the most rewarding parts of my retirement. From the warm welcome to the fun, engaging activities, every session is thoughtfully planned and uplifting. The leadership team is passionate and supportive, creating a space where we learn, laugh, and connect. It's more than a club — it's a true community.”

## OLDER ADULTS PROGRAM

2,485	435
Total	Unique
interactions	clients



## ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Despite rapid changes and growing needs, the IT and Administration team achieved several key milestones that strengthened our operations:

- **Modernized Phone System:** Successfully launched a new VOIP system, improving stability, scalability, and reducing costs
- **Improved Inventory Management:** Created a dedicated storage space for better organization and long-term asset control
- **Team Relocation & Space Planning:** Relocated the Employment team to the main office, reorganized LINC classrooms, and began planning a new admin office to support future growth
- **Cybersecurity Training:** Delivered regular staff training to reinforce digital safety and protect client data
- **Infrastructure Consolidation:** Streamlined internet and phone systems across sites for better efficiency and cost savings
- **Collaboration with City Staff:** Maintained strong communication to ensure timely responses to facility-related issues
- **Expanded Device Management:** Added support for Apple & Android devices alongside Windows systems to meet diverse tech needs
- **Development of Internal Tools:** Built custom tools for ticket tracking, system monitoring, and IT management
- **Volunteer Support & Front Desk:** Trained volunteers to assist with admin duties while continuing to provide professional, welcoming front desk service

# HUMAN RESOURCES

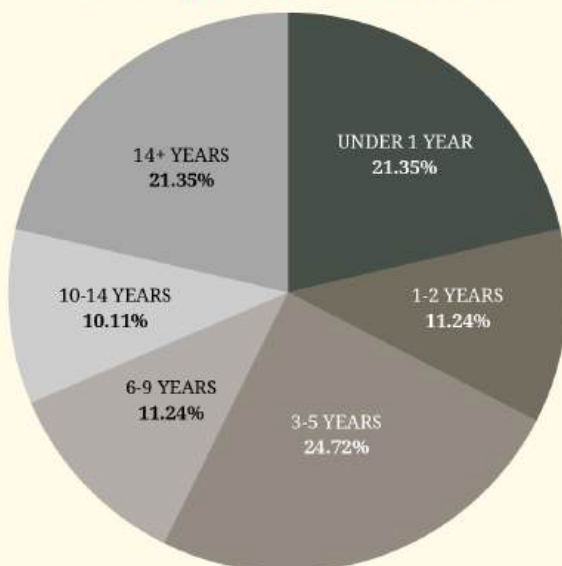
DBNC has been investing in employees by promoting internally, creating seven (7) new associate managers and two (2) new co-ordinator positions. New leadership will bring fresh ideas, improved efficiency, and encourage creativity. Learning opportunities are offered for staff to continue their personal growth, enhance their future vision, discover their values and be cognizant of their strengths.

To retain top talent DBNC has offered a new benefits plan from OASSIS, a provider that designs group benefits exclusively for non-profit organizations, and 84% of DBNC employees are covered in the plan.

DBNC employees have 12 sick days after two were added this year and the employee RRSP plan increased this year.

HR process improvements to drive greater efficiency and effectiveness across the organization include; standardized and robust employment contracts. Employee files not current or in storage were digitized and the Employee Handbook re-imagined

## PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES





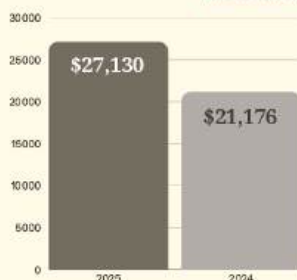
# FINANCE

**AS AT MARCH 31, 2025**

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,940,589	1,636,168
Grants and other receivables	785,520	765,297
HST rebates receivable	81,692	174,623
Prepaid expenses	46,822	70,881
	2,854,623	2,646,969
<b>Capital assets</b>	42,805	102,500
<b>Total Assets</b>	2,897,428	2,749,469
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accruals	478,656	604,634
Deferred revenue	520,463	213,961
	999,119	818,595
<b>Deferred capital contributions</b>	42,428	102,123
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	1,041,547	920,718
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>		
<b>Internally Restricted and capital assets</b>	113,377	113,377
<b>Unrestricted</b>	1,742,504	1,715,374
<b>Total Fund Balances</b>	1,855,881	1,828,751
<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>	2,897,428	2,749,469

Complete audited financial statements available upon request

## REVENUE VS EXPENSES



### REVENUE RECEIVED FROM

- United Way
- Government Grants
- Individual Fundraising
- Other grants and revenue

### EXPENSES INCURRED ON

- Salaries and benefits
- Operations
- Programs
- Rent
- Other

# OUTREACH AND DEVELOPMENT

The DBNC Podcast has evolved into Elevate, a rebranded platform that continues to highlight diverse, non-traditional leaders in our community. Originally launched as Roots & Resilience in February 2022, the podcast featured inspiring guests like Olympic athletes, authors, academics, and more. As we shift to Elevate, we welcome a new host, Mansi Gandhi and a fresh look, while bidding a fond farewell to Christian Fox, who helped shape the podcast's success. With exciting updates, Elevate now offers video podcasts streaming on YouTube, giving you a more engaging way to enjoy our episodes. Find episodes on both:

**YouTube** - @dixiebloorneighbourhoodcen6795

**Buzzsprout** - <https://www.buzzsprout.com>



Learn more...



**CHRISTIAN FOX**

Former host of  
DBNC Podcast



**MANSI GANDHI**

New host of  
DBNC Podcast



## OUR FUNDERS



Ministry of Heritage,  
Sport, Tourism and  
Culture Industries  
(Ontario)



Ministry of Labour,  
Immigration, Training  
and Skills Development  
(MLTSD)



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada



## OUR PARTNERS

- Building Multicultural Communities
- East Mississauga Community Health Centre
- Syrian Canadian Foundation
- My Neighbourhood Services
- Polycultural Immigrant and Newcomer Services
- Indus Community Services
- Peel District School Board
- Newcomer Centre of Peel
- Seva Food Bank
- MIAG
- Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board
- Mississauga Community Legal Services
- Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic
- Embrave Agency to End Violence
- ROOTS Community Services
- The Indigenous Network
- EveryMind
- CDRC
- Achè
- TRIEC
- CMHA
- MOHT

and more...







## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND SUPPORTERS



### Board of Directors

- Rashmi Sheth, Board Chair/ President
- Dan Nguyen, Treasurer
- Kelly McDonald, Secretary
- Kurt Henry, Member – Former Treasurer
- Deepak Kumar Sharma
- Oscar Moody
- Priya Shan
- Sohaib Syed
- Teresa Landry



### Our Gratitude

- MPP Kaleed Rasheed
- MP Peter Fonseca
- Councillor Chris Fonseca
- Mayor Bonnie Crombie



### Peer Leaders from:

- Applewood Heights
- John Cabot Catholic
- Glenforest
- Phillip Pocock
- St. Martin
- St. Paul



### Donors

#### A SPECIAL THANK YOU to our Community Care Closet donors

Thank you to those who donated, and continue to donate, to DBNC. The gift you give has a direct impact on the families we serve. Funds raised help provide additional resources like clothing, transportation, educational supplies, hygiene products, small household necessities, and so much more.



### Volunteers

Finally, to our esteemed and dedicated volunteers, DBNC is humbled and honoured by your drive to help families in our community. Volunteers are the backbone of DBNC's work and are the reason why we are able to impact so many lives.

Thank you!

**“**  
**THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW.**  
**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO DO SOMETHING.**  
**”**

- Antoine De Saint-Exupéry



## Building Stronger, Progressive Communities

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DBNC's mission is to build stronger, progressive communities. We uphold and advance principles of diversity, equity and inclusion across the organization – to ensure that every individual that engages with DBNC feels that their diverse perspectives, experiences and cultures are valued. Safe spaces and opportunities are created for all to voice their thoughts respectfully, to learn and develop a deeper understanding of one another.

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Learn more  
about DBNC &  
offered programs



### Follow us:



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