

## Narine Dat Sookram wins the Royal Bank of Canada ‘Top 25 Canadian Immigrants Award’



Guyanese-born Narine Dat Sookram is well-known in Waterloo Region as a social activist who helps new immigrants feel welcome in their new community. His longstanding cultural leadership within the Canadian-Caribbean community led to the creation of his organization ‘Active Vision Charity Association’ which provides books and school supplies to Guyanese youth while promoting West Indian’s rich culture. “You really don’t want to give up your own personal rich cultural values, but rather you want to respect and adapt the Canadian culture and be as open as possible, because the more open you are, the more possibilities you are giving to yourself.” By connecting with the community, new immigrants realize the resources available to them that were put in place to make them feel welcome, safe and accepted.

The ‘RBC Top 25 Canadian Immigrants Award’ is the first Canadian national award program that recognizes and promotes immigrants’ achievements across Canada. This award honours those who have been community advocates, volunteers, successful entrepreneurs or cultural icons in their community. As an immigrant to Canada himself, Narine feels obligated to empower the Canadian-Caribbean youth in his community because they are the future of the country. He believes that the fresh ideas that youth bring to their community prepares them to be the leaders of the future. The support that Narine provides to youth in his community gives them the courage to take chances and follow their dreams. “Youth are the leaders of tomorrow and this is something we have

to be conscious of. Youth especially in today's world, are full of fresh ideas and, as a social service worker, it is my obligation to empower them."

Although Narine feels a certain responsibility and tenderness towards youth, he not only passes his wisdom to them, but to newcomers of all ages. He encourages new immigrants to move out of their comfort zone and use the resources their community offers because that, "will determine [their] failures and successes."

Narine is generously donating the financial award of 500 dollars to Focus for Ethnic Women because he believes that Focus for Ethnic Women is an organization where women can come together and feel a sense of home; but most importantly knowing that supports are available from FEW for women of all ethnic backgrounds where each one can utilize the resources available to maximize their own potential, setting examples to both men and women that women do have the strength to move forward and achieve their goal and without them our community will not be the same.

We are very grateful for Narine's gift that will be used to support the delivery of programs and services to the immigrant community in the KW Region.

Visit our website at [www.few.on.ca](http://www.few.on.ca), to see how you can make a difference in the lives of immigrant women, through contributions to and volunteering at Focus for Ethnic Women.

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Reference:

<http://www.few.on.ca/news/narine-dat-sookram-wins-the-royal-bank-of-canada-top-25-canadian-immigrants-award/>