



CICS REPORT

Community profile: Ken Uppal, *new chair of the Indo-Canadian Community Advisory Committee*

Tell us a little about yourself

I grew up in a small village on the outskirts of Ludhiana, Punjab. I attended Punjab Agricultural University in food engineering before shifting to an MBA program in central India. The genetically deep-rooted Punjab diaspora took me to Abbotsford — which I chose based on a strong Indo-Canadian community presence here.

My academic interests took me to the University of Guelph where I completed another specialized degree and did my MBA with a major in agricultural economics. For the last six years I have been working with Farm Credit Canada in Abbotsford helping farm families and commercial

agri-businesses for their capital-related needs. I have been living in Abbotsford from the last 10 years with my family.

What is your affiliation with UFV and the CICS?

I can count myself as an alumnus of UFV after completing a three-month certificate program in agricultural production & management. The CICS is another area of interest for me at UFV, which has attracted my attention due to its involvement in the local Indo-Canadian community. I had an opportunity to attend a few seminars/workshops and related activities hosted by the centre. I was invited to become involved as an advisory committee member in 2008.

What does the CICS offer to the community in your opinion?

The CICS was incubated with a focus on wider issues in the Indo-Canadian community, and has been strongly supported by local community members. As of date, the centre has contributed to a great number of activities which have continued to attract my attention. These include:

- Providing knowledge/access to different chairs or departments working in various

universities/colleges in India & Canada.

- Creating a stronger presence in the local media about the centre's past and future roles.
- Providing an opportunity for members from backgrounds in business, education, and farming communities to contribute in various ways at the centre
- Acting as a common platform to facilitate closer and more personable relationships between different organizations on their ideas and opinions about local and international issues in the Indo-Canadian/Punjabi community.
- Undertaking outreach far and wide to similar communities of interest.

What roles do you see the centre having in the future?

The success of the centre in the future will be defined more and more by the involvement of the members of the Indo-Canadian community. I think the next logical step for the CICS is to diversify its geographic and intellectual reach through wider audiences all over Canada.

SAPNA update

The South Asian Peer Network Association (SAPNA) has a new executive team which organizes on and off campus events. The positions are held by Raji Heer as the president, Raman Gill as vice president, Aman Dhama as public relations coordinator, Sheetal Deo as executive assistant, and Sidrah Ahmad as communications manager. Raji Heer is hoping to take SAPNA to a new level over the next few months by bringing in speakers to discuss various South Asian Issues and organizing a lecture as a lead-up to the undergraduate conference in May 2011.

SAPNA also has a Bhangra, Giddha, and Bollywood dance team that practises weekly and performs at community events. The teams are organized and led by UFV students who have a passion to share their cultural traditions with the wider community. For more information on SAPNA, please contact Raji, at sapna@ufv.ca.

