

# Foundation Highlights

## Happy Canada Day, Eid Mubarak and Happy Summer!

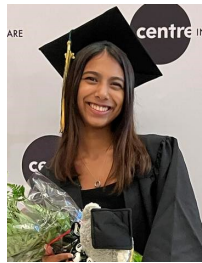
Hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful weather of summer and most of the young ones have finished another successful year while some are busy with some extra curricular works. Either way wishing everyone all well till the next time!

## Congratulations to the Graduates of 2023!

Our heartiest congratulations to the Graduates of the Year 2023 - Maisha, Prianka, Maimuna, and Atif who graduated from the University of Waterloo, ON, whereas Mashiyat, Simia and Orko graduated from Highschool. We wish you all the best and success in their new step of life. Thank you for sharing your grad photos with us!



Maisha Adil,  
Honours, B.Sc.  
Health Studies



Simia Adil  
Ontario High School  
Graduate



Prianka Hoque  
Dean's Honours  
Communication Studies and Business



Mashiyat Khan  
Ontario Highschool  
Graduate



Maimuna Khandaker  
Dean's Honours  
Psychology and Business,  
HR Resources Mgmt.



Atif Arshad Mahmud  
Honours, B.Sc.  
Software Engineering



Ahnaf Mamun  
Ontario Highschool  
Graduate

### Inside this issue

At A Glance, Donations Made in 2023...2

A patient's memoir on the journey to  
open heart surgery.....3

About Us .....7

## Upcoming Events

- Eid Re-union - July 29, 2023
- Group Blood Donation for  
The Canadian Blood Services  
Date - TBD

*"Join us in congratulating one of our most recent graduates, SPHS Student Maisha Adil! We are so proud to announce that she has been awarded both the President's Award of Excellence for the Faculty of Health, as well as Highest Academic Achievement for the School of Public Health Sciences!"*

- University of Waterloo

## At A Glance: BDKWWF's Monetary Contributions from January to June 2023

Date	Project	Amount	Comment
April 2023	4th installment of Omar Faruque's scholarship. Chandpur, Bangladesh.	\$750.00 Tk.63,000.00	He has completed the 2nd term of 3rd year exam.
April 11, 2023	Cheque to the Turkish Culture and Folklore Society of Canada, KW rep.	\$2,500.00 (Earthquake relief)	The money was used for rehabilitation program in the area.
April 26, 2022	Donation collected from KW community and other by Hasna Begum Lovely for ORCA and other projects in Bangladesh. ORCA (Old Rajshahi Cadet Association) Homes are some orphanages in Bangladesh).	\$12,300	Tk.2,58,000 –ORCA and other orphanages in Bangladesh Tk.115,000 –Chemotherapy expenses of a cancer patient Tk.52,500 –education expenses of 3 young girls Tk.60,000 –Medical expense Tk.208,000 –Building a house for a poor woman.

### Resources for Newcomers

**National Newcomer Navigation Network (N4)** is a national network for the diversity of providers who assist newcomers in navigating the complex Canadian healthcare and social service systems. You can find more information on their website [www.newcomernavigation.ca](http://www.newcomernavigation.ca)

## A letter of Appreciation from The Turkish Culture and Folklore Society of Canada

To: Bangladeshis in Kitchener Waterloo Welfare Foundation,

On behalf of Turkish Culture and Folklore Society of Canada, I am writing to extend our deepest appreciation for the recent donation made by Bangladeshis in Kitchener-Waterloo Welfare Foundation towards earthquake relief efforts in Turkiye and Syria. Your generosity and compassion during this challenging time are truly commendable, and we are profoundly grateful for your support. The devastation caused by the recent earthquake has been immense, and your donation will play a crucial role in helping us provide emergency aid and relief to those affected.

With your contribution, we've already provided essential supplies, medical assistance, and support to the affected communities, helping them rebuild and recover from this natural disaster. We would like to

express our heartfelt thanks to Bangladeshis in Kitchener-Waterloo Welfare Foundation in our upcoming communications, recognizing your organization's contribution towards our earthquake relief efforts. We value your partnership and would be honored to keep you updated on our progress and share how your donation is making a meaningful impact.

Once again, thank you for your compassionate support towards earthquake relief efforts. Your generosity and kindness are greatly appreciated.

Can Guroz  
Vice President  
Turkish Culture and Folklore Society of Canada  
April 18, 2023

## A patient's memoir on the journey to open heart surgery

By Omar Faruk, M. Sc. P. Eng., Region of York, Ontario, Canada

“Ashaduallah La Ilaha Illallahu WahDahu La Sharika Lahu Oaa Ashaduanna Muhammadan Abduhu Oaa Rasuluhu” - (I bear witness that there is no God but God and Muhammad is His slave and Messenger) – I was slowly reciting the statement of faith as I was being transported on a stretcher from the waiting room to the operation theater of South Lake Hospital, New Market Ontario, Canada, on a cold winter morning. It was December 16, 2011 and the time was 8:00 am. Earlier in the waiting room, my wife and I performed our morning prayer together. I asked for forgiveness from Allah Subhana Wa Tala for the past sins I committed knowingly and unknowingly throughout my life, and sought the Almighty's Mercy on all those who prayed for me, for their children, their parents, for my nearest and dearest ones living in Bangladesh and my relatives in North America. I was calm and content after the prayer and patiently waited for the nurse to come to take me to the operation theater.

The operation theater was on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. As I approached the operating room, I was greeted by the anesthetist whom I met earlier on my pre-clinic appointment. He accompanied me to the operating table. I had a quick glance around the room which was equipped with numerous machines and brightly lighted. The anesthetist started to prepare me for intravenous and I knew that within the next few seconds, I would succumb to a deep slumber from which I may never awake. I started to recite the profession of faith once more, and then almost instantly, I was gone.

I woke up in a large room, quiet and cold, with only a few dim lights. The veil of darkness lifted, as I ever so slowly opened my eyes. I remember with a clarity resembling daylight, that I was reciting the statement of faith – the shahadah. I tried to look around and a very young nurse was walking around the room. She came very close to me and whispered politely, “you woke up”. “So, I am alive” – the reassuring thought flashed through my mind, “this is the same old world”. I wanted to talk but was unable as there was a breathing tube down my throat. The nurse comforted me, “we shall now remove the tube and will give you some ice to swallow to relieve the pain in your throat”. Next, I was helped to sit on the bed with the assistance of two nurses and was asked to cough deeply a few times, to clear my lungs from accumulated fluids. This was very important – I remember from my pre-operation clinic session. The two nurses held me from both sides and helped me step down from my bed, after which I moved around the room for a while before returning to bed again. I still did not know how long I was unconscious after the surgery.

As my mind was racing behind to tie all the events of the past few weeks together, I noticed that my wife and my eldest brother-in-law were entering the room accompanied by the nurse. I asked her gently about the time and day. She told that it was Saturday afternoon, and approximately 3:30 pm. I did a quick calculation; it was almost 36 hrs that I was unconscious, and I was wondering why it took so long for me to wake up. My wife informed me that I had undergone four by-passes and one cleaning; that's what Dr. Moon, my surgeon, told me would be performed during our pre-surgery consultation meeting. It all worked out, and I was a little relieved. My wife later invited other visitors to come one by one to see me. Each spent a few moments with me, during which I inquired about their well being and requested their prayers for my speedy recovery. They all left in the evening around 8:00 – 9:00 pm. The nurse's shift had been changed, and a new nurse took over for the night shift. It was time for me to fall asleep again. But I would not sleep so early during the night– I would stay awake for extended periods of time late into the night, for many following nights. For now I would be thinking about myself, about the chronology of the events that happened so fast during the last few weeks. “Am I dreaming”, I asked myself. As I started to remember all that happened in the last few weeks leading to this by-pass surgery, I realized how fortunate I was, how merciful Allah Subhana Wa Tala was to me. I realized that it is my duty to let others know about the hope imbibed in such experiences -- that we can always depend on Allah's mercy even though we commit so many sins in our everyday lives.

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## A patient's memoir on the journey to open heart surgery

Cont'd from page 3

On November 21<sup>st</sup> 2011, I had an angiogram; it felt like just yesterday. The test confirmed that I had 5 serious coronary blockages of my heart. I was stunned by the test results. It took me quite some time to accept the truth and grasp the gravity of the situation. I would constantly question why such a fate confronted me! Why me? Those who knew me for many years were quite surprised as well and scared too. I was a disciplined man throughout my life – always following a regulated life style with moderation in everything: no cholesterol and no junk food, I was involved in physical activities everyday such as walking and yoga. As far as I knew, there was no family history of heart diseases. So what went wrong? I was asking myself and frantically looking for an answer. Gradually, things settled down and I started to think rationally. I knew from my earlier tests that my heart condition was fine, very close to normal.

The heart condition is expressed by a fraction, which is medically known as the ejection fraction or EF. Ejection Fraction shows the pumping capacity of heart or in other words the muscle power of heart. For a normal heart, it is 60% - 70%. My EF was 58%. So, there was no damage done so far, even with 90% blockages. But in that moment, everything became clear; suddenly, the bigger picture manifested before my eyes. Oh my God, how close was I to an eminent disaster! I started visualizing the worst case scenarios. Had I not gone for the test as I did not have any symptom which normally is related to heart diseases such as chest pain, shortness of breath, or high blood cholesterol, it would have been just a matter of time. The time bomb could have exploded when I was driving to work or home or driving my family somewhere. It was a sheer blessing of the Merciful who decided the outcome of my situation in a way of pure love and gentleness.

From that day on, I asked Allah's forgiveness after each prayer for my weakness in faith; I asked His continuous blessing in the days to come, to face the eventuality with faith. Miraculously, I got the Surgeon's appointment within two days. My surgeon Dr. Moon of SouthLake Regional Hospital, of the Region of York, is a very well experienced heart surgeon. He explained all the pros and cons of a heart by-pass surgery. I asked him some details of the procedure that he would be performing on me – whether he was going to separate my heart from the rest of the body or if he was going to stop it while he would be working on it. In both cases, I would be put on a heart-lung machine throughout the duration of the procedure. Dr. Moon told me that he preferred the second option. I asked him what the failure rate of the procedure was – he took a pause, and then replied 2%- 3%. Then he added “we put it the other way e.g., success rate was 97% - 98%”. I gave him a fragile smile and said very slowly that if I was within that 3%, it would be 100% for me. I asked him when he would be able to take me in, and he asked me when I preferred to undergo the surgery. I was desperate and wanted to get it over with as soon as possible rather than waiting and dying every day with the aching pain of uncertainty. So I requested the earliest date possible to act on my determination, even if it mean the next day. However, a number of factors would decide the surgery date.

In the next few days, I went through a number of pathological tests and information sessions. The test ranged from all types of blood work to ultrasound tests of my veins in the legs which would be required during the surgery. The information session was to prepare me psychologically by watching a video of an actual heart surgery, and talking with other people who went through bypass surgery before. Earlier, the Southlake Hospital authority gave all the potential patients an excellent brochure on heart surgery to read at home and prepare questions to ask at the information session. My wife and I attended the daylong schedule and went back to our home in Waterloo with more hope. I was granted medical leave from my job and now I was left to patiently wait for a surgery date.

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*If you have any information or article that you think is useful and inspiring for our readers please send to us at [bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com](mailto:bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com)*

## A patient's memoir on the journey to open heart surgery

Cont'd from page 4

It was possibly early morning of December 7<sup>th</sup> when I got a phone call from the Hospital that my surgery date was fixed and it would be done during the next week. I thanked Allah Subhana Wa Tala for the reassuring news. At last, my days of uncertainty were coming to an end and I didn't have to be under suffocating stress anymore. I called my wife at her work place and let her know that I was coming to meet her and spend some time with her. I was familiar with all her co-workers and everybody knew us for last 10-12 years. So, all of them were very shocked when they came to know about my diagnosis leading to a major surgery. Obviously, they were very sympathetic to us and tried to be very assuring in our difficult times.

At my wife's work place, I was greeted and hugged by her colleagues. Everybody was anxious about me. One told me about her father's by-pass surgery and how he was doing with that. I felt encouraged by her story and asked a few questions. Then I saw the Assistant Manager was coming. With a broad smile in her face from distant, she came running to me as soon as she saw me. She hugged me and inquired about my health. Then all of a sudden, she started telling me how her father got a heart attack on a wintery day while shoveling snow and fell unconscious. Her father was a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer, a very active and outgoing officer in the Canadian Police. He was around fifty when it happened. His heart stopped as he was lying on the snow. The family called for emergency medical assistance. Soon after their arrival, the paramedics were able to restart his heart and took him to the hospital, and fortunately he survived and after a long recovery period, came back to work only to find that his life had been changed totally. He was given a desk job which he didn't like. He became very depressed and became very agitated with his colleagues on small matters. Ultimately, he took voluntary retirement and confined himself at home. He started drinking a lot and 10 years later he had a second heart attack which was the end of his life. I was stunned hearing this story. Here I am with 5 blockages in my heart arteries, waiting for a by-pass surgery with an enormous stress for the eventuality that I would have to face within a few days; I didn't want such a fate – one of emptiness and the loss of hope. I was silently staring at Cindy, the Assistant Manager with an empty look. Cindy left the place to take care certain business telling me to wait for my wife.

Day by day and night by night, I was frantically reaching out for Allah's Mercy, for strength and to remain vigilant even in the face of Cindi's anecdote. I do not remember how long I was standing there, when I felt my blackberry cell phone in my pocket was vibrating. The vibration brought me back to the reality. Somebody might be trying to reach me I thought. I reached out my phone and saw a mail was waiting in my mailbox. Out of reflex, I clicked to open the mailbox. I saw that it was a mail from my office, from a very young gentleman who joined just a month before I left on medical leave. He was Bruno, a devoted catholic Christian, who sent an email wishing me good luck. I had not had a good chance to get to know Bruno when I left office. So I was a little surprised when I began to read the email. Bruno was writing to assure me that everything would be alright with my surgery, that God was just taking my test. He cited a number of verses from the Quran which he learned in his world religion class – where Allah SWT is mentioning that for every disease, there is a cure, that humans are encouraged to seek treatments, the amazing healing power of honesty and so on. As I was reading the email, I felt a cold shiver in me as if I had been struck by a thunderbolt. Like all practicing Muslims, these verses are familiar to me. But never before were they were so meaningful to me or had such a profound impact on me as my whole consciousness was engulfed with a strange feeling which I felt only before twice in my life – long, long ago when I was a just a kid; two strange dreams that I had in my boyhood, one just before my father's death and the other just after his death. "Is it a message?" I asked myself perplexed. What a strange coincidence! I felt a cold rush through my body making me numb. Suddenly, I felt that I was not afraid anymore. I felt that I had been assured by someone. Nothing would happen to me. I murmured "Subhan'Allah – Oh the Merciful, You didn't leave me no matter how I changed overtime. My eyes were getting wet – just at that moment I saw my wife was coming towards me.

As my wife approached, I told her cheerfully that I got the date of my surgery at last – just a week after. It was possibly on December 13<sup>th</sup>, however, this would be changed twice and finally; my surgery would be held on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011. A week later I would be released from the hospital.

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### Resource For Newcomer Women:

YW's employment, entrepreneurial and reskilling programs support local **women and gender diverse people, newcomer women** to find their next opportunity and remove barriers to economic security through training and skills development program. More information at this link: <https://inhershoesyw.com/>

For questions or assistance, contact:

**Kiran Aslam**, Employment & Entrepreneurship Coordinator  
226-339-0517  
[kiran.aslam@ywkw.ca](mailto:kiran.aslam@ywkw.ca)

**Emily Dyck**, Social Enterprise Coordinator  
226-751-6898  
[emily.dyck@ywkw.ca](mailto:emily.dyck@ywkw.ca)

There are many ways one can be actively involved with the Welfare Foundation. Some of these are to include yourself in one of the subcommittees:

- Food Drive Subcommittee
- Wellness Subcommittee
- Student Scholarship Subcommittee

Please bring your inputs and ideas for any these or outside of these fields.

### BDKWWF

E-mail: [bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com](mailto:bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com)

Like us on facebook

Website: [www.bdkwwf.org](http://www.bdkwwf.org)

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## A patient's memoir on the journey to open heart surgery

While at the hospital, my physiotherapist was to teach me aerobic exercises to keep my leg and chest muscles active without harming the healing process of the chest bones which were cut to open my chest cavity, along with a meter long incision in my left leg. Alhamdulillah, I became quite strong in six weeks and by the 9<sup>th</sup> week, I was given full permission to drive long distances; I joined my office after three months.

During my first follow up, my surgeon Dr. Moon was very happy to see my progress. I was referred to a cardiac rehabilitation centre to learn different exercises and move forward. The cardiac rehab is probably the most important steps that people who've undergone cardiac intervention should pursue in order to stay healthy and prevent any further damage to their heart.

The cardiac rehabilitation program is a broad topic and I hope to address it next in detail. In conclusion, I must mention that Allah Subhana Wa Tala permitted me to perform pilgrimage to Mecca the next year. My wife and I were fortunate enough to perform Hajj and visited our beloved Prophet's Sallallahu Alayhi Wassalam grave in Medina. Hajj is physically very demanding, and I think that my rigorous cardiac rehabilitation routine made it easy for me. My thanks to all those who will be reading this account of my journey, please remember me in your prayers. May the Merciful keep you safe and protect you from all dangers.

Bangladeshis in Kitchener Waterloo Welfare Foundation (BDKWWF) is a voluntary organization registered and approved as a charity organization under the Provincial Government of Ontario.

### Our Mission

Improve life of the vulnerable people in Bangladesh and all over the world by extending humanitarian support through our concerted efforts and promote friendship and bondage around the world among people of all origin.

### Our Vision

The BD-KW Welfare Foundation will be a fully humanitarian organization through which Bangladeshi community in Kitchener-Waterloo voluntarily demonstrate their effort and caring for others in need.

### Membership

Become a member is easy, Just email [bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com](mailto:bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com). Membership fee is \$120 per year or \$10/per month per family.

### Newsletter

This Newsletter Foundational Highlights aims to publish two times in a year January and July. If you like to subscribe to the newsletter please email [bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com](mailto:bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com) or do it online by visiting our website: [www.bdkwwf.org.ca](http://www.bdkwwf.org.ca)