



## EMCEES

JOSH CLASSEN & PEGAH SALARI

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & OPENING REMARKS

HER HONOUR, THE HONOURABLE SALMA LAKHANI

## SPECIAL GUEST REMARKS

HARMAN SINGH KANDOLA | Chairperson, Newcomer Centre

ELDER LORETTE GOULET

LAURIE HAUER | Acting Executive Director, Newcomer Centre

## PERFORMANCES

FARHAD KHOSRAVI | Santur Performance

KaRAR PERFORMING ARTS | Ukrainian Dancers

DANCING CREE

## PROGRAM

Opening Remarks

Dinner

KaRAR Ukrainian Dancers

Awards Presentations

Cree Dancing

Closing Remarks

Signature Sponsor



**NEWCOMER  
CENTRE**

[newcomercentre.com](http://newcomercentre.com)

@YEGNewcomers

#RISEAWARDS2024

**Edmonton**



# MULTICULTURAL BUFFET

prepared by the Edmonton Convention Centre

## RECEPTION BITES

Samosas with Tarragon Sauce (V)

Cheese Rakkat (V)

Maple Hoisin Tofu Gua Bao (V)

## SALADS

Chickpea & Smoked Paprika Salad (V) (GF)

Fattoush Salad (V)

Mexican Corn & Cabbage Salad | (Vegan) (GF)

Halima's Somali Lentil Salad (Vegan) (GF)

Cucumber Raita (V) (GF)

## HOT SELECTIONS

Bariis Iskukaris (Spiced Somali Rice) (Vegan) (GF)

Aromatic Indian-style Basmati Rice (Vegan) (GF)

Chicken Tikka Masala (GF) 🌶️

Nigerian Pepper Goat Stew (GF) 🌶️🌶️

Samak Mashwee: Oven-Grilled Tilapia (GF)

Oven Roasted Cumin-Scented Vegetables (Vegan) (GF)

Ukrainian Creamy Rice-Stuffed Cabbage (V)

## DESSERT

Sponsored by  **NORQUEST  
COLLEGE**

Assortment of Baklava

Hispanic Flan,

Gulab Jamun

French Pastry

(V) - Vegetarian, (GF) - Gluten Free, 🌶️ - Spicy





# MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER OF ALBERTA

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to send greetings to everyone attending the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual RISE Awards.

Building strong, inclusive communities takes vision, hard work and a lot of passionate people. The immigrants and newcomers being honoured with RISE Awards this year have demonstrated their commitment to a capital city where everyone feels they belong and can help create a bright future for themselves and others. Their efforts are a wonderful reminder of the history of our province. When Alberta was founded, we invited the world to come here and help us build this place. They came, and they are still coming today—and we are all the better for it.

Congratulations to the winners and all of the nominees. You inspire me, and you make Alberta one of the best places in the world to live, work and raise a family.

I hope everyone enjoys this opportunity to celebrate these outstanding individuals and organizations, as well as our province's rich diversity. Thank you to everyone at the Newcomer Centre for creating these awards and bringing attention to the incredible contributions of immigrants and newcomers in Alberta.

Have a great evening!

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**Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta**





## Message from the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

On the occasion of the 2024 RISE Awards

October 26, 2024

As Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, I would like to extend my warmest greetings and congratulations as the Newcomer Centre celebrates the 19th annual RISE Awards.

For nearly 20 years, the RISE Awards have recognized the valuable accomplishments and contributions made by immigrants and newcomers in Edmonton. These efforts help foster the welcoming, diverse and inclusive communities that Canada is renowned for—and that is worth celebrating.

The Government of Canada is pleased to work with the Newcomer Centre as we have a shared goal of strengthening our country by welcoming newcomers, helping them to settle and become active, contributing members of their new communities, as they work to achieve their personal and professional goals.

The value of the supportive environment you help create for newcomers adjusting to life in Canada truly cannot be measured and extends beyond Edmonton's city limits. Your work to build effective strategies and connect newcomers with settlement resources, language training, employment opportunities and youth supports helps pave the road to success and prosperity for those who wish to build a life in Canada.

Canada will continue to respond to emerging needs and remain a global leader in resettling immigrants, including refugees and other displaced people. The success of this endeavour is only possible through work by organizations such as yours.

I want to extend my sincere congratulations to everyone receiving honours at this year's RISE Awards and wish you every success, now and in the future.

The commendable efforts of the Newcomer Centre—your staff, volunteers, members and donors—make a real difference in the lives of the people you serve, and I am personally grateful for that, as is my entire department.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Marc Miller, P.C., MP  
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship



## *Message from His Worship Mayor Amarjeet Sohi*

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On behalf of City Council and the people of Edmonton, welcome to the 2024 RISE Awards!

Every year, this event shines a light on the achievements and contributions of exemplary newcomers to our city. Some of the best and brightest have relocated to Edmonton from almost every corner of the globe, so today's inspirational stories are no surprise.

Immigrants make up almost a third of our city's population and speak more than 125 languages. Thanks to the record number of people moving here, our region is the fastest-growing in Canada. We continue to welcome newcomers with open arms because we've experienced their positive impact in local communities and workplaces.

I commend this year's honorees for their generosity and determination. We are lucky you have chosen to call Edmonton home. I thank the staff and volunteers at the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers for their instrumental work to provide immigrants of all backgrounds with the tools they need to realize their goals and ambitions.

Congratulations, and keep up the amazing work!

*A. Sohi*

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**Amarjeet Sohi**

**MAYOR, CITY OF EDMONTON**





*Greetings from the Honourable Muhammad Yaseen*

## **Alberta's Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism**

*RISE Awards  
October 26, 2024*

*As the Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism, part of my job is to promote and advance the creation of a diverse and inclusive future for Alberta. Community events like the RISE Awards are opportunities for all Albertans to see and experience the value multiculturalism brings to our province.*

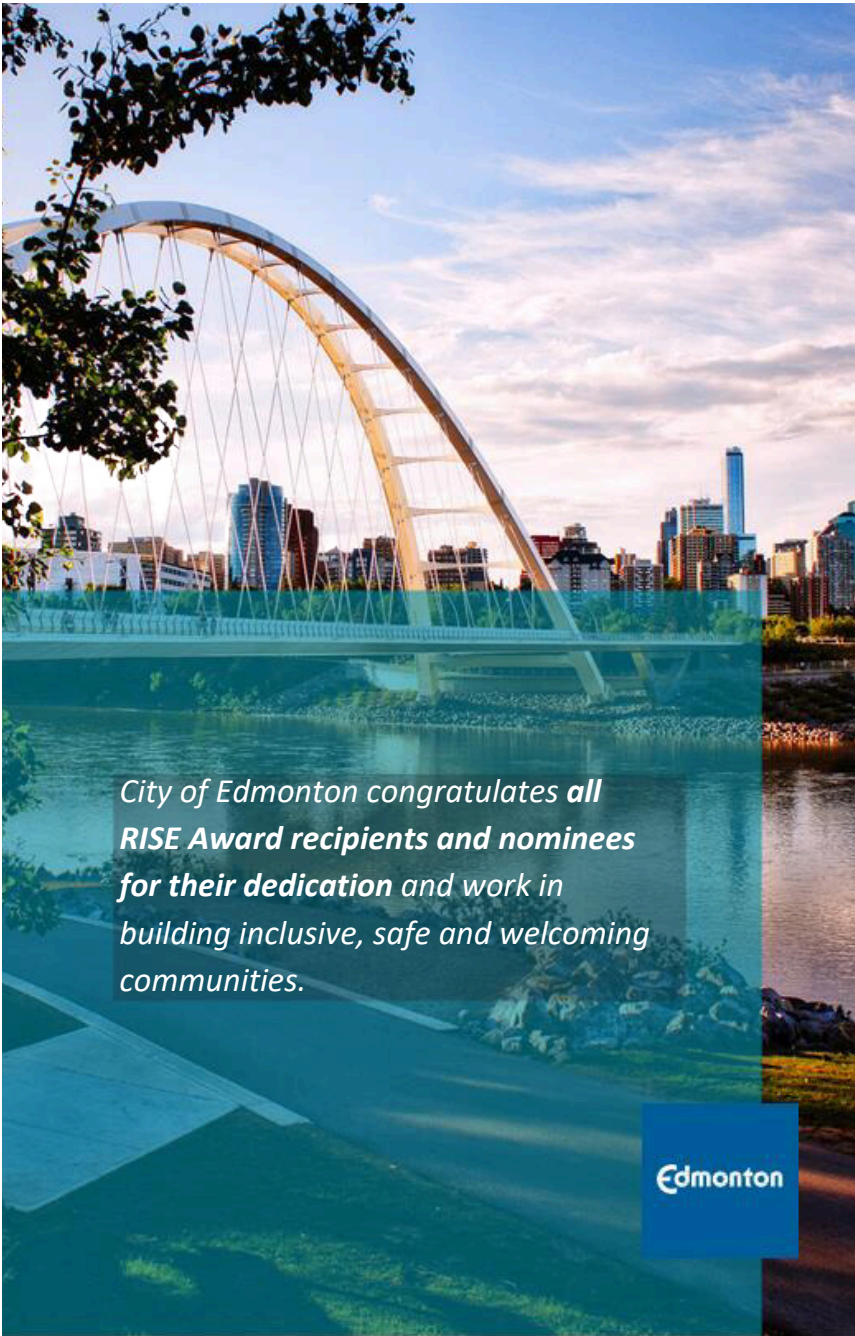
*The Newcomer Centre is instrumental in helping new Albertans find their home in our province. Their work to support the integration and participation of newcomers in Alberta helps make our province stronger and more vibrant. Through events like the RISE Awards, we witness the remarkable and notable achievements that newcomers have made in Alberta and learn more about their stories and successes.*

*My heartfelt congratulations to each of the nominees and award recipients. Thank you for your contributions to our province and our communities. You make our province the best place in Canada to live, work, and raise a family.*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Muhammad Yaseen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**The Honourable Muhammad Yaseen  
Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism**





*City of Edmonton congratulates **all RISE Award recipients and nominees** for their **dedication** and work in building inclusive, safe and welcoming communities.*



# EDMONTON NEWCOMER CENTRE

Thrive Here

The Newcomer Centre was founded to help individuals and families thrive in their new home here in Edmonton. Members from three Mennonite churches—**First Mennonite Church, Holyrood Mennonite Church, and Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church**—came together to create what we now call the Newcomer Centre. They drew on their experiences of hardship and their commitment to helping others through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). This center offers a warm welcome to those starting fresh.

At first, the Newcomer Centre focused on providing important services like language support, job help, and guidance for settling in. As the community's needs changed, so did the Newcomer Centre's programs. Now, it offers many services, including cultural orientation, mental health support, and help with becoming a citizen.

The Newcomer Centre has grown to meet the needs of many immigrants, including those moving from other provinces. Every year, it helps thousands of people along their settlement journey. The dedication of the staff, volunteers, partners and community are key to its mission of empowering newcomers to build successful and fulfilling lives.

## OUR VISION

We see a future where many citizens walk with newcomers to bridge their transition into the community,

## OUR VALUES

Social Justice | Diversity | Compassion | Responsibility







Message from the Newcomer Centre  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Laurie Hauer

To our RISE Community,

It's an absolute joy to be here tonight for the **19th Annual RISE Awards**, celebrating this inspiring group of nominees who remind us all of what's possible when we come together as a community.

The **RISE Awards** began in 2003 to honor the remarkable achievements of immigrants and local businesses that have significantly contributed to Edmonton's social, cultural, and economic growth. This year's nominees have not only made a lasting impact through their own successes but have also helped uplift others, making our community stronger and more vibrant.

For over 40 years, the Newcomer Centre has been a place where newcomers find the support, tools, and connections they need to thrive in Edmonton. From a small team of volunteers in the 1980s, we've grown into an organization with 230 staff members, speaking over 50 languages, and supporting more than 18,000 newcomers each year. We are proud to play a part in the journey of many who contribute to the rich tapestry of our city.

A huge thank you to our sponsors—your generosity and belief in our work have made tonight possible. We're also grateful to our Friends of RISE, who helped make this event more accessible to the community. To our dedicated volunteers and staff, your passion and hard work are the heart of tonight's success. And to our nominees, your achievements are a testament to the strength and resilience of the human spirit.

Thank you for being here to celebrate the people who make Edmonton such a special place to live, work, and grow. Tonight, as we honour these remarkable individuals, we also reaffirm our shared commitment to building a more inclusive and compassionate city where everyone can truly **Thrive Here**.



————— Newcomer Center RISE Awards —————



Message from the Newcomer Centre  
**CHAIR PERSON**  
Harman Singh Kandola

## Welcome to the 19th Annual RISE Awards!

It is my pleasure, as Board Chair, to welcome you to an evening that celebrates the exceptional contributions of individuals and organizations shaping the future of Edmonton. Each nominee here tonight embodies the spirit of resilience and innovation, qualities that define the immigrant journey and lie at the heart of the RISE Awards.

These awards are more than a recognition of excellence; they reflect our commitment to creating a community where immigrants *Thrive Here*. By driving positive change, the nominees have enriched countless lives and brought us closer to a city where everyone feels they belong and has the opportunity to succeed.



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drive transformation.**

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Unlock your organization's full potential with equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility training, customized for you and your needs.

Book your free 30-minute consultation with the Colbourne Institute for Inclusive Leadership today.



## Recognizing Immigrant Success in Edmonton Awards

The **RISE Awards** honours the contributions of newcomers and immigrants to Edmonton, and their role in shaping the city's social, cultural, and economic landscape. This almost 20 year initiative fosters inclusivity, inspires future generations, and strengthens connections between Edmonton's diverse communities, ensuring a more vibrant and united future for all.



# THANK -YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

## SIGNATURE SPONSOR - CITY OF EDMONTON

We sincerely thank the **City of Edmonton** for its long-term commitment to the **RISE Awards**. Your unwavering support has been vital in recognizing the achievements of newcomers and promoting inclusivity in our community. Your partnership inspires others and demonstrates the City's dedication to celebrating the invaluable contributions newcomers make to our society. Thank you for being a champion of the **RISE Awards**.



## ACCESSIBILITY PARTNER

The Edmonton Transit System has joined in again this year as an accessibility partner. Offer free public transportation on October 26, 2024, to any RISE Award ticket holder.

Edmonton  
Transit  
Service



### New can feel like home with the RBC Newcomer Advantage

With over 150 years of experience serving newcomers, RBC provides everything you need for a strong financial start in Canada.

- Bank account, credit and investment solutions tailored for newcomers
- Exclusive newcomer savings and offers from partner brands
- The convenience of the largest combined branch and ATM network across Canada
- Manage your banking needs anytime, anywhere with the RBC Mobile banking app\*
- Advice, support and community connections from RBC advisors – many of whom were once newcomers too

[rbc.com/newcomer](https://rbc.com/newcomer)



\* Based on market capitalization.

\*\* RBC Mobile is operated by Royal Bank of Canada, RBC Direct Investing Inc. and RBC Dominion Securities Inc. RBC Online Banking is operated by Royal Bank of Canada. © / ™ Trademark(s) of Royal Bank of Canada. 110541 (06/2024)



## AWARD SPONSORS

We extend our deepest thanks to our RISE Award sponsors. Your generous support makes it possible to celebrate the incredible achievements of newcomers in our community. Your commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion enriches our society, and we are truly grateful for your partnership. Together, we continue to inspire and uplift those who are making a difference. Thank you for being a vital part of this celebration.

**Rohit**<sup>™</sup>

**Bold Goes Further**  
**Intercultural Community**  
**Impact**

**EDMONTON**  
**COMMUNITY**  
FOUNDATION

**Community Champion**



**Rising Star**



**Equity In Action**



**Lifetime Achievement**

## EVENT SPONSORS

A heartfelt thank you to our event sponsors for your generous support of this year's RISE Awards. We are grateful for your partnership in celebrating diversity and creating an inclusive space where these remarkable stories can be shared. Thank you for being a part of this event.

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**Gallagher**

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*therese lopez*  
FLORALS



**Talent**  
PRODUCTIONS

# BE CURI OUS.

**YOUR CURIOSITY HAS GOTTEN YOU HERE: WE CAN HELP YOU ADVANCE YOUR ACCOUNTING CAREER IN CANADA.**

Learn how your international education and experience can help you achieve your goals:



CHARTERED  
PROFESSIONAL  
ACCOUNTANTS  
ALBERTA

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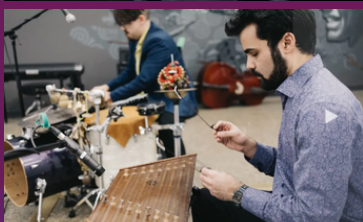
*Chadi Family*  
FOUNDATION

Is a proud supporter of the **2024 RISE Awards**, celebrating the incredible contributions of newcomers and immigrants to our community.

# RISE AWARDS PERFORMERS

## FARHAD KHOSRAVI

Farhad is a passionate composer and santur player based in Edmonton, originally from Iran. Since moving to Canada in 2012, he has made a name for himself by blending the rich tradition of Iranian classical music with modern, Western elements, creating music that resonates deeply with listeners. His debut album, *Sleeping in Sorrow*, was inspired by the theme of child labor and earned him critical acclaim, including a shortlist for the Edmonton Music Prize. His second album, *Mosâfer*, won the 2020 Edmonton Music Prize, praised for its haunting beauty and emotional depth.



Farhad's love for storytelling through music extends beyond albums—he's also composed for theatre and film, with his score for Anahita's Republic earning a Sterling Award nomination. Having toured across Western Canada, his performances leave a lasting impact, with audiences drawn to the emotional connection in his music. Currently, Farhad is working on his next project, weaving together santur, strings, and percussion to create an immersive musical experience, set for release in 2024.

Farhad performed during the **2024 RISE Awards Welcome Reception**.



## KaRAR PERFORMING ARTS

KaRAR Performing Arts (KPA), based in Stony Plain, Alberta, offers a variety of dance and performing arts classes for all ages. The dancers have earned numerous awards and will showcase two dances at this year's **RISE Awards**, choreographed by Vanessa Wiebe and Kasya Jaddock. Featuring intricate footwork and vibrant costumes with traditional embroidery, these dancers were selected for the Cheremosh Ukrainian Dance Festival's Show of Stars. They are excited to bring the lively spirit of Ukrainian culture to the **2024 RISE Awards stage**.



# RISE AWARDS PERFORMERS

## DANCING CREE

Dancing Cree ᑕᑦᑎᑦ ᑲᑦᑲᑦ is a Native American/Indigenous Performances/Powwow Dance Group/Agency.

Established in 2013 is a Cree Group based out of the Treaty 6 Territory . They are Educators, Ambassadors, Performers and Cultural Event Coordinators dedicated to promoting artistic performances, and events that bring Cultural Awareness to Cree Traditions Knowledge and History. This Inspiring group brings an authentic innovative approach to showcasing dance, drumming, singing, workshops and coordinating historical events for all types of audiences National and Internationally.

Dancing Cree performed on the **RISE Awards** stage last year and we are delighted to have **Dancing Cree - Cara Morin** back again this year.



[newcomercentre.com](http://newcomercentre.com)  
[@YEGNewcomers](https://twitter.com/YEGNewcomers)  
[#RISEAwards2024](https://hashtage.com/RISEAwards2024)



# CONGRATULATIONS

## Nominees, Finalist and Award Recipients

To all the nominees, finalists and recipients of the 2024 Newcomer Centre RISE Awards—your achievements inspire us all!

Immigrants and newcomers play a vital role in shaping the identity and future of Edmonton, contributing diverse talents, perspectives, and cultural richness that strengthen our community. As we come together to honour your incredible contributions, we celebrate not only your personal stories but also the profound impact you've made on the social, cultural, and economic growth of our city. Your efforts and resilience embody the true spirit of Edmonton, proving that diversity makes us stronger—but it's inclusion that makes us unstoppable

These awards hold even greater significance today. In a time when inclusion and acceptance face challenges, it's essential that we unite to recognize the immense value that newcomers bring. The **RISE Awards** remind us of the immeasurable contributions of immigrants and the vital role they play in creating the vibrant, thriving community we are proud to call home.

We also extend our gratitude to the community and all our Sponsors for their intentional efforts to positively impact immigrant and newcomer communities. Your support helps uplift those who bring so much to Edmonton's growth and success.

At the Newcomer Centre, we remain committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Together, we celebrate the accomplishments of newcomers, whose talents and hard work contribute to a brighter future for all. Let's continue building an Edmonton where everyone can truly rise and thrive.

