



WHAT'S NEW AT PROJECT ABRAHAM

Thanks to the support of our donors, we are growing exponentially within our organization to meet the needs of our clients.

Staff and Administration: Since April 2020, we have grown from a staff of 2 (Debbie Rose, Executive Director, and Aimee Nikmard, Executive Assistant) to 28. A recent grant from the York Catholic District School Board enabled us to hire 6 additional new tutors for our Homework Club and open up 50 additional spots, which will increase student registration from 90 to 140. We now have 16 tutors, 7 administrative staff, and 5 YES! program teachers. In addition, our Board of Directors increased last year from 8 to 11 members.

We recently filled three new positions: Program Manager, full-time Homework Club Coordinator, and Case Manager. Trudi Rutherford, our new Program Manager, has a background in training and project management in the not-for-profit sector. She is assessing our current YES! program and Homework Club processes, identifying gaps, and developing the tools required to promote a consistent quality of delivery. Alyssa Petsinis, our new full-time Coordinator, will help administer the Homework Club. Finally, our new Case Manager, Varun Midha, will assist our clients with their ongoing resettlement needs, a role that was previously fulfilled by administrative staff, volunteers, and referrals to other agencies. With an experienced Case Manager navigating the system, our clients will be able to better access the community support services they need to become employment-ready and independent.

Technology: To support our expansion, we have invested in new software, specifically Microsoft Teams and Survey Monkey. We will be using MS Teams to improve communication and collaboration among our staff and Board of Directors. Project Abraham will be using Survey Monkey for online registration, data assessment, and progress reports. Mailchimp will continue to help us communicate more effectively with our volunteers and donors and we will continue to use Keela as our fundraising and donor management tool.



Partnerships and Referrals: We are partnering with Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) on a pilot program for Yezidi women. One of the goals of the program is to help participants to improve their English and conversational skills. Project Abraham will be delivering that training. We are also receiving referrals from a wider number of sources, including Crossroads Clinic (Women's College Hospital), CAMH, and both the York Region District School Board and the York Catholic District School Board.



Our vision is to become the leading resettlement organization supporting victims of persecution, empowering them to create a future for themselves and their children as fully integrated Canadian citizens.

Donations are gratefully accepted: [projectabraham/donate](https://projectabraham.org/donate)

Project Abraham
extends condolences to
the Darweesh/Esso family
on the loss of their beloved
Ayad
on January 19th.



Yazidis plead with Canada not to repatriate ISIS members



The looming return of alleged ISIS members to Canada has brought trauma, worry and fear to people who were invited to Canada as a safe haven after the terrorist group all but destroyed their ancient community in northern Iraq.

"When I first heard the news, I felt the strength leave my body," Huda Ilyas Alhamad told CBC News in her Winnipeg apartment. She is one of 1,200 survivors of the Yazidi genocide who were resettled in Canada; she spent years as a slave of ISIS members.

"I had to sit down right away. I was heartbroken and terrified at the same time because on one hand they had promised to protect us and bring us here and give us safety, and on the other hand they're offering that same entryway for these very people who raped and tortured us on a daily basis."

[Full story at CBC News Canada](#)

Get to Know the Team at Project Abraham

YES! TEACHER - FERESHTEH MOKHTARI

Fereshteh has been a YES! program teacher since the program started in 2020. She also teaches ESL classes for the York Catholic District School Board. Originally from Iran, Fereshteh has a B.A. in English Translation, an M.A. in Linguistics, and a Certificate in Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. She has been a teacher for 33 years and moved to Canada 10 years ago. She now teaches approximately 14 Toronto and London-based students online in the YES! program. Two of her students recently passed the Canadian Citizenship Test and one will be taking the test soon. She is very proud of her students' success, as she is keenly aware of the learning challenges that they work to overcome.



Fereshteh says that seeing her students' progress is one of the most rewarding aspects of her job – “a kind of miracle.” Her students are the “most vulnerable members of society. They came to this country to find peace. When I can meet their needs – even their emotional needs – it’s very rewarding.” She cites several examples of students who, in spite of personal and family struggles, are making progress toward independence, such as learning how to contact their children’s school to report an absence, finding out how to comparison-shop for a deal on a new phone, or being able to complete a form at Service Ontario. Fereshteh has found that students who forge a bond with their teacher are more eager to learn. One student, who was disappointed that his classes weren’t going to be held over the holidays, told her that “The only time I forget about my problems is when I have this class.”

Volunteers needed:

Project Abraham needs a team of volunteers to manage our **in-kind donation program**.

Also needed are volunteers who are able to provide **occasional driving** to take clients to appointments and/or pick up and deliver in-kind donations.

If interested in either of these positions, please contact Aimee at admin@projectabraham.ca