

Nepalese Canadian Society of Edmonton

An Overview



NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON

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BACKGROUND

The Nepalese Canadian Society of Edmonton (NECASE) is a nonprofit organization predominantly of people with Nepalese heritage living in and around the city of Edmonton, Canada. It was established in 1999 and incorporated in Alberta on 23 May 2000 with an objective of promoting and developing Nepalese culture, arts, music, tradition and heritage. Currently it has around 600 general members ranging from university students, professionals and others employed in both the private and public sectors in Edmonton. Please visit our website at <http://necase.ca/> for further information.

NECASE Board of Directors (BOD) is the governing body elected from the general Society membership for governing the Society as per its by-law in Appendix A. The Board encourages and supports the development of its various programs for fostering an atmosphere of goodwill among Edmontonians with Nepalese heritage and thers with an interest in Nepali Language and Culture.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS, AUDITORS AND ADVISORS

Position	Name	Phone No.
President	Mr. Mohanath Acharya	780-432-3177
Vice President Administration and Communication	Mr. Anil Pant	780-467-5831
Vice President: Programs and Events	Mr. Santosh GC	780-432-4432
General Secretary	Mr. Naba Raj Adhikari	780.465.1806
Joint Secretary	Mr. Om Mani Pokharel	780-909-3209
Treasurer	Mr. Shiva Shankar KC	780-435-5275
Joint Treasurer	Mr. Punya Sagar Marahatta	780-249-9439
Director : Cultural Activities and Programs	Dr. Ai Bahadur Gurung	780-439-4185
Director : Youth, Sports and Recreation	Mr. Surendra Mishra	780-965-4436
Director : Membership, Welfare and Information Systems	Mr. Data Ram Aryal	780-994-7056
Director : Project and Fund Raising	Mr. Prabodh Raj Regmi	780-439-6552

NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON

Auditor	Mr. Deepak R. Upreti	780-988-9650
Auditor	Mrs. Sarojani Singh	780-485-1693
Advisor	Mr. Rameshwar Adhikari	780-463-6370
Advisor	Dr. Narayan Pokharel	780-482-6928
Advisor	Dr Arbind Mainali	780-466-4056

PROGRAM FINANCING

The basic source of Operational funds for NECASE is the biennial Casino proceeds of the Society granted by the AGLC. Other discretionary fund for the society is its General Fund established through society membership fees, donation and program fees and fund raising drives. NECASE currently is working with the City of Edmonton and the Province of Alberta for permit and funding to achieve one of its important objectives of purchasing of a permanent facility to house NECASE programs and assets and continue to improve and strengthen its various programs. NECASE is very close towards the finish line to purchase its own community Centre which will be called “Nepal Centre” once it is established.

PROGRAMS OFFERED BY NECASE

NECASE considers programs as a series of events that has well defined schedule and well defined objectives conducted by its membership through a combination of voluntary and paid staff. The following are the programs currently offered by NECASE and it sees these programs continuing to be offered in the years to come.

Nepali Language Class

Numerous volunteers are involved in conducting the Nepali Language Program. Currently there are around 20 regular students in Nepali class. We expect to see this continuously grow in the future. The class is held at the NECASE Centre each Sunday morning for a period of one hour. Nepali class is a key contributor to maintaining Nepali language within the children in the Community.

NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON

This program is predominantly supported by fees collected from parents. Only minor expenses such as books and stationary are supported through casino fund. NECASE supports the program by providing the facility at no cost to the program.

FM Radio Program

This program is named as the Radio Kathmandu of Edmonton is a radio broadcast of one hour each Sunday morning via the CJSR Radio (<http://www.cjsr.ualberta.ca/>). This program is conducted both in Nepali and English languages highlighting music and cultural items from Nepal. Radio program is truly helping to bring together the NECASE community members and share its music and culture with other Edmontonians at large. This program is conducted by volunteers from NECASE with nominal amount paid to them to cover their parking and commuting expenses through the Casino fund.

Community Assistance Program

As part of the objectives of NECASE, the Society is engaged periodically in organizing food drives for Edmonton Food Bank, collection of donations during international catastrophic events and blood donations. NECASE sees this program expanding significantly in the future years.

Sports Program

Sports program includes organized soccer and volleyball, 'Dandi Beyo' programs offered particularly to its members and others. These events are held every week during the summer months. Indoor soccer, badminton and volleyball games are held during the winter months for adults and youths. These programs are currently paid through individual contributions for venue fees. Once some assistance is available through the Casino fund, participation in this program is expected to increase substantially. This provides a great opportunity for youths to participate in physical activities and a chance to interact with other members in the community. This is organized by NECASE volunteers.

The Casino fund supports this program through purchase of team shirts. This program is seeing huge success with increased participation by youth and adults in the community. An

NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON

Interprovincial sports meet was also organized for teams from Winnipeg, Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton participating in a soccer, volleyball and Dandi Beyo competition. This was a historical event with record attendance of community members from Edmonton and Calgary. With the purchase of the community hall it is the Community's hope that some indoor sports activities can be house in the facility.

Cultural Dance Program

This program offers community youths opportunities to learn Nepali dances. This is a weekly program organized by community volunteers and paid staffs. The training takes place in the hall currently rented by NECASE. This program has been very successful in encouraging youths to participate in community activities and provides them with exposure to Nepali dance and culture. The dancers or learners of this program also participate in the Heritage Festival of Edmonton.

The program is predominantly run through fees collected from participants. NECASE offers its hall for the use by this program. Once a permanent facility is available, participation in this program is expected to increase.

Heritage Festival Program

NECASE has been actively participating in the Edmonton Heritage Festival (organized by the Servus Heritage Festival, <http://www.heritage-festival.com/>) for some years. This annual event, although lasting about 4 or 3 days in the summer, draws or occupies a huge voluntary resource from the community members throughout the year in organizing and getting ready for the program. A large part of the asset used in the festival by the Nepalese pavilion that has been collected by the Festival Organizing Committees over the years is stored at the NECASE hall.

The Casino fund provides money for the registration and rental of tent and the stage. Other expenses are covered through the general revenue fund of the Society. A large inventory of asset used in this event has been accumulated over the years to facilitate a cost-effective and efficient execution of this program. This asset is stored at the current NECASE facilities. Once a permanent Community Centre is purchased, these valuable cultural and other asset can be preserved for use long into the future.

NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON

Newcomer Assistance Program

One of the most important objectives of NECASE is to help new immigrants to our city and the surrounding areas. As per the by-law, NECASE values providing assistance to newcomers to Edmonton as one of its important tasks. A comprehensive project was undertaken by the executive in 2007 to develop a newcomer's guide which provides the most relevant information to new immigrants coming and settling in Edmonton. This guide has been posted on the NECASE Webpage and is accessed by many throughout the world prior to and after arriving in Edmonton allowing them to make informed settlement decisions <http://www.necase.ca/Documents/Necase%20Welcome%20Kit.pdf>

NECASE has been playing a vital role to support new immigrants by providing initial support such as picking up from airports, finding apartments, providing information about jobs, schools for kids etc. and much other useful information. NEACASE is a place for networking for our newcomers to our city and the surrounding areas. The new facility will further enhance this program by providing a permanent and appropriate venue for the newcomers. This program has been very effective and the work of individual community members in assisting newcomers to Edmonton was the feature of an article published in the Reader's Digest in 2010.

Seniors' Program

As the population of seniors in the NECASE community has grown, there is an urgent need to develop programs that targets seniors and their interests. Currently, the seniors participate in most of the programs offered by NECASE. This is one program NECASE will be focusing in the near future. A permanent community Centre will make new programs more accessible to Seniors.

NECASE EVENTS

Events are single or multiple days' activities that are organized annually by the society through voluntary help. Although each one of these events may be of short duration, it requires a lot of efforts by organizing committees and volunteers to conduct each one of these events. Where possible, these events are held in the NECASE hall and, when the numbers increase, special

NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON

locations are booked for these events. These events are financially self sufficient.

Social Events

NECASE organizes at least three to four social events such as picnics and pot-luk each year. Some of these events are organized at the NECASE Centre and others outside in public parks. NECASE also organizes each year a very popular joint Edmonton-Calgary picnic for the Nepalese community from these two cities to meet in the summer.

Cultural Events

The Heritage Festival Cultural show discussed earlier is one of the main cultural events organized annually. Over the years NECASE also organizes formal dinner events on special Hindu festivals such as *Dashain* and *Tihar* and to celebrate the Nepali New Year. Both cultural and religious activities are incorporated into the program during these events. We also celebrate *Saraswati pooja* during Nepali class hours and *Tij* festival is celebrated by mostly women in the community. Most of these events, except the dinner events, are held at the NECASE Centre.

Religious Events

As the current membership of NECASE is predominantly Hindu, NECASE conducts three to four organized religious events mostly focused on Hindu religious occasions. Christmas is also another annual religious event which is celebrated by its members. The community members of Buddhist faith have also worked very hard to include Losar, a New Year - religious (Buddist) and social event, into NECASE's annual program since 2009. This sees participation by a large group of NECASE members and public.

These events are mostly held at the NECASE Centre. Should members of other faith wish to organize religious events NECASE fully supports these initiatives.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Open University of Nepal Initiative

NECASE and many of its members are also members of the Non Resident Nepali Association which is an organization established to unify the Nepali Diaspora throughout the world with the aim to advance the cause of continual betterment of Nepal and the diaspora throughout the world. NECASE has been an active player in a current initiative of NRN and others to establish an Open University in Nepal with the aim to provide access to distance education to all, particularly the underprivileged, in Nepal.

The Athabasca University, one of the largest Universities for Distance Learning in Canada and Alberta, has played a key role in the project for OUN in Nepal. NECASE has played a key role in helping NRN establish a contact with Athabasca University and as a conduit for providing support of the Nepalese Diaspora in Edmonton and Alberta at large.

More information about NECASE can be obtained worldwide through our website at <http://necase.ca/>

