

CANADIAN MUSLIM *WOMEN WHO INSPIRE*

MADINA WASUGE is an extraordinary social activist and community leader.

She came to Canada 15 years ago as a refugee from Somalia. A medical doctor by training, she was unable to practise in Canada. Not discouraged, she embraced the Hamilton community where she made her new home and set about helping others in situations similar to hers. From the beginning, her personal and professional goal has been to make Hamilton - and Canada - a place that is inclusive, culturally sensitive, linguistically appropriate and free of racism and discrimination.

She started as a settlement counsellor at the Settlement and Integration Services Organization and quickly rose to the position of Manager, Program and Operations. A dynamic leader who advocates not only for newcomers' rights but for all marginalized groups, Madina established cross-cultural networks and built bridges between different communities. She is currently the Executive Director of the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI)

Madina also actively volunteers for several civil society organizations, including Ontario Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrants, Hamilton Police Services and Refugee Women's Mental Health in Canada, among others. According to the Chief of Police, she has made "a positive difference in the lives of literally thousands of citizens."

During her initial years in Canada she set up the Sudanese League of Hamilton, an association that brings together and provides emotional support to people from the Sudan, irrespective of their religion, politics, tribe or



gender. She is also a vital member of varied organizations working to create racism-free environments in all areas of civic life.

Despite all her community development and advocacy work, Madina has always found time to mentor young women from diverse communities and help them attain their educational and professional goals.

The City of Hamilton's Vision 2020 Plan aims to create a city free of racism and hate. As the Executive Director of HCCI, a community based resource centre, Madina has been entrusted with helping that dream become reality.

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