

CANADIAN MUSLIM *WOMEN WHO INSPIRE*

NIMET KARACHI inspires on all levels of her life: personal, social and religious.

A dynamo from the moment she arrived in Canada as a young bride from Turkey in the 1960s, she has been a leader at whatever she has undertaken. Never one to let obstacles stand in her way, she managed to adapt and excel in her new country from the start without family or many close friends.

Nimet and her late husband, Hassan, developed a paint-manufacturing business in the Niagara region. Her priorities were always clear, however: Her faith and her family came first. Interacting with customers and employees every day, she was an ambassador for her culture and her faith.

Despite the demands of business, Nimet quickly became a leader among the immigrant community. Her home was always open to visitors. For 25 years, the trailer parked at the side of the Karachi house was full of new arrivals who were welcome to stay for days, or even years, until they got settled. Single moms, transitional fathers, and students all broke bread around the Karachi family table and enjoyed the fruits of the garden. Many of the newcomers she housed, employed and educated are now contributing, successful, hard working Canadian citizens. One such is the son she and Hassan adopted from Ethiopia who is now grown with his own family and business. Another is the family from Gorazde to whom she offered a future in Canada during the Bosnian crisis.

Nimet was a member of the first Muslim community in Niagara and an immediate leader. For nearly 15 years, before the construction of the present Centre, the mosque was in the Karachi's basement. Nimet and Hassan were instrumental



in building the Niagara mosque and in establishing, in the late 1980s, the first all-Muslim cemetery in North America. Today, Nimet is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Islamic Centre of the Niagara Peninsula. Her mission is to see that women share an equal role at the mosque, that the Centre practices interfaith outreach and that it is a place that fosters truly openminded friendships. She has always been up-to-date on the politics of the wider community and has facilitated activities that welcome local government representatives into the Niagara Muslim community.

Nimet's leadership roles have demonstrated that women are equal partners in the success of the Muslim community. Her confidence and her voice have been examples to other women. For 40 years, Nimet has been a symbol of how to be a proud Muslim Canadian woman.

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