

# UZIMA SPRING NEWSLETTER



**SPRING INTO  
ACTION WITH  
UZIMA!**

# WELCOME TO THE SPRING EDITION OF THE UZIMA NEWSLETTER!

As we embrace the vibrant energy of spring, we are reminded of the season's themes of renewal, growth, and hope. At Uzima Women Relief Group International, we have been working diligently to advance our mission of empowering women, improving health, and alleviating poverty. We are thrilled to share the progress we have made and the exciting initiatives we have planned for the coming months.



In this edition, you'll find inspiring stories of transformation, updates on our latest programs, and opportunities for you to get involved. Whether through volunteering, donating, or spreading the word, your support is instrumental in helping us achieve our goals and make a meaningful impact in the lives of women and communities.

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

JACOBET EDITH WAMBAYI



## SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

**ALTHOUGH WE HAD A MILD WINTER IN TORONTO AND GTA WE BELIEVE ALL OF YOU ARE FEELING ENERGETIC AND READY TO WORK IN BETTER WEATHER THIS SPRING LOOKING FORWARD TO SUMMER. IN THIS NEWSLETTER, WE HAVE SHARED HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE WINTER MONTHS. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL OF YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR ANNUAL DINNER HELD ON MARCH 8, 2024, IN CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY. THE PROCEEDS FROM THIS EVENT AND OTHER FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES ENABLE US TO SUPPORT WOMEN GROUPS IN KENYA.**

**UZIMA CONDUCTED ACTIVITIES TO MARK THE BLACK HISTORY MONTH, FEBRUARY. MANY COMMUNITY MEMBERS PARTICIPATED, AND WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL THOSE WHO SUPPORTED OUR EVENTS THROUGH ACTIVE PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH. UZIMA HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF PARTICIPATING IN THIS YEAR'S PARLIAMENTARY BLACK CAUCUS EVENT HELD IN OTTAWA WHERE MANY BLACK REPRESENTATIVES AND THEIR STAFF PRESENTED ON MANY ISSUES AFFECTING BLACK PEOPLE IN CANADA.**

**WINTERTIME SAW US CONCLUDE MOST OF OUR PROJECTS WITH A FOCUS ON THE YOUTH MICROGRANT PROJECT TO WHICH 100 YOUTH CONTRIBUTED BY WRAPPING AROUND THEIR PROJECTS THAT ENDED ON MARCH 31, 2024. WE THANK ALL THE PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO SUPPORTED THE YOUTH IN COMPLETING THEIR PROJECTS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THESE YOUTH AND MANY OTHERS ON FUTURE PROJECTS.**

**AS A B3 ORGANIZATION UZIMA CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE FOR BLACK COMMUNITIES IN CANADA. WE CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS TO ADVOCATE FOR EQUALITY ON ALL FRONTS. PLEASE FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA ON THIS AND SUPPORT OUR CAUSE. WE HIGHLY APPRECIATE ALL YOUR VISITS TO OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS. THIS HAS MADE UZIMA TO GROW AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.**

**WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO OUR PARTNERS, SUPPORTERS, COLLABORATORS, FUNDERS AND OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS WHO GIVE US THE ENERGY TO PUSH AHEAD.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacobet Edith Wambayi'.

Thank you,  
Jacobet Edith Wambayi, PhD  
Executive Director

# CANADA SERVICE CORPS (MICRO –GRANTS BYETCOM)

- BLACK YOUTH EMPOWERMENT  
TOWARDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT





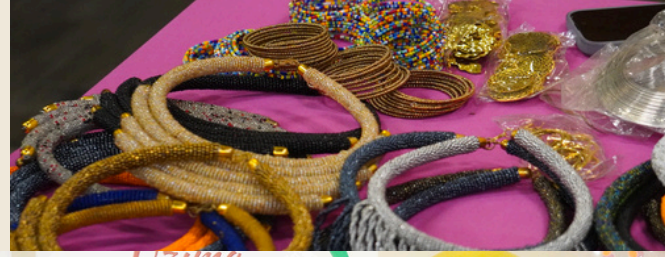
# Photo Gallery

## Fundraising Dinner



# Photo Gallery

## Fundraising Dinner



# Project Highlights

## Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives (CSMARI) Program

CSMARI is a govt. of Canada Project. (Canadian Heritage Capacity Building) that began in March 2022. The project is to help build the capacity of Uzima to serve the diverse range of racialized communities in Toronto and the GTA.

Since 2022, Uzima has implemented the project with the aim of supporting communities to confront racism, engage in discussions on diversity and strengthen research and evidence to build understanding of the disparities and challenges faced by racialized and religious minority communities as well as indigenous people.



The project's Capacity building focus is geared towards improving Uzima's Cultural Competence, Governance Systems, Strategic Planning, Human Resource Management, Financial Management, Gender-Based Analysis, Partnership Building, Community Mobilization Skills, Virtual Communication Skills, Sustaining and Evaluation Process

Members of the Uzima team as well as Board have undertaken various training programs and virtual and in-person workshops to gain hands on knowledge that has culminated in upskilling and work improvements in critical service areas. This round of funding for the project will round off at the end of spring and we look forward to the next stage in the continued efforts to improve service delivery to our esteemed stakeholders.



# Project Highlights

## Age Well at Home



This spring, we commenced the second year of this Government of Canada funded program for seniors with the goal of providing a more targeted support to Black seniors in Ontario and Calgary who are adversely affected by the effects of COVID-19. During the past winter months, we were able to evaluate the first year of the program and develop even better strategies to deliver more services to black seniors. We have strengthened our partnerships with the Kenyan Canadian Association and the Bridge To Oasis to ramp up our recruitment activities across the provinces of Ontario and Alberta. Against this backdrop, we are well on our way to reaching our target of 500 seniors this spring. As part of the project, there is a focus on building the capacity of service providers who may not be well versed with cultural appropriate approaches for supporting Black seniors in Canada. Seniors and their service providers are being engaged in a series of virtual and in-person educational sessions to increase their understanding of the care needs that may be unique to improving the lives of Black seniors. This spring, several virtual and in-person workshops and activities are taking place in various project locations across Canada.

In the coming months, we plan to continue to increase the number of services offered to Black seniors in Ontario and Calgary and achieve raised levels of referrals for more specialized care and

support for Black seniors in the 2 provinces. We constantly look forward to working with other community organisations and individuals that are keen to serve black seniors across Canada.

# **Age Well At Home-AWAH Activities (Quarter 4: January 2024-March 2024)**

**February 22nd, 2024: Black History Month Seniors' Event**  
Uzima in partnership with KCA celebrated Black History Month for our seniors' community with over 70 seniors in attendance. Black History Month is a time to not only celebrate the achievements of the Black community but to also reflect on where we came from, where we are today and what we need to do to build a society that welcomes and promotes cultural diversity.

The event included a workshop on mental health and wellness, speeches from invited MPs, presentation of Nigerian History by a senior, presentation of the African Drum by Mustaffa Jarra from Ghana, presentation of short African Movie/Documentary as well as presentation of African Dance Performance by Uzima Seniors, among others.

As part of the AWAH initiative to improve our seniors' health and wellness while they age at home with their families, the event provided a workshop on mental health and wellness. Furthermore, the event provided an opportunity once again for our seniors to connect, support one another, engage, share and learn or relearn the history of different African cultures hence fostering the acceptance and understanding of our unique differences.

BTO, one of Uzima's collaborative partners working on the AWAH Project also held a successful event celebrating Black History at Kerby centre, Calgary with over 100 seniors in attendance.

# **Youth Violence and Human Trafficking Prevention Program Event:**

**Art Therapy Events Feb 4th, Feb 15th, March 7th, March 21st:**

## **Art Therapy Sessions: Fostering Growth and Empowerment**

**We are thrilled to share the success of our recent four Art Therapy sessions, which have now concluded. Under the guidance of our art therapist, Rakshanda Khan, international students from Loyalist Business College, had the opportunity to explore their creativity and address personal challenges through artistic expression.**

**Throughout February and March, our engaging sessions provided a nurturing environment for youth aged 16-29 to delve into their emotions, cultivate new skills, and connect with peers and support in a group setting. Participants were able to channel their thoughts and feelings into meaningful artworks, fostering not only personal growth but also enhancing their professional development.**

**By offering a platform for self-expression, our Art Therapy sessions aimed to empower students, instill confidence, and promote overall well-being. We are proud to have facilitated an environment where individuals felt supported and encouraged to explore their inner selves through the transformative power of art. We have received many positive feedback from students, community members, and staff from the college regarding our efforts.**

**As we reflect on the completion of these sessions, we remain committed to providing meaningful opportunities for youth to thrive, and we look forward to continuing our mission of nurturing creativity and resilience in our community.**

**Stay tuned for future initiatives as we continue to empower youth and foster a culture of growth and self-expression.**

# **YVHTPP Events:**



**"Navigating the Self: Youth Wellbeing & Empowerment"**

**"Navigating the Self: Youth Wellbeing & Empowerment," was held on Saturday, March 23rd, 2024, at the Malvern Family Resource Centre. This transformative event provided an enriching space for youth to explore mindfulness, stress reduction techniques, and creative self-expression.**

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**One of the highlights of the day was the empowering art activity led by Rakshanda Khan where participants had the opportunity to create their own "tree of life". Rakshanda guided participants through the creation of their own "tree of life" using art materials, allowing them to symbolize their journeys, strengths, and aspirations through the branches and roots of their individual trees.**

**Additionally, esteemed guest speakers Rhonda Bennett, a Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying), and Sumaira Choudhury, also engaged youth with thoughtful and practical discussions. Rhonda focused on helping youth discover their passions, career paths, and aspirations, while Sumaira provided guidance on navigating trauma and introduced mindfulness and stress reduction techniques.**

**By engaging in these activities and discussions, participants gained practical tools to navigate life's challenges with greater ease and confidence. Furthermore, they accessed valuable mental health resources and self-expression techniques to support their ongoing journey towards holistic well-being.**

# Project Highlights

## The Black Youth Empowerment Towards Community Development (BYETCD)



**The first set of 100 youth participants of The Black Youth Empowerment Towards Community Development (BYETCD) project funded by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) rounded off activities on March 31, 2024. The project empowered 100 Black youth aged 15 – 30 in pro-social activities, fostering leadership, building professional networks and gaining life skills to build an inclusive Canada.**

**Each participating youth received a \$5,000 micro-grant to execute innovative, short-term service projects that they conceived and planned. Even though the projects are for the benefit of the community, taking part in the project equally helps in enhancing youth resilience as everyone needs to prove their project management mettle.**

**Some of the objectives which the project set out to achieve for participants include Community Engagement, Inclusivity, Professional Networking, and Personal Growth. Throughout these spring months, Uzima is focused on gathering all the project reports in readiness for submission to the Government of Canada. During this period, we are also evaluating the project and its achievements to enhance the next one with the lessons learned from the past year.**

# Project Highlights

## What will the project achieve?



- **Youth Empowerment:** The program effectively empowers Black youth by providing them with resources, mentorship, and opportunities to lead projects, fostering a sense of agency, self-efficacy and accomplishment among participants.
- **Skill Development:** Through workshops and hands-on experiences, participants develop essential life skills such as leadership, fiscal management, and technology proficiency, enhancing their employability and long-term prospects.
- **Community Engagement:** BYETCD encourages active engagement with communities through volunteering and service projects, leading to strengthened bonds and positive ripple effects within the community.
- **Inclusivity:** The program's commitment to inclusivity ensures equal access to opportunities for all participants, enriching diversity and equity within the program.
- **Professional Networking:** The mentorship component of BYETCD facilitates connections between youth and professionals, expanding their networks and opening doors to future career opportunities.
- **Personal Growth:** Participation in BYETCD leads to personal growth, increased self-confidence, and a heightened sense of purpose among youth, contributing to a more resilient and empowered society.

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SERVICE  
CORPS



## The Black Youth Empowerment Towards Community Development (BYETCD) Project

### Here are a few facts you should know;

As Lead organization, Uzima works with its partner Kenyan Canadian Association (KCA), consultants, facilitators, volunteers, and community leaders to ensure that black youth participants leave the project better equipped to face their chosen careers and fields of endeavor. Areas of focus include;

- **Youth Support Services:** BYETCD offers funding, equipment, and networking opportunities to enhance digital skills and navigate systems, ensuring inclusivity and support for persons living with disability and dependent care.
- **Mentorship Program and Life Coaching:** Youth are matched with leaders and professionals in various fields, providing guidance and support to navigate personal and professional challenges.
- **Workshops:** Ongoing workshops cover topics such as financial management, technology, leadership, and project planning, equipping youth with essential life skills.
- **Youth-Designed Projects:** Youth actively participate in designing projects based on their interests, promoting ownership, creativity, and community engagement.
- **Volunteering Program:** Encouraging youth to volunteer in diverse positions to foster a sense of altruism, community involvement, and the accumulation of community service hours.
- **Evaluation and Feedback:** Projects undergo regular evaluation by an independent community consulting firm, ensuring accountability, effectiveness, and continuous improvement.



# ABOUT THE MICRO-GRANT PROJECT

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**CANADA SERVICE CORPS**

Canada

**Uzima WOMEN**  
Relief Group International

**KENYAN Canadian Association**



## MANDATORY ATTENDANCE MICROGRANT RECIPIENT VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

Join Now

1. Business and IT ( Careers & Trends )
2. Importance of Social Work & Mental Health
3. Next In-Person Hygiene Kit Distribution Event Announcement

22 FEBRUARY 2024  
5:00-7:00 PM

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**MICRO-GRANT YOUTH**

**MICRO-GRANT RECIPIENT**

Join us for an in-person workshop! Experience and learn valuable insights. Food will be provided. Don't miss out!

**EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:**

- 3 WORKSHOPS  
Project Organization | Mental Health | Black History Month
- BREAKFAST AND LUNCH
- EXCELLENT SPEAKERS

**INFORMATION**

February 3, 2024  
9:00AM - 4PM  
1-647-748-8870  
7-888-448-6225  
microgrant@uzimawomeninternational.org  
Styl'd Spaces Events Studio  
1200 Ellesmere Rd Unit 82,  
Scarborough, ON M1P 2P9

LET'S GROW WITH US

**February 22nd Workshop:** The workshop centered on career and business trends as well as the importance of social work and mental health. The career and business trend workshop shared insights about careers in marketing, Sales, finance, human resources, operations, supply chain and Information technology. The second workshop addressed topics like the connection between social work and mental health as well as scope of social work in the mental health sector.

**February 3rd Workshop:** The event was hosted at Styl'd Spaces in Scarborough and celebrated the Black History Month. The event served to empower participants via three workshops covering three major and crucial topics: Project closure compliance, Black Youth Empowerment and Mental Health and Wellness.

## WRAPPING UP THE 2023-2024 MICRO-GRANT YOUTH PROJECT

Empowering DREAMS  
Transforming FUTURES

All 2023 Micro-Grant recipients are invited to celebrate their achievements in this amazing project!

Get ready for an evening packed with:

- Sumptuous Dinner
- Issuance of certificates of completion
- Your very own presentations
- Youth networking
- Entertainment that'll keep you dancing!
- Dress to impress in your fancy spring look!

**THURSDAY MARCH 28, 2024**

**3:00PM-8:00PM EST (Toronto Time)**

ISTAR BANQUET HALL, 235 Dixon Road Toronto ON M9P 2M5

+1 248 288 0887 | microgrant@uzimawomeninternational.org

**RSVP TODAY**  
Let's Celebrate Your Success Together!

**DON'T MISS IT!**

**KENYAN Canadian Association** | **Uzima WOMEN**  
Relief Group International

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**Uzima WOMEN**

**Microgrant Virtual Agency & Mentorship Breakout Sessions**

Thursday, March 7th 2024

**JOIN US**

5:30-6:30: Project Closing Compliance  
6:30-7:15: Mentorship Breakout Sessions

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**CANADA SERVICE CORPS** | Canada | **Uzima WOMEN** | **KENYAN Canadian Association**

**March 28th Closing Dinner:** This dinner event was held to appreciate and acknowledge all the efforts that the youth had undertaken during their project delivery and making the Microgrant initiative by Government of Canada a success. Certificates recognising their work were distributed alongside books and hygiene kits.

**March 7th Workshop:** The event hosted a workshop sharing examples of professional project closing reports followed by 1 hour mentorship sessions for the youth in different break out rooms where groups of youth were assigned to mentors who helped address challenges that youth brought up during their session.

# WELCOMING OUR NEW MEMBER TO THE TEAM

New!



*“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.” -William James*

Hello, my name is Lydia. A Social Service Worker graduate from Seneca Polytechnic. I recently joined Uzima as project coordinator and I am very excited to be part of a team that is contributing to the well-being of the communities that we serve and making a positive impact on their lives. I have always believed that at the end of the day, what is truly fulfilling is being able to make a difference in someone's life however small it may be—because it always counts!



# WELCOMING OUR NEW MEMBER TO THE TEAM

New!



## UDUOT TOM

Uduot joined Uzima as Program Manager in March 2024 and brings a wealth of experience spanning several sectors including financial services, construction, consulting, and non-profits. He sees himself as a versatile and solutions-driven professional with broad-ranging experience leading diverse teams to improve business and operational processes culminating in the achievement of organisational goals. He is constantly seeking opportunities to transform organisational practices into fresh, cost-effective solutions leading to more efficient operations. He constantly lends his voice and skills to youth development, leadership building and community development efforts in communities across the globe, and is a life member of the Junior Chamber International (JCI) movement.

# How You Can Help

**Donate:** Your generous contributions make our work possible. Consider making a donation today to support our programs and initiatives. [Click here to donate](#)

**Donate:**  
**Volunteer:** We are always looking for passionate volunteers. Join us and make a difference in our community. [Click here to volunteer](#)

**Spread the Word:** Follow us on social media and share our updates with your network to help us reach more people. [Click here to follow us on our social media pages](#)



# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH



HAPPY

# Father's Day

To the dads who guide us, inspire us, and fill our lives with love and laughter—today is for you. Thank you for all the sacrifices, wisdom, and strength you share every day. Enjoy your special day, you deserve it!



# MOTHER'S Day



**THANK  
YOU**

*For supporting Uzima*