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Gallery showcases experiences of immigrant/refugee women

BRANTFORD – Wilfrid Laurier University’s Yellow Brick Wall exhibition space presents *Do You See What I See?*, a participatory photo-based research project by Bharati Sethi that runs from April 1 to April 30, 2014.

The exhibit explores the employment-health association for immigrant/refugee women from Korea, Asia, Africa, Japan, Arab World and Latin America (KAAJAL) in Brantford, Brant County and Haldimand-Norfolk. KAAJAL incorporates all the populations listed under visible minorities by Statistics Canada.

Sethi created the exhibit using Photovoice, a visual arts-based research methodology based on the principles of empowerment education. Its focus is to empower individuals, often those that are marginalized and/or disadvantaged, by giving them an opportunity to tell their stories in the form of participant-generated photographs.

“The photographs that are part of the exhibit showcase some of the incredible women I had the pleasure of working with on my research,” said Sethi. “Using Photovoice, I am able to allow them to share their stories and experiences visually in their own voice, which is important.”

Sethi is a PhD candidate in Laurier’s Faculty of Social Work, specializing in community, planning, policy and organization. Her research has earned her several prestigious awards, including the Ontario Women’s Health Scholarship (PhD 2012 and 2013), the Tutor-Primary Health Care Fellowship (PhD), the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship (PhD), the Inaugural Hilary M. Weston Scholarship (MSW) and the Social Sciences Humanities Research Scholarship (MSW). In addition, her master’s thesis earned her a Governor General’s Award nomination.

In 2013, Sethi’s community advocacy efforts and research earned her the Citizens Award from the Honourable Dave Levac, Member of Provincial Parliament for Brant, and in 2012 she was named one of the top 25 immigrants to Canada.

The Yellow Brick Wall plays a vital role in providing opportunities to appreciate and enjoy Canadian art for members of the Laurier community and beyond. The new exhibition space adds to a growing list of venues in Brantford – including Glenhyrst, The Station, Woodland Culture Centre and the Brantford Arts Block – that feature the work of visual artists. The Yellow Brick Wall celebrates visual creativity in a space that encourages dialogue and reflects the diversity and culture of the community.

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