



## Year in Review : Newsletter

### 12th Anniversary International Women's Day - "Break the Bias"

In celebration of our 12th anniversary on International Women's Day, the [Dr. Borna Meisami Commemorative Foundation](#) held a Screening Clinic and Business Luncheon with Restoring Smiles patients, Board of Directors, Program Directors, Patient Liaisons, Founding Members and our Youth Leaders on March 5th, 2022. International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women - while also marking a call to action for accelerating gender balance. This year's International Women's Day theme, "Break the Bias," challenges and calls out gender bias, discrimination and stereotyping to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive world. A gender-equal world.

Since our inauguration on International Women's Day 2010, the Foundation continues to help survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) through three programs: Restoring Smiles, Restoring Sleep, and Restoring Strength. These are the only charitable programs available in Canada to provide free, gold standard treatment (with no costs spared) to alleviate pain and disease to fully reconstruct jaw function, teeth, sleep breathing disorder and rehabilitation of musculoskeletal disorders. Our work has grown to a network of over 50 volunteer practitioners who provide comprehensive pro-bono treatments in dentistry, sleep medicine, orthopedic surgery, and rehabilitative and physical therapy. In addition, the Foundation works closely with more than 50 women's shelters and programs in the Greater Toronto Area and Ontario to identify survivors in need of care.

"For the past 12 years, we have learnt that the real impact on the lives of women we treat is not just in the delivery of oral healthcare but a fundamental change in the individual's sense of well-being when they feel included and have the autonomy to make decisions about their health and well-being. It's crucial that we continue bringing attention to the impact and traumas from all other forms of gender-based violence. When we create a more gender-equal and inclusive world, we create a better world," says Dr. Tina Meisami, Founder and Executive Director of the Foundation.

## Our Road to Post-COVID Recovery

**Dr. Borna Meisami Commemorative Foundation** [www.drmeisamifoundation.com](http://www.drmeisamifoundation.com) [@drmeisamifoundation](https://twitter.com/drmeisamifoundation)

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*Restore a Smile, Empower a Woman, Reclaim her Life*



Since the outset of COVID-19, data has demonstrated that all types of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, has increased. Some of the factors that led to this increase may include but are not limited to, financial security, cramped living conditions, isolation with abusers and movement restrictions. Survivors have limited information and awareness about resources and support. Organizations, such as our Foundation, have established networks with more than 50 shelters and 3 Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Acute Care Centres (SADVACC) in the area to support GBV survivors and restore their smiles and confidence.

Prior to COVID-19, the Dr. Borna Meisami Commemorative Foundation was consistently effective in locating, assessing, and treating trauma-based patients. Our organization provides FREE treatment for dental, oral health, musculoskeletal, rehabilitative and sleep breathing disorders. However, the pandemic hindered our ability to offer pre-COVID levels of service.

## Many thanks to our Donors

With support from [The Canadian Women's Foundation](#), the Foundation was awarded the [Shockproofing Communities: Gender-Based Violence COVID Emergency and Renewal Funds](#) of \$125,000, which helped the Foundation in addressing its patient backlog and prioritize immediate dental services for our patients who needed them in 2021.

As a result, the Foundation has treated about 85% of our backlog of eligible patients with significant pain, infections, and diseases with a serious risk impacting their systemic health. We have also been awarded the [Shockproofing Communities: Gender-Based Violence COVID Recovery Funds](#), an amount of \$100,000 from the Canadian Women's Foundation to support RECOVERY projects and collaborations that move beyond immediate emergency needs to respond to issues raised by the pandemic.

In February 2022, we received the [GSC Community Impact Fund at Toronto Foundation](#), an amount of \$75,000, which will support staffing for patient intake, treatment coordination, training and mentorship (i.e. trauma-informed approaches to service for dental professionals). The Foundation has developed strategies to conduct recruitment and assessment interviews safely; offer diagnostic medical and dental services; provide urgent care and treatment to patients, and continue our normal operations. We have adapted our



program delivery by pivoting to online platforms when possible to facilitate patient assessments, alternative fundraising events, and educational initiatives.

## Upcoming Event

Dr. Borna Meisami Commemorative Foundation presents “Women in Leadership Seminar for Female Practitioners in Dentistry and Medicine” with Dr. Mamta Gautam: **May 13th, 14th and 15th 2022.**

## Changes in Organizational Structure

- Director of Restoring Smiles – Dr. Maureen Fenn
- Director of Patient Screening – Dr. Melanie Little
- Director of Restoring Sleep – Dr. Indra Narang and Dr. Tina Meisami
- Director of Restoring Strength – Dr. Franco Tavazzani

## Programs

- Introduction of Screening Clinic and centralizing patient screening at Yorkville Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Restoring Sleep: Restoring Sleep provides treatment of sleep disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) and snoring.
- Restoring Strength: Restoring Strength provides treatment of musculoskeletal conditions such as injuries to the upper and lower extremities, neck, back, or any orthopedic trauma as well as rehabilitation and physiotherapy.
- Introduction of Exit Interviews

## Human Resources

- Hired full-time Executive Administrators (Jhenae Ho-Sue and Christina Sam)
- Hired two summer research interns (Zoha Anjum and Ghazal Haddadi)
- Hired two Treatment Coordinators (Angel Kajendran and Caroline Vander Kooij)

## Awards for Dr. Tina Meisami

- The Peter Newman Humanitarian Award: North York General Hospital: an award that honours those who display a tremendous commitment to the welfare of people or a community.



- The YWCA Women of Distinction Award (Health): an award that honours individuals and organizations for outstanding contributions for advancement of women and girls' lives in society.

### **Dr. Borna Meisami Foundation Youth Leaders**

- Recruited high school students to raise awareness about gender bias and inequality amongst their peers and community. We have given them a voice by tasking them to create social media content, outreach activities, educational materials and more.
- Dr. Borna Meisami Foundation (DBMF) Youth Leaders are *Lee-Ran Goodman, Charlotte Mui, Gabrielle Tavazzani, Sofia Jadavji, Ava Meisami-Mcallister*

**Many thanks to our 2021 Volunteer Practitioners for your tremendous continued support. Without your support, our organization wouldn't have been able to achieve this much success!**

- Dr. Tina Meisami
- Dr. Maureen Fenn
- Dr. Renu Varshney
- Dr. Shiva Shadmand
- Dr. Yasmin Mawji
- Dr. Melanie Little
- Dr. Julie Paris
- Dr. Amelia Deliakis
- Dr. Pasha Nasirzadeh
- Dr. Natalie Battish
- Dr. Sepideh Gharai
- Dr. Mahsa Farzaneh
- Dr. Gary Glassman
- Dr. Adam Grossman
- Dr. Beatrice Leung
- Dr. Katherine Lee
- Dr. James Noble
- Dr. Anna De Filippo
- Dr. Aarati Balakrishnan
- Dr. Susan Murray
- Dr. Neena D'Souza
- Dr. Girish Deshpande
- Dr. Susanne Perschbacher
- Dr. Sidney Fireman
- Dr. Feisel Haji
- Dr. Natoosha Nargaski



- Dr. Christine Tang
- Dr. Bennett Mui

**We thank the following Volunteer Practitioners for their years of service and we're thrilled about all the care and support you have given us in the past years.**

- Dr. Tunde Pal
- Dr. Sue Chincholi
- Dr. Phil Shedletsky
- Dr. Ramona Dico
- Dr. Emily Trohatos
- Dr. Elly Tehrani
- Mr. Jerrick Yao
- Dr. Leslie Laing
- Dr. Marian Rizk

**We welcome our new Volunteer Practitioners. Words cannot express how grateful we are for your willingness to volunteer.**

- Dr. Amanda Larsh
- Dr. Osama Soliman
- Dr. Sara Chirico
- Dr. Lynn Bazarin
- Dr. Janet Tamo
- Dr. Oliver Pin-Harry
- Dr. Sara Josephine Chirico
- Dr. Daniella D'avella
- Dr. Lionel Lenkinsi

**We have the most wonderful sponsors and we thank them for their constant help and support.**

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**Dr. Borna Meisami**  
Commemorative Foundation

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- The Colony Project
- COACH

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*The Dr. Borna Meisami Commemorative Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping women rebuild their lives after gender-based violence. The Foundation was created in honour of Dr. Borna Meisami, an orthopedic surgeon and humanitarian. For more information, please visit: [www.drmeisamifoundation.com](http://www.drmeisamifoundation.com)*