

Local Social Worker wins Royal Bank 'Top 25 Immigrant' award for 2011

Written by
Monday, 13 June 2011 11:37



For the greater good

The field of social work is an intense career path that demands the ability and empathy to fight passionately on behalf of others, and that suits Alex Sangha of Delta, B.C., perfectly. In fact, speaking up for those who need a voice is a part of everything Sangha does, as a registered social worker, a grad student, founder of a gay and lesbian South Asian organization called Sher Vancouver and co-founder of Mindset (Mental Health Education, Awareness and Support) at PICS settlement agency.

Where does Sangha's passion for advocacy come from? Born in the United Kingdom to Indian parents, Sangha, whose youth was spent largely in Canada, says he himself faced discrimination and disadvantage, not only for being South Asian, but for being gay. His experiences overcoming injustice in his own life, including tough years as a teenager dealing with bullying, has led him to become a vocal advocate for others.

"I feel if you give back and help others then you reap rewards of positive energy, positive feedback, and an intrinsic feeling of health and wellness. I felt it was necessary to make the most of my opportunities in Canada and fight for the rights of the marginalized and oppressed," he says.

"I have my grandfather's spirit in me. My grandfather spent his whole life helping South Asian immigrants in England settle in that country. My mother was devoted to giving back because it was a tenet of her Sikh faith. And I learned values of caring, sharing and collective goodwill through my professional education as a social worker."