

Calgary Marathi Association (CMA), is a registered non-profit organization to preserve the Marathi Culture by bringing together Marathi speaking people in Calgary and surrounding area. website : <http://www.cmacalgary.ca>

Our Vision

- “As a forward thinking and socially responsible group, our vision is to work together to preserve, promote, and enhance our culture, heritage and religion.
- We aspire to strengthen our community as a whole and to promote multi- culturalism and inclusiveness for all generations to come”

Our Mission

- Uphold and encourage our values, heritage and culture through celebration of our customs and traditions for generations to come.
- To support the spirit of Multiculturalism in Canada and invite other Canadians to participate in our community
- To bring all persons interested in Marathi language and/or others interested in the promotion of Marathi language.
- To support relief of poverty through community service and by arranging various charitable and educational activities.
- Mental well-being.
- Language and/or others interested in the promotion of Marathi language.

CMA Objectives

- Endorse events to strengthen the heritage, culture, festivities of the Marathi traditions.
- Support initiatives to promote and preserve the rich legacy of Marathi Language including support to Marathi schools in & around Calgary.
- Endorse culture specific entertainment opportunities to members through social gatherings.
- Promote artists from other ethnic groups & cultures to perform at events organised by CMA.

- Support the spirit of multiculturalism by promoting the events of other ethnic groups within the Marathi community.
- Educate and inform the younger generation of the diverse cultural heritage of India in general and of Maharashtra through various activities
- Engage the youth group through Paalavi program, in leadership opportunities to develop life skills, self- image and volunteerism.
- Engage the senior members of the community by supporting the initiatives of the Samadhaan (a group for senior members).
- Support new Immigrants for an easy transition and engage them in the community activities.
- Promote participation in various charity initiatives while liaising with various community and charitable organisations.
- Conduct educational and skill development programs open to all members to strengthen the community as a whole.

Our Core Values

- **Respect:** We believe that every person deserves to be treated with respect, dignity, equality and compassion.
- **Open- Mindedness:** We are committed to engage families, community partners and service providers in the various initiatives, programs, events to strength the community network and social support system an inclusive environment.
- **Passion:** We are passionate about what we do - we value innovation, growth, educational opportunities with the underlying philosophy of togetherness, union of families and communities.
- **Enhance natural capacities and networks:** We are committed to provide a safe, secure, fun filled community network and social support system that promotes physical, social and me

Calgary Marathi Association – 2021 Event Highlights

Preserving Culture | Uniting Communities | Building a Stronger Tomorrow

FLAGSHIP EVENTS

Gudhi Padwa 2021 – A Virtual Celebration of Culture and Creativity

Date: April 10, 2021

Description:

As the world continued to navigate through the pandemic, Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) found a way to keep spirits high and traditions alive with a heartwarming two-day virtual celebration of Gudhi Padwa, the Marathi New Year. Designed to bring families together and preserve the essence of Marathi culture, the event became more than just a competition — it was a display of love, pride, and community resilience.

Participants, especially children and families, put their heart into creating innovative Gudhis and traditional recipes, while the audience — scattered across Calgary and beyond — felt a renewed sense of connection to their roots. From edible Gudhis to cook-along recipe videos, the event rekindled memories of family celebrations and created new traditions in a digital world.

The emotional energy of the participants was palpable — children spoke passionately about the themes behind their Gudhis, and families invited the community into their kitchens, reviving the age-old joy of preparing festive sweets. The event transcended generations and boundaries, engaging not only Marathi-speaking individuals but also welcoming friends from other communities to witness and appreciate the richness of Maharashtrian heritage.

Above all, Gudhi Padwa 2021 paved the way for inclusive cultural exchanges and future collaborations, demonstrating how technology and tradition can come together to keep culture thriving, even in challenging times.

Highlights:

- ✓ Two engaging virtual competitions:
 - Innovative Gudhi Competition for youth up to 18 years
 - Gudhi Padwa Special Recipe Competition for all age groups
- ✓ Creative themes like Recycled Gudhi and Edible Gudhi celebrated sustainability and innovation

- ✓ Cook-along format made the recipe segment interactive and family-friendly
- ✓ Widespread appreciation from viewers — the YouTube livestream received 692 views
- ✓ Prizes sponsored by local Indian businesses:
 - Vivaan's Yummies: \$75 & \$50 vouchers for recipe winners
 - Mumbai Bites: \$50 voucher for Innovative Gudhi winner
- ✓ Strengthened community bonding by involving children, adults, and seniors
- ✓ Promoted cultural preservation through storytelling, cooking, and creativity
- ✓ Set a foundation for future inclusive celebrations with cross-community engagement



Youtube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/VZIdGBP1I3U?si=G4vK6IV9v368cftQ>



Sur Sangam 2021 – Online Singing Competition

Date: April 24, 2021

Description:

Sur Sangam 2021 was not just a singing competition — it was a celebration of melody, passion, and cultural pride. Building on the success of Sur Sangam 2020, this year's edition transformed into a live online event, inviting participants of all ages to showcase their vocal talent and love for Marathi and Hindi music.

Held amidst ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the event served as a powerful reminder of how music can bridge distances and uplift spirits. Participants, families, and music lovers joined virtually, creating a shared cultural experience that resonated across screens and hearts.

Each finalist brought a unique flavor to the competition — from classical renditions to contemporary hits — making the evening a melodic tapestry woven with emotion, nostalgia, and community pride. For many, it was not just about winning; it was about expression, connection, and honoring heritage through art.

The audience, tuning in from across the globe, expressed overwhelming admiration. Comments flooded the chat with praise for the singers' talent and the event's production, while viewers swayed to the rhythms of homegrown voices.

This competition also created a platform for cross-generational participation, allowing young budding singers to share the stage — albeit virtually — with seasoned vocalists, strengthening the community's artistic fabric.

Sur Sangam 2021 reinforced that Marathi culture thrives when nurtured by music, and that such inclusive events pave the way for deeper intercultural appreciation and artistic collaboration in the years ahead.

Highlights:

- ✓ Audience Reach:
 - 737 YouTube views
 - 2100 Facebook views
- ✓ Finalists: 11 participants selected from open submissions
- ✓ Genres: Performances in Marathi and Hindi across various musical styles
- ✓ Judges: Deepali Shishodia & Anand Thakar — professionals in the field
- ✓ Hosts: Swapnali Nerlikar & Rohan Sankhe
- ✓ Vivaan's Yummies generously sponsored prizes:

- First Prize – \$100 Voucher
- Second Prize – \$75 Voucher
- Third Prize – \$50 Voucher
- ✓ Judging Criteria: Vocal quality, emotional expression, and stage presence
- ✓ Community Impact:
 - Inspired artistic expression across generations
 - Brought Marathi and broader South Asian communities closer through music
 - Reinforced the importance of cultural preservation through performing arts
 - Fostered a spirit of celebration and hope despite pandemic challenges



Youtube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/mvA5xsC21hM?si=JDjRlOmVWvKfuZ7L>



Ganesh Chaturthi 2021 – Virtual Celebration of Devotion & Culture

Dates: September 19, 2021

Description:

In 2021, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) ensured that the spirit of Ganesh Chaturthi remained vibrant and inclusive. Though held virtually, this annual celebration brought together Marathi families and friends from across Calgary and beyond to invoke the blessings of Ganapati Bappa.

The event beautifully blended devotion, nostalgia, artistry, and togetherness, reflecting the true essence of Marathi culture and traditional values. Participants — from toddlers to seniors — contributed their energy, creativity, and heartfelt devotion, making this an unforgettable celebration.

From the creation of eco-friendly idols to cultural performances echoing devotion and tradition, the entire event became a moving tribute to Bappa and a living testament to the resilience and unity of the Marathi community.

Even though a technical glitch postponed the live stream by a day, it only amplified the audience's anticipation and appreciation. The rescheduled broadcast on September 19, 2021, received an overwhelming response with 446 views on YouTube and 770 views on Facebook, showing the wide reach and engagement of the event.

Highlights:

- ✓ Virtual Celebration broadcasted LIVE on YouTube and Facebook
- ✓ Cultural Performances by community members — including folk and classical dances, bhajans, musical acts, and theatrical expressions all centered on the theme “Traditional Culture and Values”
- ✓ Ganpati Murti Making Contest with beautiful entries crafted from eco-friendly materials
- ✓ Nostalgic Katta: Heartwarming stories and memories shared by senior citizens recounting Ganesh Utsav in their earlier years — a powerful bridge between generations
- ✓ Home Ganpati Festival Moments: Enthusiastic members shared photos and videos of Sthapana, Aarti, Naivaidya Samarpan, and Visarjan ceremonies from their homes
- ✓ Participation open to members and non-members, promoting community-wide inclusion

- ✓ Event & Prizes sponsored by Raj Bhopla – ReMax, including two \$25 Gift Cards for contest winners
- ✓ Preserved and promoted Marathi traditions and family values, even in a virtual setting
- ✓ Brought Marathi-speaking families and broader Indian communities together, allowing everyone to participate regardless of location
- ✓ Empowered all age groups — from children creating idols to seniors sharing memories — to engage and contribute meaningfully
- ✓ Encouraged eco-consciousness through the murti-making contest
- ✓ Set the stage for more inclusive events in the future by inviting entries from non-members and showcasing diverse talents
- ✓ Created a sense of collective celebration and spiritual upliftment, strengthening cultural roots in Calgary's multicultural landscape

The love for Bappa, the shared joy of celebration, and the emotional connection fostered during this event became a symbol of hope, unity, and resilience. Events like these not only preserve our culture but also nurture a sense of belonging, paving the way for more inclusive and culturally rich experiences for all Calgarians.

Ganapati Bappa Morya!



The poster for Ganesh Utsav 2021 features a central orange background with the text "Presents GANESH UTSAV 2021 Virtual Celebration 19 September, 7 PM onwards". It is surrounded by six circular images: an eco-friendly murti, a map of India, a collage of photos, a group of dancers, a portrait of Raj Bhopla, and a woman holding a murti. Text around the images includes "Eco-friendly Ganpati making contest", "Festive Dance Performances", "Sponsored By RAJ BHOPLA REALTOR 403-399-5878 RE/MAX", "Hear Nostalgic Katta of Bappa", and "Share your celebration videos and inspire CMA community".

Youtube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/svUeY4d-cQg?si=2GawSTdylvM-0DNb>



Diwali 2021 – A Festival of Light, Love, and Community Spirit

Dates: November 27, 2021

Description:

Diwali 2021 was a heartfelt celebration organized by the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) during one of the most challenging phases of the pandemic. While COVID-19 restrictions prevented an in-person gathering, the spirit of Diwali — joy, togetherness, and cultural pride — remained alive through an innovative hybrid event model.

With safety as a priority and creativity at its heart, CMA offered community members the opportunity to perform on a professionally recorded stage setup. These performances, along with festive workshops and inspiring segments, were later broadcast to homes, creating a deeply immersive and safe Diwali experience.

The program beautifully blended tradition and technology to connect the Marathi community and broader audiences. It served as a glowing example of how love for culture can transcend physical boundaries.

The program also carried emotional weight as it featured an interview with Jui Karkare Navare, daughter of Ashok Chakra Awardee Late ATS Chief Hemant Karkare, who sacrificed his life in the 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attacks. Her powerful message reminded everyone of the resilience, bravery, and values that lie at the heart of Indian identity — making the festival not just joyful but also profoundly meaningful.

Additionally, CMA's beloved Diwali Faraal distribution was once again a grand success, spreading joy to the doorsteps of paid members. A special thanks was extended to Rekha Kaku (mother of Vrishali Mhatre), who crafted and delivered over 120 boxes of authentic Diwali treats with unmatched warmth and efficiency.

With 598 views on YouTube and 371 views on Facebook, the event touched hundreds of hearts across Calgary and beyond.

Highlights:

- ✓ Vibrant Cultural Performances by community members, recorded on a staged setup for a near-live experience
- ✓ Workshops: Diva Decoration & Kandil and Toran Making by Ms. Priya Dhande
- ✓ Interview with Jui Karkare Navare, daughter of Martyr Hemant Karkare — a poignant tribute to bravery and national service
- ✓ Hybrid Model with staged performances professionally recorded and broadcasted online
- ✓ CMA Diwali Faraal Home Delivery to all CMA members, reinforcing community bonding and warmth
- ✓ Chivda, Ladoo, Chakali and Shankarpale were delivered contactless to all members across Calgary through 4 teams, covering a total of 900 kms
- ✓ Hosted by: Suchita Karkhanis & Rohan Sankhe
- ✓ Sponsored by: Raj Bhopala – ReMax & Akshay Jejurkar – UPS
- ✓ Embraced innovation while preserving core Marathi traditions, demonstrating how culture can thrive even amid constraints
- ✓ Created deep emotional resonance with stories of sacrifice, celebration, and community spirit
- ✓ Brought together multiple generations — from kids making decorations to seniors enjoying Faraal — fostering inclusivity and unity
- ✓ Engaged non-Marathi and wider Indian communities, opening doors to cross-cultural connections
- ✓ Set a blueprint for future hybrid events, making celebrations more accessible and safe for all
- ✓ Reinforced a sense of belonging, continuity, and pride in Marathi heritage within Calgary's diverse cultural landscape

CMA's Diwali 2021 was not just a celebration of light, but also of love, courage, and community resilience — a glowing reminder that when hearts unite, even physical distance can't dim the joy.

Shubh Deepavali!





Youtube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/LFXFJNq0im8?si=qEj4plimtrlhVijg>

Facebook link:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/16VXzpTooz/>



CMA DIWALI FARAAL



SAMADHAAN – SENIOR’S EVENTS

Love Your Health – Virtual Physiotherapy for Seniors

Date: February 15, 2021

Description:

In response to growing concerns among seniors about maintaining physical well-being during the pandemic and winter months, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA), in collaboration with Alignbody Physio Inc, hosted a free virtual physiotherapy session led by Mrs. Swati Girap, a registered physiotherapist in Canada since 2015.

This thoughtful and inclusive initiative, titled Love Your Health, focused on helping Marathi seniors understand and improve mobility, manage joint and back pain, and safely incorporate physical activity into their daily lives—all from the comfort of their homes.

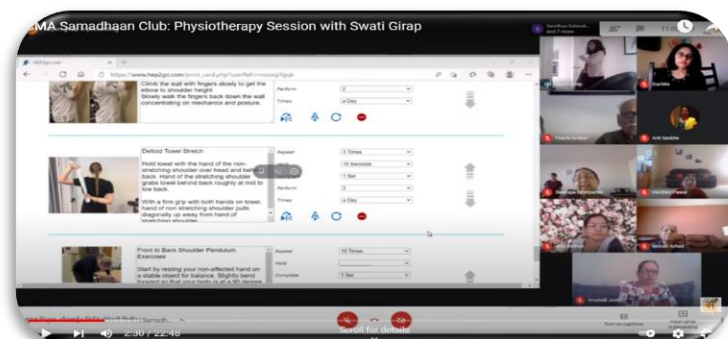
Swati Girap, with her extensive experience and specialized training in areas such as dry needling, K-tape, and pelvic floor therapy, not only demonstrated exercises tailored for the senior population but also held an engaging Q&A session that addressed common concerns like arthritis, joint stiffness, and age-related limitations.

The event was a beautiful blend of health, learning, and community care. For many senior participants, it was not just about physical wellness—it was about being seen, heard, and supported by their community during a time of increased isolation. The familiar language, cultural context, and warm delivery made it easy for the seniors to connect, ask questions freely, and commit to prioritizing their health.

Events like these highlight the Marathi value of honoring our elders, nurturing their well-being, and ensuring they are not left behind in the digital age. This virtual initiative also opened doors for similar online programs in the future, bringing together members from across Calgary and beyond, regardless of age or ability, reinforcing CMA’s commitment to inclusivity, accessibility, and cultural care.

Highlights:

- ✓ Free virtual physiotherapy session for seniors
- ✓ Hosted by: Mrs. Swati Girap, Registered Physiotherapist (Canada)
- ✓ Mobility improvement for seniors (60+)
- ✓ Exercises for back, joint, and arthritis-related pain
- ✓ Live demonstrations and interaction
- ✓ Open Q&A addressing personal health concerns
- ✓ CMA shared exercise links and recordings for seniors to continue practicing at home
- ✓ Honored and supported the elderly within the Marathi community
- ✓ Encouraged health-conscious living, even during pandemic isolation
- ✓ Fostered emotional connection and intergenerational care
- ✓ Promoted inclusive, future-ready community outreach



Youtube link:

<https://youtu.be/CBx3LyGJIrw?si=vQ0xO8NaG4I9HUJU>

Samadhaan Picnic – A CMA Seniors’ Gathering

Date: August 27, 2021

Description:

As summer brought families together, many senior parents visiting from India or settled in Calgary as PR holders or citizens became a reason to celebrate. To honor and connect with our elders, the Calgary Marathi Association organized a vibrant, joy-filled gathering under the Samadhaan Club initiative.

Originally planned as a sunny outdoor picnic at Edworthy Park, the event was gracefully relocated to Cardel Recreation Facility SE due to rain. But the spirit of the evening remained untouched, and perhaps even more magical.

For many, this was the first in-person social event after the long isolation of the pandemic. The smiles, laughter, and heartfelt conversations turned the gathering into a heartwarming celebration of life, community, and connection.

Highlights:

- ✓ First in-person seniors’ event for 2020–2021 organized by CMA
- ✓ Attended by 19 senior members of the community
- ✓ Light snacks, tea, coffee, and a warm dinner shared in great company
- ✓ Introductions that helped break the ice and build new friendships
- ✓ Fun games like Kahoot and Bingo, with prizes for the winners
- ✓ Unforgettable atmosphere filled with laughter, joy, and emotional warmth
- ✓ Reinforced respect and care for our elders, which is at the core of Marathi and Indian values
- ✓ Provided a safe, inclusive platform for seniors to reconnect post-pandemic
- ✓ Sparked enthusiasm and demand for more such gatherings in the future
- ✓ Strengthened intergenerational ties within the Marathi community

This event was a gentle reminder that joy often lies in simple moments of togetherness. The glowing faces of our seniors reminded us why building community bonds is more important than ever.



Samadhaan: Online Chair Yoga Session for Seniors

Date: December 11, 2021

Description:

As part of its initiative to promote wellness and meaningful engagement among senior members, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA), through its Senior Citizens Club – Samadhaan, organized a free virtual Chair Yoga session led by certified yoga teacher Mrs. Uma Deshpande from India.

This thoughtful and rejuvenating session, held on the morning of December 11, 2021, drew warm participation and interest from our senior members, with a total of 13 attendees joining in. The session was designed to be accessible, safe, and practical, focusing on exercises that could be performed while seated, making it especially suitable for seniors or those with limited mobility.

Mrs. Deshpande guided participants through gentle warm-up movements, asanas (postures), breathing exercises, and a concluding prayer, blending physical well-being with mental peace. The demonstrations were easy to follow, and the explanations of benefits helped deepen participants' understanding of how these practices could improve posture, flexibility, and overall vitality.

Beyond just physical health, this event became a bonding experience. It revived traditional Indian wellness practices, offering a sense of familiarity and cultural connection for seniors living far from their homeland. The session was also recorded for future reference, allowing more members of the community to benefit from this timeless wisdom at their own pace.

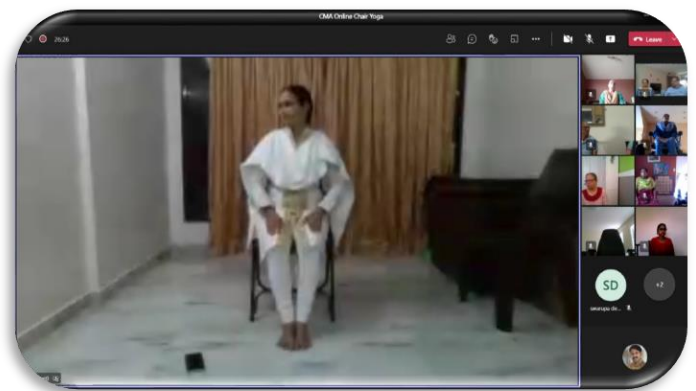
The atmosphere was filled with gratitude, curiosity, and calm energy, as participants expressed their joy in reconnecting with yogic practices in a manner that respected their current physical needs.

Highlights:

- ✓ A free virtual yoga session tailored for senior citizens
- ✓ Hosted by Mrs. Uma Deshpande, a certified yoga teacher from India
- ✓ Total 13 attendees participated live
- ✓ Gentle warm-up exercises while seated on a chair
- ✓ Guided practice of simple yet effective asanas with clear explanation of benefits
- ✓ Standing squats with chair support for added mobility

- ✓ Breathing exercises to promote mindfulness and relaxation
- ✓ Session concluded with a prayer, reinforcing spiritual connection
- ✓ Video recording shared for future use and extended community benefit
- ✓ Reaffirmed the importance of Indian wellness traditions, especially among senior community members
- ✓ Offered an opportunity for intergenerational learning and inspiration
- ✓ Strengthened community bonds, especially for seniors who may face isolation
- ✓ Promoted inclusive wellness, reminding us that age or mobility need not be a barrier to health
- ✓ Set the stage for future wellness-oriented programs that honor culture, promote health, and build stronger communities

Through Samadhaan, CMA once again demonstrated its commitment to holistic community development, honoring the wisdom of our elders while keeping them actively connected with their roots and with each other.



Youtube link:

https://youtu.be/jiPqPr9KIQ0?si=l6R6aXB178S81o_6

Palavee – YOUTH EVENTS

CMA Youth Club Bike Ride

Date: July 18, 2021

Description:

The CMA Youth Club Bike Ride marked the first outdoor event of 2021 for Calgary Marathi Association's youth wing, and it was an instant hit. Organized with meticulous planning by CMA's Young Leaders, the ride welcomed both youth and adults to pedal through scenic trails from Sikome Lake to Carburn Park and back, covering a total of 20 kilometers. Designed as a casual, inclusive event, it encouraged physical activity, social bonding, and a reconnection with nature.

This wasn't just a bike ride — it was a celebration of togetherness and resilience after months of isolation. Laughter echoed down the trails, friendships were renewed, and the sheer joy of riding together as a community was palpable. For many, it served as a reminder that our Marathi roots are deeply intertwined with the values of unity, health, and vibrant living.

While aimed at CMA youth, the event was open to all and warmly welcomed participants from other communities, emphasizing inclusivity and cultural exchange. It was heartwarming to witness families and friends — both old and new — come together under the summer sky, with shared smiles, snacks, and stories.

Highlights:

- ✓ The event was conceptualized and led by the CMA Youth Club, showcasing the leadership potential and organizational capabilities of our young members. They created posters, managed registrations, and handled logistics, setting the stage for many future youth-led initiatives.
- ✓ A scenic 20 km loop from Sikome Lake to Carburn Park, with an optional 10 km route for those preferring a shorter ride.
- ✓ 6 Youth Leads at the helm of planning
- ✓ 25 Total Volunteers who ensured safety and coordination
- ✓ 15 Young Participants who pedaled their hearts out
- ✓ The event provided a much-needed social outlet after long restrictions, and created an informal, yet powerful space for bonding across generations.

- ✓ While the format was modern and recreational, the values embedded in the event — community, collaboration, and joy — are core to Marathi culture. The language spoken, the familiar jokes and encouragements along the trail, and the spirit of “एकत्र येणे” (coming together) made it a deeply cultural experience.
- ✓ The response was overwhelmingly positive. “We had a great evening,” said one young participant, echoing the feelings of many.

This ride was more than just a trail on the map — it was the beginning of a renewed journey for CMA Youth. It paved the way for many more inclusive, cross-cultural, and community-centered events that celebrate both our Marathi heritage and our place in Calgary's diverse mosaic.



CMA Youth Club Hike – Tunnel Mountain

Dates: September 25, 2021

Description:

As the golden hues of summer slowly gave way to autumn, CMA Youth Club organized an invigorating and scenic hike to Tunnel Mountain — an initiative that combined fitness, friendship, and cultural bonding into one memorable day. This outdoor event was entirely conceptualized and executed by CMA's young leaders, showcasing their growing confidence, capability, and connection to the community.

Set against the breathtaking backdrop of Banff National Park, the hike was an opportunity for youth and families to reconnect with nature, recharge their spirits, and forge new relationships. The 4.8 km round-trip trail to the Tunnel Mountain summit provided just the right balance of challenge and enjoyment, with panoramic views rewarding each step of the climb.

More than just a physical activity, this hike became a symbol of unity — people came together not just to trek, but to support one another, laugh, share snacks at the summit, and breathe in the crisp mountain air. In the process, they lived out the Marathi values of **सामूहिकता** (community), **सहकार्य** (collaboration), **आणि आनंद** (joy). It was an outdoor celebration of life, resilience, and togetherness.

The event also welcomed participants from beyond the Marathi community, fostering intercultural harmony and friendships. It paved the way for many more collaborative and inclusive youth-led events in the future — events that highlight health, environmental consciousness, and community pride.

Highlights:

- ✓ Trail: Tunnel Mountain Summit, Banff
- ✓ Distance: 4.8 km round trip
- ✓ Elevation Gain: 267 m (Summit elevation: 1,692 m)
- ✓ Duration: Approximately 2 hours
- ✓ Entirely managed by the CMA Youth Team
- ✓ Responsibilities included creating promotional materials, handling registration, and ensuring safety protocols
- ✓ 6 Youth Leaders led the initiative
- ✓ 45 Total Volunteers ensured smooth coordination
- ✓ 25 Youth Participants joined the hike

- ✓ Many attendees commented on how refreshing and meaningful it was to engage in an activity that encouraged physical movement, mental wellness, and social bonding
- ✓ The event rekindled the community's love for nature and reminded everyone of the joy in shared experiences
- ✓ Though the setting was the Canadian Rockies, the spirit was unmistakably Marathi — with familiar conversations, shared meals, supportive gestures, and a sense of belonging
- ✓ Events like these help youth stay grounded in cultural values while embracing their surroundings and contributing to Calgary's multicultural identity

The Tunnel Mountain Hike was more than a day in nature — it was a step forward for community-led youth engagement, blending tradition, modernity, and a shared vision for a connected future.



Financial Literacy Series for Youth

Dates:

Part 1: Basic Budgeting – February 21, 2021

Part 2: Basic Banking – July 11, 2021

Description:

In a world where financial decisions start early—often from the moment youth receive their first pocket money—instilling a sense of fiscal responsibility is not just essential, it is empowering. Recognizing this, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA), in collaboration with Connect First Credit Union, launched a two-part Financial Literacy Series titled Each One Teach One, specially designed for youth aged 12 and above.

Led by CMA President and certified EOTO trainer Rohan Sankhe, the sessions aimed to demystify the basics of money management in simple, relatable language. These virtual sessions were a community-first initiative that blended financial education with culturally rooted values of prudence, planning, and long-term vision.

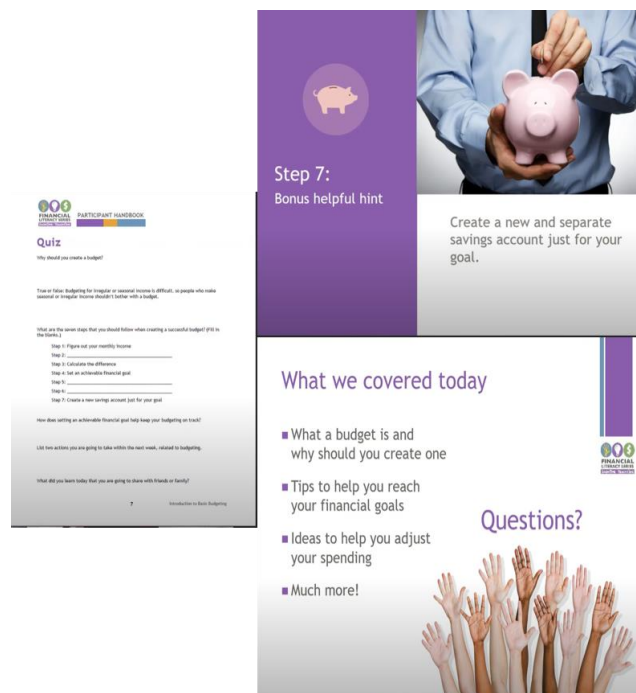
In Part 1: Basic Budgeting, participants explored what a budget is, why it's important, and how one can align spending with savings goals. In Part 2: Basic Banking, the focus shifted to choosing the right bank accounts, understanding interest, and minimizing banking fees.

But beyond numbers and balance sheets, these sessions fostered deep personal reflection among young participants and their families. For many, it was the first time financial planning was discussed in a communal, non-judgmental space. The series also encouraged intergenerational learning, as parents joined younger participants to revisit financial fundamentals and reflect on their own habits.

By introducing these concepts through the lens of shared culture and collective well-being, CMA upheld its values of preparing the next generation—not only as successful individuals but also as responsible contributors to society. These sessions laid the groundwork for future workshops and emphasized that financial empowerment is a form of cultural preservation, especially when done in a community setting that embraces both learning and inclusivity.

Highlights:

- ✓ Basic Budgeting: What a budget is, tips for saving, ideas for adjusting spending
- ✓ Basic Banking: Choosing the right account, understanding interest, reducing transaction fees
- ✓ Participants: 25 individuals from 11 families
- ✓ Total Man-Hours of Learning: 62.5
- ✓ Encouraged responsible financial habits among Marathi youth
- ✓ Created a safe, interactive space for family learning
- ✓ Celebrated the value of "Sahakarya" (collaboration) and "Yogdan" (contribution) in financial planning
- ✓ Opened doors for broader community participation and laid the foundation for similar inclusive educational events



Youtube link:

https://youtu.be/jSpTCTaF9vg?si=pAgJTzqEtL.Bmx_TI

OTHER ONGOING PROGRAMS

Newcomer Support Program

Description:

In 2021, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) strengthened its commitment to community service by continuing the Newcomer Support Program, a heartfelt initiative designed to support newcomers—especially students and families of Marathi origin—during their initial transition to life in Calgary.

This program has gone beyond basic guidance, offering practical help, emotional support, and a strong sense of belonging. Whether it was providing temporary shelter, financial aid, or connecting individuals to career resources, CMA ensured that no newcomer felt alone in a new country.

With support from the Centre for Newcomers, CMA has actively assisted with immigration formalities, educational pathways, and career planning, ensuring that newcomers build a solid foundation for their future in Canada.

A poignant moment came when the community rallied together to support a victim of a dog bite incident, raising \$4,000 to help cover medical and recovery expenses—an example of compassion and unity at its best.

Highlights:

- ✓ Helped 4 engineering students currently studying in Lethbridge with settlement needs
- ✓ Assisted 3 Permanent Resident families with housing, formalities, and career navigation
- ✓ Collaborated with the Centre for Newcomers to offer career counselling and integration services
- ✓ Raised \$4,000 in community donations to support a victim of a serious dog bite incident
- ✓ Fostered a welcoming environment for Marathi-speaking newcomers, ensuring they felt emotionally and culturally connected
- ✓ Promoted Marathi values of seva (selfless service), compassion, and hospitality
- ✓ Strengthened ties with Canadian social support agencies, creating pathways for long-term integration

Marathi Shaala (School)

Description:

Preserving the Marathi Language for Future Generations

Calgary Marathi Association proudly runs Marathi language classes for our members and their children, helping them read, write, and speak Marathi with pride.

These classes are led by dedicated volunteer teachers—Vaishali Moghe, Nutan More, Manali More, Nikhil Shidhaye, and Deepali Shisodiya—who teach from their homes out of a true spirit of community service, without accepting any payment.

Due to COVID-19, classes shifted online and were successfully conducted throughout the year, continuing in the same format again this year.

We are deeply grateful for our teachers' selfless efforts and feel hopeful that this initiative will help our next generation stay connected to their roots through language.

Maharashtra Day Celebration by Marathi School Students

Date: May 1, 2021

Description:

On the occasion of Maharashtra Day (celebrated on May 1st), students from the Calgary Marathi School came together to present a heartfelt virtual program. This event paid tribute to the formation of Maharashtra state in 1960 and celebrated its rich cultural and historical legacy.

With great dedication, students and their parents worked together to create a memorable and meaningful show. The event featured performances that honored Maharashtra's illustrious heritage — from saints like Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram to valiant leaders such as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Queen Lakshmbai.

The program opened with a powerful recitation of:

“Mangal desha, pavitra desha, Maharashtra desha
Pranam maza ghyava ha, Shri Maharashtra desha”
(O Holy land, O blessed land, land of Maharashtra,
Accept my heartfelt salutation, O land of Maharashtra.)

The students expressed pride in their Marathi identity and brought to life the stories, songs, and spirit of Maharashtra through their performances.

The online celebration evoked a deep sense of pride and belonging among viewers. Parents, community members, and well-wishers were encouraged to tune in and leave their messages of appreciation. The event was a beautiful reminder of cultural roots, community involvement, and intergenerational learning.

Highlights:

- ✓ Celebration of Maharashtra Day by Marathi school children
- ✓ Virtual performances broadcasted live on YouTube
- ✓ Tribute to Maharashtra's history, culture, and legacy
- ✓ Prepared with dedication by students and parents
- ✓ Positive audience engagement and encouraging feedback



Youtube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/V2Pu3rcJdJ0?si=tO1tydUVHUN2oo5Z>

SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVES

Maharashtra Diwas Food Drive – Fighting Hunger, Feeding Hope

Dates: Saturday, May 1 & Saturday, May 8, 2021

Description:

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA), in collaboration with the Calgary Food Bank, stepped up to make a powerful impact – both on plates and in hearts. Rooted in the spirit of Maharashtra Diwas, the initiative aimed to address a painful yet often overlooked reality: Hunger and mental health are deeply connected.

Over two consecutive Saturdays, more than 80 dedicated volunteers—families, youth, seniors—came together to bring this ambitious mission to life. CMA aimed high with a goal of 5,000 lbs of food—and exceeded it by collecting a staggering 10,000 lbs!

The campaign was powered by compassion. Volunteers dropped off food bags at over 6,000 homes in the Evergreen, Millrise, and Shawnee Slopes neighborhoods, then returned to collect them, all while maintaining safety protocols amidst the pandemic. From logistics coordinators to drivers and food sorters, the CMA community ran this well-oiled machine of kindness with passion and purpose.

This act of collective empathy didn't go unnoticed. CTV News featured the event, and the Calgary Food Bank recognized CMA's efforts with a special certificate. Youth and university volunteers received participation certificates, but more than that, they received the irreplaceable experience of service that changes lives.

This food drive reminded us that a full stomach is the first step toward a healthy, peaceful mind. Through this initiative, the CMA brought attention to the hidden hunger behind mental illness, and showed how community can come together to feed bodies, uplift minds, and restore dignity.

Highlights:

- ✓ 10,000 lbs of food collected and \$1500
- ✓ 15 Coordinators and 80 Total Volunteers, including youth and university students
- ✓ Covered over 6,000 residences in Evergreen, Millrise, and Shawnee Slopes

- ✓ Drop-off and pick-up operations executed with mapped routes and trained teams
- ✓ Highlighted hunger's effect on mental health
- ✓ Empowered the youth with community service experience
- ✓ Brought Marathi identity and service values into the spotlight
- ✓ Strengthened ties between local Indian diaspora and broader Calgary community



Blood Donation Camp – In Memory of Calgary Police Sgt. Andrew Harnett

Dates:

Camp 1: Saturday, March 6, 2021

Camp 2: Monday, August 2, 2021

Description:

In a heartfelt gesture of gratitude, remembrance, and community service, Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) collaborated with Alberta Health Services to organize two blood donation drives in 2021. These camps were held in loving memory of Calgary Police Service Sgt. Andrew Harnett, who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

The first camp, held in March, was led by young community leader Mr. Francis Arahna, who envisioned the initiative as a way to give back during a time when COVID-19 restrictions had drastically affected blood supply levels. This initiative resonated deeply with community members, igniting a spirit of collective responsibility. The event was conducted with full adherence to Alberta Health Services' safety protocols, ensuring the well-being of every participant.

The overwhelming response from the first drive inspired the CMA to host a second blood donation camp in August, continuing the momentum of compassion and civic engagement. These drives served as a powerful reminder that saving lives is within our reach — one donation at a time.

The sense of purpose and empathy that filled the air during these events was palpable. Participants were visibly moved to honor the memory of Sgt. Harnett by contributing something as vital as blood. People of all ages, including youth and seniors, came forward, often expressing that they were proud to be part of a community that values human life and solidarity.

These efforts went beyond charity — they were a testament to the values deeply rooted in Marathi culture: **सेवा** (selfless service), **स्मृती** (remembrance), and **समाजबद्धता** (community unity). The events also attracted attention beyond the Marathi community, fostering intercultural connections and building bridges with broader Calgary society, including law enforcement and public health organizations.

Highlights:

- ✓ Two Camps Held in 2021
- ✓ In memory of Calgary Police Sgt. Andrew Harnett and to address urgent blood supply shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic
- ✓ Conducted under strict AHS protocols ensuring participant safety
- ✓ 60 units of blood donated in 2021
- ✓ Received a certificate of recognition for contributions to Canadian Blood Services
- ✓ Events covered by local media, amplifying awareness
- ✓ Strong turnout from youth and adults
- ✓ High emotional and moral engagement
- ✓ Participants expressed pride and a sense of purpose in giving the “Gift of Life”
- ✓ Embodied Marathi values of selfless giving and community service
- ✓ Strengthened ties within and beyond the Marathi community
- ✓ Set a precedent for future inclusive service-based initiatives

The success of these blood donation drives is a reflection of what happens when cultural values meet civic responsibility. They have laid the foundation for many more such efforts where kindness transcends community boundaries and truly makes a difference.



Winter Clothing Drive for The Mustard Seed

Dates:

January 22–29, 2022 (Collection Period)

Drop-off on January 29, 2022

Description:

As Alberta winter tightened its grip on Calgary, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) partnered with The Mustard Seed to bring warmth and hope to those in need. Through this winter clothing drive led by Rama & Amit Khare, CMA members came together to donate gently used or new warm clothing, footwear, and food to support vulnerable community members. The drive was coordinated with the help of "host" families who volunteered space in their homes, and CMA drivers who ensured all donations reached their destination.

This heartfelt initiative was more than just a donation drive—it was a lesson in compassion, community, and collective action. Children who participated experienced firsthand the value of giving back and gained an understanding of the challenges others face in their own city.

Highlights:

- ✓ Generous donations of warm clothing, footwear, and food items collected by CMA families.
- ✓ Strong volunteer participation as donors, hosts, and drivers.
- ✓ Inspiring visit to The Mustard Seed, where families learned about the organization's mission and the lives they impact.
- ✓ Children gained awareness about social responsibility and the importance of volunteering.
- ✓ Strengthened the spirit of seva (service) and samyukta kruti (collective action), core values in Marathi culture.
- ✓ Fostered deeper connections within the Marathi and broader Calgary community, paving the way for more inclusive service initiatives in the future.



Veteran's Food Drive with MLA Prasad Panda

Dates: November 11–13, 2021

Description:

In a heartfelt tribute to those who served, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) proudly participated in the Veteran's Food Drive organized by MLA Prasad Panda. Marking the second consecutive year of CMA's involvement, the initiative brought together individuals and families from the Marathi community to honor veterans by supporting the Calgary Veterans Association Food Bank.

Taking place over Remembrance Day weekend, the drive offered meaningful volunteer opportunities such as delivering and picking up food donation bags across Calgary. With overwhelming enthusiasm and a deep sense of gratitude, CMA members—including youth, parents, and seniors—stepped forward to make a tangible difference. The initiative not only served those who served our nation but also strengthened the values of compassion, respect, and unity among volunteers.

Highlights:

- ✓ CMA was one of the largest community groups to participate over two days.
- ✓ Total Volunteers: 96 | Youth Volunteers: 40
- ✓ Total Volunteer Hours: 385 hours
- ✓ Total Food Collected: 45,000 lbs
- ✓ Reinforced core Marathi cultural values—gratitude, respect for elders, and giving back to society. Created a platform for youth to experience civic responsibility while staying connected to cultural roots.
- ✓ Helped bridge communities by joining hands with broader Calgary residents in support of a noble cause.



COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

India @ 75 – Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Date: August 15, 2021

Description:

As India completed 75 glorious years of independence, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) proudly joined hands with Bhartiya Multicultural Heritage Society (BHMS), Calgary Gujarati Mandal, Rajasthan Association of North America (RANA), and Seva Parmo Dharma to present Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav – Bharatiya Svatantrata Utsav in Calgary.

This event was more than a celebration—it was an emotional homage by the Indian diaspora to their roots. For many CMA members, who are now Canadian citizens, it was a heartfelt connection to their Matrubhoomi – India, while embracing their Karmabhoomi – Canada. With flags in hand, pride in their hearts, and tradition in their steps, the Marathi community came together to commemorate a historic milestone alongside fellow Indian communities.

Children, youth, and elders all participated with great enthusiasm, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Maharashtra and India at large. The event evoked strong feelings of pride, unity, and cultural belonging, reminding everyone that though oceans apart, we remain connected through shared values and traditions.

Highlights:

- ✓ Vedic Prayers and Shanti Path initiated the event with sacred energy
- ✓ Raksha Bandhan symbolized the protective bond between communities
- ✓ CMA Shaala's 'Gems of Maharashtra' highlighted Maharashtra's glorious legacy
- ✓ Patriotic song 'Garja Maharashtra Majha' delivered by CMA youth moved the audience with its powerful message of pride and resilience
- ✓ A variety of dances and performances from different cultural organizations added vibrancy
- ✓ Dual National Anthem rendition – Jan Gan Man and O Canada reflected the unity of Indo-Canadian identity
- ✓ Flag Hoisting ceremony invoked deep patriotic sentiments among attendees
- ✓ Tiranga Yatra (Car Rally)
- ✓ The event was graced by prominent dignitaries and politicians, including Calgary's outgoing mayor Naheed Nenshi

- ✓ Preserved and promoted Marathi cultural heritage through music, language, and traditional representation
- ✓ Fostered inter-community collaboration and solidarity among diverse Indian associations in Calgary
- ✓ Established a model for inclusive, multicultural celebrations, paving the way for future events rooted in unity, pride, and cultural understanding



Hindu Heritage Month Celebration

Dates: August 26, 2021

Description:

Calgary Marathi Association proudly represented the community at the Alberta Government's official Hindu Heritage Month Celebration held at the McDougall Centre. In 2021, the Alberta Government formally proclaimed August as Hindu Heritage Month, recognizing the cultural, spiritual, and social contributions of the Hindu community to Alberta and Canada.

This was a moment of pride and affirmation for the community, as the proclamation marked a significant milestone in acknowledging the positive impact of Hindu values, traditions, and individuals in the multicultural fabric of Alberta.

Highlights:

- ✓ CMA represented the Marathi Hindu community at the provincial celebration.
- ✓ Strengthened cultural identity and representation at the government level.
- ✓ Paved the way for continued inclusivity and celebration of Indian heritage in Alberta.



Engagement with Consul General of India – Strengthening Ties

Virtual Event and In-Person Meeting

Description:

In a significant move toward building stronger connections between the Indian diaspora and the Indian government, Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) initiated a relationship with Consul General Mr. Manish Gupta. CMA Executive Committee members participated in both a virtual engagement and an in-person meeting alongside other Indo-Canadian community leaders.

These interactions focused on fostering unity among Indian organizations, streamlining communication channels with the Consulate, and creating a collaborative approach for celebrating national events like India's Independence Day as a joint community initiative.

The meeting also addressed key community concerns, such as OCI, passport, and visa services, as well as pandemic-related travel. The Consul General highlighted immense opportunities for Alberta businesses in India across diverse sectors, promoting bilateral growth and economic cooperation.

Highlights:

- ✓ CMA helped initiate and strengthen the relationship with the Consulate General of India.
- ✓ Discussed unified celebration of national Indian events in Calgary to build collective identity.
- ✓ Addressed vital community issues (OCI, visa, pandemic travel).
- ✓ Explored Indo-Canadian business collaborations in energy, education, infrastructure, clean-tech, and entertainment.
- ✓ CMA now actively represented in the Consulate's monthly newsletters.
- ✓ Reinforced CMA's leadership role in advocating for community interests while promoting collaboration across Indian diaspora organizations.



Advocacy for Inclusion of Indian Civilization and Hindu Religion in Alberta's K-6 Curriculum

Ongoing initiative through the curriculum review period

Description:

In a remarkable collaborative effort, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA) joined forces with 42 other cultural and community organizations across Alberta to advocate for the inclusion of Indian civilization and Hindu religious contributions in the revised Alberta K-6 curriculum. This initiative aimed to bring greater cultural representation and historical accuracy to the education system, highlighting the rich heritage, philosophies, and global contributions of Indian civilization.

CMA President Mr. Rohan Sankhe played a key leadership role in this advocacy, serving as part of the core strategy team. His work involved countless hours of research, resource development, and meetings with MLAs, including a formal representation to the Education Minister Hon. Adriana LaGrange and education board officials.

Highlights:

- ✓ United front with 42 Alberta-based organizations for curriculum inclusion.
- ✓ Core leadership role by CMA President Mr. Rohan Sankhe.
- ✓ Extensive community outreach and policy engagement with government officials.
- ✓ Formal meetings with Education Minister and curriculum review boards.
- ✓ A milestone initiative fostering multicultural inclusivity and education reform in Alberta.
- ✓ Strengthened visibility and voice of the Indo-Canadian community in shaping future education.



ART & CINEMA INITIATIVES

Online Screening of “Lapandaav” – A Super-Duper Comedy Drama

Date: May 15, 2021

Description:

Bringing entertainment to the safety and comfort of your home during challenging times, the Calgary Marathi Association proudly hosted an exclusive online screening of the Marathi comedy-drama Lapandaav — a multi-starrer stage production by Natyamanch, released under Kallol Entertainment, and directed by acclaimed theatre veteran Vijay Kenkare.

Lapandaav is a comedy-drama packed with unexpected twists and turns, brought alive by some of the finest talents in Marathi theatre. It combined wit, laughter, and engaging storytelling in a way that delighted audiences across age groups.

Star Cast:

Smita Shewale
Sharvari Lohkare
Madhura Velankar
Anand Ingle
Atul Parchure
Sanjay Narvekar

Creative Team:

Writer: Suresh Jayaram
Stage Setup: Sandesh Bendre
Line Producer: Vivek Vaidya
Video Director: Vivek Deshpande
Director: Vijay Kenkare

This event was made possible through CMA’s collaboration with Marathi Bhashik Mandal, Toronto, demonstrating unity across cities to make quality entertainment accessible. With generous support from Ensoul Aesthetics and Wellness (exclusive sponsor), CMA was able to offer discounted ticket rates, ensuring affordability for the community.

The online screening was well-attended and appreciated by Marathi-speaking audiences. Families came together virtually for an evening of laughter and lighthearted entertainment. The quality of production and performances received high praise from attendees.

Highlights:

- ✓ First-of-its-kind online theatrical release hosted by CMA
- ✓ Multi-starrer cast with stellar performances
- ✓ Collaboration across two major Marathi organizations in Canada
- ✓ Exclusive sponsorship to subsidize ticket rates
- ✓ Strengthening cultural connection through theatre
- ✓ Online via TUGOZ web platform



Marathi Movie Screening – Zimma

Dates: December 12, 2021

Description:

In a special initiative to bring the vibrancy of Marathi cinema to Calgary, the Calgary Marathi Association (CMA), in collaboration with Dr. Parnerkar Life Management Foundation, proudly presented a screening of the blockbuster Marathi film Zimma. The event was not just a movie screening—it was a celebration of Marathi storytelling, cinematic excellence, and community bonding.

What made this event even more special was the personal touch—director Hemant Dhome and lead actor Siddharth Chandekar sent a heartfelt video message inviting the Calgary audience to enjoy the film. Their message created a buzz and generated immense excitement within the community.

Held at Canyon Meadows Cinema, the screening brought together Marathi-speaking families, movie lovers, and newcomers curious about regional Indian cinema. Attendees followed all provincial COVID-19 safety protocols, ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.

The screening was a resounding success, with overwhelming attendance and joyous reactions. The audience was seen laughing, crying, and connecting with the characters—proof that great storytelling transcends boundaries. It became more than entertainment; it was a reminder of home, a spark of nostalgia, and a celebration of shared identity.

Highlights:

- ✓ Screening of the Superhit Marathi Movie Zimma in Calgary
- ✓ Organized by Calgary Marathi Association in collaboration with Dr. Parnerkar Life Management Foundation
- ✓ Special video invitation from director Hemant Dhome and actor Siddharth Chandekar
- ✓ Tickets were exclusively available through the Canyon Meadows Cinema App
- ✓ Attendees complied with provincial COVID-19 guidelines, ensuring a safe in-person experience
- ✓ Sold-out show with enthusiastic participation from the community
- ✓ Vibrant display of regional cinema in a multicultural Canadian setting

- ✓ Reaffirmed the power of Marathi cinema to engage, inspire, and unite the diaspora
- ✓ Helped younger generations connect with their cultural roots through film
- ✓ Created a space for cultural exchange, inviting interest from the broader Calgary community
- ✓ Set a precedent for more regional language film screenings in mainstream venues
- ✓ Strengthened the sense of community belonging and cultural pride among participants

This event marked a new chapter in cultural programming by the CMA—where storytelling, cinema, and community come together to preserve heritage and build bridges with other cultures in Canada.



Through innovative adaptations during the pandemic, the Calgary Marathi Association not only preserved the vibrance of Marathi culture but also expanded its inclusive community engagement. From educating youth and supporting seniors, to uniting music lovers and supporting social causes, 2021 stood as a testament to resilience and togetherness. These events laid the foundation for even more inclusive, collaborative, and impactful programming in the years to come.

Executive Committee

- ✚ **President** – Rohan Sankhe
- ✚ **Vice-President** – Pallavi Kulkarni
- ✚ **Secretary** – Mandar Marathe
- ✚ **Treasurer** – Sanjeev Nerlikar

Board of Trustees (BoT)

- ✚ **Chairperson** - Rajesh Jintikar
- ✚ **Director** - Vaibhav Rane
- ✚ **Director** - Mukesh Shende

Sub Committee

- ✚ **Cultural Lead** – Dewangi Kode
- ✚ **Youth/Paalavee Lead** – Sandhya Satavalekar
- ✚ **Samadhaan Lead** – Suchita Karkhanis
- ✚ **Annapurna Lead** – Swapnali Nerlikar
- ✚ **Newcomers Lead** – Francis Aranha
- ✚ **Cyber Media** – Rohan Sankhe

Marathi Shala Teachers

- ✚ Vaishali Moghe
- ✚ Deepali Shishodia
- ✚ Nutan More
- ✚ Manali More
- ✚ Nikhil Siddhaye

Paalavi Youth Committee

- ✚ **President** – Neel Marathe
- ✚ **Vice President** – Roshini Pugashetti
- ✚ **Secretary** – Shreesha Lathkar
- ✚ **Treasurer** – Arya Bhuyan
- ✚ **Director, Club Services** – Tanishka Gokhale
- ✚ **Director, Media & Public Relations** – Anushka Arvikar



