

# FEZANA *bulletin*

September 2018 / VOLUME 8 • ISSUE 9



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## UPCOMING DATES

### October 7, 2018

WZCC New York Chapter Meeting with Guest Speaker Dr. Neville Sanjana. 1:30pm. Dar-e-Mehr Suffern, NY. [www.zagny.org](http://www.zagny.org)

### October 19, 2018

[ZSBC Golden Jubilee Celebration](#)  
6:30pm. Aria Banquet Hall Surrey, British Columbia

### October 19-21, 2018

Annual SSZ Conference. ZAC-Chicago Darbe Mehr, Burr Ridge, Illinois

### October 26, 2018

ZAH Library – Home of FIRES – presents award winning author Sohrab Homi Fracis to read and discuss his debut novel, Go Home. 6:30pm. [Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center](#) Houston, TX

### November 1-7, 2018

[Parliament of the World's Religions](#), Toronto.

(Dates continued on page 4)

## Distinguished Scholar Awards from the North American Mobeds Council (NAMC)

At the last NAMC AGM in Washington DC, it was unanimously decided to confer the Distinguished Scholar Awards to Mobed Jehan Bagli and Mobed Soli P. Dastur.

On August 18, the award was presented to Mobed Jehan Bagli in Toronto at the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) Navroze function by Past NAMC President, Mobed Kobad Zarolia.

Also on August 18, the award was presented to Mobed Soli P. Dastur by NAMC President Mobed Ardaeviraf Minocherhomji at the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale/Boca Raton Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF) Nowruz function, and also at the Orlando Central Florida Group Navroze function on Sunday August 19. Also, on August 26, at the ZATAMBAY function, Mobed Dastur was honored by Past FEZANA President Rustom Kevala and Hoshedar Tamboli. □



<< **Top left:** Erv Kobad Zarolia presents NAMC's Distinguished Scholar Award to Erv. Jehan Bagli in Toronto on August 18.

**Bottom left:** Erv Arda-e-Viraf Minocherhomji presents NAMC's Distinguished Scholar Award to Erv Soli P. Dastur with Jo Ann Dastur, in Florida on August 18. **Bottom right:** Dinyar Mehta, Hoshedar Tamboly and Past FEZANA President Rustom Kevala present the award to Erv Soli P. and Jo Ann Dastur in Florida on August 26.



## 7th Parliament of the World's Religions Toronto, Canada – November 1-7, 2018



FEZANA and the Zoroastrian community will be actively participating at the above Parliament: The opening ceremony Plenary Speaker is Parisa Khosravi; Zoroastrian Choir will be singing Monajats at the Festival stage; Ervad Tehemton Mirza will be conducting Fire (Boi) and Water ceremonies; Thanksgiving

Jashan ceremony will be displayed by Ervad Jehan Bagli and Mobedyar Guloo Austin; Plenaries on Ecology and Women's Empowerment will be addressed by Homi Dhalla and Armene Modi. A FEZANA Booth will highlight many aspects of the Zoroastrian faith, and the Family Fun Fair for Children will present a visual education for children about the simple tenets of the Zoroastrian faith. This is rounded up by 20+ Zoroastrians participating in many panel discussions. □



## Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA)

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NGO in consultative status  
(Roster) with the Economic  
and Social Council of the  
United Nations

## FEZANA Welcomes New Co-Chair for EXISS

The Excellence in Sports Scholarship (EXISS) Committee is joined by a new Co-Chair: Nima Patel (Los Angeles). As a representative of the Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC), Nima will bridge the gap between the two committees. FEZANA looks forward to working with Nima who joins Co-Chair, Amy Sumariwalla.



**NIMA PATEL** was born and raised in Los Angeles, California, where he was exposed to one of the most dense Zoroastrian populations outside of Iran. He has been involved with events at the California Zoroastrian Center starting at the age of 7, through piano recitals, dance performances and plays. As he grew older, Nima's commitment to the Zoroastrian community didn't wane, even as he earned his advanced engineering degrees at UCLA. Being an avid sports fan, he found a way to merge his Zoroastrian faith and hobby by becoming involved with the Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC) in 2012, eventually becoming president of the committee in 2016. Nima is proud of all he's accomplished with his fellow ZSC members, bringing thousands of Zoroastrians together from all over the world on a bi-annual basis, but knows the commitment to uniting the community is everlasting. While his philanthropic responsibilities have grown over the years, so have his personal and professional commitments - Nima married his beautiful wife in 2017 and currently works as a Senior Project Manager in Los Angeles overseeing a portfolio of high-profile projects ranging from hospital upgrades to theme park expansions throughout Southern California. He remains committed to helping bring the Z community together, knowing that using sports as a universal medium to unite is a proven strategy. □

## FEZANA Welcomes New Co-Chairs for ZYNA

FEZANA is pleased to announce the following new Co-chairs for the Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA) Committee: **Adil Bhesania (Toronto); Behrouz Sohrabi (Sacramento); Mojdeh Hamavand (Sacramento); Zamyad Meherji (Toronto)**. This group, representing both Canada and the USA, will work together to organize activities for ZYNA. FEZANA gives them a warm welcome and looks forward to supporting these new ZYNA Co-chairs as they coordinate activities to bring youth of North America together.



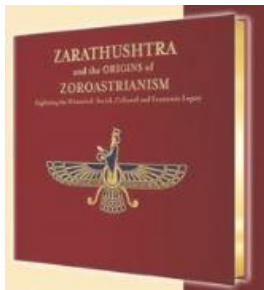
**ADIL BHESANIA**, 29, moved to Canada from Karachi, Pakistan in 2013. After completing his early education at the Bai Virbaiji Soparivala (BVS) Parsi High School, he did his Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) from the University of Karachi. In Canada, he completed his Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) from the University of Toronto and now works as a general dentist in Ontario, Canada.

Adil is actively involved in activities at the Community level. He volunteers with the Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation (OZCF) as the Chairperson for the Youth Committee and is a member on the Entertainment, Fundraising and Bingo committees. Having been part of scouting during his school years, he serves as a Scout Leader with the 100<sup>th</sup> Oakville Zoroastrian Scouts Group. Currently he is working with a few colleagues on initiating a Toronto Chapter for the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (WZCC).

Besides being involved with the community, he enjoys reading and sports. He plays cricket regularly at the OZCF and is also part of a Zoroastrian volleyball team that



## BOOK AWARENESS



***Zarathushtra and the origins of Zoroastrianism -- Exploring the historical, social cultural and economic legacy***

edited by Meher Bhesania, India, Jak Printers, 2018.

Spectacularly illustrated articles with 410 photographs, artifacts and maps, this beautiful book tells the story of Zarathushtra, traces our roots from Iran, and chronicles the Persian empire to the present era. It highlights the flowering of the Zoroastrians on Indian soil, with the history of legends and legend makers, and it makes a wonderful gift for any occasion. Place your order by sending an email to:

[zoroastrianbook@gmail.com](mailto:zoroastrianbook@gmail.com).

Visit our website at

<http://www.fires-fezana.org/>

plays in a local league in Mississauga. Recently, he took part in the 16<sup>th</sup> Zoroastrian Games in Los Angeles for the first time and won a bronze medal in swimming.

Adil expresses his thoughts on serving as a ZYNA Co-chair: "My vision for the North American Zoroastrian youth, as ZYNA co-chair, is to provide opportunities to interact and network with community and social events. To achieve this, I shall work with the OZCF youth committee and co-chairs of other regions to keep the youth engaged and could utilize available resources to promote collaborative events."



**BEHROUZ SOHRABI** was born in Yazd, Iran. He received his Bachelor's degree in Civil engineering from University of Yazd in 2007 and his Masters in 2011.

His passion of his ancestors' religion encouraged him to learn the holy Avesta with the help of Moobedyar Mehraban Afarin. Being one of the member of Gathha-Pooyan e Yazd, from 2003 to 2008 prepared him for writing articles and presentations for the Mantrah competition – a religious competition for writing articles and reading from the Gathas. He also attended Anjoman Moobedan class for studying Avesta literature in 2013 for two years. He was a member of Yazd Zoroastrian Youth Association from 2002 to 2007, when he went to India to pursue his studies.

His interest in commerce and economy was the reason that he joined World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (Mumbai Chapter) in 2009. From 2010-12, he was a member of World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce – Youth Wing.

Behrouz is also active in the sport of Volleyball. He also holds a Volleyball Coach and Referee license from Iran Volleyball Federation. And was player on Yazd Zoroastrian Youth Team and Adorian Tehran Team.

Currently, he serves on the board for the Sacramento Zoroastrian Association.

Behrouz quotes Thomas Hincks, the Natural historian, when asked about his thoughts on Co-Chairing ZYNA, "If we don't start today...it will be too late for tomorrow."



**MOJDEH HAMAVAND** was born in Kerman, Iran. She received her Bachelor's degree in Industrial engineering from University of Kerman in 2011.

Mojdeh attributes her deep caring about the Zoroastrian culture and community to her wonderful experiences in the community from an early age. As a member of Kerman Zoroastrian Youth Organization, she was involved in organizing religious and national celebrations. In 2003, she wrote articles for *Asha*, the monthly magazine of Kerman Zoroastrian's association. She also began giving lectures on Zoroastrian topics at community celebrations and events. Mojdeh actively participated in Mantrah religious competitions, from 2003, receiving first and second places for several years. She became a writing tutor for the Kerman Zoroastrian youth and she has been a journalist for *Amordad* (the Biweekly newspaper of Zoroastrian community) since 2004.

Mojdeh's commitment to the community is always present in the activities she does, and she is always finding ways to educate people about Zoroastrian's culture and beliefs. She has served as a tour leader at Kerman's Zoroastrian museum during the Norouz holidays.

Mojdeh quotes Arthur Ashe, Pro tennis player, when asked about visions for serving as a Co-Chair for ZYNA: "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."



## UPCOMING DATES

(continued from page 1)

### November 24, 2018

4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser for American Cancer Society and [ZAMWI](#). Boyds, MD.

### March 11-22, 2019

United Nations 63<sup>rd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women Conference (CSW63). Individuals interested in attending the conference as FEZANA representatives are requested to send their resume and letter of intent by October 20, 2018 to: [bpastakia@aol.com](mailto:bpastakia@aol.com) and [mistry.afreed@gmail.com](mailto:mistry.afreed@gmail.com)

### May 1-5, 2019

WZCC AGM hosted by Central Florida Zoroastrian Community in Orlando. [www.wzcc.org](http://www.wzcc.org) in conjunction with FEZANA AGM. Details to come.

### July 1-6, 2019

[7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress](#). Los Angeles, CA.

### August 20-23, 2019

*10th World Assembly, Religions for Peace International* in Lindau, Germany

### August 26-29, 2019

*68th Annual DPI / NGO Conference*. Salt Lake City, Utah. Details at [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)  
FEZANA Contact: [mistry.afreed@gmail.com](mailto:mistry.afreed@gmail.com) or [bpastakia@aol.com](mailto:bpastakia@aol.com)

### December 29-31, 2020

North American Zoroastrian Congress hosted by ZAH (Houston)



**ZAMYAD MEHERJI** is proud of having grown up in the tiny but a close-knit Parsee community in Kolkata, India. Throughout his childhood he had plenty of exposure and opportunities – played various sports, attended religious classes, competed in quiz/elocution contests, learnt Western as well as Indian Classical Music and was an active member of the 21<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Parsee Boy Scouts movement. All these were instrumental in overall development and building confidence, a competitive mindset, camaraderie and practical skills.

Zamyad completed his undergraduate degree in Bachelors of Commerce from St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, India. He captained the varsity soccer team for two out of three years. He worked for two years at a soccer player agency. In August 2014, he moved to Toronto, Canada for postgraduate studies in Sports and Advertising Management. He currently is an Account Manager at a worldwide media firm in Toronto, ON.

Zamyad's father Cyrus Meherji has written books on Parsi culture and Persian history. During his boyhood, Zamyad was taught the Khordeh Avesta prayers as well as stories on Cyrus the Great, The Shahnameh, and the Parsi customs.

He serves as the Chair on the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario's (ZSO) – Sport & Youth Committee. Zamyad participated in the Z Games held in Chicago, 2016 as well as Los Angeles, 2018. He has won an overall 7 individual medals (Track and Table Tennis) over the two editions. He was the only participant from Canada at the soccer - Z Unity Cup, LA 2017 finishing third (represented San Diego).

He believes that his indefatigable attitude helps him in achieving his goals. He envisions to reach maximum North American Zoroastrian Youths – to connect, grow and build an enduring interpersonal relationship with one another. □

## Return To Roots Now Accepting Applications for December 2018 Trip

Zoroastrian Return to Roots, a youth-initiated program that takes small groups of youth on trips to explore their religious, social and cultural heritage, is pleased to announce the opening of applications for Return to Roots 5 (RTR5) scheduled for December 19, 2018 to January 2, 2019. Applications from any part of the world, including Indian born and based participants, are encouraged.

As with previous RTR trips, the itinerary will respect local customs and traditions of the religious and cultural institutions we visit in Mumbai and Gujarat and be customized accordingly to accommodate and include all our applicants.

To apply: <http://zororoots.org/apply/>

View a short clip made by two RTR alumni, Tanya Hoshi from Toronto and Cyrus Karanjia from Karachi, who participated on the last RTR trip in December 2017:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYfiUeID66M>

Annual trip report can be viewed here for a great review of the December 2017 trip:

<https://zororoots.org/wp-content/uploads/RTR-IV-Annual-Report.pdf>

□



## CONNECTIONS

Congress Registration Now Open for the 2019 World Zoroastrian Youth Congress



Spread the Word! Registration is now open for the upcoming World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Los Angeles on July 1-6, 2019. Early Bird rates are available now.

Contact: [info@wzycongress.org](mailto:info@wzycongress.org)

For more info or to register: <https://wzycongress.org/register/details/>

## Muktad ~ In A Zarathushtri World Without Borders



This year, we have had a Zoroastrian Community without borders, celebrating our ancient traditions together, in a very remarkable and collaborative way.

Consider the following variety of experiences over the past months:

- a) *Vada Dasturji Firoz Kotwal*, gives a talk as part of the EMPOWERING MOBEDS program in **Mumbai** in July 2018, explaining the eschatological underpinnings of the Parsi tradition of Muktad\*
- b) *Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala*, from California, translates the lecture into English.
- c) The World Zoroastrian Organization WZO, from **London, UK**, broadcasts the translation in English to the worldwide Zarathushti diaspora through its membership network.
- d) *Rohinton Tarapore*, from Fezana Small Group in **New Orleans**, leads the prayers for the five Gatha days in cyberspace through a shared manuscript transliterated into English.
- e) *Erv Ramiyar Karanjia*, from Mumbai, sends out a step by step explanation on how to perform the *Muktad* prayers at home, which are then put into practice by families in North America.
- e) *Hosi Mehta* from ZAC-Chicago, bridges the gap across cultures by clarifying (through an interpreter) fundamental concepts about the Zarathushtri community -- its beliefs, the symbolism of the *Farohar*, and the importance of *Muktad* -- on 15 August 2018 intended for an **Omani Viewing Audience** recorded in the ZAC-CHICAGO Library. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7RdDr0b7UU>
- f) Several North American Zoroastrian priests adopt a tradition from Iran, of having the congregants pray together from printed handouts, during the course of the *Jashan*. This is a break from the current practice in India, where congregants do not pray with the priests.
- g) The **North American Iranian Zarathushtris**, knowing full well, that the Parsi calendar is off kilter in relationship to the seasons, still come out and participate, in a show of solidarity, blending some of the traditions from the *Farvardegan* prayers held in Iran, into the *Muktad* traditions (e.g., distribution of **lorik**, (satchels of seven kinds of dry fruits ), with the **chasni** at the conclusion of the prayers).

The multi-level experiences outlined above, encapsulate how the Zarathushtri community is becoming a worldwide Zarathushtri community WITHOUT borders. Certainly, the North American Zoroastrian identity is strong during the *Muktad* season, where individuals at home with their families, associations in large cities, and small groups all come together in-person and also via cyberspace.

\* **Muktad** is an abbreviated term from the Sanskrit language, used by Parsis, *MUKTATMA* (liberated soul). □



## Nominations Requested for position of FEZANA Assistant Secretary

As you may know, the position of FEZANA Assistant Secretary has remained unfilled since no nominations were received for this position prior to the FEZANA 2018 AGM. We are therefore resubmitting a request for nominations to this position. FEZANA Members and Corresponding Members are requested to forward interested persons for this position. Interested candidates should please fill out the [nomination form](#) and have it duly signed by the association President or FEZANA Representative before emailing it to FEZANA Secretary ([secretary@fezana.org](mailto:secretary@fezana.org)) prior to the deadline of midnight (US Eastern Time) on September 30, 2018. Please note that a member association may only nominate one nominee for this office. □

## FEZANA Scholarship Success Story

Dear Zarathushtis, by donating to the FEZANA scholarship, you are helping a young person achieve their dreams. Each year we receive about 70 applications from hard working students. We can award only 15 Zarathushti students a scholarship. Help us expand this by adding your contribution to the scholarship program.

Here a recent scholarship recipient tells us her story in her own words:



*My name is Ziba Colah. I graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Houston with a bachelors in Biochemistry and Biophysical Sciences and two minors in Chemistry, and Medicine and Society. Currently I am a second-year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine with the intention to pursue a career in Internal Medicine.*

*The FEZANA scholarships have been instrumental in helping me accomplish my dream of being a physician. I come from a family that had two students enrolled in college at the same time. **Having some of the costs of my education covered by FEZANA scholarships eased a burden for both me and my parents.** Further, it allowed me to focus in my classes so that I could achieve the grades I needed in order to successfully apply to medical school.*

*I would like to thank all the donors who contribute to FEZANA scholarships.*

*Without the Zoroastrian community in North America I would not be in the place and career that I am today. Each donor's contribution has value in how it funds Zoroastrian students. **It is priceless in how it encourages them to accomplish their dreams.***

*The encouragement and outpouring of support that I and other Zoroastrian students across America receive, is never taken for granted. The generous spirit of each of the donors impacts us greatly. It reminds us that in the future when we are successful it is important to continue these donors' legacy. Their generosity will be remembered.*

Please support the scholarship program at our recently streamlined and simplified donation portal: <https://fezana.org/donate/> □