

2025 MAX ANNUAL REPORT



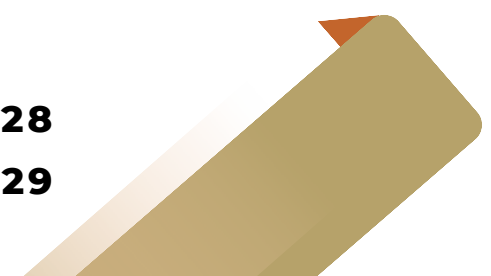
www.onemax.org





TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER	03
ABOUT US	04
OUR FIRST TEN YEARS	05
OUR PILLARS AND PROGRAMS	06
2025 IMPACT IN NUMBERS	07
2025 EVENTS & PROGRAMS	08
PEOPLE & CULTURE	09
MAX Scholarship Fund 11-12	
Mentorships 13	
Boards 14	
CEO Panel Series 15	
Industry Leaders Panel Series 16	
AI & Beyond 17	
Cybersecurity 18	
Entrepreneurship 19	
MAXPitch 20	
Women In Leadership 21	
Executive Leadership Series 22	
Circles 23	
Connect 24	
MAX-IRC Grand Iftar 25	
Community 26	
SPONSORS	27-28
CONTACT US	29



LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER



"Inspired by my late father, who cared deeply about Muslims and believed that we should positively contribute to society by being leaders in the sciences, technology, business, law, social sciences, and ethics." – Aazar Zafar, MAX Co-Founder

At MAX, we are committed to recognizing, rewarding, and celebrating high achievement and positive contributions within the North American Muslim community. Your ongoing support and commitment to this mission is greatly appreciated.

Our vision is to foster a culture of excellence, where every stakeholder plays a vital role in shaping impactful events and initiatives. Together, we create meaningful experiences that highlight the talent and diversity of our community.

MAX is more than an organization—it is a journey we are building for the long term. With your support, we strive to create a lasting impact on present and future generations across Canada and North America, God willing.

The strength of MAX has always been its people. Volunteers are the driving force behind our success, and we are grateful for their commitment to this journey.

This annual report provides insight into the various programs at MAX. I encourage you to connect, collaborate, and engage with our community to support and amplify our collective impact.

We look forward to achieving great things together!

Aazar Zafar, CA CFA
Founder and Head Cheerleader

ABOUT US



PURPOSE

Inspire leadership and empower change in our communities

MISSION

Recognize and accelerate productive contributions made by Muslims in North America through academic and professional development.

YOUR JOURNEY WITH MAX

No matter where you are in your career journey, you will find a home at MAX. We have opportunities for you to grow with us, give back and be part of a dynamic community.



Students and Early Career Professionals

Scholarship applicant, general volunteer or become a mentee!



Mid and Late Career Professionals

Take part in our extensive programs! Become a mentor, a judge for scholarships, or volunteer with WIL, Business, Gala, or Aspire.



Senior Executives

Be recognized through our awards program, participate in one of our C-level programs, or a judge for Scholarships.

OUR FIRST TEN YEARS

MAX Founded

2015

2016

★ First Gala at Ritz-Carlton
 🏆 MAX Scholarships Awarded

Mentorship launches in Toronto
 Gala at Roy Thompson Hall

2017

2018

👤 Mentorship expands to Montreal
 🎓 Muslim Youth Fellowship
 ★ Gala at Ritz-Carlton

Mentorship: Edmonton, Vancouver, NCR
 MAX Tank
 Aspire Development

2019

2020

👩 Women in Leadership Business
 📜 MSF gains charity status

MAX Investment & Referral Network
 Aspire

2021

2022

🇺🇸 MAX Texas
 📚 Training for Boards

Community
 Gala at Ritz-Carlton

2023

2024

📢 MAXPitch
 🗣️ CEO Panel Series
 🌐 Disruptive Tech (AI & Cybersecurity)
 🌟 Networking (Circles & Connect)

Executive Leadership Series
 Barakah Labs
 Launched programming in two new cities: Montreal & NCR

2025

2026

🍁 Calgary Launch
 🏠 Executive Sanctuary
 ✂️ Project X
 👩 Emerging Women In Leadership
 ★ Gala at Ritz-Carlton

OUR PILLARS & PROGRAMS

Back in 2016, we began with just three programs. Nearly a decade later, MAX has grown to 24 programs across nine key pillars:



2025 IMPACT IN NUMBERS



\$309,000+

Awarded in scholarships



69

High achieving students who earned scholarships



2,500+

Event attendees



32

Industry Leading Speakers



5

North American Cities: Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa, Calgary



\$3M

Raised in capital from companies who have presented at MAXPitch & Barakah Labs



224

Mentor-Mentee pairs in 2025. **800+** active pairs overall since inception



24+

Growth Companies & Startups presented during MAXPitch



50

Professional Development events



800+

Volunteers



2

Scholarships for partnership with BridgeTO Youth



20

Different programs

2025 EVENTS & PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

CEO PANEL SERIES
Inside the mind of a CEO - strategy, grit, and the moments that matter

Join us for the fourth CEO Panel Series, featuring seasoned industry professionals who will share their unique insights, experiences, and insider tips from the world of finance, business, and more. Register today!

MCKINSEY TORONTO BLOOR/YONGE CORNER THURSDAY DECEMBER 11, 2025 TIME 5:30PM - 10:00 PM

REGISTER NOW

MAX CYBERSECURITY
MASTERING THE ART OF ATTACK AND DEFENSE

Speakers: ABDULLAH ALAGHA (MCKINSEY), MARIYAM SAFARI LAFTI (ACCENTURE), OSMAN SALEEM (ACTIMETA), TRISH VILLANUEVA (FRIBUS)

Speakers: JUNIOR WILLIAMS (MOBIA), DANISH SAMADHOTE (FASDEN), ARAFAT AZALZADA (STINGRAY), ABIRAS BASHPOUR (STINGRAY)

MAX Montreal
INDUSTRY LEADERS PANEL

Join us for MAX Montreal's inaugural panel discussion, launching a series that spotlights Muslim excellence across industries. Learn practical strategies from senior Muslim leaders on overcoming challenges, balancing faith with modern life, and fostering positive contributions to society.

Speakers: Amina Sall, Khalid ElSawaf, Sacha Haque, Junaid Subhan, Nadia Malik

HALAL FINANCES & INVESTING WORKSHOP

Speakers: AMR ELWALDY, SHALEH BULFIN, HANAN KHAN

YOUR JOURNEY STARTS HERE.

Bakarah Labs: A tech accelerator meant to connect your startup to seasoned mentors who can help it grow.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2025 6:30-9:30PM

NAAN & KABOB 691 YONGE ST, TORONTO

RAMADAN FOUNDERS & FUNDERS IFTAR DINNER

Are you an entrepreneur, investor, or ecosystem builder looking to connect with like-minded professionals? MAX Entrepreneurship invites you to an exclusive Iftar, bringing together founders and funders to build meaningful connections over a delicious meal.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2025 6:30-9:30PM

NAAN & KABOB 691 YONGE ST, TORONTO

Online WEBINAR
Thriving in 2025

Speakers: Aida Awan, Yasmin Fadi

11 MARCH 2025 AT 12.00 PM EST

REGISTER NOW

THE FUTURE OF AI
HOW INNOVATION IS SHAPING WORK, POLICY, AND SOCIETY

Gain insights from leaders on the real opportunities and challenges of AI, and how it is transforming decisions, strategies, and the workplace across sectors.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20th 5:30PM-8:30PM

KPMG Office, 150 ELGIN ST SUITE 1800 OTTAWA, ON

LIVE PITCH NIGHT at Deloitte.

Deloitte Toronto Wednesday, October 15, 2025 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM

A Night of Opportunity

Join us at Deloitte for an exclusive pitch night featuring six rising founders presenting to a room of funders, innovators, and change makers over dinner and networking.

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025 | 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM

TORYS - 79 WELLINGTON ST W, 33rd FLOOR

MAX AI & BEYOND
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON TRIAL

Tailored for mid- to senior-level professionals, this dynamic event puts AI on trial with a live judge, prosecution, defense, and expert witnesses. Dive into the future of AI in the workplace!

Speakers: ALI ASARIA, TEMI ODESINWA, DOOR ZIEM, DORIS ASSAF, MERIN KHAN

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025 | 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM

TORYS - 79 WELLINGTON ST W, 33rd FLOOR

THE ART OF Becoming Her

You're invited to an exclusive panel...

Join us for an inspiring evening with women leaders who've each found fulfillment on their own terms

SPACE CENTER THURSDAY, JULY 17th 6PM - 9PM

Registration required

THE ESSENCE OF SUCCESS

5th Annual International Women's Day Event

Speakers: NEENA SHARMA, JENNIFER BEHREND, FATMA ISMAIL, AISHA JAHANGIR

Friday, February 28 5:30 PM - REGISTER ON EVENTBRITE

5K for MSF 2025

STRATEGIC AI INTEGRATION:
MASTERING EFFICIENCY & REVENUE GROWTH

Are you a mid-senior executive looking to harness AI for business growth?

Speakers: ALI ASARIA, MINIZ MEBRIL, BIREN AGNIHOTRI, BIZWAN KHALFAN

Moderator: ARMOUSHAH DHAMID

Workshop Lead: TEMI ODESINWA, DOOR ZIEM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8 2024 | 5:00 PM - 10:00 PM

MAX Executive Leadership Series

MAX and PwC are selecting candidates for a 6-session leadership series in preparation of joining C-suite and Partner level roles!

WHO SHOULD APPLY:

- Muslims w/ 12+ yrs of experience in the financial industry
- At least 5+ yrs of experience in a management role
- Have held a complex multi-mandate or large team(s) role

APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEB 28 2025

APPLY NOW

CEO PANEL SERIES

Join us for the third MAX CEO Panel Series, featuring distinguished leaders sharing insights on success through innovation and leadership. Discover strategies and stories from trailblazers in Insurance, Public Service, Finance, Asset Management, and more.

8 ADELAIDE ST W (DELOITTE CANADA OFFICE) THURSDAY FEBRUARY 6, 2025 TIME 5:00PM - 9:30PM

Speakers: NAVEED IRSHAD, AISHA JAHANGIR, RICHARD ROONEY, MOEZ KASSAM

Moderated by: FATIMA LAHER

PEOPLE & CULTURE

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

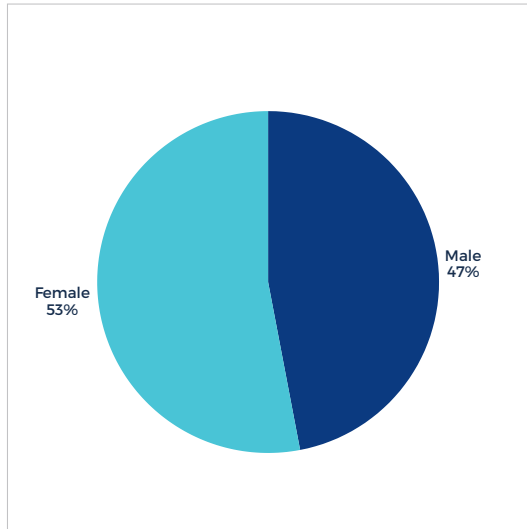
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

MAX as an organization, is committed to the principles of respect, value, and inclusion of all individuals regardless of their ethnic origin, gender, age, physical ability, and education.

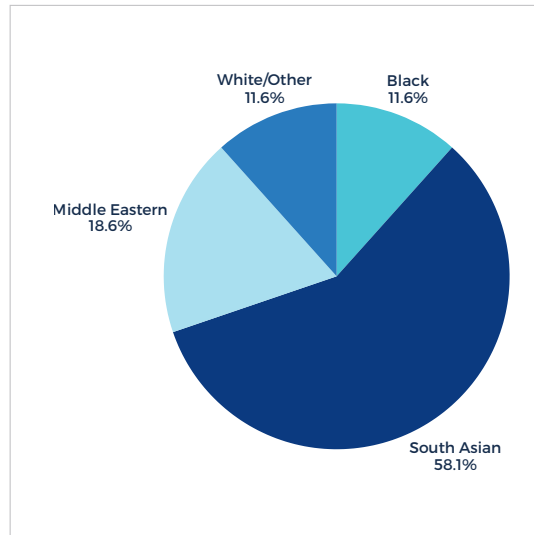
We are committed to diversity and recognize the multivalence of identities that make up the Muslim community and its allies including race, gender, and those differently-abled. Throughout the organization, including MAX awards, scholarships, and professional development events, we strive to create a representative climate of respect, fairness, and cooperation between all individuals.



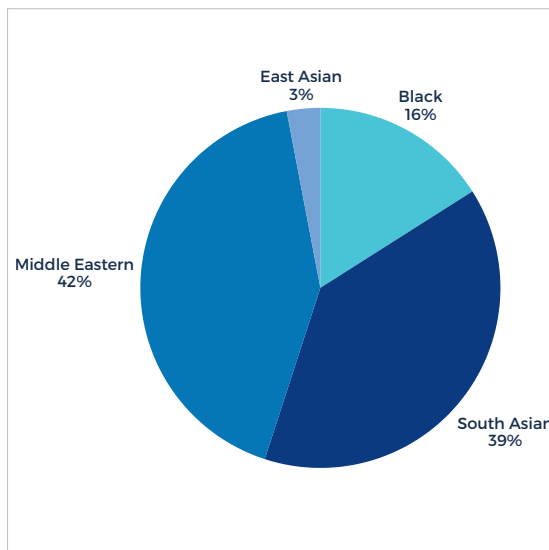
MAX Exec Team by gender 2025



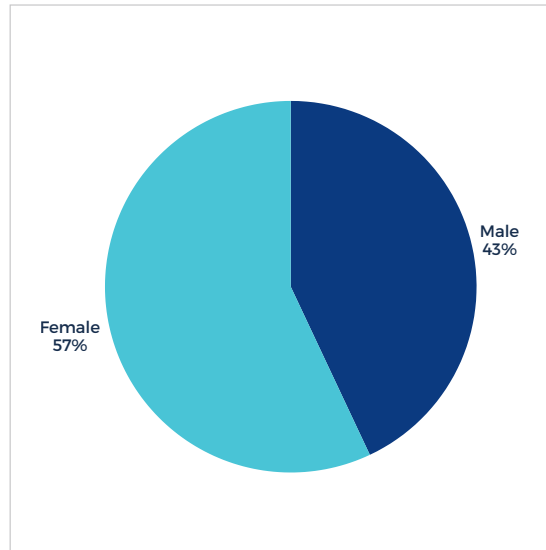
Event Speakers by ethnicity 2025



MSF Winners by ethnicity 2025



MSF Winners Gender Ratio 2025



MAX SCHOLARSHIP FUND

69
Scholarships
in 2025

\$309,000
Worth of scholarships in
2025 alone

50+
Scholarship
Sponsors in 2025

The MAX Scholarship Fund (MSF) awards well-rounded High school and University students who are eager to make an impact, learn and create. Winners are students who have contributed to their communities and Canada at large, achieved above-average marks, and are recognized by their peers.

2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This year we awarded **69** scholarships worth **\$309,000** to Muslim students in high school and university across Canada. Our **scholarship reception** took place in person on **September 10, 2025** and was attended by well over 100 sponsors, scholars, and community members.

GROWTH

Since we started the program in 2016, we have grown immensely! In 2016, we awarded 7 scholarships worth \$35,000. In 2020, we awarded 40 scholarships worth \$178,000, and by 2025 MSF awarded \$309,000 worth of scholarships to 69 students. Ten years of dedication and commitment from our community.

SERVING A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Our scholarship program provides diverse opportunities for students from different ethnic backgrounds to receive financial aid for their education and growth. We recognize there are gaps within our community as it relates to financial supports and the MSF is one of the avenues we are building upon to address those barriers. We partner with a local organization, BridgeTO that provides scholarships, and program access to underserved BIPOC students in the GTA.



Support & Giving



Legacy Building



MSF is a registered charitable entity, and donors are eligible for a Charitable Tax Receipt



Investing in your community

\$2.1M

Worth of Scholarships Awards since 2016

480

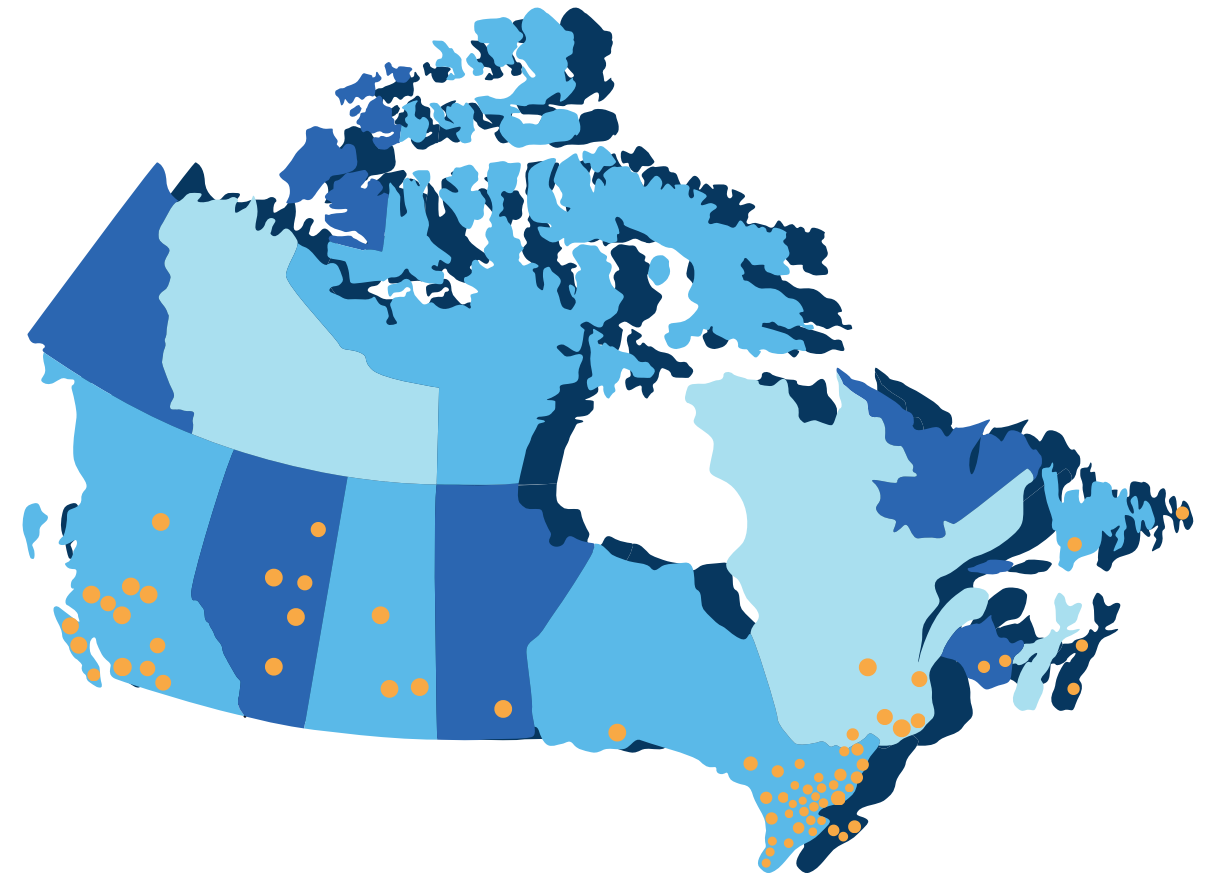
Scholarships awarded to students since 2016

3,800+

Scholarship Applicants in 2025

MAX SCHOLARSHIP FUND

83 CITIES REPRESENTED IN THE APPLICANT POOL:



- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Abbotsford | Etobicoke | Milton | Richmond Hill |
| Airdrie | Fillmore | Mississauga | Saskatoon |
| Ajax | Fort McMurray | Moncton | Scarborough |
| Amherstburg | Grande Prairie | Montreal | St. Albert |
| Barrie | Guelph | Mount Hope | St. Catharines |
| Beaconsfield | Halifax | Mulmur | St. John's |
| Binbrook | Hamilton | Nepean | Stoney Creek |
| Brampton | Hanwell | New Glasgow | Stouffville |
| Brantford | Hawkesbury | New Westminster | Surrey |
| Brossard | Kamloops | Newmarket | Toronto |
| Burnaby | Kanata | Niagara Falls | Vancouver |
| Caledon | Kelowna | Niagara-On-The-Lake | Vaughan |
| Calgary | King City | North Vancouver | Vernon |
| Cambridge | Kingston | North York | Victoria |
| Charlottetown | Kitchener | Oakville | Waterdown |
| Chestermere | LaSalle | Oshawa | Waterloo |
| Chicoutimi | London | Ottawa | Whitby |
| Chilliwack | Losier Settlement | Pickering | Windsor |
| Cornwall | Maple | Pinpoint | Winnipeg |
| Delta | Markham | Port Moody | Woodbridge |
| Edmonton | Middle Sackville | Rabat | |

MENTORSHIPS

A professional mentorship program that connects early career professionals with seasoned professionals who provide career-related guidance and support as mentors, to catalyze excellence in the Canadian Muslim community.

2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 224** New Mentor – Mentee pairs in 2025
- 212** Mentors intake applications **+15% increase**
- 354** Mentees intake applications **+16% increase**
- 16** In-person and virtual national events

In 2025, **MAX Mentorships** expanded its national footprint and deepened industry engagement, connecting a growing network of mentors and mentees across key sectors.

The top three industries were **Technology, Consulting, and Finance**, with Technology being the #1 industry nationwide in terms of mentor demand.

MAX Mentorships hosted a total of **16** events, consisting of **6** in-person gatherings and **4** virtual webinars. Among the in-person events, three were speed-matching events, while the other three were summer networking events, held in **Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver**. These events provided participants with invaluable opportunities to connect, collaborate, and expand their professional networks in dynamic settings.



220+

New pairs in 3 Cities

560+

Mentor/Mentee Applications

850+

Total Attendees at events

BOARDS

A mentorship program designed to prepare accomplished professionals from underrepresented communities for Board of Directors positions, connecting them with seasoned board members for guidance and skill-building.

Launched in 2025, **MAX Boards – Board Leadership Mentorship Program** onboarded **43** mentees and matched them with **22** mentors, including **15** senior cohort mentors and **7** junior cohort mentors, fostering meaningful one-on-one mentorship. The program formed a partnership with **BIPOC Executive Search** to enhance board readiness and early feedback has been positive, with participants reporting increased confidence and a stronger understanding of governance and boardroom dynamics.

The program drives impact across the Muslim community by promoting:

- **Representation:** Equipping Muslims to hold decision-making seats on boards, building visibility of Muslim excellence in leadership spaces.
- **Pipeline of Future Leaders:** Preparing mid-career and emerging professionals for governance roles and fostering community influence and advocacy.
- **Excellence:** Elevating governance skills to globally recognized standards (ICD/NACD), positioning Muslims as trusted, competent, and effective board members.
- **Network Effect:** Alumni mentor the next cohorts, creating a self-sustaining cycle of guidance, opportunity, and influence.

Through these initiatives, MAX Boards cultivates the next generation of Muslim leaders, ensuring their perspectives help shape policy, philanthropy, and corporate strategy while strengthening diversity and inclusion in boardrooms globally. Plans for 2026 include the launch of Cohort Two and the expansion of the mentor pool with seasoned board members across sectors, strengthening pathways for diverse executives to access board opportunities.

43

Mentees

22

Mentors

15

Senior Cohort Members

MAX BOARDS 2025-26: MEET OUR MENTORS



Waleed Soliman
Chairman,
Norton Rose Fulbright



Salma Salman
CFO,
TD Bank America



Armughan Ahmad
Executive AI Advisor



Rizwan Khalfan
EVP, Chief Digital & Payments
Officer, TD Bank



Bisma Ansari
Consultant & Board Director



Mujir Muneeruddin
Partner,
Pallett Valo LLP



Sami Zahur
CEO,
One Queen Capital Inc.



Eric Wetlaufer
Managing Partner,
TwinRiver Capital



Sabir Sami
Consultant, ex-CEO KFC



Richard Rooney
Vice Chair,
Burgundy Asset Management



Yung Wu
Chair,
NFQ Ventures



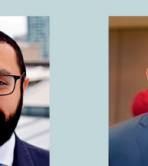
Navaid Mansuri
CFO,
Dialogue



Mohamed Lachemi
President & Vice Chancellor,
TMU



Waqqas Shafique
Product Lead,
Loblaw Digital



Hasan Naqvi
CFO,
Habib Canadian Bank

CEO PANEL SERIES

C-LEVEL PROGRAMS

A speaker series that brings together distinguished CEOs from the community to share their career journeys, leadership insights, and strategies for success, inspiring the next generation of professionals and entrepreneurs to reach new heights in their industries.



In 2025, MAX expanded the reach of the **CEO Panel Series**, spotlighting distinguished leaders from our community and offering attendees the chance to gain firsthand insights, learn from their journeys, and explore strategies for success in today's fast-paced business landscape.

This year, MAX hosted three CEO Panel Series events, including a Senior Finance Panel, bringing together over **340 attendees** and featuring **13 senior executives** from diverse industries such as Anson Funds, OPTrust, TD, Manulife and more. Each event provided thought-provoking discussions and opportunities for participants to engage directly with seasoned leaders, expand their professional networks, and gain actionable insights to accelerate their own careers and ventures.

3 Events in 2025 **13** Total Senior Speakers **340+** Attendees



INDUSTRY LEADERS PANEL SERIES

C-LEVEL PROGRAMS

Launched in Montreal and Ottawa in 2025, this flagship speaker series spotlights accomplished Muslim leaders who share practical insights, lived experiences, and career strategies from across industries.

Montreal

In 2025, the **MAX Industry Leaders Panel** launched in **Montreal** with two impactful events: *"Achieving Excellence in a Diverse Work Environment"* in **February** and *"Unlocking Excellence: Driving Lasting Impact with Mindset and Action"* in **October**, bringing together **145** attendees and **12** senior speakers. The sessions featured accomplished Muslim leaders from diverse industries sharing insights on leadership, career growth, and professional strategy.

By tapping into Montreal's diverse Muslim Francophone community and offering accessibility for both **English** and **French** attendees, the program provided fresh perspectives and fostered inclusive networking and mentorship opportunities. Attendees engaged directly with speakers, gained actionable guidance, and strengthened connections across the city's professional Muslim community.

3 Events in 2025 **18** Total Senior Speakers **230+** Attendees

National Capital Region (Ottawa)

In **November 2025**, the **MAX Industry Leaders Panel** held its first-ever event in the **National Capital Region (Ottawa)**, titled *"The Future of AI: Careers and Applications"*, attracting **90** attendees and featuring **6** senior speakers. The session brought together accomplished Muslim leaders from a variety of industries to share insights on leadership, career development, and professional strategy.

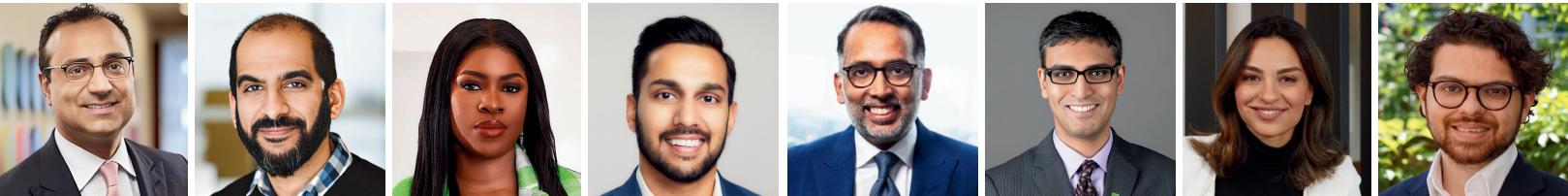
By introducing the program to a new city with brand new speakers and participants, attendees were able to engage directly with experts, gain practical guidance, and build meaningful connections. This event also marked the official launch of MAX NCR, establishing a new hub for professional development, mentorship, and networking within the National Capital Region Muslim community.



AI & BEYOND

DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

A program launched in 2024 that equips mid- to senior-level professionals with the knowledge and strategies to integrate AI technologies into their businesses, driving both innovation and value.



Since its launch in 2024, **MAX AI** has become a leading program equipping mid- to senior-level professionals with actionable insights on how AI and related technologies are transforming industries. To date, the program has successfully hosted **six events**—including **three panels**, **one mock trial**, and **two workshops**—bringing together over **25 senior AI leaders** and attracting **500+ attendees**.

The mock trial in 2025 offered a unique, interactive experience, putting AI “on trial” and inviting the audience to serve as the jury. Experts debated whether AI’s productivity gains put professionals who don’t adopt it at a disadvantage, explored the accessibility and trustworthiness of AI in the workplace, and demonstrated AI tools like ChatGPT, Superhuman, and Cursor in real-world business workflows.

Across all sessions, participants gained **practical strategies for integrating AI** into their organizations, explored real-world applications across industries, and connected with the broader AI community, fostering collaborations that drive innovation and industry impact.



6

Events since 2024

25+

Senior Speakers since 2024

500+

Event attendees since 2024

CYBERSECURITY

DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

A program launched in 2024 that offers an in-depth exploration of the fast-evolving cybersecurity landscape, featuring top experts who share essential strategies and real-world examples to safeguard against digital threats.



Since its launch in 2024, **MAX Cybersecurity** has become a leading program for professionals and the broader community to deepen their understanding of digital security. Since inception, the program has hosted **two professional panel events** for **Cybersecurity Awareness Month**—including in 2025, the second annual panel titled *Mastering the Art of Attack & Defense*—as well as a **Cybersecurity for Seniors workshop at ISNA**, bringing together over **10 senior cybersecurity leaders** and engaging **300+ attendees**.

Panelists have shared real-world examples of security breaches, explored why cybersecurity is essential across all sectors, and provided actionable strategies **to stay ahead of evolving threats**. Through these sessions, MAX Cybersecurity has equipped participants with the knowledge, tools, and best practices needed to navigate the growing complexities of the digital landscape, fostering safer and more resilient professional and community environments.

3

Events since 2024

10+

Senior Speakers since 2024

300+

Event attendees since 2024

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

A program designed to equip Muslim founders with the tools, knowledge, and peer support needed to strengthen their ventures and drive sustainable growth.

In 2025, **MAX Entrepreneurship** strengthened support for aspiring and growth stage founders through curated convenings that expanded access to capital, customers, and peer learning. Highlights included a Ramadan gathering connecting entrepreneurs with active investors and a June panel **"How to Get Your First 50 Customers"**, where experienced founders shared early stage go to market strategies.



7 Speakers **6** Mentors **1** Equity-free Accelerator **250+** Attendees

These ecosystem-building efforts culminated in the launch of **Barakah Labs**, a 6-week **equity-free accelerator** hosted at the MaRS Waterfront in downtown Toronto, supporting a cohort of 12 founders with the tools, mentorship, and networks needed to scale their ventures. At the end of the program, founders showcased their progress and pitched their startups at Demo Day, featuring **high-impact ventures** across **security, health-tech, climate, creator tools, and AI infrastructure**.



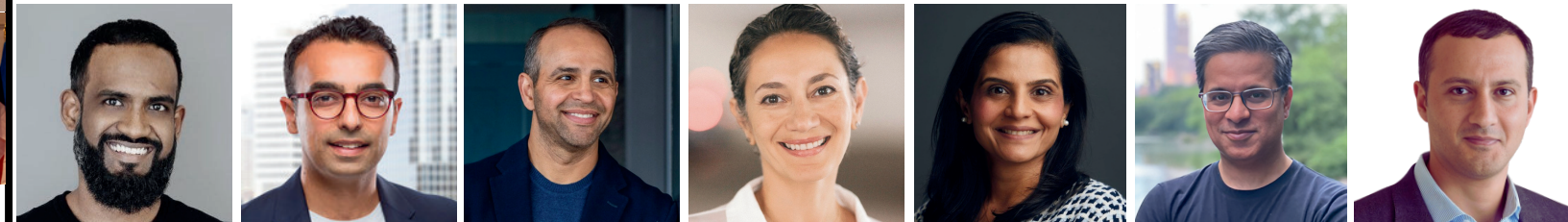
MAXPITCH

A program launched to support Muslim entrepreneurs connecting founders with investors, mentorship, and a curated network, providing a structured pathway to scale their ventures and accelerate growth.

In 2025, **MAXPitch** hosted three live episodes, a VC/LP dinner, and its first in-person Live Pitch Night, marking a major milestone as the program expanded from virtual to professional in-person events. These initiatives brought together **140+** founders, **115+** investors, and showcased **24+** startups, resulting in over **\$1.7M** raised to support the next stage of these ventures.

Participants gained opportunities to refine their pitches, receive feedback from seasoned investors, and build lasting connections with peers and mentors. By fostering high-quality programming and curated investor access, MAXPitch strengthened the broader investment ecosystem for Muslim entrepreneurs, helping founders turn their ideas into scalable, high-impact businesses.

115+ VCs/Angels/HNWI in network **7** Episodes **24+** Featured startups **\$1.7M** Raised (+ counting)



FEATURED COMPANIES



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

A program with a mission to celebrate, inspire and cultivate leadership excellence in North American-Muslim women. The program focuses on Recognition, Leadership, and Network & Partnerships, thereby connecting and mobilizing Muslim women across North America to institute a strong and sustainable network.



Launched in Toronto in July 2017, **MAX Women in Leadership** has hosted **10+** professional development events and workshops, featuring **50+** leading industry speakers and engaging **1,000+** attendees to date.

In 2025, WIL hosted its 5th Annual International Women's Day (IWD) event on February 28, generously sponsored for the fifth consecutive year by McCarthy Tétrault. Centered on the theme **The Essence of Success**, the event, Women at Work: Embracing Equity, Inclusivity, and Opportunity, explored strategies for women's professional development, including upskilling, reskilling, retention, and mentorship.

This year, WIL hosted **three** key events—IWD, an Islamic Painting Workshop, and The Art of Becoming Her—featuring 14 senior professionals as speakers. The top impacts of these events were career acceleration and empowerment, visibility and representation, and networking and mentorship.

In 2025, WIL also partnered with **12+** Muslim women-owned businesses and launched its social media presence in June, reaching over 300 followers organically within a few months. Looking ahead, WIL will expand into **Montreal** and **Calgary** and soon launch a career accelerator program, **Emerging Women in Leadership**, to support early- to mid-career women professionals in building skills, networks, and pathways to leadership roles.

1,000+

Event attendees since 2018

10+

Professional development programs for women since 2018

50+

Leading industry speakers since 2018

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP SERIES

A program launched in 2025 in partnership with PwC, that empowers seasoned senior professionals to break through into executive leadership. The program provides advanced training, personalized mentorship, and access to a strong network to prepare participants for the next step in their career growth.



The **MAX Executive Leadership Series** is a professional development program that selects a cohort of rising senior professionals through a competitive application and interview process. In 2025, the program received 45 applications, of which **27** participants were accepted, and featured **28** industry speakers. Last year, it was delivered as a six-part program, with modules including **Executive Communication & Presence**, **Managing Your Brand**, **Managing Stakeholders (Upwards & Downwards)**, **Building Teams**, **Establishing Your Network (Internal & External)**, and the **Art of Persuasion**.

Through hands-on experiences, real-world case studies, and mentorship from senior leaders, participants develop advanced leadership skills, expand their professional networks, and gain the tools and guidance needed to accelerate their progression into executive leadership roles. The program is flexible in structure, with future editions offering a slightly reduced module count to focus on core leadership competencies.

27 Participants

28 Industry Speakers

6 Sessions in 2025



CIRCLES

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

A program that connects ambitious visionaries across disciplines into tight-knit, discipline-specific circles of ~10 members, fostering collaboration, mentorship, and collective success.

Since its launch in 2024, **MAX Circles** has grown to over **250 members** across **29 circles**, including C-Suite executives, world-renowned surgeon-scientists, founding entrepreneurs, and senior finance and asset management professionals. The program has become a powerful platform for professional growth, with many members achieving significant milestones such as promotions, transitions into larger leadership roles, awards, and other career-defining accomplishments.

In 2025, MAX Circles hosted **10** intimate monthly dinner socials across the GTA, providing members with meaningful networking and relationship-building opportunities. The flagship November **Interdisciplinary Checkpoint** brought together Circle leads and high performers to collaborate, share insights, and strengthen cross-industry connections.

Looking ahead, the program will introduce **Reciprocity Hour** in 2026, a structured collaboration model inspired by Wayne and Cheryl Baker, designed to foster intentional peer support and accelerate collective impact across Circles.

29 Circles

Acctg, Tax & Advisory A	High Finance A	Entry-Level Healthcare	Entrepreneurship A
Acctg, Tax & Advisory B	High Finance B	Healthcare Innovation	Entrepreneurship B
Consulting A	High Finance C	Sales & Business Dev.	Entrepreneurship C
Consulting B	High Finance D	Tech, Data & Analytics A	Government & Policy
Consulting C	Jr. Engineering A	Tech, Data & Analytics B	Law A
Cybersecurity	Jr. Engineering B	Tech, Data & Analytics C	Law B
MBB	Sr. Engineering A	Tech, Data & Analytics D	
HR & Comms.	Sr. Engineering B		



29

Total Circles

250+

Total Members

10+

Total Disciplines

CONNECT

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

A moderated, subscription-based platform designed to foster mentorship, collaboration, and career mobility across the MAX professional community.

Launched in 2024, **MAX Connect** has grown into a dynamic ecosystem connecting professionals across all career stages, from senior executives to graduating students. The platform now includes **100+** senior executives spanning industries such as law, banking, healthcare, asset management, entrepreneurship, technology, and finance, creating direct pathways for mentorship, referrals, and opportunity sharing.

To date, the platform has maintained a **100% response rate**, meaning every request shared has received at least one reply, with members consistently stepping up to support one another. Requests have ranged from founders seeking mentorship to register investment funds, professionals exploring careers in Responsible AI Strategy and Governance, founders looking for go-to-market advice on wealth-tech platforms, and healthcare professionals aiming to connect with life sciences researchers.

Through curated job postings, business introductions, and peer-to-peer engagement, members have secured interviews, expanded their networks, and built meaningful relationships with accomplished leaders in their fields. As one member shared, the program has been “incredibly rewarding” and has expanded both their network and career prospects.

By providing year-round access to an exclusive and values-aligned professional network, MAX Connect continues to strengthen career mobility within the community, fostering a culture of collaboration, support, and shared success.

SAMPLE OF SENIOR EXECUTIVES ACCESSIBLE VIA MAX CONNECT

Walied Soliman , Global Chair at Norton Rose Fulbright	Salma Salman , Chief Financial Officer, TD AMCB
Mohamed Lachemi , President & Vice Chancellor at Toronto Metropolitan University	Uzair Hussain , Banking Advisory Lead at Microsoft
Zehra Sheerazi , Partner at Torys LLP	Akif Siddiqui , Partner at PwC
Sayed Alaali , Senior Vice President at Slate Asset Management	Rayhan Azmat , Vice President, Investor Relations & Corporate Development at Cineplex
Dr. Adnan Kazi Hameed , Cardiologist	Ali Naqvi , Managing Director, Real Assets at CPP
Raheel Janjua , Managing Director, Investment Science & Active Equities at CPP	Saba Tariq , Partner at Deloitte
Dr. Najma Ahmed , Surgeon-in-Chief, Professor of Surgery	Raed Masri , Founding Partner at Transform VC
Danish Yusuf , CEO and Founder at Zensurance	Zahid Fazal , Managing Partner, Assurance at EY
Armughan Ahmad , Former CEO at Appen AI & President at KPMG & Dell	Hassan Bhatti , Serial Entrepreneur
Abbas Rizvi , Head of Enterprise Sales at Adobe	Atif Zafar , Chief, Stroke Program at St. Michael's Hospital

100+

Senior Executives

100%

Response Rate So Far

MAX-IRC GRAND IFTAR

An annual event in partnership with Islamic Relief Canada every Ramadan in support of orphans around the world, the MAX-IRC Grand Iftar brings the community together to create lasting impact through collective giving.



Our **9th Annual MAX-IRC Grand Iftar** took place on Saturday, March 15, 2025, at the Pearson Convention Centre, welcoming over **700** attendees for an evening of reflection, community, and purpose. The event featured a keynote address by **Shaykh Abdullah Waheed**.

Through the generosity of our MAX community, Islamic Relief Canada (IRC) was able to raise over **\$150,000+**, representing the sponsorship of over **140 orphans** around the world.

77 of those orphans were sponsored on a 1-1 basis, with your sponsorship allowing for continuous, long-term transformation in the life of each orphan. This support enables them to rise above their circumstances, access deserving opportunities, and build better lives for themselves and their families.

The remaining orphans were supported through IRC's Orphan Care Project, where your donations were allocated to provide additional care for those in need. These funds ensure that their most essential needs are met, including **medical aid, educational support, shelter repair and orphan projects**.

Your donations reached orphans in **9** countries around the world, including: **Palestine, Turkey, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Jordan, Bangladesh, Niger, Albania, and Pakistan**.

140

Orphans Sponsored

\$150,000+

Raised collectively at the Annual MAX - IRC Grand Iftar in April 2025

700+

Total Attendees

COMMUNITY

A program with the aim of fostering a sense of community and building the network of Muslims in Canada, empowering professionals through education, leadership development, and meaningful connections.

In 2025, **MAX Community** expanded its reach and impact by delivering engaging workshops, professional development sessions, and community initiatives that fostered learning, mentorship, and meaningful connections. The program intentionally **supported local businesses**, promoted **career growth** and **skill-building**, and created spaces for networking, collaboration, and civic engagement.

Over the year, MAX Community delivered **500+** hours of programming, engaged **240+** attendees, and hosted **6** events, expanding both the reach and impact of its network across Canada.

SIX EVENTS IN 2025:

- 1. Resume Workshop x BridgeTO**
Hands-on resume reviews and career guidance
- 2. Connect & Connect**
Networking for Muslim professionals
- 3. Islamic Biomorph Art Workshop**
Exploring Islamic design and creativity
- 4. 5K Run for MSF**
Fundraising for scholarships
- 5. Road Hockey x PMCF**
Supporting cancer research
- 6. Halal Finance Workshop**
Financial literacy and halal investing



500+

Hours of Programming

240+

Total Attendees in 2025

6

Events in 2025

2025 MAX SPONSORS

PLATINUM



ISLAMIC
RELIEF
CANADA



MOEZ KASSAM &
MARISSA KASSAM
FOUNDATION



National Zakat
Foundation™

GOLD

Toronto
Metropolitan
University



CF Cadillac
Fairview

Richard Rooney

MOHAMMAD
AL ZAIBAK
and Family



SRJ Chartered Professional
Accountants

FASKEN

GreenShield™

PALLET VALO LLP
Lawyers



pwc

2025 MAX SPONSORS

SILVER

TORYS
LLP

Deloitte.

DAVIES

mccarthy
tetrault



around HI
INSPIRED BY HUMAN INTELLIGENCE

BRONZE

SYEDLAW
Business | Charity | Security

Extendicare
Helping people
live better

DR. ADNAN KAZI HAMEED
MEDICINE PC

INFINITE
INVESTMENT SYSTEMS

MISHKAT
DIGITAL MARKETING



CONTACT US



MAX – Muslims Achieving Excellence
MAX – Muslims Achieving Excellence Network



@onemax.ca @maxwomeninleadership
@max.scholarshipfund @_maxcommunity



@muslimsachievingexcellence
@max.scholarshipfund



@max_gala



onemax.org



contact@onemax.org

