

Gul Nawaz was a leader in local Pakistani community

By JOHN STEWART
Staff

Obituary

The prayer room at the Islamic Society of North America mosque on South Sheridan Way was packed Monday as Mississaugans said goodbye to Gul Nawaz, who was described as a quiet but forceful leader of the local Pakistani Canadian community and a dedicated patron of the arts.

The long-time Mississauga resident, who came to Canada from Pakistan in 1966 and moved to Mississauga in 1973, died of a ruptured ulcer on Saturday.

He was 70.

"The Mississauga Arts Council Board, staff and members mourn the passing of a dedicated and honourable man who lived the precepts of his faith by volunteering and donating his time to the community to make this a better place for all of us," Bohdan Shulakewych, president of the Mississauga Arts Council, said in a statement.

"He was a tireless worker who was forced to retire from the MAC board due to health reasons. He helped promote and advance the arts in our city adding to its richness."

Nawaz served as treasurer of MAC for almost two years until March 2008. He remained on the board until 2010.

"Gul Nawaz was what every good citizen aspires to be," said Mississauga-Streetsville MPP Bob Delaney who was among those who spoke at the service yesterday, which drew about 2,000 people. "He helped so many people in so many ways. He was a champion and a patron of the arts.

"He helped build strong ties between Canada and Pakistan and he provided critical funding for hospitals and universities. He was a credit to his community in every way and a man with no enemies at all."

A chartered accountant by trade,

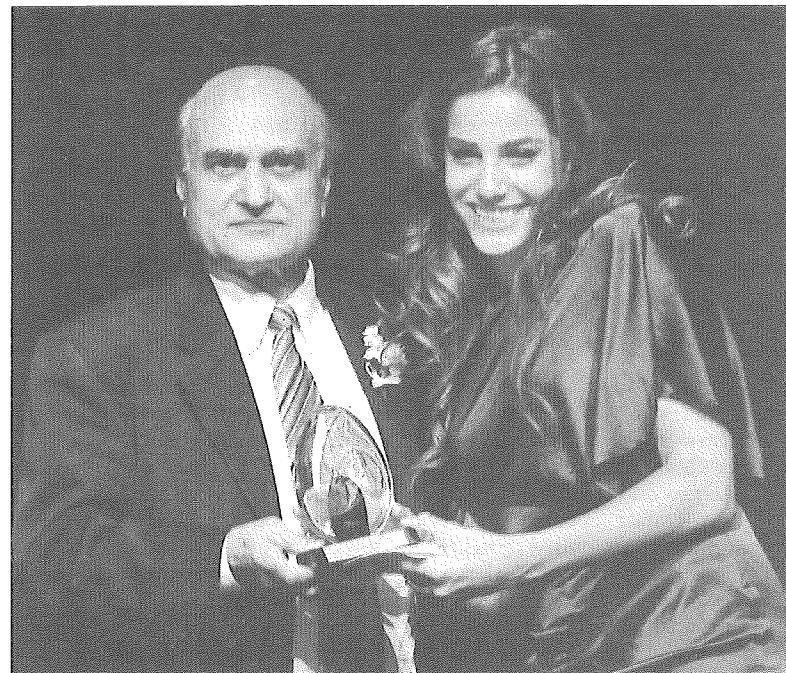
he was a partner in the firm Nawaz Taub & Wasserman and was particularly proud of having served as president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario.

He was the president of the Canada Pakistan Friendship Association and the Council of Pakistani Canadians and spent much of this time in recent years fundraising for Pakistani earthquake victims as well as Credit Valley Hospital and the Osler Health Centre.

An active Conservative, Nawaz ran for nomination and served on several provincial and federal riding associations over the years and was the former president of the Mississauga-Streetsville provincial riding.

Federal Immigration Minister Jason Kenney tweeted he was "saddened to learn of the death ... of my friend Gul Nawaz, a patriotic Canadian who was a tireless volunteer for many worthy causes. RIP."

Nawaz is survived by his wife Ghizola, sons Kaiser, 42 and Haroon, 33 and daughter Nazleen, 39.



Gul Nawaz presents an award to dancer Amanda Cleghorn at the 2012 MARTYs.
Staff photo by Rob Beintema