



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

BRNESH BERGE

Brnesh Berhe is a passionate human rights advocate who saw an opportunity to raise greater awareness and initiate change with the power of storytelling. And with that, *Marker* magazine was born.

Brnesh has shown resilience in self-publishing an independent publication from her home in Edmonton, while juggling a fulltime job and a side gig as a freelancer. She wore many hats at the magazine – editor, art director, publisher and sales associate to provide a niche outlet for writers to write and report on a range of issues, from music and the arts to racial and sexual inequality.

Those who worked with Brnesh express their gratitude for not only being given a platform to showcase underground or underreported topics, but also for the mentorship she provided. They grew as writers, photographers and illustrators under her direction, and, perhaps more importantly, learned how to strive for change from Brnesh's leadership and dogged determination to give a voice to the voiceless.

After seven issues, Brnesh has decided the time has come to put *Marker* to rest. "*Marker* was an absolutely eye-opening experience and showed me how much can be done when the determination and focus in there; if you see something you're not happy with, or feel you can add an alternative perspective, be the alternative," she says.