



**Jalal Barzanji, 53**, is originally from Kurdistan, northern of Iraq. He has been in Canada since 1998. A poet & human right activist for many years in his own country, Jalal has published a number of poems & articles on individual freedom & freedom of expression.

His work values and passion cost him greatly -- it brought him under government surveillance, caused him to be expelled from employment and was imprisoned for his political beliefs. Since coming to Canada he & his wife have been involved in a variety of initiatives related to

welcoming & supporting newcomers to Edmonton.

In the year 2000, he established the Canadian Kurdish Friendship Association which support new Kurdish families to integrate in to Canadian society.

Jalal was a 2004 recipient of a RISE award. He continues writing/publishing poems & articles, and was appointed PEN Canada Writer-in-Exil. Jalal has three children and works part-time with the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative.