



Chris and Kirk make a great duo at West End Comics

## TORONTO YOUTH JOB CORPS

# Business partnership helps youth employment

**I**wanted something with longevity, something that would last,” says Chris Barber. Chris needed to find a stable job, but as a young person in Toronto’s job market, where the youth unemployment rate is at 20%, he was finding it almost impossible.

He jokes that looking for a full-time job had essentially become his full-time job—minus the paycheck of course. Frustrated, Chris stumbled upon a posting during his online job search—it was for Toronto Youth Job Corps (TYJC) at West Neighbourhood House.

TYJC is an employment program that connects youth (ages 16–29) to the workplace through paid employment, school, and/or training. Intrigued by the opportunity, Chris decided to sign up

for TYJC—it was his first time using an employment program.

Chris enjoyed how the program was structured. “You aren’t employed right away—you have time to build skills and get to see different work opportunities.” This was a good fit for Chris who was looking to develop some skills before finding a steady, full-time job in a field he was interested in.

In September of 2016, after completing the training portion of TYJC, Chris got a work placement at West End Comics in Parkdale. Shop owner Kirk Sutterfield jumped at the opportunity to participate in TYJC. “As a small business, you can always use the help,” says Kirk. “It’s great for small businesses looking to grow.”

Not only was the prospect of having a trained employee (whose wages are covered by TYJC) an attractive option for Kirk as a small business owner, Kirk participated in a program like TYJC when he was younger and knew the positive impact it had on him. He wanted to pay it forward and support youth in his community.

The opportunity ended up working out for both parties—when Chris came to the end of his placement, he was hired as full-time staff member at West End Comics!

## Is TYJC for you, as a participant or as a business?

**West NH knows** how difficult it is for youth to find sustainable employment. Through programs like TYJC, we are proud to partner with over 20 businesses across Toronto so youth can gain experience and businesses can find the extra support they need.

Are you between the ages of 16–29 and think TYJC could be for you? Are you a business interested in taking part in TYJC job placements? Contact us to find out more: [tyjc@westnh.org](mailto:tyjc@westnh.org) 416-848-7980 [westnh.org](http://westnh.org)

# Developing entrepreneurial skills

**A**t West Neighbourhood House we believe in “giving people a hand up, not a hand out.” That saying might be old, but it still rings true today. All of our programs help people gain the skills they need to take control of their lives and be active in their communities. One way we do this is through opportunities that help participants develop business and entrepreneurial skills.

## Meeting Place Store

At our Meeting Place Drop-In for street-involved adults, located at Queen and Bathurst, our goals are lowering social isolation and creating opportunities. While some of our work focuses on access to basic needs (e.g. showers, assistance with housing etc.) we also focus on developing skills.

The Meeting Place Store located at the front of the drop-in, offers Meeting Place members and members of Toronto’s low-income and marginalized communities, the opportunity to make and sell handcrafted goods. A social enterprise, the store supports folks in building upon their own creative talents, provides access to artisan training and crafting materials, and the opportunity to sell their finished

goods to the public in the store where 100% of profit goes into the pockets of the artisans. The shop is staffed by peer-workers who are also members of the Meeting Place Drop-In, creating an opportunity for members to learn the retail side of the enterprise.

To find out more about the Meeting Place Store call 416-504-4275.

## Newcomer Youth Silkscreening project

What started in 2011 with a few silkscreens and some interested youth has become an entrepreneurial endeavour in South Parkdale! The Newcomer Youth Silkscreening Project is run by youth

leaders between the ages of 16-19. They create both original and made-to-order T-shirt designs, working out of the West NH Newcomer Youth Space or using a mobile silkscreening kit that they take to street festivals and schools.

They connect with their local community and develop the skills needed to make, market and sell their goods. The Silkscreening Project also provides the opportunity for newcomer youth to develop leadership, language, and public speaking skills. All of the money generated through the project goes back into the Newcomer Youth Program to fund different initiatives.

Interested in placing an order with the Newcomer Youth Silkscreening project?

- 416-206-8041
- theartofsilkscreening@gmail.com
- facebook.com/theartofsilkscreening



Combining  
creativity and  
entrepreneur-  
ship



Meeting Place member Mikey works in the store where he sells some of his own handcrafted items.



# OUR FABULOUS VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE AWARDS

**There are over 1,000** dedicated volunteers who give their time to West Neighbourhood House each year. Here are some of our longtime volunteers who received an *Ontario Volunteer Service Award* in 2017. Thank you to all of our dedicated volunteers across the House!



**"The opportunity helped me grow as a person."**

— Renata Gulyas, Newcomer Youth Program Volunteer since 2014



**"The volunteers, I know them. It's a real family atmosphere."**

— David Cronsilver, Meals on Wheels Volunteer since 2003



**"I'm always learning from students; I get so much out of it!"**

— Nicole Jacobs, English Tutor since 2010



**"The volunteering opportunities I had impacted me to continue working in the community."**

— Fatima Amari, Newcomer Youth Program Volunteer since 2013



**The most rewarding part of volunteering is "when I arrive and [the participant] smiles at me, and likes to talk to me about her life, her family."**

— Sagajarani (Rani) Pathilomiy, Friendly Visitor since 2007



**"I'm often struck by the good feeling of this place. It's a relaxed, friendly environment to be in."**

— David Lampert, Adult Literacy Tutor since 2012



**"It means so much for people to socialize and feel someone cares ..."**

— Sophia Rondrigues, Friendly Visitor since 2009



RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED  
PORT DE RETOUR GARANTI



## JOIN OUR CHARITY CHALLENGE TEAM

**Walk, run, or wheel** this October and raise money for the House!

Wear a costume, beat your personal best, stroll with your family, or wheel with friends—no matter how you participate, we'd love to have you on our Charity Challenge team to fundraise for the House! Those who fundraise over

\$150 can have their registration fees reimbursed by West NH.

Choose the right distance for you—sign up for the 5k, half or full marathon.

Interested? Get in touch with Kaleigh at [kaleighwi@westnh.org](mailto:kaleighwi@westnh.org) or call her at 416-532-7586 ext 215. Or visit [westnh.org/STWM](http://westnh.org/STWM).



## Support our Music School at Scoff 'N Scuff

**Join us at** Scoff 'N Scuff, our annual Newfoundland Kitchen Party Fundraiser in support of the Music School at West NH. This year, there will be a special program of Canadian and Newfoundland music to celebrate our country's 150th birthday.

- **Saturday May 13 at 7:30pm**
- 248 Ossington Avenue

- Stan Meek Community Hall
- Students and Seniors: \$10 in advance (\$15 at the door)
- Adults: \$20 in advance (\$25 at the door)

Tickets are available for purchase at 248 Ossington Ave reception, or by calling 416-532-4828 ext. 127.