

# annual report

2019-2020





#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

West Neighbourhood House has as its central purpose the enabling of less-advantaged individuals, families, and groups in the community to gain greater control over their lives and within their communities.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

West Neighbourhood House works in partnership with the community to promote personal and social change in order to achieve a safe, healthy, and accepting society for all. To this end, we will work with our resources and the strengths of the community to:

- > build bridges within and across communities;
- promote access to full participation in society by addressing barriers such as illiteracy, inadequate incomes, unaffordable housing, and discrimination of all types;
- > assist people to meet individual and family needs;
- provide the tools and opportunities for people to gain greater control over their lives and to take on leadership in the community; and
- advocate for changes in social systems that will ensure dignity, quality of life, and equal opportunities for all.

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

- > Produce the most positive impact possible.
- > Preserve community benefits for perpetuity.
- > Reposition the House in the community to respond to rapid and profound external changes.

#### **ANNUAL REPORT CONTRIBUTORS**

Genna Buck Maureen Fair Nelson Lynch Lynne Woolcott

**Photographs:** Mika Wee, Stanley Hua, Nathalia Herrera, Ashika Aashok, Zachary Li, Chris Young,

Gaetz Photography **Design:** WriteDesign.ca





## 





# leadership report

## THANK YOU TO OUR LEADERSHIP DONORS

**Every donation makes an impact.** West

Neighbourhood House is grateful for all the ways we receive support. Every year, some people step forward with extraordinary gifts. We want to thank the following individuals for their generosity:

- > Rona Abramovitch
- > Conor McCreery
- > Eileen McMahon
- > Lou Meehan
- > Earl Miller
- > Barbara Ritchie
- > Mark Satov
- > Joseph Sheehan

**COVID-19 RESPONSE** 

# It's been a year of big changes — and we're just getting started

**Up until the pandemic, West** 

Neighbourhood House staff, volunteers, partners, and community members worked side by side — physically as well as figuratively — to create personal and social change. You will see much of that work reflected in this report. COVID-19 transformed our community and the House during the last three weeks of our fiscal year.

All of us had to pivot quickly in early March to an entirely new world of physical distancing, personal protective equipment, infection



**Executive Director Maureen Fair** 

prevention, mass unemployment, and closed public spaces.

Our team moved with incredible speed, creativity, co-operation and care to transition to providing support over the phone or online. We maintained in-person contact in our essential services: home supports for seniors from our dedicated Personal Support Workers, Meals on Wheels, and the Meeting Place drop-in for homeless people. To the essential staff who kept these programs going, thank you.

We will tell more about our work during the pandemic in next year's Annual Report. For now, we want to say our incredible, strong relationships and tradition of collaboration helped make this transformation possible. We've received tremendous support from donors, volunteers, partners, and funders such as the United Way. This enabled us to provide uninterrupted care to diverse people facing isolation, loss of income, and fear, on top of the pre-pandemic issues of poverty and inequality. To all our supporters and partners, thank you.



**Board President Rona Abramovitch** 

The Board has been meeting virtually throughout this crisis. They continue to fiercely support the House and take great pride in its work.

We are all in this together — all the time, not just in a pandemic.  $\triangleleft$ 

– Executive Director, Maureen Fair– Board President Rona Abramovitch

## **CONTACT US**

- 416-532-4828
- westnh.org
- f facebook.com/

WestNeighbourhoodHouse

- **▼** twitter.com/WestNHouse
- instagram.com/westnh



## children & youth

WORKING TOGETHER APART

# We pivot quickly to online learning for newcomer youth

It's Tuesday at 5 p.m. and Jovie Galit, the Team Leader for the Newcomer Youth Program, is leading a mindful after-school arts activity. A group of participants, who range in age from 13 to 24, follows along as she demonstrates how to decorate a greeting card. "The good thing about drawing flowers is you don't need straight lines," she says.

Normally, this would take place at our youth space in Parkdale or a local school. Now it's streaming live on Instagram and Facebook.

Over just a few days in March, the program pivoted to being entirely virtual. Helped along by its already vibrant social-media presence, it remained a steady source of support for newcomer youth.

The program now offers at least five online activities a week — including hip-hop dance, Spanish lessons, crafts, homework help, and more. Most sessions start with an informal check-in so youth can catch up and get encouragement from each other and the facilitators.

They've needed it. Some youth are caring for younger siblings full-time while schools are closed. Extra time at home has brought up complicated feelings for youth who've recently reunited with their families after a long separation due to immigration issues.

"Families haven't had time to unpack and heal, and now they're isolating together," Jovie says. "We support them through that and try to be mindful that the youth sometimes don't understand what they're feeling."

All year long, staff and volunteers work hard to create a safe space for youth to learn and process their feelings. Now they are creating it virtually, and as participant Claire says, "They make a boring pandemic day fun."

## JOIN THE NEWCOMER YOUTH PROGRAM ONLINE

- instagram.com/westnh\_nyp
- facebook.com/westnhnyp



Jovie leads an online arts and crafts session for newcomer youth.





# children & youth



## **CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS**

## > Preschool children

- Growing Up Healthy Downtown: Drop-in for families with children ages 0–6, workshops, special events
- Partnership with six EarlyON Child and Family Centres: outreach, settlement, parent supports, early intervention, child screening clinics

### > Parents

- Family program: father engagement, parent skillbuilding, social-recreational activities
- Parent Family Action Network: parent-led community projects

## > School-aged children

 After-school programs: socialrecreational activities, homework support

- Winter break, March break, and summer camps
- Individual support to children who have experienced violence in the home
- *Music School:* individual lessons, recitals, concerts, children's choir
- · After-School Opera Program

#### > Youth

- Newcomer Youth Program: skill development, mentorships, special events, youth-led community projects
- · Youth after-school tutoring
- Youth leadership programs
- Toronto Youth Job Corps: life skills, pre-employment training, job placements

## ■ Highlights of the 2019-2020 year

- Approximately 400 children, including 150 from newcomer families, participated in our program for preschoolers 0-6 and their caregivers. Now, we're offering do-it-yourself projects and virtual circle time to keep children learning, happy and engaged.
- 318 school-aged kids attended developmentally appropriate afterschool programs at four locations in downtown west Toronto, including

- the Out of School Kids (OOSK) program for children 6-12 and Tweens Only program for 11 to 13-year-olds.
- Between our Newcomer Youth Program, youth leadership work and Music School, we served 809 young people aged 13-24.
- 91% of young adults in Toronto Youth Job Corps successfully completed pre-employment placement training



Members of the CTKids choir got their first taste of the stage by performing as gingerbread children in a production of Hansel and Gretel at the Canadian Opera Company in Februrary 2019.

# adult programs



WEST regularly holds job fairs so people looking for work — or a better-paying job — can do an interview on the spot.

**ECONOMIC DIGNITY** 

# We fight the systems that keep people in poverty

### **Economic life in Toronto is**

changing, and we must change with it. To afford a two-bedroom apartment in our city today, you need to earn \$34 per hour.

"We can no longer be satisfied with finding someone any old minimum wage job, or just connecting people to their benefits," says Jeff Klein, our Director of Community Economic Strategies.

In 2019, we started transforming our financial empowerment and employment and training programs to go beyond relieving poverty, to start helping people build better lives with economic dignity.

Economic dignity means more than having enough money to live. It means having a life that is financially secure and allows you to be healthy, happy, and able to pursue your goals in a meaningful way.

Economic dignity means freedom from financial stress that can make you physically sick. It also means protection from financial scams, predatory lending practices, and exploitative work conditions. It means fighting the systems that entrench people in poverty. It means supporting people to build a personal safety net that will see them through emergencies and life changes and help them take care of their families in the future.

Our first step in this transformation is to make sure everyone who comes to West Neighbourhood House for training or employment help also gets the chance to work with a financial coach. People with higher incomes take for granted that they can get long-term, personalized support from a knowledgeable financial professional. Our program aims to provide that service for the people who need it most.

We're also committing to better data collection, so we can celebrate progress, integrate evidence into our work, and assess our impact over time. <



Our FEPS program puts money in people's pockets and back into the local economy.



## adult programs

## ADULT PROGRAMS

- > Women's Empowerment Program and Transitional Housing Support Program: outreach, individual and group support for women who have experienced abuse
- > West Employment Services and Training: Employment coaching, skills development, career exploration, job search and retention support, connections with employers
- > Financial Empowerment and Problem-Solving: individual financial coaching, income tax clinics, public education
- > Immigrant and Refugee Services: settlement, volunteer tutoring and mentoring, workshops, outreach, support to homeless newcomers
- > Adult Learning Programs: individual tutoring, groups and small classes, academic upgrading

- General Educational Development (GED) preparation
- Computer training and internet access
- > The Meeting Place drop-in: basic needs (showers, laundry, telephones, computers, community kitchen), mental health and addictions case management, Indigenous spiritual and group supports, eviction prevention, connections to odd jobs, information and referral
- > The Parkdale Meeting Place drop-in: social and recreational activities, information and referral
- Music School: individual lessons, recitals, adult choir, concerts, special events
- Space for Narcotics Anonymous meetings





Zoom choir practice in the COVID-19 era

## ■ Highlights of the 2019-2020 year

- 473 adult learners upgraded their skills or received academic support
- 2,207 newcomers received settlement supports in Arabic, Dari, English, Farsi, Hindi, Hungarian, Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Tibetan, Spanish, or Urdu
- 223 women and 68 child and youth survivors of domestic violence received individual and group support, crisis intervention, safety planning, interpretation, and/ or advocacy
- 2,443 Meeting Place and Parkdale Meeting Place members used essential services and received mental health/ addictions supports
- **42 Indigenous members** participated in Spirit Circles led by

- Elder Henry Pitawanakwat
- 105 people maintained their housing with the support of Peer Eviction Prevention
- 71 Meeting Place members
   earned income through peer
   worker positions, odd jobs and our
   storefront.
- 3,111 clients received financial empowerment and problem-solving services, bringing \$6.3 million into their pockets and the local economy
- In our WEST employment program, 81% of job seekers had positive outcomes: 67% found employment and 14% received training. We provided workshops, computer labs and information to 581 people



## investing in innovation

## THE COMPASS PROJECT

# We learn new skills to build the House of the future

### **West Neighbourhood House is**

108 years old. We don't want to get set in our ways and fail to adapt to change. Enter the Compass program.

In 2019, under the guidance of Marjorie Brans and Chryssa Loulis from Toronto's School for Social Entrepreneurs, 11 staff members participated in a custom-designed program that helped them think like entrepreneurs and to experiment with projects for the House of the future.

Compass was made possible by a donation from Mark Satov, a former West Neighbourhood House board member and founder of Satov Consultants.





Mark vividly remembers the first time he visited West Neighbourhood House, then St. Christopher House, at 248 Ossington Ave. "It is just this grassroots, do-good to organization that has a direct connection with the people it serves," he says. "Everybody's so engaged and passionate ... for me, and I imagine for everybody, it's all well and good to live in a modern digital world, but we crave human contact. And the House has always been a place where you get a lot of human contact."

Some of the projects that came out of Compass include a plan to integrate a "coaching culture" in the employment and training programs and across the House. Through Compass, Angela Barrass, Employment Services Coordinator, was inspired her to get training in peer coaching. It's method of non-judgemental open-ended discussion that focuses on a single problem and asks the person being coached to decide on solutions. This empowers them to follow through and create change.

Veronica Nascimento came up with a particularly timely Compass project. As Coordinator of the Home at Last program, she was troubled by how little we integrate the input of Personal Support Workers (PSWs) into our work across the House. PSWs

play a crucial role on the healthcare frontlines, but their voices are seldom heard when it comes to shaping the policies that affect them and the people they care for. Veronica spoke to PSWs and brainstormed ways to make sure they are heard and retained. She came up with the idea to hold forums where PSWs could talk about their experiences, knowledge,

and challenges in a judgement-free environment.

These are just two projects that came out of Compass, thanks to the School for Social Entrepreneurs and Mark's support.

Mark's interest in non-profit work dates back to his days as a kid helping his mother deliver Meals on Wheels. He asked that we pass on a message from him: He wants to encourage others who can give to start thinking of themselves as potential philanthropists — and he doesn't just mean millionaires.

"If you're a professional person, you may need to be reminded that relative to the average, you're quite lucky and can afford to give a fair bit. Even something you don't think of as fair bit, actually would go a long way." he says.



**Angela Barrass** 



# pandemic response

COVID-19

# We adapt quickly to a world of distancing and protective gear

Over just a few days in March, the COVID-19 pandemic totally transformed the House. Essential in-person work, including the Meeting Place drop-in for homeless folks, Meals on Wheels and seniors' supports, adapted to a new world of physical distancing and personal protective equipment.

Most programs switched to offering supports online and over the phone. Now we're busy planning for a post-pandemic future — one where we are more resilient and better able to serve the most marginalized people in our community. Executive Director Maureen Fair offers some reflections on our response so far.

## We were (relatively) ready

Pandemic preparedness was on our radar long before this year. We knew about hygiene and personal protection equipment, thanks to guidance from our funders at the Ministry of Health and our experience dealing with infection control in seniors' programs.

When the pandemic was declared, we had a three-week supply of masks and gloves on hand and our highrisk frontline staff had all been fitted with appropriate PPE. The Meeting Place, unlike many Toronto dropins, has remained open throughout COVID-19. We were even able to share supplies with other social-service organizations.



**Everyone entering the Meeting Place is screened.** 

## We can do better

Working over the phone and online, we realized something important — many people had been falling through the cracks. We need to do more outreach to the most vulnerable members of our communities.

This was
especially
evident in
seniors'
programs.
"Doing all this
phone work
has helped

us develop many more and deeper relationships with people who are too frail to come in," Maureen says.

## The post-pandemic future

We need a simpler system for funding community social services, now more than ever. West Neighbourhood House gratefully receives 17 different sources of government funding, and each one comes with different targets and reporting obligations.



The Meeting Place is one of few Toronto drop-ins to stay open throughout the pandemic, for members like Indigenous artist Nanuk.

During the pandemic, these have been relaxed. Funders told us to do whatever we can to meet the community's needs. That's how we were able to respond so quickly and nimbly — and it should be how things are all the time, Maureen says.

"Give us one envelope of money and let us tell you what we can do with it, instead of funding in this fragmented, siloed way."

## semiors programs

## NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE TEAM

# We partner to provide seamless health care to the most vulnerable

### **West Neighbourhood House**

recently completed its first full year as the lead agency for the Roncesvalles Neighbourhood Care Team. NCTs are local partnerships of health providers that work together to provide seamless health care services to the most vulnerable, isolated people in need. Ours is based at our supportive housing office at 20 West Lodge.

NCTs work at the level of a city block or apartment building. This lets them collect information constantly about what people in the community need and adjust their services accordingly.

Our NCT is designed to address a common problem in community health care: Having services available isn't enough to ensure people will access them.

Many seniors struggle to navigate the health system and keep track of different appointments. The NCT allows them to get care in one place, reducing repetition and gaps, and preventing seniors having to explain their health history to different providers over and over.

The folks the NCT serves — the most vulnerable, marginalized and isolated seniors — often don't reach out for help with health problems. Even if the services they need are close by, they may not know about them.

"There are lots of reasons why people don't engage with what's around them," says Isabel Palmar, Director of Older Adult Centre. "It may be because of mental health, or mobility, language barrier, preference, or someone who is just shy."

So, each month, the NCT holds a drop-in at West Lodge. It's advertised posters in six languages, and it always include snacks, a presentation from a local health provider, and an opportunity to register with the NCT. And music. It turns out music is really important.

"Seniors will stick around through the presentation, until we're packing things up and we put the music on so they can dance," Isabel says. "It's the farthest thing from a waiting room at a doctor's office." <



Seniors at our NCT drop-in to learn about available health care and measure their blood pressure in a relaxed setting.

## semiors programs

## SENIORS PROGRAMS

- > Client and Family Services: intake, assessment and case management, crisis intervention, caregiver support and counselling, income tax clinic, home visits
- > Adult Day Services: supervised care in a group setting for people who are frail or have Alzheimer's or cognitive impairments
- > Home Support: homemaking, personal care, respite care
- Assisted Living and Supportive Housing for high-risk seniors
- Visiting Social and Safety: regular monitoring friendly visiting, online connections program

- > Meals on Wheels: hot or frozen meals delivered to homes, 6 days a week
- > Transportation: member of Toronto Ride, rides for appointments, shopping, social activities and day programs
- > Health Promotion: workshops, health clinics, self-care groups, fitness and arts
- > Seniors' Community Development: leadership development, Health Action Theatre by Seniors (HATS), intergenerational activities, University for Seniors (U4Seniors), and Portuguese Women 55+ social group





Dance-Ability is a multi-generational fitness group. Every Wednesday, we gather and move to the music — sometimes Drake, sometimes 1950s showtunes — at our own pace by the light of a disco ball.

## ■ Highlights of the 2019-2020 year

- Supported more than **1,500 seniors** and people with disabilities in their homes through: 50,266 hours of personal and home care; 33,290 days of care for assisted living and supportive housing residents and 8,195 security checks
- Transported **363 individuals** who are unable to travel by TTC and are ineligible for Wheel Trans to medical appointments, activities and day programs
- Supported over **450 family** caregivers through 1,983 consultations, 7,555 attendance days for 144 seniors in the Adult Day program, and 5,489 hours of respite care for seniors in their own homes
- Through our Home at Last (HAL)
   Program and with nine partner
   agencies, assisted 1,675 seniors
   with no family supports to
   transition safely home from hospital

## community development



contributes to social justice

## ADVOCATES FOR THE COMMUNITY

## We collaborate to create change from the ground up

Collaboration is part of everything we do. In partnership with others in the community, we worked on affordable housing, civic engagement, and neighbour-to-neighbour mutual aid this year.

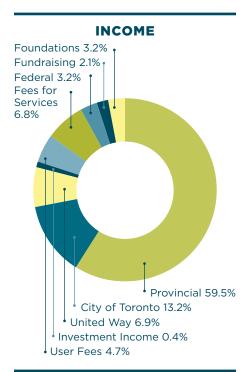
Here's what was achieved in collaboration with participants, volunteers, neighbours, partners, and stakeholders:

- > Our 843 volunteers delivered meals, visited seniors in their homes, supported learning, completed taxes, and much more.
- > We worked with Build a Better Bloor Dufferin to win significant contributions for affordable housing, community space, and a non-profit land trust as a condition of redevelopment on former publicschool lands at Bloor and Dufferin streets.
- > In response to a development application at Bloor and Dundas, we organized two affordable housing forums, engaging 74 residents and media.

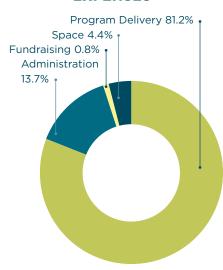
- > Facilitated five community consultations and engaged 50 diverse community members in the development of the City of Toronto's new ten-year housing plan.
- > With policy expert John Stapleton, community financial workers, informal workers, and adult learners, we developed a financial education campaign for informal workers.
- > Held five "Getting to Know Your Government" workshops for 110 residents, held drop-ins to help 35 seniors and Meeting Place members with guidance about voting, and moderated a candidates' debate in partnership with the Parkdale Residents' Association.
- > With the Parkdale People's Economy, we co-facilitated two working groups and co-authored the "Community Wealth Building Report," a framework for how communities can leverage repayable investments.



# financial report



### **EXPENSES**



## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES

	Year Ended Mar. 31, 2020	Year Ended Mar. 31, 2019
Income		
Grants		
Federal	398,259	400,170
Provincial	7,418,615	7,827,693
City of Toronto	1,643,699	1,686,353
United Way	863,715	834,446
Foundations	400,402	203,115
Fundraising and Donations	257,419	188,316
Investment Income	45,154	46,114
	11,027,263	11,186,207
Fees		
User Fees	589,474	721,946
Fees for Services	852,054	756,462
Membership	662	275
Amortization of Capital Contributions	75,992	75,992
	12,545,445	12,740,882
Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits	9,699,931	9,878,212
Building Occupancy	542,062	451,998
Office Expenses	334,659	287,972
Recruitment and Education — Volunteers	22,685	28,967
Communication and Printing	20,573	18,348
Purchased Services	744,592	876,225
Staff Development	64,205	84,022
Staff Travel	78,072	81,997
Transportation	52,426	66,313
Food Services	299,710	302,469
Program Expenses	502,901	480,115
Fundraising Expenses	94,166	87,031
Depreciation Expense	80,986	91,450
	12,536,969	12,735,119
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses from operations	8,476	5,763
Fair market value change in investments	-4,767	56,991
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses from operations	3,709	62,754

Note: Complete financial statements have been audited by Grant Thornton, Chartered Accountants, and are available upon request.



## Thanks to all the friends of the House

West Neighbourhood House appreciates the support of the following funders and donors in 2019–2020. We also thank the 682 individuals who supported us financially this year.

### **Federal Government**

Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation

Employment and Social Development Canada

- · Canada Summer Jobs
- New Horizons

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

• Settlement Directorate

Public Health Agency of Canada

• Health Programs & Services

### **Province of Ontario**

Ministry of Colleges, Training & Universities

• Employment Ontario

Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services

- Citizenship & Immigration Division
- Community Services Branch

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

• Employment Ontario
Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility

Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport

Toronto Central Local Health Integrated Network

## **City of Toronto**

Children's Services Division
Shelter, Support & Housing Division
Social Development, Finance &
Administration Division

Toronto Employment and Social Services Division Toronto Arts Council

### **Foundations**

Aqueduct Foundation
Aston Family Foundation
CHUM Charitable Foundation
D.H. Gordon Foundation
Fundo de Apoio IC Savings
Harry A. Newman Memorial
Foundation
Kids Up Front Foundation



Members listen to a presentation at the 2019 Annual General Meeting

The Henry White Kinnear Foundation The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation

George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation

St. Christopher House Community Endowment

Tides Canada Foundation

The Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund

Toronto Foundation – Wilkinson Family Fund

## **Corporations/Local Businesses**

Angle Media Group Auto Sonic Service Station Inc.

Bell Canada Caldense Bakery

Campbell Craft Consulting

Canada Running Series

Cardinal Funeral Home

CIRV Radio International

Costume House

Drawing Room Architect Inc.

**Dufflet Pastries** 

E.B. Rich Research 2006 Inc.

Gluskin Sheff + Associates Inc.

Havas IT

IC Savings

Imaginus Canada Limited

Imanshi Japanese Kitchen

Intact Financial Corporation

J.E. Black and Associates
Jolera Inc.



Jumbleberry Interactive Group Ltd League

Loblaw's Inc

Longview Asset Management

Lost & Found

Meridian Credit Union Limited

Metro – various locations

Narcotics Anonymous

Nestle Canada

No Frills - various locations

Office Central

Opera Bob's Public House

Paris Paris

Paula Bowley Architects Inc.

Precision Property Maintenance

RBC - various branches

**RBC** Financial Group

Roger's Computer Technology Inc.

Starbucks - various locations

Satov Consulting

Studio Wyse

Sun Life Financial

The Emmet Ray

Tim Hortons - various locations

Uncommon Toronto Ltd.

Venezia Bakery

Vina Pharmacy

## Associations/Community Groups/Sources of Donations

Benevity

Canada Running Series Inc.

CanadaHelps



Cooking a community meal at The Parkdale Meeting Place

Canadian Council of Construction Unions

 $Charities\ Aid\ Foundation\ of\ Canada$ 

CUPE Local #3393

Donate A Car

Givins/Shaw School Council

Hopologia Social and Recreation Fund Inc.

Long & McQuade

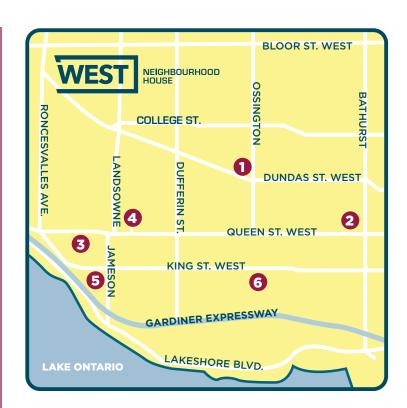
The Monday Afternoon Bridge Club

Needlework Guild of Canada

Parkdale Roadrunners

West Neighbourhood House Fixthe6ix Committee

West Neighbourhood House Seniors' Fund/Members Council



## **OUR LOCATIONS**

- > 248 Ossington Avenue 1
- > Meeting Place and Administration 588 Queen Street West 2
- > Parkdale Community Programs, Newcomer Youth Space, Parkdale Meeting Place

1497/1499 Queen Street West 3

- > Supportive Housing and Elderly Persons Centres
  - 20 West Lodge Ave. 4
  - Springhurst Manor, 1447 King Street West
- > 1033 King Street West 6





**VOLUNTEERS** power the programs we deliver to 15,000 people in our community each year. If you you have lots or a little time to spare, and if you want to give back to your community and learn new skills, you've got what it takes to be a West Neighbourhood House volunteer. Visit **westnh.org/volunteer** to find out how.

## **DONATE**

Every dollar from our donors helps us create personal and social change in the community. Support West Neighbourhood House at westnh.org/donate.