



NEIGHBOURHOOD  
HOUSE

# 2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT

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## Mission Statement

West Neighbourhood House enables less advantaged individuals, families and groups in the community to gain greater control over their lives and within their community.

## Our Values

Our values guide us and will be revisited as we learn from both our successes and failures. None of these values stand alone - each needs to be understood in relation to the others.

### Land

Right relations with Indigenous peoples.  
Right relations with our environment.

### Equity and social justice

Recognize and challenge inequity and injustice in the House and society.



## Responsive practices and positive organizational culture

In all our interactions, practice compassion, trust, respect, equity, innovation, non-judgment, harm reduction, conflict resolution, finding common ground, accountability, inclusion, responsiveness, learning-unlearning, and transparency.

### Neighbourhood-based, community-centered

Being “place-based”, with the House as the “campfire of neighbourhood”; honouring the people who shape our neighbourhood and focusing on community development as well as individual service.

#### Our Board: (left to right)

Rachel Spence, Jeannie Samuel, Adrienne Lipsey (Board President), Walter Ng, Zayna Khayat, Zahra Ismail, Maisie Cu, Maureen Fair (Executive Director), Hana Yassin, Caspar Sinnige, Isaiah John, Leon Liberman, and Sean Meagher.

Missing: Jerry Koh, Dorothy Charach, and James Janeiro.

### Co-creation, Collaboration

Meaningful inclusion of participants in program design, evaluation, advocacy, and change strategies; and working collaboratively and creatively with multiple partners inside and outside the sector.

# Leadership Report

**As the leaders of West Neighbourhood House's volunteer Board of Directors and staff, we report to you to be accountable for the work of the House over the past year.**

This Annual Report tells the story of important activities and outcomes West NH achieved in 2025-26. We want to provide context about the environment in which that work happened.

Like most non-profits, West NH faced government funding cuts and long delays in funding decisions. Because over 80% of our budget is staff salary and benefits, West NH had to make the difficult decision to lay off some valued staff to stabilize our finances. We also reluctantly closed the Greenest City program although we maintained the Milky Way Garden, thanks to the new volunteer Stewardship Committee.

We saw many challenges in our community and advocated for public policy changes to make things better, for example:

- More funding for affordable housing because we see rising numbers of newly homeless people, and many frustrated workers and families who cannot find appropriate housing. Our work here goes beyond advocacy as we plan to redevelop our 248 Ossington site to create new space for House programs with new affordable housing above,
- Reduce or reverse federal cuts to immigration and refugee levels because we see workforce gaps and we hear from our community about the importance of Canada's humanitarian values,
- Prevent evictions and address the toxic drug supply because we see our frontline staff in the Meeting Place have done their best to respond with skill and compassion but there is no quick and easy solution we can provide at the frontline to end homelessness and the toxic drug supply.

On a positive note, we acknowledge and appreciate the many new and returning volunteers who have stepped in to help across West NH, from frontline service to the volunteer Board. Our community is built by people giving their time to help each other.

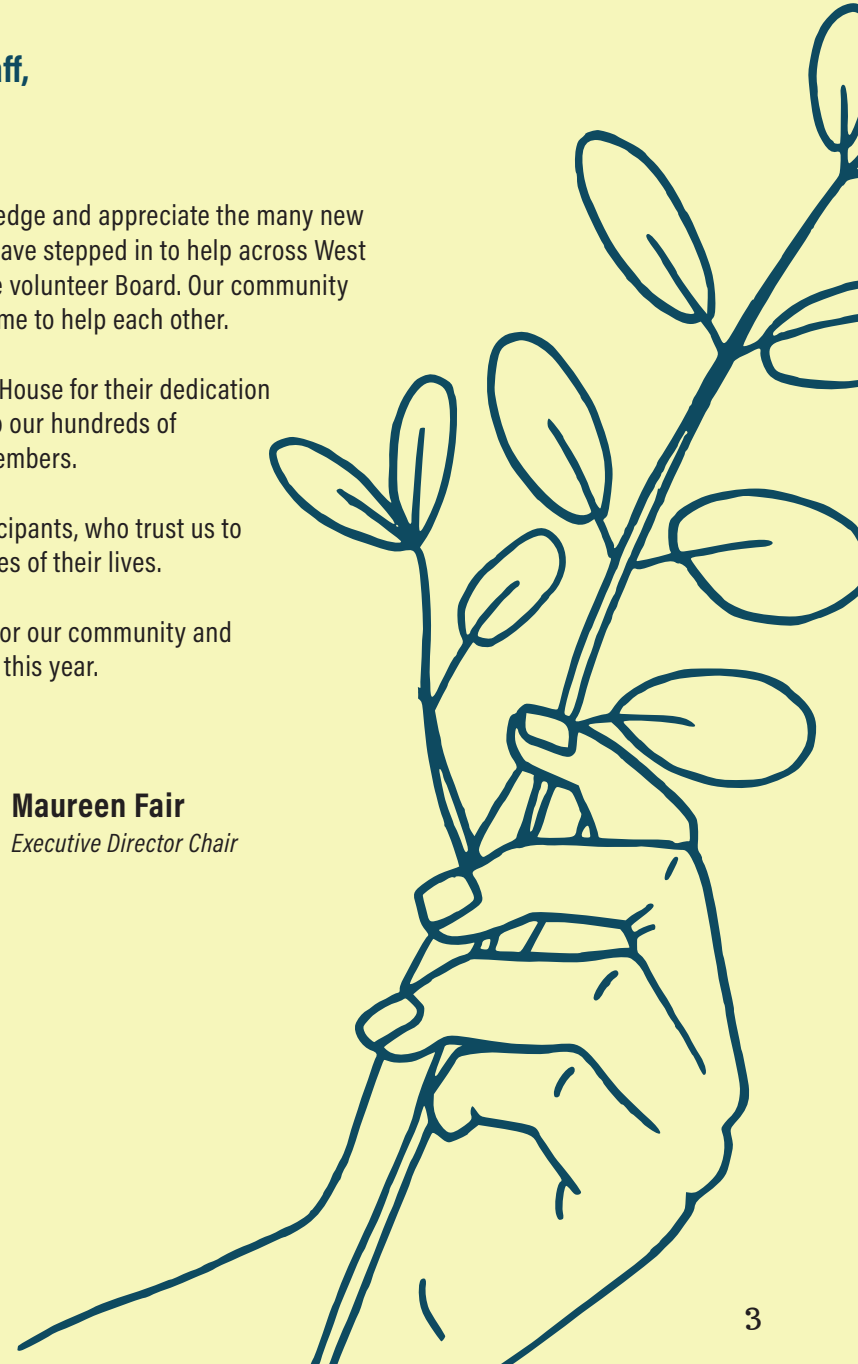
Thank you to all the staff of the House for their dedication and perseverance. Thank you to our hundreds of donors, our funders, and our members.

Thank you to our program participants, who trust us to support them all ages and stages of their lives.

All your support was essential for our community and our House to survive and thrive this year.

**Adrienne Lipsey**  
*Volunteer Board Chair*

**Maureen Fair**  
*Executive Director Chair*



# STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



## Belonging Forward

**At West Neighbourhood House, we believe that strong, healthy communities don't just happen—they are built and rebuilt every day, together. Over the past year, we made meaningful progress on our Strategic Priorities by testing new approaches, deepening relationships, and laying the foundations that shape a future worth sharing. We are energized by what we are learning and creating alongside our community.**



### Values Taking Action

Our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging is embedded in better practices about how we hire and support staff, work with volunteers, and welcome community members. Discussions about our values are explicit and key in our planning and decision-making processes as an organization, including in difficult decisions about our budget.

### New Ways of Working

We are experimenting with more shared leadership and collaboration, with new internal cross-program teams and planning committees. We continue to draw on the interests, knowledge, and strengths of staff, participants, and partners to respond to a rapidly changing environment this year.

### Community-Centred Solutions

We have sufficient data quality now to better monitor and analyze the results of our work. This data increases our capacity to respond to trends emerging at the frontline. We are grateful for our partners and community members who have engaged in co-design activities such as the Dunn House Welcome Committee for integrating new supportive housing.

We still have more work to do with more resources needed to fully utilize co-design methodologies to build solutions.

### Transforming a New Home

With tremendous support from the City of Toronto, we have been able to proceed in “pre-development planning” for the redevelopment of our 248 Ossington Avenue site. This includes architectural and financial planning for a new building to house our programs with as much affordable rental housing and green technology as possible.

Meanwhile, West Neighbourhood House is also part of planning to be in two new local community hubs at Bloor and Dufferin, as well as on Queen Street West in Parkdale.

### Belonging Forward Through Moving Together

We know that real change takes time – and learning a new choreography. This happens through relationships, trust, and shared dedication to the place we hope to get to. Thank you for being part of what comes next.



# POLICY AND ADVOCACY IN ACTION

## Our Pilot Climate Action Program

Climate change disproportionately affects the communities served by West Neighbourhood House, especially low-income families, newcomers, seniors, and people experiencing homelessness. Many face the impacts of extreme heat, poor air quality, power outages, and rising costs - with limited resources to respond.

The pilot Climate Action Program was made possible through a generous investment by long-time supporter of West Neighbourhood House, Stan Meek. This advances a key pillar in our Strategic Plan to help neighbours adapt to a changing climate through community education, research, and advocacy.

Over the past year, we supported climate action in several ways:

- Designing climate actions, program by program, with different age groups, including emergency preparedness workshops, neighbourhood reading parties, and trying out zero-waste recipes!
- Researching and experimenting to make daily operations of our buildings more sustainable, including a thermal comfort study and waste/recycling audit,
- Supporting advocacy for community-led climate solutions, including volunteers in the Meeting Place drop-in helping sort the large daily volumes of recycling, compost, and waste, and
- Exploring and costing potential green technologies for the proposed new redevelopment at 248 Ossington.

Overall, we engaged more than 500 community members and staff in activities that built collective hope and empowered our community for the future climate.



*Waste audit at the Meeting Place drop-in*



*Exploring climate hope with families.*



*Nico Cassidy, Manager of Community Programs with one of our Older Adult Centre volunteer and participant, Francisco Brito.*

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## Community-Based Response to Ontario's Healthcare Crisis

### Enhanced Community Supports (Older Adult Centre)

Ontario's healthcare system has bottlenecks, in particular with hospital beds taken by patients who are medically stable but in long waits to be transferred to more appropriate long-term care or rehabilitation. This is referred to as the "Alternate Level of Care" problem (ALC). While these patients no longer require acute medical care, prolonged bed rest and losing muscle tone diminishes the capacity to live safely at home.

West Neighbourhood House's Enhanced Community Supports (ECS) model is a proven, community-based solution that relieves this strain on our healthcare system

by enabling older adults to transition safely from hospital to home with our care.

ECS provides rapid, coordinated wrap-around supports—often within 48-72 hours of referral. Our team of homecare staff provide personal care, dementia care, respite care for caregivers, accompaniments to follow-up appointments, independence coaching, and care coordination.

Our timely response reduces prolonged hospital stays and avoidable re-admissions to hospitals, allowing hospital beds to be used for those who most need medical care. Participants who used our Enhanced Community Supports share that we made coming home possible for them. Caregivers describe their burnout and anxiety is reduced because they now have trusted supports in place. Families we work with know that we will continue to problem-solve with them, and our hospital partners see us as a "pressure valve" they rely on when pressure to discharge builds up.

Sustained investment in community-based health care like ECS is needed. West NH and the non-profit community support sector demonstrate tremendous capacity to care for frail people outside hospital walls - and we can do more. Models like ECS not only improve individual outcomes and dignity but also deliver system-wide value. Well-funded community care is essential for a resilient and responsive healthcare system for Ontarians.

### Impact

114 patients transitioned safely from hospital to home via West Neighbourhood House Enhanced Community Supports, surpassing the annual target of 75 patients.

### What People Say

- "Without this support, coming home from hospital would not have been possible."
- "Having help in place reduced our stress and gave our family peace of mind."
- "The care was kind, responsive, and focused on what mattered to me."

# Family Drop-in Programming Partnership

## Early-ON (Children, Youth and Family Services Program)

Each month, families attending our preschool drop-in programs participate in Indigenous-led programming facilitated by the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT). Children and their caregivers\* come together, sitting side by side to experience drumming, learn songs in Indigenous languages, and listen to stories rooted in Indigenous traditions. This creates a welcoming space that encourages connection, presence, and learning. This collaboration with NCCT is one way we have put our commitment to reconciliation in practice.

Our approach to early learning in the House recognizes that children learn best through play, responsive relationships, and shared experiences with the adults who care for them. NCCT-facilitated sessions invite children and caregivers to participate together in play-based activities, musical experiences, storytelling with puppets, and more. Learning unfolds through these shared interactions, reinforcing caregivers as active partners in early development.

Our partnership with NCCT is an important, intentional part of our work to ensure Indigenous perspectives are learned and respected. Indigenous families can experience culturally-safe programming that affirms identity, language, and ways of knowing, while non-Indigenous participants are invited into respectful, relationship-based opportunities to learn through listening, participation, and shared experience. This partnership continues to guide how we design and deliver programming, encouraging us to ensure Indigenous knowledge is honoured and meaningfully integrated into Early Years spaces.

We remain committed to learning alongside our communities and fostering understanding, respect, and well-being from the earliest years.

*\* We use the term caregivers in our programs to be inclusive of all families and the many meaningful ways care is provided.*

*Children experience Indigenous traditions together*



# Participant Spotlight: Jason Miles

## Forging a New Pathway with GET SET (Adult Learning Program)

Jason is one of the many participants West Neighbourhood House works with across our different program areas. The program highlights here reflect the diverse ways we connect individual self-development to collective change.

Jason Miles has lived many lives. He has gone from having a good career and a home of his own to living on the streets for years and struggling with addiction. Now in recovery, he is successfully rebuilding the life he wants.

One of Jason's regrets is not finishing his high school education. After being rehoused, he shares, "I was in a position where I wanted to try and do some things ... Something I could set my sights on." After finding our Adult Learning program, he enrolled in the Canadian Adult Education Credential (CAEC) Preparation class launched this year.

Jason expects to complete his high school diploma this summer so he can finally apply to university. "At 44 years old, it was something that I actually found a little bit scary at first, to be honest, the idea of going back into a classroom setting again at this point in my life. But, the staff were wonderful, they made me feel comfortable."

He is one of the many learners who joined our first CAEC Preparation cohort, "I was surprised at the ease which all of us in the room were able to build a community amongst ourselves." The group supports a vital lifelong learning and reskilling pathway for adults. "The program taught English, Math, Science, Geography, and more. There was a class on government that was a deep dive into municipal, provincial, and federal, politics in Canada," Jason explains.

Jason has been busy applying some of his social studies lessons. He is taking his experiences, along with all his new learning, to different places - including advising Toronto City Council and Mayor Chow. He has become an advocate for unhoused neighbours and also wants to see more support around harm reduction for those living with addiction. "I want to help create pathways so that people get the same opportunities that I had," he says.

Jason appreciates taking part in the Adult Learning program, "It was right at that intersection of what I wanted to do in this stage of my life. Getting that extra set of skills in my toolbox." He now looks forward to going to university to continue studies in public policy and sociology.

To read more about Jason's story scan:





# OUR PROGRAMS

## How We Work with our Community

### Children and Youth Programs

#### For Parents and Caregivers

- Family Drop-In Program: skill-building, peer support, connection to community resources, and social and recreational activities for parents/caregivers and their children
- One-to-One Family Support: individualized support for families and caregivers to address specific needs and goals
- Support for Families Impacted by Violence: trauma-informed, individual support for families who have experienced violence

### All Age Groups

- Climate change education and community development activities
- Community Gardens, Good Food Market
- Community Undertaking Social Policy Fellowship
- Downtown West and East Resilience Project
- New Housing Alternatives research project
- Public education, research, community consultations, and advocacy
- Volunteer: recruiting, screening, and matching community members, students, and corporate groups
- Leadership development and administrative supports for self-led grassroots groups and mutual aid groups

#### School-aged children

- After School Program: structured social and recreational activities, workshops, and academic support
- School Break and Summer Camps: full-day recreational, educational, and social programs offered during school holidays and summer months

#### Youth

- Newcomer Youth Program: skill development, mentorships, social-recreational activities, special events, youth-led community projects
- Youth After-School Tutoring
- Youth Leadership Program: skill development, mentorship, workshops, and youth-led community engagement activities that build leadership and connection during the summer





Peer Volunteers at the Meeting Place celebrating Volunteer Appreciation Month

## Adult Programs

- Adult Learning: individual tutoring, groups and small classes in reading, writing, math and computers as well as preparation for the Canadian Adult Education Credential (CAEC) high school equivalency test
- Community Mental Health Case Management in partnership with Toronto Community Crisis Services – Gerstein Crisis Centre
- Community space for Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings
- Financial Empowerment: individualized financial problem-solving, financial coaching, income tax support, access to benefits, financial literacy education, and advocacy
- Immigrant and Refugee Services: settlement, employment-related services, English learning groups, volunteer tutoring and mentoring, workshops, outreach, support to homeless/precariously housed newcomers and asylum seekers
- Intensive Case Management for Housing Stabilization
- The Meeting Place Drop-in: basic needs (showers, laundry, telephones, computers, community kitchen), information and referral, mental health and addictions case management, Indigenous cultural and group supports, skill development, and social recreation groups
- Outdoor Ecotherapy Groups supporting healing in uncertain times
- Women's Empowerment Program: outreach, case management, transitional planning and housing referrals, individual and group support for women and gender-diverse people who have experienced gender-based violence

## By the Numbers

**1,115**

Pre-school children (0-6)

**250**

School-aged children (6-12)

**1,566**

Youth (13-24)

**11,290**

Adults (25-64)

**5,528**

Seniors (65+)

**19,749**

Total served

## Older Adult Programs

- Adult Day Services: structured and supportive group, in-home or on-line programming for Older Adults living with dementia, cognitive impairments, and/or physical challenges who benefit from supervised, structured weekly programming, as well as caregivers supports.
- Assisted Living and Supportive Housing: support for high-risk seniors with activities of daily living through homemaking, personal care, and response to emergencies 24/7
- Client and Family Services: intake, assessment and case management, crisis intervention, caregiver support and counselling, home visits
- Enhanced Community Supports for individuals transitioning from hospital to community-based care settings
- Health Promotion: virtual programming, weekly workshops, health clinics, self-care groups, Health Action Theatre by Seniors (HATS), and arts studio
- Home at Last (HAL) in partnership with other agencies and hospitals: accompany seniors home upon hospital discharge and to follow up medical appointments
- Home Support: homemaking, personal care, respite care for caregivers
- Meals on Wheels: delivery of hot or frozen meals to homes 6 days a week
- Transportation: member of Toronto Ride service providing rides for appointments, shopping, social activities, and day programs
- West Active Living and Learning Centre (WALLC): leadership and community development, social and recreational activities, fitness, yoga, Zumba, intergenerational activities, and Portuguese Women 55+ social group
- Visiting Social and Safety Program: daily monitoring calls, friendly calls, home visits from volunteers, social media club and online programming for older adults looking for social connections that reduce isolation.



## Tribute to Viji

With fondness, we remember the passing of Viji Naguleswaran in November 2025. Viji worked in our Financial Empowerment Program for more than 18 years as a dedicated Community Financial Worker.

Throughout her time with the House, Viji supported thousands of participants, guiding them through the financial challenges associated with living on a low income.

Viji's kindness and compassion were deeply valued by colleagues and participants alike.



# DONORS AND FUNDERS



## Leadership Donors

We thank the following individuals for their generous support. Their contributions to our community are deeply appreciated.

### \$500 to \$999

Adrienne Lipsey  
Agnes van't Bosch  
Barbara Thompson  
Carlos & Odete Nascimento  
David Stonehouse and Family  
Jane Cobden  
Judy Gargaro  
Leslie Paine

Ms. Margaret Olson & Dr. Michel Hoffman  
Ms. Maria D.C.M Nunes  
Martin Sykes  
Patricia Quinn  
Kathleen Hughes  
Sayran Sulevani  
Scott Picket  
Mr. S. Hurley  
Stephanie Hodnett and Michael Sims  
Tywen Thomas & Jenna Rapoport  
Vijay Khurana  
Anonymous

### \$1,000 to \$1,999

Dr. & Mrs. A. Lentini  
Ruth Crammond and Brad James  
Cale, Joni & Rhys Brillinger  
and Diana McLachlan  
Chander Chaddah  
Christine Campbell  
Dorothy Charach  
Earl Miller  
Dr. Emily Paradis & Ms. Sarah Fowlie  
Jane & Gordon Morwood

Graeme and Julia Deans  
Katherine Childs & Paul Hess  
Lambrina Nikolaou and Brett Titus  
Margaret White  
Maria Soares  
M. Fair & W. Shaw  
Philip Marion  
Tom McCauley & Sandra  
Cruickshanks  
Tom & Susan Main  
Anonymous

### \$2,000 or more

Andrew Heal and Monica Kowal  
Claude Breeze  
Eileen McMahon & Mark  
Scinocca Family  
J. David Hulchanski

Joe Sheehan  
Prasad Rao  
Patricia Lorenz  
Rona Abramovitch  
The Torbey Family  
Stanley Meek  
Anonymous

*Volunteers from CIBC Mellon delivered meals to the community*





# DONORS AND FUNDERS

A heartfelt  
thank you to  
our supporters!

West Neighbourhood House  
extends its deepest gratitude to  
all our funders and donors for  
their support in 2025-2026.

Every contribution, no matter the  
size, has a real impact. We are  
grateful to each of over 400 donors  
this year for their generosity  
and unwavering commitment to  
strengthening our community.

## Government of Canada

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- Canada Revenue Agency
  - *Community Volunteer Income Tax Program*
- Employment & Social Development Canada
  - *Canada Summer Jobs*
  - *New Horizons for Seniors*
- Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada
  - *Settlement Directorate*
- Public Health Agency of Canada
  - *Health Programs & Services*

## City of Toronto

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

## Other

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- Prosper Canada
- United Way of Greater Toronto

## Province of Ontario

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- Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
  - *Ontario Health*
- Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
  - *Employment Ontario*
  - *Literacy and Basic Skills*
- Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility
- Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport

## Associations/ Community Groups/ Sources of Donations

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- AMAPCEO
- CanadaHelps
- FixtheSix Committee
- Hoplologia
- Kids Up Front
- Kingsway-Lambton United
- Church Women
- Kiwanis Club of Casa Loma
- LiUNA Local 183
- Needlework Guild of Canada
- Royal Ontario Museum
- The Boulevard Club
- West NH Older Adult Centre
- Members' Council
- WoodGreen Community Services

## Foundations

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Aston Family Foundation  
Benefaction  
Dr. Lou and Mae Lukenda Charitable Foundation  
Gift Funds Canada  
J.P. Bickell Foundation  
La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso  
Newall Family Foundation Trust

Ottawa Community Foundation  
The Henry White Kinnear Foundation  
The St. Christopher House Community Endowment  
The William and Nona Heaslip Foundation  
The Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund  
Toronto Foundation  
• *Adult Education & Literacy Fund*

## Corporations/Local Businesses

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2650435 ONTARIO INC.  
Autosonic Service Station Inc.  
BMO Community Giving  
Cameron Pictures  
CampbellCraft Consulting Inc.  
Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP  
CIBC Mellon  
CMC Real Estate Ltd.  
Duca  
Eileen McMahon Professional Corporation  
High Park Real Estate Group Ltd.  
Ipsen NA  
Kensington Tours (Canada) Inc.  
Matrix360  
Mawer Investment Management Ltd.  
Package Implementation Consultants Ltd.

Palais Royale Corporation  
Paris Paris  
RBC  
RBC New Grad Programs  
Reuven International Limited  
TD Bank  
Uncommon Toronto Ltd



## OUR LOCATIONS:

- Dundas/Ossington**
- 1 248 Ossington Avenue  
**Meeting Place & Administration**
  - 2 588 Queen Street West  
**Parkdale Community Programs**
  - 3 1497 Queen Street West

- Parkdale Assisted Living  
Seniors Active Living Centres**
- 4 20/25 West Lodge Avenue
  - 5 Springhurst Manor, 1447 King Street West  
**Families and Capacity Building**
  - 6 1033 King Street West  
**Milky Way Garden**
  - 7 Milky Way Lane, south of Queen Street West



## Annual Report Contributors

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We thank all community members and partners for their efforts towards more equity and positive social change. We appreciate every individual whose skills, wisdom, kindness, imagination, and time built better relationships and solved problems, making positive changes in our neighbourhoods.

### CONTACT US:

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### FOLLOW US:

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