

INTRODUCING

THE WOODGREEN FOUNDATION BOARD

We are honoured to introduce The WoodGreen Foundation's newly expanded Board of Directors. This community-minded group of corporate and philanthropic leaders has come together to bring awareness to the social services sector, inspire

philanthropic support for WoodGreen and address some of the most critical issues facing our city. We are thrilled to have their leadership and expertise as we work together to create a society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



LEO SALOM, CHAIR



ANNE BABCOCK, PRESIDENT AND CEO



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TERESA VASIPOPOULOS
Ex Officio

*As of September 1, 2018

DID YOU KNOW?



Each year WoodGreen delivers **critical social programming** to more than 37,000 individuals across 36 locations. WoodGreen has 750 staff members and relies on the invaluable help of over 1,000 volunteers.



WoodGreen helps approximately 4,000 people with serious homelessness and housing issues every year. WoodGreen, one of the city's largest non-municipal providers of **affordable housing**, was designated an Affordable Housing Champion by the City of Toronto in early 2018. Currently, more than 1,000 individuals live in WoodGreen's 12 affordable housing locations.



WoodGreen Community Services and Sinai Health System are bringing together caregivers, patients, clinicians, community leaders, hospital administrators and health services researchers to co-design a truly **caregiver friendly community**. Called the *The Cultivating Change Project*, this initiative is generously funded by The Change Foundation.



Every year, WoodGreen helps more than **8,000 newcomers** make a successful transition into Canadian life.

The WoodGreen Foundation Focus is published for friends and supporters of WoodGreen Community Services. Your generosity helps WoodGreen continue our efforts to realize our vision of a Toronto where everyone has an opportunity to thrive.

To donate, please visit: www.woodgreen.foundation

For More Information:

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STAY CONNECTED WITH WOODGREEN!

www.woodgreen.com/Foundation.aspx

REMINDER

The current membership year ends on March 31, 2019.

In order to qualify for the membership to WCS for the following year (April 1, 2019-March 31, 2020), you must meet these three qualifications:

- Support the vision, mission and values of WoodGreen;
- Be at least eighteen (18) years of age; and
- Have made a donation of at least \$25 in calendar year 2017 and \$25 in calendar year 2018 to The WoodGreen Foundation

Membership forms are available online at woodgreen.org/Foundation/BecomeaMember.aspx

For more information, please contact Stacey Baker at (416) 645.6000 ext. 4001.



Charitable Registration Number: 891038507 RR0001

THE
WOODGREEN
FOUNDATION



THE WOODGREEN FOUNDATION

FOCUS

FALL 2018



We are so grateful for your generous support, which continues to create lasting change for our clients.



CLIENT GRATITUDE

"Housing provides me with a sense of community and belonging. Without a doubt, having my own home, my first home, was — and is — the strength in my recovery."

Kelly — WoodGreen Housing Tenant

After a 28-year addiction, Kelly is going into her fifth year without using drugs. She credits finding housing at one of WoodGreen's affordable housing sites for getting her off the streets and off drugs.

"Homeward Bound completely changed my life and bettered me as an individual and mother. I will forever feel indebted to the program and those who helped me create a life for myself and my child."

Makayla — Homeward Bound Graduate

To date, 274 mothers and 428 children have found new tomorrows through WoodGreen's Homeward Bound which helps inadequately housed or homeless mother-led families earn college diplomas, start careers and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

"WoodGreen's programs have made me feel less alone and given me the support, coping strategies and tools that I need to be a better caregiver."

Desmond — Client, WoodGreen's Caregiver Support and Wellness Program

Desmond is the caregiver for his wife, Darlene, who has MS and whose memory is failing. He is grateful for WoodGreen's Seniors Day program, which provides recreational and therapeutic activities for Darlene — and for our caregiver support, which helps him deal with the emotional impact of caregiving.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

With Thanksgiving approaching, we are reminded that winter is just around the corner. For many, the cold months ahead will bring fear, stress and uncertainty. We can no longer ignore the fact that our city is facing growing disparity between wealth and poverty and there must be an urgent call to action to create real change, in order to ensure equitable opportunities and access for all.

WoodGreen is the organization to answer the call and address the critical social issues that are affecting the health and well-being of our city. WoodGreen is the "go to" organization than can provide the wrap around services that can lead to long-term, sustainable solutions for some of society's most pressing problems.

I invite you to stay tuned as we embark on an ambitious new initiative to promote a greater awareness of the need for investment into the social service sector and create more equitable tomorrows for all members of our society.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce our newly expanded Board of Directors to you — it is truly the first of its kind in the social service sector. These leaders have come together to shine a spotlight on the work of the social service sector and create real change, with a shared goal to make our city more livable for all.

Thank you for putting your trust in WoodGreen. The outstanding support and generosity of our donors and friends is truly inspirational.

I wish you and yours a very Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Leo Salom
Chair, The WoodGreen Foundation

THANK YOU MANPOWER

Back to school can be a nerve-racking time. For families in need, back to school time brings tremendous financial stress. Each year, Manpower donates awesome backpacks filled with school supplies to the children in WoodGreen's Homeward Bound After 4 program. Thank you Manpower for ensuring that the children in our After 4 program will start the new school year on an equal footing with their peers with the supplies they need to be successful in the classroom.



WOODGREEN RESPONDS TO FIRE AT 650 PARLIAMENT THROUGH H.O.M.E.

In late August, approximately 1,500 people were displaced by a six-alarm fire in a high-rise building in St. James Town. The earliest some families would be allowed to return to their homes could be Thanksgiving – for many others, it looks like January.

WoodGreen, in partnership with the City of Toronto, is responding to this crisis by making WoodGreen's H.O.M.E portal available to families who have been uprooted by the fire and are in need of household items and temporary accommodation during this traumatic time.

H.O.M.E (Housing Opportunities & Marketplace Exchange) is an online portal that matches people

in need with businesses and individuals who have housing, goods or services to offer. It was launched in January 2016 to help facilitate the tremendous outpouring of support from Torontonians when thousands of Syrian Refugees began arriving in the city and has since been expanded to serve anyone in need.

"WoodGreen is thrilled to now make our H.O.M.E Portal available to support the individuals and families displaced by the devastating fire at 650 Parliament," said Mwarigha, WoodGreen's Vice President of Housing & Homelessness Services.

We encourage anyone who is able to help with accommodation or household items to visit the H.O.M.E portal at www.mycanadianhome.org.



rites of passage alumni travel to london indaba

WoodGreen's Rites of Passage (ROP) program engages young people of Afrikan descent as they navigate the transition from adolescence into responsible adulthood, building an increased sense of identity, pride in their heritage, purpose and ultimately a stronger desire to give back to their communities.

This past August, thanks to the support of our generous donors, 13 WoodGreen alumni, accompanied by program staff, were able to be part of the third international Indaba Conference in London, UK.

In the Xhosa tradition of South Africa, the term, "Indaba", is used to describe a gathering, traditionally led by the Village Elders. It is designed to allow for discussion of issues that affect the group; everyone has a voice and they strive to find a common story that everyone is able to tell when they leave.



Current Rites of Passage participants raise money for alumni trip to Indaba 2018.

The two-day, interactive cultural experience in London allowed WoodGreen's ROP delegates to embrace and celebrate their Afrikan lineage and explore the stories shaping their identities and futures. It was a memorable and truly life-changing experience for the young alumni.

THE SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY AND VOLUNTEERISM DIDN'T TAKE VACATION OVER THE SUMMER

The hot days of summer saw numerous corporate and individual donors volunteering at WoodGreen. These volunteers brought smiles, special meals and some summer fun to many of our clients. We thank them for their generosity and for spending their time at WoodGreen.



Volunteers from **BMO** prune and plant flowers for the gardens at our Pape Renwick housing site on **BMO Volunteer Day**. Thank you for making the outdoor living spaces beautiful for our tenants!



A Caribbean Carnival comes to 444 Logan Avenue! **Jess O'Reilly, Brandon Ware and their teams** serve up a Caribbean inspired lunch while tenants enjoy games and a visit from two Caribbean dancers and a steel drum band.



XL Catlin employees plant gardens and provide a pizza lunch for clients at our Adult Day Program during their company-wide **Global Day of Giving**.



An enthusiastic group of volunteers from **CIBC** pose for a group photo before preparing a delicious barbeque for the tenants at 444 Logan Ave.

Pictured below are just a few of the many festive events – thank you to the donors and volunteers who made these possible! For information on how you can support WoodGreen, please call Kerri Nichols at 416-645-6000 ext. 4010.



Volunteers from **RGA Life Reinsurance Co.** run a family event for tenants at 43 Pape Avenue. In addition to a mouth-watering barbeque, there were games, face painting and fun prizes for all the children.



New employees from **RBC Capital Markets** come together to assemble 24 new bikes for children in WoodGreen's Homeward Bound After 4 Program. Thank you **RBC Capital Markets**!



A huge thank you to the **Toronto Airline Operators Committee** for raising \$15,000 in support of WoodGreen's Homeward Bound Program at the Committee's annual golf tournament.



Thank you to **Daryl Aitken** of Fabric Spark and **Berene Campbell** of Happy Sew Lucky. A portion of each sale of their "Badass Quilts" fabric kits was directed to WoodGreen's Homeward Bound program. We are grateful to both of them and to everyone who participated in this brilliant initiative.



MAZON Canada's support provides a fun summer BBQ at our 650 Queen St. East site. We look forward to hosting a Thanksgiving meal at our Drop-in Centre thanks to **MAZON Canada's** generosity.

A PATH TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE: FREE 2 BE (HOUSING FIRST FOR YOUTH LEAVING CARE)

Each Year in Toronto, approximately 700 Teens "Age Out" of the Care of our Child Welfare System

We know that the transition from adolescence to adulthood is a time of tremendous change with new challenges and responsibilities. For most young people, this is a gradual process that takes place with the guidance and support of family. For youth leaving the child welfare system, the entry into adulthood has been described as more akin to an "expulsion" than a transition.

Young people age out of care on their 18th birthday. Instead of celebrating, most must leave their foster family or group home — often without knowing where they will sleep that night. They are now, suddenly, "independent" regardless of their complex financial, emotional, educational and practical support needs.

Alarming research shows that, relative to their peers, they experience disheartening outcomes across a number of areas. They are less likely to complete high school, pursue post-secondary education, or secure stable employment — not through lack of desire on their part but, rather, as a result of the challenges of their situations.. Furthermore, they are more liable to experience poverty and homelessness, struggle with trauma and mental health issues including substance abuse, and are over-represented in the criminal justice system. They are in urgent need of support.

To address this distressing situation that exists in our society, WoodGreen has just launched an exciting, new flagship program, Free to Be (Housing First for Youth Leaving Care).

Co-created with young people with lived experience of the child welfare system, Free 2 Be is a youth-centred, trauma-informed, strengths-based program



"I have a strong commitment to young people and my community. I am supporting Free 2 Be because I believe that everyone should enter adulthood feeling empowered. I want to provide a path to a brighter future for youth leaving the child welfare system"

Vijay Kanwar | Board Member, The WoodGreen Foundation
Champion of Free 2 Be (Housing First for Youth Leaving Care)



The WoodGreen Free 2 Be Staff Team left to right: Adam Whisler, Nijatha Subramaniam, Rasheeda Guinn, Vanessa Wu, Erik Wexler (Program Manager, Free 2 Be), Jennifer Gourley. Not pictured: Sydney Blum.

to support young people ages 17-21 who have been involved with the child welfare system and are now transitioning to life after care.

Building on extensive research and consultations, and WoodGreen's existing work, Free 2 Be encompasses intensive case management with holistic supports, focussing on: housing security and tenancy skills; high school and post-secondary educational attainment; essential skills development, employment, and independence; mental health and wellness; and consistent relationships and social connection.

With philanthropic investment, Free 2 Be will create better outcomes for youth leaving care, ensuring they have the supportive relationships and stability they need to move forward into independence and healthy futures. Foundation Board Member, Vijay Kanwar, understands the importance of investment and has stepped up to champion this program. Vijay believes that in life, if you are given a choice between sitting out or dancing — you should choose to dance.