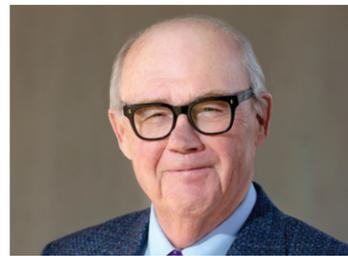


Welcoming Bill MacKinnon, The WoodGreen Foundation Chair

We are honoured to welcome Bill MacKinnon to his new role as Chair of The WoodGreen Foundation Board of Directors.

Bill, who joined our Board in 2018, was former Chief Executive Officer of KPMG Canada. Post retirement, he has served as a Director on numerous corporate boards including Telus, Osisko

Mining, Pioneer Petroleum and The Public Sector Investment



Board. Bill has also served on The United Way fundraising campaign cabinet, The Toronto Foundation Board, the Roy Thomson/Massey Hall Board and The Toronto Board of Trade. We are fortunate to have Bill's wealth of experience and strategic guidance to lead us in the next exciting phase of our work.

We also wish to express our deep appreciation to Leo Salom who, while he remains Chair of *The Difference Makers* campaign, has moved into the role of Past Chair of the Board of Directors. Leo's leadership and dedication have been instrumental in our success and growth.

We Can't Lie, We're Exhausted ... but Also Inspired.

It's been a brutal series of second and third waves for WoodGreen's staff and volunteers, says Anne Babcock, President & CEO of WoodGreen Community Services, but even harder for our clients. It has been especially hard on our isolated seniors and people with disabilities who can't leave home. Throughout the pandemic WoodGreen has continued to respond to the urgent needs of our

clients and in the past months we have focused on getting these same clients vaccinated. Since December, the East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP) – the Ontario Health Team for east Toronto, of which WoodGreen is an anchor partner – has visited more than 90 high-risk, long-term care homes, retirement homes, shelters and seniors' congregate buildings across east Toronto to vaccinate

vulnerable seniors. The ETHP has also administered vaccines at pop-up clinics at primary care



offices and 'hot-spot' neighbourhoods, helping to keep our essential workers – and the larger community – safe. Your financial and emotional support has lifted our spirits, and amplified the passion and commitment of WoodGreen's staff and volunteers, as they deliver essential services to our community's most vulnerable.

TJX – A Partner Extraordinaire!

TJX, parent company of Winners, HomeSense and Marshalls, continues to WOW us! Their support annually has been outstanding right from the start when they partnered with our Homeward Bound program to

design a Retail Educational Stream as a career for our moms. However, it is when things are tough that you really know who you can count on, and despite their own issues with closures due to the pandemic, TJX not only stood by their commitment, they upped their game! Through their *Find Your Stride* campaign, TJX continued - investing financially, advising

on our Industry Council, and sharing incredible training programs with the women in our program.

When COVID-19 hit Toronto, TJX offered PPE and cleaning supplies, and other supports to our front-line staff and clients. Throughout the past year, they donated more than 140,000 reusable masks for WoodGreen to distribute to our clients and

partners across the city, including hospitals, schools, and housing locations. We are so grateful for this generous contribution to WoodGreen. THX TJX!



Remembering Cathy Fooks.

Cathy Fooks, who died suddenly in December 2020, made an incredible impact on our health care system, bringing unprecedented attention to the role of the informal caregiver. Cathy, who had been appointed Ontario's Patient Ombudsman in July 2020, was instrumental in the Change

Foundation's Cultivating Change project in which WoodGreen and Bridgepoint Active Healthcare/Sinai Health System partnered with caregivers, patients, and clinicians, to co-design a truly caregiver-friendly community. Ashnoor Rahim, WoodGreen's VP Community Care said, "Cathy's

lasting legacy was her ability to improve the lives of patients and caregivers by challenging the way care is delivered and pushing providers to collaborate. She was fearless as we worked to develop a robust community caregiver program."



WoodGreen's Caregiver Support and Wellness program offers caregivers vital emotional support, education, skills-building and coping strategies. Support through funds donated in Cathy's memory is helping to continue her work with our caregiver program.



THE DIFFERENCE REPORT

SUMMER 2021



THANKS TO OUR DONORS AND DIFFERENCE MAKERS, GREAT THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT WOODGREEN.

1117 Gerrard St., East, Toronto

Responding to the Need for More Affordable Senior Housing

The team at WoodGreen is excited to announce the opening of our newest affordable housing building for seniors - at 1117 Gerrard Street East, in Leslieville. Constructed on the former Riverdale United Church site, this modern, five-storey, 36-unit building has been designed with an aesthetically appealing neighbourhood fit, and meets Ontario's highest accessibility standards and the Toronto Green Standard. It is located beside another WoodGreen seniors building, allowing for shared services within an affordable housing complex dedicated to healthy senior living.

All tenants have access to the full basket of WoodGreen's 75 programs and services. These wrap-around services include Meals on Wheels, adult day programs, congregate dining, social work, mental health supports, financial counselling and tax preparation, and transportation - key supports that enable frail, isolated seniors to remain living with safety and dignity in the community.

WoodGreen is one of Toronto's largest non-municipal providers of affordable housing, with 17 locations, home to more than 1,300 residents. We welcome this newest addition to the WoodGreen Housing family.

Your Dollars at Work!



With the support of caring and generous individuals and organizations, *The Difference Makers* campaign will help to create a Toronto where everyone has an opportunity to thrive. Thanks to our many generous donors who have stepped forward to be

Difference Makers, we are close to reaching our \$20 million goal in this ambitious, poverty reduction campaign.

As you will read in this newsletter, your donations are already hard at work, creating more affordable housing,

supporting struggling single mothers and their children, helping vulnerable seniors stay safe and healthy in their homes, and allowing us to respond to the hardships and urgent local needs caused by COVID-19.

The Difference Makers Campaign Update



815 Danforth Ave., Suite 402, Toronto, ON. M4J 1L2
416-405-5173 foundation@woodgreen.org www.woodgreen.org

Charitable registration number is 891038507 RR0001

The Sprott Foundation's \$1M Gift, Stopping Evictions Before They Happen

Through a \$1M gift to The WoodGreen Foundation, The Sprott Foundation will help WoodGreen pilot a homelessness-prevention program that will keep vulnerable individuals and families housed. The program will ensure clients are able to access benefits, rent subsidies and financial counselling to ensure housing stability.

In our work on the frontlines, WoodGreen witnesses the struggles marginalized individuals and families face in Toronto's increasingly difficult housing market. The pandemic has exacerbated this situation and clearly illustrated that when individuals are living on low incomes, experience a bump in the road or an illness or addiction, they can quickly spiral into homelessness.

Benefits and housing subsidies are tied to notices of assessment. It is crucial for vulnerable people to file their taxes and get their assessments annually. If they don't, they

could be at risk of losing their benefits and housing subsidies, which could make their rents unaffordable, and, in turn, lead to possible evictions.

Through The Sprott Foundation-funded pilot program – this innovative partnership between our Financial Empowerment team and our Housing and Homelessness unit – WoodGreen will help clients to file their taxes, access benefits, prevent evictions and ensure they do not fall into homelessness.

The Sprott Foundation's generous gift will also enable WoodGreen to provide ongoing financial counselling and create a small Emergency Relief Fund and Rent Bank to stop-gap evictions, or provide one-time supports to help clients transition into housing, as well as provide small, interest-free micro-loans to support individuals at risk of losing their housing.

"The Sprott Foundation has a long history



of supporting innovative approaches that bring concrete solutions to preventing poverty," said Larisa Sprott, Director of The Sprott Foundation. "My family and the foundation board support WoodGreen's *The Difference Makers* campaign's focus on poverty reduction and keeping people safely housed in the community. We encourage others to invest in WoodGreen solutions – especially now, as COVID has accelerated the number of people losing their housing and the risk of being evicted is very real."

We thank The Sprott Foundation for their forward-thinking investment in poverty and homelessness prevention.

Introducing the Scotiabank Family Finance Clinic: Helping Vulnerable Families Achieve Financial Stability.

We are thrilled to announce Scotiabank's generous investment of \$300,000 through *The Difference Makers* campaign, to establish the Scotiabank Family Finance Clinic at WoodGreen. The new Scotiabank Family Finance Clinic – an extension of our successful Financial Empowerment Services – provides a wide range of individualized programming to help families with low incomes better navigate precarious financial situations.

Even before COVID-19 hit, thousands of Toronto families were struggling to meet basic needs – living on the financial edge – with no savings. The pandemic has brought many families to the brink. The Scotiabank Family Finance Clinic is helping vulnerable families avoid catastrophe. It is alleviating often

overwhelming financial stress, by guiding clients to take positive steps in education, employment and financial decision making.

Scotiabank's visionary gift is part of their *ScotiaRISE* initiative, a 10-year \$500-million community investment commitment to promote economic resilience among disadvantaged groups, and increase their likelihood of financial success.

"We are so pleased to help establish the Scotiabank Family Finance Clinic which provides the necessary tools and skills to build healthy financial habits," says Sandra Odendahl, Scotiabank's Vice President of Social Impact & Sustainability. "We understand the importance of financial planning as a means for individuals and families to achieve financial self-reliance and to meet the goals that are important to them."

The Scotiabank Family Finance Clinic offers a range of personalized services and assistance in understanding and accessing benefits and credits through programs such as the Canada Learning Bond and the Disability Tax Credit. Over the course of an intensive, one-on-one, three-month program, our financial

ScotiaRISE

counsellors – registered social workers with a specialty in financial counselling – work with the families to increase skills in budgeting, reducing debt, increasing savings, and improving credit ratings. Together with their counsellor, each family develops a financial plan, based on their individual circumstances.

The results are remarkable. A graduate of the first cohort told us, "This has made a difference in so many ways. I now have savings and a budget. In fact, now I have a plan and a schedule which I know I must always follow. It's written down and it's on the fridge door so whenever I open my fridge, I am reminded of what I need to do to get where I want to go in the future. It has really helped me a lot."

"We are grateful for Scotiabank's investment in the families of our diverse community and their commitment to advancing economic inclusion for all", said Anne Babcock, President and CEO of WoodGreen. "The Scotiabank Family Finance Clinic will strengthen the resilience of some of Toronto's most vulnerable families – and empower them to gain financial stability and transition into better futures."

"We are so grateful for Scotiabank's investment in the families of our diverse community and their commitment to advancing economic inclusion for all"

\$1 Million Gift from the Allan Slaight Seniors Fund will Promote Financial Well-being of Vulnerable Seniors - Keeping Them Stable at Home in Their Community.

Keeping seniors safe at home in their community has always been a priority for WoodGreen. Thanks to a transformational gift through the United Way Greater Toronto's Allan Slaight Seniors Fund, WoodGreen will be able to safeguard the well-being of some of our city's most vulnerable seniors.

WoodGreen plays a leadership role for seniors across Toronto through our Toronto Seniors Help Line (TSH) providing a 'one call' access point for seniors requiring

food, physical and mental health supports, financial assistance, service navigation, crisis intervention, and counselling. The isolation caused by the pandemic has heightened anxiety for this frail population and there has been an increased need to respond to fears and concerns. Prior to COVID, our TSH received more than 20,000 calls annually. The number this year has risen exponentially with more than 10,000 calls in the first months alone. Many of these calls

are from seniors concerned about their financial stability.

The Allan Slaight Seniors Fund gift to *The Difference Makers* Campaign will enable WoodGreen to pilot Financial Foundations for Vulnerable Seniors - an innovative approach to improving the financial well-being of marginalized seniors. This innovative initiative leverages an integrated multi-discipline approach, utilizing the core strengths of WoodGreen's TSH, PSW and



Financial Empowerment teams to ensure that at-risk, low-income seniors are both physically and financially stable enough to remain at home in their community.

Thank you to the United Way Greater Toronto Allan Slaight Seniors Fund for making it possible for WoodGreen to provide our seniors with the integrated financial supports they need to protect their economic stability and well-being.

Meals on Wheels (MOW) Rolls on Through Pandemic and Needs Volunteers.

Before the pandemic, WoodGreen prepared and delivered 30,000 meals a year to frail seniors and adults living with disabilities, who counted on the hot and frozen meals as their primary source of nutrition. However, during COVID the need for Meals on Wheels exploded – suddenly food security became a crisis and we had new clients who had normally depended on friends and family. Due to the lockdown, their family or caregivers couldn't risk visiting and clients were unable to leave their homes. Our Meals on Wheels team helped seniors stay



safe at home and out of hospitals.

A recent story on CBC TV followed a volunteer MOW driver during his daily route. He talked about the enjoyment he gets from helping people and how happy 'his' clients always are to see him. His visits also serve as safety checks for vulnerable individuals

who live alone and are sometimes the only social interaction the clients have that day (or week!) with the outside world. The volunteer's MOW route only takes about three hours out of his day but makes a huge difference in the clients' lives.

At the same time as the demand for MOW escalated, our volunteer numbers dropped significantly as many of our volunteers are seniors who, themselves, have been required to isolate at home for safety during the pandemic. At one point, client need for this service surged by 200%

while the number of volunteers dropped by more than half. For more information on volunteering for our MOW program – so you too can make a difference – please visit woodgreen.org/volunteer or contact: volunteer@woodgreen.org.



48 Mile Stretch of Thank-Yous for Dave Piazza's Fantastic '4 x 4 x 48' Fundraiser.

During the weekend of March 5, 2021, when many of us were just taking it easy during the latest lockdown, David Piazza laced up his running shoes and ran four miles every four hours - day and night - completing a remarkable 48 miles in 48 hours to raise funds for WoodGreen's Homeward Bound program.

Homeward Bound is a four-year housing, education and employment program that helps

precariously housed or homeless single mothers earn college diplomas, start careers, and achieve economic self-sufficiency. Dave raised nearly \$8,000 through his '4 x 4 x 48 Challenge' fundraiser to help Homeward Bound families build new lives.

"I chose WoodGreen," said Dave, "because of their commitment to our community's critical social needs, in particular, their Homeward Bound program."

Growing up in a single-parent household, Dave "knew the struggles these mothers face ... I love the concept ... how they provide these mothers with the tools to create a better life."

The grueling 4 x 4 x 48 Challenge - well into ultra-marathon territory - was established by renowned high-performance athlete, David Goggins. It tests runners both physically and mentally as they push themselves

to the limit while raising money for charity. Dave Piazza's perseverance parallels the strength and resilience of the Homeward Bound mothers he so generously supported. Thank you, Dave!

