# YWCA TORONTO 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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### MESSAGE FROM **CEO & BOARD PRESIDENT**



At YWCA Toronto a resurgent feminist movement inspires us. From the Women's March to #MeToo. women and allies are taking action for gender equity, social justice and better futures. This is what our YWCA movement has always been about - courage in the face of adversity.

With more than 32 programs across Toronto, YWCA Toronto helps women escape violence, move out of poverty and access safe, affordable housing. Our range of employment programs guide women to decent employment opportunities. Through our advocacy, we ensure women's diverse voices are heard as Canada embarks on necessary strategies on affordable housing and gender-based violence.

milestones in the history of our

\*Maureen Adams retired from this position July 2017. \*\* Marilda Tselepis retired from this position June 2017.

In 2017, we celebrated three important Association: the 60th anniversary of 1st Stop Woodlawn Housing, the 10th anniversary of Bergamot Apartments, and the 5th anniversary of Elm Centre. Bold risk-taking advanced these critical women's housing programs in times of financial and political uncertainty. YWCA Toronto is a reflection of the strength of our women's community

and our success is a reflection of the power of our movement.

In this Annual Report, we are proud to share the impact of your support. The resilience of the women we serve. the passion of our staff, the dedication of volunteers and the generosity of our donors anchor our tenacity and unwavering commitment to transforming the lives of women and girls.

BESSY TRIANTAFYLLOS President, Board of Directors (left)

Heather A. Arrager

HEATHER M. McGREGOR Chief Executive Officer (right)



## JOANNE DALLAIRE Elm Centre, Winona's Place CREATING COMMUNITY

A place to belong - that is what Winona's Place symbolizes to Elder Joanne Dallaire, Shadow Hawk Woman of the Wolf Clan. who is Cree Omushkego with ancestry from Attawapiskat First Nation, Joanne facilitates monthly circles and runs healing groups for tenants at Winona's Place, an affordable and culturally appropriate home for Indigenous women and their families in downtown Toronto.

"With every circle, the commitment of women who come into the room, the safety that goes into that circle and the friendships that develop are constant."

For Joanne, safe housing and support are intertwined. She

shares her own experiences of abuse and violence and helps to empower women on their healing journey. Joanne creates a safe place for women to share their stories, honour their language and celebrate drumming traditions. This is how healing begins.

"I've overcome a lot of adversity and from that came strength and the ability to say to whoever is in front of me - you can get through

Joanne acknowledges the power of helping women without iudaement.

"We need to be empowered to take care of ourselves and that is what happens at Winona's Place."

## **CREATING INDIGENOUS** WOMEN'S HOUSING

Five years ago, YWCA Toronto opened the doors to Winona's Place, our affordable housing initiative for Indigenous women and their families. With 50 units of permanent housing, Winona's Place is centrally located in downtown Toronto. Staff offer traditional healing programs developed in collaboration with Indigenous partners. Women build community in group activities and enjoy the rooftop garden where herbal medicines grow in the summer. Generous donors raised over \$500,000 to ensure that the building is secure for women and children impacted by violence.

To quote journalist Connie Walker, a 2017 Woman of Distinction, "It is important to truly understand the realities that Indigenous women and girls face in this country, but we also need to showcase the incredible strength and resilience in our communities." At YWCA Toronto, we take these words to heart. We stand alongside Indigenous women for truth and reconciliation, starting with addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two Spirit people. In the face of injustice, we take action.

## >\$12.3 million

invested in permanent housing programs

## >972 women

& children live in safe affordable housing

> 248 women

received specialized mental health & addiction supports

> 50 units of affordable housing designated for Indigenous women



## CHYANNE Teen Mothers' Program BUILDING CONFIDENCE

Chyanne is kind and nurturing: determination and boldness shine in her eyes. Her son, wide-eyed two-year-old Jessiah loves helping in the kitchen, Elmo, reading books and getting his photo taken.

Chyanne came to the Teen Mothers' Program when she was five months pregnant. She was shy and uncertain about what motherhood entailed. The program offers free support for mothers 14 to 22 years of age and a place to build positive parenting skills, access resources, and learn from specialists.

Although hesitant at first, Chyanne began participating in empowerment workshops, received support from staff and was encouraged by the strength and stories of the other mothers around her.

"There was so much I didn't know. I have learned a lot about children, but a lot about myself too."

Now, she beams with pride when she talks about setting goals for herself, like returning to high school, and being the best role model and mom she can be.

"I see myself very differently now. I am able to speak up not only for myself, but for my son."

## EMPOWERING TEEN MOTHERS

YWCA Toronto helps young mothers gain positive parenting and life skills in our Teen Mothers' program. Launched in 1976, the Teen Mothers' program was the first of its kind in Scarborough. We continue to offer young mothers parenting information and holistic support on life skills, financial literacy, healthy relationships, food security, housing assistance and educational pathways. Young women benefit from support on their parenting journeys, and from the bonds they form amongst one another.

Young women also tell us about the challenges they face in securing safe, affordable housing - not only for themselves, but also for their children. Across Toronto, rent costs are skyrocketing. More than 180,000 people fill waiting lists for homes that they will never see. YWCA Toronto works alongside young women to provide support and we advocate at all levels of government on the issue of women's access to safe, affordable housing. Housing is a human right.

## > \$2.5 million

invested in girls & family programs

> 779 girls built friendships & became leaders at YWCA's Camp Tapawingo

## > 363 girls

became better critical thinkers, challenging sexualized & violent media images of girls at the Girls' Centre

## > 525 teen moms

& families increased social networks, & developed the confidence & skills to raise healthy children



## SONIA JUMP Settlement Services FINDING HOME

When Sonia thinks back on her arrival in Canada from the Philippines she remembers minus 18°C weather, and a time marked with apprehension and fear. Daily activities such as grocery shopping created crises of confidence because colloquial English was hard to follow.

"I wanted to explore the possibility of settling, but it was very challenging."

Sonia was working as a livein caregiver, but was looking forward to doing more. Her self-esteem was plummeting and the challenge of adjusting to Canadian life was weighing heavily on her heart. That is when her friend introduced her to JUMP, a settlement support program for newcomer women and girls. It helps women and girls explore career options, build skills, job search and integrate into Canadian society. For Sonia, this is when things began to change.

She participated in many training programs including office administration, cashiering and entrepreneurship and received the support she needed. Sonia's smile now brightens the room and she has a renewed sense of selfconfidence.

"I was not like this before. There is a lot of support here. It is like a second home."

## UNLOCKING NEWCOMER WOMEN'S POTENTIAL

In 2017, YWCA Toronto's two Join, Unify, Motivate and Participate (JUMP) programs helped 1,284 newcomer women and girls with comprehensive settlement support. With locations in Scarborough and Etobicoke, JUMP offers employment training, job search support, and professional workshops in individualized and group sessions. Women tell us that they come to JUMP because it is a womencentered learning environment. It is a safe space where they can build connections, receive support and leave feeling more confident and prepared to take on the Canadian labour market.

When women in our programs share stories, we hear about hope - the hope to improve their lives, and to provide better opportunities for their children. Yet in Canada, newcomer women face systemic barriers to reaching these ends, overrepresentation in precarious jobs and a larger pay gap. YWCA Toronto speaks out strongly in support of decent work, fair pay and updated labour standards. We honour newcomer women's resilience, and recognize the gifts and skills they bring to Canada.

## > \$7 million

invested in employment & skills training

## > 6,630 women

in employment & training programs gained stronger economic futures

## > 1,407 newcomers

developed job-readiness skills to prepare them for the Canadian labour market

> 1,095 women built business and career skills in YWCA Toronto's social purpose enterprise



## PROGRAM PARTICIPANT December 6 Fund A NEW BEGINNING

Three years ago one participant discovered firsthand how the December 6 Fund has the potential to transform a life.

This fund provides interest-free loans to women fleeing abuse and enables them to establish themselves in safety.

By accessing the fund, at what this participant describes as the lowest and hardest point in her life, she was able to alleviate some of the overwhelming pressures of her circumstances and focus on the future. Receiving support when she needed it the most was critical. "If I didn't get that initial support I don't think I would be here," she says.

A proud mother of three, a Child and Youth Worker, makeup artist and model, this participant is still finding time to give back. She has started a not-for-profit called New Genesis in the hopes of helping other women counteract hardship and find their new beginning the way she did.

"I was able to better myself in order to be there for my kids... there comes a point where we all need help or support."

## INVESTING IN WOMEN'S FUTURES

In 2017, YWCA Toronto's December 6 Fund provided interest-free loans to 323 women and children fleeing violence. With this fund, we help women establish themselves in safety, heal from trauma, and move on from violence. Our loans range from \$500 to \$1,000 and can be used towards rent, moving costs, furniture or utility deposits. When women are able to get back on their feet, they repay the loans and free up the funds for other women in need.

YWCA Toronto's commitment to social justice is strongest in our work to eliminate gender-based violence. In 2017, it gave us hope to see feminists come together for gender equity, racial justice and action – from the millions who took part in the Women's March worldwide, to the online #MeToo campaign where more than 4.7 million people used the hashtag to speak out about sexual violence. We believe survivors and stand alongside them to advance systemic change.

## > \$3.7 million

invested in violence against women shelters & programs

427 women & children found safety & support at a YWCA Toronto shelter

### > 444 women

& children overcame trauma in healing & expressive arts programs

## > 323 women

& children received interest-free, micro-loans that helped them escape violence



## SYSTEM CHANGE ADVOCACY

In 2017, the YWCA movement proved to be a force of influence on Parliament Hill, YWCA leaders successfully advocated for a gender lens on the National Housing Strategy. Together, we called for a minimum of 25% of funds to be dedicated to projects and services for women, girls and their families. We spoke out and government heard our call to action.

The inclusion of our 'ask' in the National Housing Strategy is a hopeful step forward. It signals the possibility of new investment in women's emergency shelters, permanent housing, and supportive housing. It may lead to additional fundina for staff

support to address mental health and addiction challenges that women may experience.

Looking ahead, we will continue advocating until the women's housing crisis is averted, Indigenous women are prioritized, and funds flow for critical staff supports. We are just getting started and will need your help to keep the pressure on. Advocacy works!

## **ADVOCACY WORKS!**

YWCA Toronto works tenaciously to break down barriers that hold women back from achieving equity. Our advocacy is driven by the experiences of women. In 2017, we focused on:

- Joining the movement for a \$15 minimum wage in Ontario, making clear that women are over-represented in precarious jobs.
- Supporting Indigenous women leaders in calling for the elimination of sex discrimination in the all too controversial Indian Act.
- Leading the call for dedicated funding for womencentred employment programs to promote economic empowerment.
- Advancing gender-based violence prevention strategies at the provincial and federal levels.
- **Demanding action** on Toronto's poverty reduction strategy and gender equity in the City Budget alongside other civic leaders.
- Working with child care advocates for new subsidies, and funding to achieve professional pay for early childhood educators and childcare workers.
- Standing in solidarity with Muslim women in fighting Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism.



## >1 in 2

Canadian women have experienced sexual harassment at work

## > 60.000 women

and allies marched for gender equity in Toronto's Women's March

## > 42%

of recent immigrant women will benefit from a \$15 minimum wage in Ontario

> 94 calls to action to address inequities facing Indigenous Peoples



## **THE POWER OF** COLLECTIVE ACTION

In 2017 we established the Circle of Distinction to bring together 264 Women of Distinction Award recipients from the last 37 years, who together, have enormous power to change the world for women and girls.

The Circle is also a call to collective action. Its exceptional members motivate, inspire and lead to amplify women's voices and mobilize for the advancement of women and girls in Toronto and around the world.

The Distinction Fund was launched in concert with the Circle to bolster YWCA Toronto's capacity to help women and girls move out of poverty and away

from violence, build sustainable futures, and provide girls and young women access to the extraordinary opportunities that make becoming a Woman of Distinction possible.

Thanks to an amazing lead gift from the Irma Brydson Foundation, and the generosity of Circle members, an impressive \$400,000 has been raised so far

The Circle is changing the face of philanthropy in Toronto to become a unified, powerful force committed to fundamental change for women and girls.

## MULTIPLYING IMPACT

Toronto's only and Canada's first full-time Girls' Centre is the inaugural three-year focus of the Distinction Fund.

This vital program is drastically under-funded, yet immensely impactful. The transformative Distinction Fund is crucial to sustaining and strengthening the Girls' Centre.

Thanks to the Distinction Fund, we can provide opportunities to an increased number of girls to enhance their confidence, skills, security and long-term stability propelling girls and women into leadership roles. This contribution to collective action sets an inspiring example that will galvanize long-term investments in a future that is equitable and filled with opportunities for women and airls.

"In our world we are equal. The cool staff at YWCA Toronto give us the space to talk about what matters to girls. We can have fun, be who we are, and strive to be who we want to be without judgement. We learn how we can change the world for the better."

> Maykah and Mahayah - Members of the Girls' Council

> \$2.8 million donated in 2017

> \$670,626 raised at YWCA Toronto Women of Distinction Awards

> \$355,420 in Gift-in-Kind donations

> 682 volunteers contributed 20,160 hours to help transform lives in programs across the Association

#### YWCA TORONTO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(Back Row) Naomi Sayers, Christine Tekker, Christina Dorey-Gray, Brenda Andress, Julie Neff, Bessy Triantafyllos, Nora Nestor

(Front Row) Sabrina Wu, Carlene McCubbin, Barb Keenan, Nikita Patel

Absent Suhuyini Abudulai, Doris Chan, Pierrette Dosanjh, Kellie Hodges, Sarabeth Holden, Silvia Jacinto, Alice Wright

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## YWCA TORONTO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

YWCA Toronto's Board of Directors is committed to creating change for women and girls across Toronto. The Board ensures that our work is aligned with our vision and mission, stewards our financial and donor resources, and provides leadership and oversight of our strategic plan and initiatives.

### **OUR VISION**

YWCA Toronto will be a leader in transforming the lives of marginalized and disadvantaged women and girls in Toronto.

### **OUR MISSION**

YWCA Toronto accomplishes this vision by being a strong advocate for women and girls, providing transformative services in the areas of employment support and training, housing options and shelters, leadership development programs for girls and key supports for women and children who have experienced violence.

# OUR STRATEGIC **PRIORITIES**

 STRENGTHEN awareness of YWCA Toronto, leveraging our credibility and reputation.

> ENSURE financial and organizational sustainability.

 INTEGRATE continuous quality improvement in operations and programs.

> DELIVER high-impact, life-changing programs for women and girls.

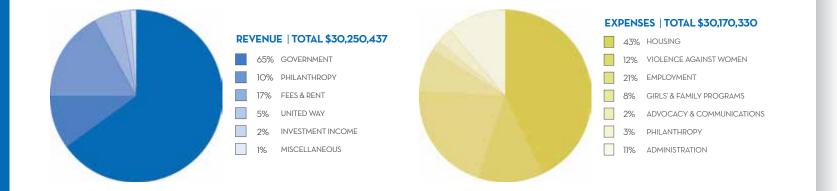
> ALIGN advocacy with mission priorities, supported by program expertise.

PROMOTE strong governance and employer best practices.

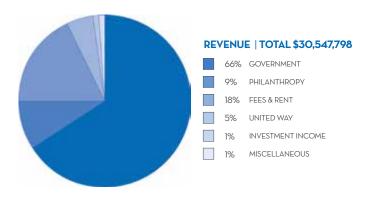
## **2016** REVENUE & EXPENSES

Year ended December 31

## **2017** REVENUE & EXPENSES



2016 EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR: **\$80,107** 



### 2017 EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR: **\$25,099**

Auditors: Ernst & Young LLP | A full set of Financial Statements is available upon request. Charitable Business #10822 9865 RROOO1 Information filed under the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996 is available on the Ministry of Finance website: http://www.fin.gov.on.ca.

Year ended December 31





\$100,000+

Irma J. Brydson Foundation RBC Foundation

.....

#### \$50,000+

Ontario Trillium Foundation The Joan Wright Family

#### \$25,000+

S.M. Clarkson Linda Chu & John Donald Echo Foundation The Harry E. Foster Charitable Foundation The Honourable Margaret McCain Margaret Newall, in memory of Ted Newall Royal LePage Real Estate Services Ltd., Johnston & Daniel Division Royal LePage Shelter Foundation Shoppers Drug Mart Life Foundation

#### \$10,000+

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### \$1,000+

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	Nancy Foster	
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io	Marion Holmes	
r	Maruja Jackman	
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	Gale Kelly	•
	Sheryl L. Kerr	

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CBC Toronto

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**ESTATES** We honour the memory of individuals whose legacy

was realized in 2017.

Rita Kwei-Kina Lee Cornelius Anderson Silber

••••••

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HoHoTO

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### CREATIVE DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Kim Quashie

PHOTOGRAPHY LightMonkey Photography

## VENUE RENTALS AT YWCA TORONTO GREAT VALUE GREAT CAUSE



venuerentals@ywcatoronto.org 416.961.8101 x370







### Be Inspired!

For more information, contact Phoebe Wong, Manager of Events, Sponsorships and Volunteers at **pwong@ywcatoronto.org** or 416.961.8101 x361

www.womenofdistinction.ca

### YWCA INTERNATIONAL BOUTIQUE



Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm 81 St. Clair Avenue East (inside the Sobey's mall) 416.924.4762



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