

FALL 2019

turning points

IMPACT
REPORT

NURTURING
COMMUNITY
FROM THE
INSIDE OUT

LITTLE GIVE
HAS BIG
IMPACT

ART,
IDENTITY
AND
HEALING



YWCA
TORONTO

A TURNING POINT
FOR WOMEN



United Way
Greater Toronto

A THANK YOU NOTE

FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

To show our gratitude, and show you the life-changing impact of your support, I am delighted to share with you a revitalized Turning Points newsletter, in a fresh new format, focused entirely on how your support helps enrich our programs and the lives of the women and girls we serve.

All of us at YWCA Toronto would like to offer our deepest gratitude for your generosity and support. Our multiple programs serving women and girls in the Greater Toronto Area would not be possible without a community that believes in and cares about our mission.

In this issue, focused on the timely topic of housing, you

will find: a profile of Grace, Food Services Coordinator at one of our shelters; a conversation with Scott Evans, General Manager of Edelman Toronto about the impact of volunteering; news about the healing, Indigenous-led creative programs happening in our Elm Centre housing community, and more. I truly hope you enjoy it.

As we head towards the federal election, I know you will continue to follow through on your commitment to social change and a more equitable world. Please follow us on social media for more on affordable housing, and other key election issues affecting women and girls.



Heather M. McGregor,
Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Toronto

TURNING POINTS NEWSLETTER

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NURTURING COMMUNITY FROM THE INSIDE OUT

PHOTO | GRACE SMALL AT YWCA TORONTO'S
1ST STOP WOODLAWN SHELTER

My name is Grace Small and I'm the Food Services Coordinator at YWCA Toronto's 1st Stop Woodlawn, a shelter and permanent housing residence, serving over 130 women every day.

I'm passionate about introducing nutritious food to our residents and tenants. When you're struggling with mental health and addiction, or just trying to find somewhere to stay for the night, making positive food choices can be really difficult.

It's amazing to see the impact that regular, nourishing meals can have on women's mental and physical health.

We offer meal options that cater to different dietary restrictions and cultural backgrounds.

Sometimes I invite women to bring in recipes. It's important for everyone to have choices and feel respected.

I've been part of YWCA Toronto since 2003. During that time I've met some amazing women. I'm inspired by their courage and determination in the face of everything life has thrown at them.

Every day, I see how mealtimes bring together women from different backgrounds to share and support each other. At Woodlawn, food really does build community.

Grace and her dedicated team serve almost 2,500 meals every week (or 130,000 meals per year!). Your generosity enables us to continue providing women with the fresh, healthy food they need and deserve. Thank you!

LITTLE GIVE HAS BIG IMPACT



For one day each year, global communications firm Edelman encourages its employees to switch off their screens, roll up their sleeves, and take on the 'Little Give' for local non-profit organizations.

We spoke to Scott Evans, General Manager of Edelman Toronto, about this year's event.

Hi Scott, can you tell us about the Little Give?

For Edelman, as a family firm, contributing to our local and global communities is incredibly important. The Little Give is a dedicated day where all our employees rally together to identify and respond to the needs of a chosen charitable organization.

Why did Edelman choose YWCA Toronto for this year's Little Give?

This year, for the first time, Edelman's five regional offices across Canada all partnered with a single organization to have a united impact.

We chose YWCA because it is nationally aligned in its commitment to improving the lives of women and girls, but the impact of each member organization happens at a very local level. This was our third Little Give with YWCA Toronto, so we were confident it would be a great partnership.

What has this experience meant to you?

Volunteering across YWCA Toronto's diverse programs has been such an enriching experience for our employees.

This year, my team built garden beds at one of YWCA Toronto's housing sites, planted them with vegetables and herbs, and created recipes to inspire families to cook with the fresh ingredients. It was exciting to see such an immediate result, and gratifying to recognize the lasting impact of our work on the lives of so many marginalized women and girls.



PHOTO | AN EDELMAN VOLUNTEER
AT A YWCA TORONTO LOCATION



THANK YOU **EDELMAN TORONTO**
FOR GENEROUSLY VOLUNTEERING WITH YWCA
TORONTO PROGRAM LOCATIONS ALL OVER THE
CITY THIS SUMMER TO HELP SPREAD THE SUNSHINE!

1,327
HOURS



104
VOLUNTEERS

250+
MEALS SERVED



2,000+
PLANTS PLANTED

\$8,000
WORTH OF GIFT-IN-KIND ITEMS



\$7,000
DONATED

600+
WOMEN & CHILDREN IMPACTED



ENGAGE YOUR WORKPLACE

Empower your own colleagues to be leaders of change by volunteering with YWCA Toronto or fundraising for our transformational programs. For more information contact Katie Edwards at kedwards@ywcatoronto.org.



ART, IDENTITY AND HEALING

YWCA Toronto Elm Centre's permanent housing community is home to more than 50 Indigenous women and women-led families. Most live at Winona's Place, a 50-unit building dedicated to Indigenous women and children, within the Elm Centre.

Culturally sensitive community programming, generously funded by the Echo Foundation, is helping many of Elm Centre's Indigenous tenants to recover from trauma and express their cultural identity with confidence and pride.

In workshops guided by Indigenous elders, women master the craft and teachings of traditional instruments, weave their own stories into Indigenous regalia, and find peace and wisdom in the words of their ancestors. As one woman explains: "My language helps me heal my spirit. Miigwetch."

There is also profound power in sharing cultural knowledge with younger community members. Sitting with their sons at the big drum, for example, women reclaim the teachings of this traditionally male instrument, and become the gatekeepers of a legacy to be passed down through generations. At the final Pow Wow celebration, as mothers and grandmothers join their children in the Round Dance, their Indigenous roots feel deep, secure, and whole.

We extend heartfelt thanks to the Echo Foundation, and to all our donors, for sharing our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and for investing in inclusive, healing communities across our shelters and permanent housing sites.

PHOTOS | INDIGENOUS POW WOW CELEBRATION
AT YWCA TORONTO'S NANCY'S AUDITORIUM

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

We are so grateful for your ongoing support and want to let you know about other ways you can deepen your involvement with YWCA Toronto and continue to make a lasting impact on the lives of women and girls in our city.

SHOP FOR A GOOD CAUSE - Our long-time supporter, Shoppers Drug Mart, is donating proceeds of their *Growing Women's Health* campaign to YWCA Toronto's 1st Stop Woodlawn shelter. Shop at these stores from **October 5 to November 1** to help support YWCA Toronto.



Yonge St. and St. Clair Ave. • Yonge St.
and Roxborough St. • Carlton St. and
Parliament St. • East York Town Centre

CELEBRATE A WOMAN WHO INSPIRES YOU. NOMINATE HER FOR A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION AWARD

NOMINATION DEADLINE: **Friday, November 1, 2019**

WOMENOFDISTINCTION.CA

TRANSFORM WOMEN'S LIVES WITH EVERY STEP



Scotiabank TORONTO
WATERFRONT MARATHON

Sunday, October 20, 2019

To register or to donate to our team,
visit www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com/stwm-charities/ywca-toronto/
For more information, visit ywcatoronto.org/supportus.