

# 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

43rd year: a year of Transition and Development

## Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors and the Interim Executive Director.

The Neighbourhood Information Centre (Neighbourhood Centre) celebrates its 43<sup>rd</sup> year of service to the neighbourhood surrounding Main and Danforth.

It was an exciting time in 2011. The Board was invigorated by an influx of new, engaged community-minded members who bring their training, skill and life experience to the mix.

Building on our past success, we saw a continuation of longstanding programs such as the Legal Clinic, Income Tax Clinic, Clothing Depot, Children and Family Services. Both Hearing Every Youth through Youth (HEYY) and Youth In Action (YIA) have been active and engaged supporting youth across the GTA.

We ended our service agreement partnership with Harmony Hall and hired a new Elderly Person's Centre co-ordinator to provide these services onsite.

Our new membership services program, announced at the last AGM, began in the fall and has quadrupled in member uptake since inception as of the writing this report. We must continue our focus on expanding our membership base.

Last summer, The Neighbourhood Centre began a major transformation with changes in the face of the agency at the community, management and board levels.

We are transforming our activity and working together with Board, volunteers, staff and supporters to build an agency to better serve our communities. It is a process that includes renewal, revitalization, capacity building, community building, outreach and strategic planning.

We have worked hard to bring closure to past outstanding issues within the agency, both with our funders and with the community.

These changes have changed staff roles and responsibilities to ensure that their position is linked to the funding of the program work that they are doing.

Our role our agency plays in the community is as diverse as our community itself. We realigned our volunteer co-ordination function to happen within the different program areas. This allows us to better respond to the needs of our volunteers and our clients.

We know that often this type of transformative change is not something that can be done quickly, especially if we are getting it done correctly. We thank our clients, members and volunteers as we continue through this challenge and appreciate your patience

Our goal remains to "Build skills that build communities" and are proud of what we have accomplished and the road ahead.

We are creating new systems to better face the future and making technology improvements so we might better measure our service outputs and efficiencies.

Our services continue to increase professionalism without losing the caring and compassionate approach that is the characteristic of the Centre. We remain relevant and critical to people in this community, and are generously supported by the Centre's core funders, the United Way of Greater Toronto and the City of Toronto. With the continued involvement of donors and volunteers, we are able to keep the programs running.

The Board of Directors has been looking at potential new additional service sites as it is bursting at the seams at 91 Barrington with service users, volunteers and staff.

We are excited to move forward with an engaged strategic planning process anticipated for 2013 to provide greater insight and direction for our future developments.



## Appreciation for the dedication and community leadership of the 2011 Board of Directors

Boards of Directors govern charitable non-profit organizations such as the Neighbourhood Centre. In 2011, the Centre's Board of Directors worked together to realize some immediate organizational transitioning. Board Members reviewed the governance model and established new standards.

### CHAIR

Murray Gaudreau

### VICE CHAIR

Douglas duCharme

### TREASURER

Darren Rotsch

### SECRETARY

Karen Lutrell

### MEMBERS AT LARGE

Sarina Chawla

Juanita Downey

Daryl Finlayson

Anais Kirazian

Rob Smalley

### YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE

Anupam Chaudhri

### SENIORS REPRESENTATIVE

Maria-Luisa Morales

## The Neighbourhood Centre's Employees

In 2011, the Centre's employees kept the services and programs operating smoothly. Following its strategic plan, a restructuring of staff roles and HR stabilization efforts facilitated some employment terminations and re-definition of position. Outgoing staff members are acknowledged for their contributions and wished well. Some new roles have already been filled or are in development. There is no longer a generic Information and Referral Counselor, rather each program area relates to their own service user base.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Beryl Tsang**, Interim (January to October)

**Tanya Gerber**, Interim (Nov. to December)

### REFERRAL & INFORMATION COUNSELOR

**Gina MacDonald**

**Zahid Hussain** Relief

**Jim Taylor**

**Randall Gutierrez** Relief

### PROGRAM COORDINATORS

**Archina Kurich**, Volunteer Coordinator (January-Oct)

**Michele Ponniah**, Relief/Membership Services (Apr-Dec)

**Beryl Tsang**, Family and Children Services Coordinator (November-December)

**Nikki Roberts**, Youth Engagement (on leave Sept.-Dec.)

**Shaheda Azami**, Elderly Person's Centre (Oct-Dec)

**Lauralee Jeethan**, Interim HEYY Coord. (Sept-Dec)

**Arlene Willis**, Interim YIA Mentor (Sept-Dec)

**Joseph Cain**, Interim YIA Coordinator (Sept-Dec)

**Jo-anne Lindsay**, Interim Snow Removal Co-ord. (Nov-Dec)

### BOOKKEEPER

**Aijun Zhang** (Jan – Jun)

**Orissa Leung**, (Jun – Dec)

### PAID INTERNS

Diana Chea

Neil LaPointe

### SUMMER STUDENTS

Cadie Bunn

Lauralee Jeethan

Stacey Barrose

Joseph Cain

Pam Chaudhri

Jillian McCahon

Joanna Zhu

Juliana Patterson

### SNOW SHOVELERS

John Marshall

Sergio Otoyá

Graham Strachan

Amanada Worobess

Tom Worobess

**Cleaning support provided by Gail Ponniah**

## **Neighbourhood Centre Volunteers Are Dedicated!**

In 2011 the agency changed its course with regard to its volunteer management. It no longer employs a Volunteer Coordinator but rather incorporates the responsibility in every staff position. We leverage volunteer contributions within each program area toward defined deliverables and tasks.

An anticipated new computerized customized database will support the Neighbourhood Centre's volunteer management along with improvements in communication with service users, members, donors and funders.

All Centre's volunteers give generously and are appreciated (for list see pages 4-5). Those who work with the Income Tax Clinic, Clothing Depot, and Holiday Hampers are especially contributive and appreciated!

Special individual acknowledgement is also deserved for the following individuals whose contributions have been exceptional and longstanding.

**Jane Kozak** - Year-round donation procurement, storage and delivery; Holiday Hamper

**Jeanette Felicano** - Income Tax, Admin, Holiday Hamper

**Araceli Legasto** - Income Tax Clinic Coordinator

**Murray Gaudreau** - Board Chair

**Gina MacDonald** - Holiday Hamper (previous employee)

Week in and week out, all Centre volunteers ensure smooth operations and get things done!! Thank you all! We couldn't do it without you!!

## **2011 Programs and Service Synopsis:**

### **Community Support and Services - Youth**

Hearing Every Youth through Youth (HEYY)

Phone Line and Chat Forum

HEYY Peer Counselling Training

HEYY Outreach and Education

Youth In Action (YIA) Anti-Violence Group

YIA Media Arts Cooperative/Studio

### **Community Support and Services - Families**

Training home-based child care providers

Urban Pilots initiative

Workshops for parents on childcare options

Workshops with new parents on the Child Tax Credit and Universal Child Tax Benet

Assistance accessing childcare spaces in the City and filling in paperwork for the

Child Care Registries Good Food Box

TTC group purchase plan

Holiday Hampers

"The Diaper Club"

Low cost and free tickets to cultural events

## **Community Capacity Building and Educational Services**

Community-Based Governance Training Project (NAP Employment and Volunteer Committee)

Information Referral

Income Tax Clinic

Legal Clinic

Crisis Response to Emergencies

Fax, computer, printer and informal supports

CAP Computer site

Toronto Public Health distribution site

## **Partnerships**

Early Years Education Centre (EYEC)

Partners for Access and Identification (PAID)

Harmony Hall

## **Work Skills & Community Supports**

Snow Removal

Home Help Registry

## **Network Memberships**

Taylor Massey Neighbourhood Action Partnership (NAP) (Gardening and Food Access Strategy Work Group; Volunteer Capacity Building Work Group)

Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)

Toronto Neighbourhood Centres (TNC)

Neighbourhood Youth Alliance (NYA)

Teesdale Services Network

Social Planning Council Toronto

Volunteer Toronto

## **Community Support and Services - Seniors**

Coffee and Chat, Computer Classes, Outings and Special Events, Yoga Class, individual assistance and support brief case management

## **Initiatives and Developments in Progress**

- Research and applications to expand Snow Removal Program into a Lawn Care Social Enterprise
- Securing an additional location for the Centre
- Increased members, donors and contributors
- Volunteer Management Strategy & procedures
- Accessibility improvements to Secord Community Centre
- Development of a Community Kitchen (TM NAP)

## OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS

Gail Ponniah  
Mila Yabis  
Patricia Woyce  
Peter Gaudet  
Roxanne Williams  
Bruce Nicol  
Hemangini Brahmhatt  
Sandy Trebell  
Nikki Roberts  
Devon McMahon  
Vani S.  
Gina McDonald  
Jane Kozak  
Patricia Woyce  
Araceli Legasto  
Nesar Ahmad  
Tahmina Akhter  
Shamim Chowdhury  
Anjuman Shelly  
Xiaohuan Wu  
Fiza Mahmood  
Aloma Languaigne  
Meseret Cherent  
Lemlem Beieme  
Maria Renee Monterio  
Syeda Aqeela Bano  
Sulaimon Ayilara  
Tobias Bunshey  
Mark Castillo  
Richard Vajda  
AnneTuyn  
Tobia Bushey  
Lori Partenio  
Nicole Edwards  
Terry Ann Myles  
Rosita Arceo  
Susana Bando  
Margarita Cabanso  
Luis Cartagena  
Charles Lou  
Pauline Cheekes  
Justin Corby  
Jeannette Feliciano  
Thomas Hundakl  
Anthony, Klinker

Winnie Liao  
Chenchen , Liu  
Jay Mir  
Jason Mongahan  
Kassi N'Buessan  
Diem Pham  
Michelle Prior  
Helene Basselin  
Wayne Shaheen  
Irene Sia  
Henry Wang  
Huiquan Wang  
Ying Xiong  
Garvey Powell  
Jereal Reid  
Christian Gillis  
Margarita Martinez  
Esnehar Lalanne  
Warren Holt  
Anthony Lawrence  
Len Issacs  
Bill Shepard

Youth Volunteers (identified by first names only)

Rachel  
Shazia  
Vaishnavie  
Juliana  
Nicki  
Zaki  
Yiren  
Jayshree  
Zak  
Cadie  
Sabina  
Jessica  
Jason  
Jasmine  
Sarah  
Celene  
Zainab  
Cindy  
Denisa  
Hala  
Kim  
Sarah  
Sabrina

Ashraf  
 Terry  
 Sarah  
 Mel  
 Michelle  
 Yiren  
 Rachel  
 Anita  
 Brittany  
 Bess  
 Hamzah  
 Hesam  
 Ishraq  
 Déjah  
 Emmanuella  
 Eric  
 Sam  
 Calvin  
 Alice  
 Hytham  
 Minna  
 Samantha  
 Shaili  
 Ana  
 Mark  
 Mia  
 Nicholas  
 Tracy  
 Farooq  
 Carol  
 Shabrina  
 Michelle  
 Katy  
 Dushan  
 Stacey  
 Thaddeus  
 Joanna  
 Gabi  
 Kenneth  
 Katlyn  
 Rob  
 Meza  
 Michele

## PEOPLE SERVED IN 2011\*

o Children (0-6yrs)	503
o Children (7-12)	845
o Youth (13-24)	457
o Adults	1822
o Seniors	228
o Age unknown	70

\*PLUS 2138 PEOPLE ATTENDED GROUP EVENTS AT WHICH WE PRESENTED AND/OR COORDINATED.

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## 2011 HAMPER SPONSORS

Communications Branch Staff - Ontario Ministry of Education  
 Fairmont Group  
 Bank of Montreal  
 Coyle's Corrugated Cardboard  
 D.A. Morrison Public School  
 Eastview Presbyterian, Church  
 Faith Presbyterian Church  
 Kiwanis Club of East York  
 Christmas Card Club North York General Hospital  
 George Webster Public School,  
 Hope United Church  
 Remax  
 Royal Canadian Legion Dawes Road Branch,  
 Seniors Health Centre  
 TDCanada Trust World Markets  
 Tom's No Frills, St. Clair and O'Connor  
 Toronto Community Housing, 444 Lumsden  
 Toronto Police Services, 54 Division  
 World Association on Christian Communication  
 Benjamin Family  
 McMahan Family  
 Sloan Family  
 Carolyn Griffis  
 Stephen and Paula McCleod  
 Marion Douglas

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## In 2011 we worked to:

Alleviate or reduce the impact of poverty (i.e. Clothing Exchange; Good Food Box; bulk buying clubs Diapers and wipes; discounted TTC Metropasses)

Build community members` capacity to be more economically self-sufficient: more than 2900 individual returns in our year-round income tax preparation including back taxes (needed to access government supplied income supplements).

Provide a summary legal advice through a weekly clinic (funded by Legal Aid Ontario) to the community. The majority of individuals seeking legal advice needed notarized rent affidavits to prevent eviction and homelessness.

Enrich families by offering parents/caregiver opportunities to further develop their parenting skills (workshops and presentations); learn with their children (family math nights, homework club) and make informed decisions about child care.

Engage seniors in a primarily MOHLTC-funded **Elderly Persons Centre** with multicultural, social and recreational activities that promote inclusion, diversity and well-being.

Support to individuals and families: a holiday hamper program; clothing depot; book exchange. (These services have shifted from being primarily delivered by staff members to being supported strongly by local residents.)

The Neighbourhood Centre applied in 2010 for funds to renovate the ramp at the Secord School. In 2011, we received \$ 40,000 from the Government of Canada, funds remain in trust for this project which has yet to be completed due to numerous logistical impediments. The site is managed by the TDSB and the main tenant is Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation, to which we are sub-tenants. The architectural elements are complete. The project awaits additional funding to address revised requirements.

Engage community members as stakeholders and decision-makers: in our seniors councils; Youth Planning Action Committee (associated with HEYY); Senior, Family and Youth representatives on our Board; four member focus groups; membership drive.

Participation in community based service networks and partnerships that leverage resources to respond to community needs and create service synergies including: St. Vincent De-Paul Family Homes regarding space use at Gower Park Place; crisis response planning for Taylor Massey NAP and ANC; Neighbourhood Action Partnership (NAP) Volunteer and Leadership Development Sub-Committee regarding development of Community Based Governance Training; NAP Sexual Health Sub-Committee. We work with the ANC in implementing services for children recommendations of the **2011-13 Resident Action Plan**.

We work with the Teesdale Services Network regarding issues related to seniors. The program's long-term goal is to bring seniors together in a supportive setting that promotes well-being; knowledge and quality of life.

The program's specific objectives are to:

- Encourage seniors from diverse communities to network and socialize;
- Increase access to meaningful, culturally appropriate social recreational activities for seniors;
- Promote seniors engagement in their neighbourhood and communities
- Reduce social isolation.

Program Activities include the piloting of:

- Workshops
- Trips and Special Events
- Retreats
- Intergenerational Mentoring with Neighbourhood Centre's Youth and Family Resource Programs
- ESL Conversation Circles
- Discussion Groups
- Congregate Dining Experiences
- Community Meetings.

This program is supported by a grant through the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and delivered in partnership with Harmony Hall.

### **Serving people...**

NC participants and service users are of all ages and come from all walks of life: families with children 0-6; families with school aged children; youth and young adults, adults and seniors. Most identify themselves as "low income. Together they speak more than 35 "mother tongues"

NC service users diverse and includes: members of the Deaf, Deafened and Hard of Hearing community, people with disabilities; new Canadians and individuals and families who identify as LGBTQ.

Since 1981 the number of families living in poverty in our

catchment area has increased, poverty rates are quickly rising among new Canadians and youth, especially those from racialized communities.

We are in the process of implementing a database so that we will be able to more accurately report the demographics of our service users and its diversity.

## **VISION**

The Neighbourhood Centre will be a community place dedicated to building skills that build community, and helping people with their questions so that everyone can access the information and the services they need to achieve their potential.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Neighbourhood Centre coordinates activities and facilitates groups to improve resources and strengthen the neighbourhood, and helps people to achieve their goals and participate meaningfully in their community.

## **MANDATE**

The Neighbourhood Centre is focused on place-making, which is about the experiences places have on our lives and the things they make possible. Place-making capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

## **VALUES**

### Equity and Diversity

- Promoting respect for human rights and equality for all
- Reflecting diversity in our volunteers, partners, board and staff

### Dignity

- Treating people as individuals and focusing on their needs
- Listening to and learning from one another
- Enabling individuals to successfully direct their own lives

### Supporting Self-Sufficiency

- Recognizing people Developing creative approaches and alternative solutions

### Resourcefulness

- Efficiently using resources for the betterment of our community

We have made major changes to the way that the agency prepares and completes the strategic planning process.

Throughout 2011 many initiatives were undertaken to feed into a strategic planning session that now happens in January.

In March/April, community consultation focus groups were facilitated by the Board Chair with clients, non-clients and community members. The sessions were specifically addressed seniors, youth, families and newcomers.

The board chair and Interim Executive Director also met with numerous city councillors in the current catchment area of East Toronto, East York and West Scarborough.

Our organization serves the City of Toronto and the United Way of Greater Toronto's priority neighbourhoods of Crescent Town; O'Connor and Teesdale Place as well as the former Borough of East York, East Toronto and West Scarborough. Our HEYY (Hearing Every Youth Through Youth Line) serve youth from across the City of Toronto including newcomer and racialized youth.

A partnership initiative with the NAP Volunteer Leadership Development Sub-Committee, the Neighbourhood Centre acts as trustee and employer to one IIN (Investing in Neighbourhoods City grant) Coordinator who reports to the sub-committee for direction and support. (Access Alliance, Neighbourhood Link, Scarborough LIP, Toronto East LIP, Toronto Public Libraries, ANC and NAP and CDO from City) Program involves a 6 week training for 15 individuals on Governance training followed by a mentorship component. Certificate supplied.

## **FINANCES**

The Neighbourhood Centre continues to make progress improving its operations with regard to financial management and systems. Our budget increased by \$64,473. The increase was primarily a result of a new Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant to support agency capacity building and transition initiatives. For complete audited financial statements, please visit our website or contact us at the Centre office for an electronic version in a PDF.

## THANK YOU...

### OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES WERE PROVIDED WITH FUNDING FROM AND IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

City of Toronto, Community Services Program  
City of Toronto, Children's Services Division  
City of Toronto, Investing in Neighbourhoods Strategy  
City of Toronto, Access Equity and Human Rights  
City of Toronto, Parks Forestry and Recreation  
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care  
Ontario Ministry of Culture and Citizenship  
Human Resources Development Services Canada  
Government of Canada

### MEMBERSHIPS

This year the Neighbourhood Centre began a new Membership Initiative toward increasing paid memberships with the Centre to support our financial sustainability. Donations and sponsorships continue to be required to augment the funding available through government, foundations and granting streams. Please give generously if you haven't already. Charitable receipts are available for donations of \$20 or more

### OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES WERE MADE POSSIBLE BY GENEROSITY OF OUR DONORS

Vaishnavie Gnanasaravanapavan  
Barrie Gray  
Vera Hewitt  
Stephen & Joan Allan  
Werner Bachman  
Margaret Duggan  
Mary Duggan  
Stephen McLeod  
Paula McCleod  
Paul Milliere  
Josephine Mulle  
Lisa Randall  
Lila Stone  
Beryl Tsang

### GIFTS IN KIND WERE PROVIDED BY:

Professional Hair Care Products  
United Way Gifts In-Kind Program

## Thank You to our Program Funders

