



North York
Community
House

Where Community Lives

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



OUR VISION

**A STRONG
COMMUNITY
WHERE ALL
BELONG AND
THRIVE.**

2014 | INTRODUCTION

North York Community House (“NYCH”) has been a vibrant part of northwest Toronto for over 24 years. In that time, we have been fortunate to be a part of so many people’s journeys as they build a new life in Canada, raise their families, and work to make their neighbourhoods stronger.

We are proud to share our 2014 Annual Report with you so that you can get a glimpse of some of the amazing initiatives and events that took place over the year. It’s always exciting to highlight the success stories of those we serve, and showcase new developments in our communities.

This report doesn’t show all the work we do, so please visit us at www.nych.ca to see all our programs and services in the areas of:

NEW CANADIANS

COMMUNITY

HEALTHY LIVING

YOUTH

SKILLS & LEADERSHIP

PARENTS & CHILDREN

WORKPLACE



Maureen Anglin,
Board President



Shelley Zuckerman,
Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Just one glance at the front of this report and you will see that 2014 was another year of transformation and change at North York Community House, starting with our new look! We were fortunate to have the team at Naked Creative design our new logo and tagline, and we're very excited to share it with all our community members, funders and partners. We feel our new logo is not only unique and eye-catching, but really captures who we are as an organization.

The work we did in 2014 reflected this commitment to building on what we do best. The NYCH team began developing new evaluation tools and systems in order to better understand the specific needs for our services, and to increase our impact in the communities we serve. NYCH also launched new initiatives such as the Perspectives Project to bring our work to more diverse communities, and expanded on the strengths of our participants and volunteers, as demonstrated by the growth of the Stepping Stones to Leadership program. Participants in both programs created their own Digital Stories – another unique experience offered by NYCH that continues to have a profound impact on those who create and share their stories, as well as those who view them. Visit our Youtube page to see Digital Stories from these programs and others: www.youtube.com/user/nychonline

A major project for the Board of Directors in 2014 was to develop our new three-year strategic plan. Both the planning process and the strategic plan itself, which will take us from 2015 through 2017, were unlike any we have undertaken before. Based on the Theory of Change we developed in 2013, one of the key objectives is to bring all of our work in line with the three stages of progress, Settle, Thrive and Lead, experienced by most of the people we serve.

Within this model, the strategic plan will focus on priorities in five key areas:

- Enhancing our existing programs
- Pursuing new program opportunities
- Diversifying our funding
- Expanding our volunteer opportunities
- Strengthening the organization to achieve overall success

This plan provides a clear road map for the goals we want to achieve over the next three years, but also allows for the flexibility and adaptability required to remain strong and sustainable in our sector.

We hope you enjoy this year's annual report, which showcases our new look and logo. Although we cannot possibly capture all the work we do with families and local neighbourhoods, or the many ways we help newcomers to settle, develop their skills, and work towards their goals, we have highlighted some of the most exciting events and initiatives from 2014. This report represents all of the amazing work done by our staff, volunteers, partners and the 25,000+ participants we serve every year.

We are, as always, extremely proud to be part of an amazing team of volunteers and staff who dedicate their time and energy to making our communities better for all of us. We are also grateful to our funders, sponsors, partners and donors, who continue to show their belief in the work we do. Our communities continue to face many challenges, but we become stronger by facing them together.

2014 | BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Maureen Anglin, President
Nina Chandarana, Vice-President
Eduardo Garay, Director
Brandy Hagborg, Secretary⁺ / Director^{*}
Linda Karlinsky, Director⁺ / Secretary^{*}
Fatima Murji, Director^{*}
Kaezad Nallaseth, Director
Nalini Pandalangat, Director
Eric Plato, Director^{*} / Treasurer^{**}
Lisa Watson, Director^{*}

Irfaan Manji, Vice-President⁺
Adela Colhon, Director⁺
Fahreen Kurji, Director⁺
Ryan Silva, Treasurer⁺⁺
Sandy Silva, Director⁺

^{*} (as of September 2014)

^{**} (as of December 2014)

⁺ (until September 2014)

⁺⁺ (until December 2014)

2014 | COMMUNITY



MICHELE LANDSBERG

AWARD

QUOTE

"I was so impressed by the energy and joy in your blog as you described how much fun it is to be just with other girls once in a while, to feel you belong with your friends and mentors, that you are accepted and valued, where you can feel so free, and how good it is to learn about each other's experiences instead of feeling judged and being rivals."

- Michele Landsberg, August 2014





A group selfie after the award presentation.

On a sunny afternoon in August, an excited audience gathered in a small classroom at Joyce Public School for the presentation of the Michele Landsberg Community Award. The recipients? Our very own Village Bloggurls. The award was named after Michele Landsberg, award-winning Canadian journalist, author, social activist and feminist. It was created by the Canadian Women's Foundation to celebrate community initiatives that empower girls and raise awareness about women's equality issues in Canada.

And the Village Bloggurls have been doing just that! Through their blog and social media activity, this diverse group of girls from the Lotherton neighbourhood have established a strong voice that not only expresses their unique perspectives, but also allows them to connect with each other and the community at large. From celebrating mentorship, to performing a neighbourhood safety

audit, to challenging Hollywood's portrayal of women and girls, the Village Bloggurls have shown us that theirs is a voice that needs to be heard.

The award presentation began with a short graduation ceremony for children in our Early Years Drop-in program. It was a fitting start as these pre-schoolers, who represent the future generation, were able to witness the strength of these tween-aged girls and the impact of generations shouldering upon one another. This sentiment was echoed in an inspiring speech by Michele Landsberg who stated, "...we know this opens the door for you to see yourselves as future leaders..." Finally, after the award was presented, the group of girls, who are determined to build the self-confidence of young girls everywhere, celebrated with – what else? – a proud group selfie.



REMEMBERING NAHOM BERHANE

In September of 2014, the NYCH community mourned the sudden loss of one of our former staff members, Nahom Berhane. This was a loss felt across the city, as Nahom was not only a strong member of the NYCH team, but had become a powerful and respected leader and role model in the Eritrean community.

During his time with NYCH, Nahom ran a number of programs for youth in the Trethewey community, and provided support to all its residents through a period of great change and transition. He was warm and funny, and always had a smile for everyone, even at the most challenging times. Nahom also had a real vision for working with the community, and a passion for creating opportunities for youth to

become great leaders. His commitment carried on in his subsequent work with other organizations.

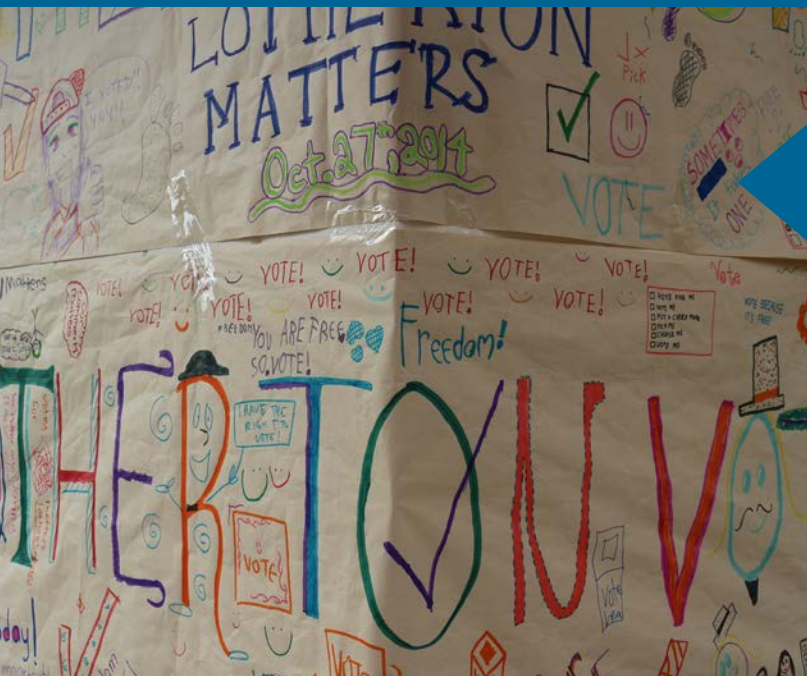
**HE WAS WARM AND FUNNY,
AND ALWAYS HAD A SMILE
FOR EVERYONE...**

It is always hard to come to terms with the loss of someone so young, especially when it is the result of a senseless, and seemingly random act of violence. We can only be grateful for the time we had with Nahom, and endeavor to keep his spirit alive in our work.

EARLY YEARS PROGRAM

979

The number of children who participated in our Early Years Drop-in programs in 2014 - along with 891 parents.



GET OUT THE VOTE

42.05%

The voter turnout in the Lotherton community for the 2014 municipal election - a 7.83% increase from 2010.

PLAYING FOR KEEPS

90

The number of Neighbourhood Games led by community members who were trained as Volunteer Ambassadors.



2014 | YOUTH

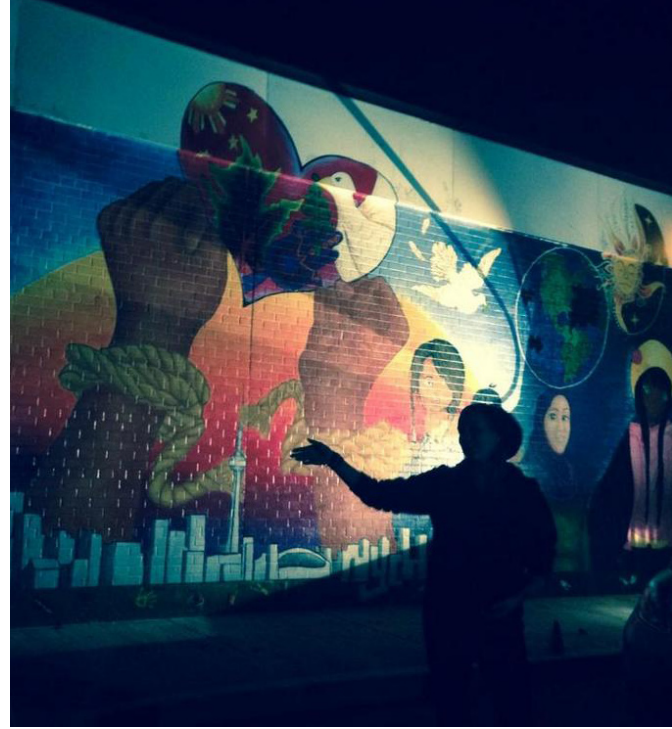


V.O.I.C.E. MURAL PROJECT

QUOTE

"NYCH programs made a summer to remember! I met new friends, I feel like I have gained confidence, and I now feel as if I can take charge of what goes on around me."

- April Veloso



For most teenagers, the summer is a glorious time - a chance to spend your days outside, hang out with friends, and think of anything but homework. However, newcomer youth often feel the pressure and isolation of settling in a new country, and struggle to establish a sense of identity. The summer months are the perfect time to address some of these issues while having fun at the same time.

Enter the Summer V.O.I.C.E. Mural Project. Standing for “Voicing Our Ideas for Change and Empowerment”, V.O.I.C.E. programs allow newcomer youth to explore the arts, empowering them to express themselves and lead positive change. Through workshops and activities, they gain confidence, increase friendships, and improve their communication skills.

For three weeks in the summer of 2014, V.O.I.C.E. participants were given the opportunity to paint a mural on one of the outdoor walls of Northview Heights Secondary School in the Bathurst-Finch area. Before they started, they discussed the subject matter they wished to represent – focusing on the themes of peace, freedom, and diversity.

Day by day, the bare façade was transformed by streaks of vibrant colour, as this enthusiastic group

of youth brought their artistic vision to life. When the summer came to an end, and all the paintbrushes were cleaned up and the ladders were put away, all that was left to do was to share the mural with the rest of the community.

The Mural Celebration on October 18, 2014 was a community event that brought together students, parents, and residents of the Bathurst-Finch neighbourhood. Led by our Youth Leadership Worker, Amy, with guidance from Northview Heights Secondary School, Action for Neighbourhood Change Bathurst-Finch, and Unison Health and Community Services, the youth participants put together an entertaining evening, culminating in the official unveiling of their artwork.

It was truly an awesome sight to see these youth standing by the transformed wall that evening, but an even greater transformation could be seen in each of the participants. Monsaina Leones, a V.O.I.C.E. participant spoke of this change:

“I’m forever thankful that I met a lot of amazing people. I’ve learned a lot from them. I’ve learned how to be more confident and creative.”



LINC CLASSES

338

The number of students learning English at our LINC classes in 2014.



NOW PROGRAM

213

The number of youth participants who learned to navigate through their new schools during Newcomer Orientation Week.



SETTLEMENT IN SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES

24,855

The number of SEPT sessions in schools and libraries, resulting in 96% of clients feeling more welcome in their schools and communities.





DIGITAL STORYTELLING CROSSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

The Digital Divide was an incredibly successful Digital Storytelling project that was funded through a Google Grant and implemented in the Rexdale community. The project's focus was to bring newcomer youth and newcomer seniors together to share their stories and experiences, while learning about various computer programs and technology.

First, the youth participated in a Digital Storytelling creation workshop, where they were able to make their personal and unique stories, and then were trained to share these stories in discussion groups.

During the sessions with the seniors, participants shared that they were often overlooked and not seen as having anything important to add or

share within the community. They just wanted the opportunity to finally be able to tell their stories, and this program helped them do exactly that. With the help of the newcomer youth, the seniors created beautiful and inspirational Digital Stories that captured their life journeys. The youth were then given a leadership role in sharing the seniors' stories with others in the community.

The program had a strong impact on the participants, their families and surrounding community. Many of the participants, both youth and seniors, mentioned that this was the first time that they had been given the opportunity to highlight their experiences and felt proud that others would learn from their stories.



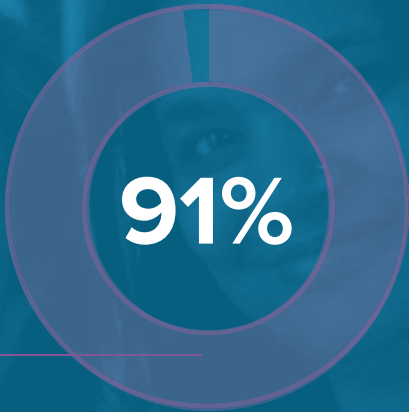
A photograph of three women smiling and posing together at an indoor event. The woman on the left is wearing a black top and a name tag. The woman in the middle is wearing a black top. The woman on the right is wearing a black top and a blue and white patterned scarf. The background shows a hallway with a door and a window.

2014 | EVENTS

STEPPING STONES IDEA MIXER

IMPACT

91% of Stepping Stones participants were able to create new networks, and **94%** reported an increase in self-confidence. ●

A circular infographic showing a blue ring with a small gap, representing 91%. The number 91% is written in white inside the ring.

91%



Building on its success from the first year, the Stepping Stones to Leadership program continued in 2014 to help newcomer volunteers work towards their employment and life goals, and connect them with Canadian mentors for support. This structured and tailored approach to supporting newcomers as they enter the workplace continued to grow, as past participants returned to mentor those just beginning the program.

In September 2014, we held an event to celebrate the success of the participants in Stepping Stones to Leadership to date, as well as to raise the profile of the program and expand our network of contacts. This 'Idea Mixer' brought together program participants, graduates, and people from across the private, non-profit and public sectors.

Attendees enjoyed a wonderful evening of celebration and networking, hosted by the Shamba

Foundation in downtown Toronto. The activities of the evening were designed to encourage the sharing of ideas and feedback to further strengthen the Stepping Stones to Leadership program. There was a live tweet wall where guests posted their ideas, which led to robust discussions about the challenges newcomers face in establishing new careers in Canada.

Additionally, one of the new Digital Stories featuring a Stepping Stones participant was screened, highlighting the impact of the program on a very personal level. Not only was the event a success in itself, but it significantly increased the network of contacts for the program's newcomer participants.

Stepping Stones to Leadership is a wonderful demonstration of all the skills, strengths and leadership newcomers contribute to the Canadian workforce, and to the broader community.



2014 | CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

A photograph of two women sitting at a table, smiling and engaged in a craft activity. The woman on the left has dark hair and is wearing a blue patterned scarf. The woman on the right is wearing a red headscarf and a red button-down shirt. They are both looking towards the right side of the frame. On the table in front of them are various craft supplies, including a colorful spiral notebook, string, and small beads.

DEMOCRACY TALKS

THE CHALLENGE

39% of Canadians report never having had a single political conversation in a year-long period.

Samara Canada, Democracy 360 report ●

A donut chart with a blue outer ring and a grey inner ring. The blue ring represents 39% of the total. The number '39%' is written in white inside the blue ring.

39%

DEMOCRACY BRACELETS

Beatriz

Creating my ideal democracy

- Step #1: choose 4 attributes most important to your group
- Step #2: mark the 4 on the list. Make up one more you like that is not on the list.
- Step #3: As a group, assign a bead colour to each of the attributes you chose. If you add any more, assign a colour to this one as well.
- Step #4: Write the colour beside each attribute
- Step #5: Measure your wrist & use the string and beads to make a democracy bracelet for you or your child!
- Step #6: Show off your democracy bracelet and tell others what colours represent

Beatriz facilitating a Democracy Talks workshop with one of our LINC classes.

What issues are important to you? For the past year, we've been asking our participants to answer this question as a way to kick-start a political discussion – and the resulting conversations are what Democracy Talks is all about.

Democracy Talks is an initiative launched by Samara Canada, an organization that aims to reconnect citizens to politics, and is based on the idea that political participation begins simply by talking about the things that matter to you. According to Samara, these facilitated discussions have “inspired new ideas, strengthened social bonds, and motivated people to become more active and engaged in politics and society.” NYCH is proud to be a partner in bringing this important dialogue to our communities.

When we began implementing Democracy Talks activities into our programs, we saw how effective they were in getting local residents interested in civic issues. While many newcomers avoid politics

...TO CREATE A VIBRANT, HEALTHY DEMOCRACY FOR US ALL.

as a result of being in an unfamiliar country, facing a language barrier, or being unable to vote, Democracy Talks has encouraged participants to take part in lively discussions, share their opinions and, most importantly, to be heard.

In 2014, NYCH facilitated 30 Democracy Talks sessions involving 300 participants. Through these conversations, these community members not only increased their overall level of political knowledge, but also increased their interest and attention to politics. It is our belief that civic involvement helps individuals to become more confident and connected, ultimately helping to create a vibrant, healthy democracy for us all.



PERSPECTIVES PROJECT

The experience of immigrating to Canada creates many challenges for teens and young adults, from leaving what is familiar, to learning a new language and trying to fit in...and this is on top of the typical difficulties we all face in growing up.

For some newcomer youth, there is the added stress of identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and/or queer (LGBTQ), or questioning their sexuality, an experience which can be incredibly isolating. It is often difficult for newcomer youth to talk to anyone about issues around sexuality because they don't know many people in their new community, and because they may fear rejection, discrimination and even violence.

The Perspectives Project started in 2014, and in its first year, brought together newcomers who

identify as LGBTQ to discuss their issues and concerns, as well as to connect with each other and to the supports they need. To facilitate this program, young people from LGBTQ communities were hired as Peer Leaders. Their first task was to create their own short videos, or 'Digital Stories' about their personal experiences.

They were then trained to use their Digital Stories to begin conversations with newcomer LGBTQ youth and others in the community about issues such as healthy relationships, dealing with stress, oppression, and isolation. Through the discussions and connections created during these story circles, participants developed an increased sense of belonging, acceptance, and identity. Many have developed strong bonds with each other and with allies, which makes them feel like they're not alone. LGBTQ newcomer youth have also gained the confidence and support they need to thrive.





SCOTIABANK TORONTO WATERFRONT MARATHON

The team at NYCH was incredibly proud this year to participate once again in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon, especially since this was the first time we had runners and walkers of our own. We also had a

**WE WERE ALSO ABLE TO
RAISE OVER \$10,000 IN
THE PROCESS!**

great group of cheerleaders who lent their voices and spirit to keeping all the participants motivated, which was important on a chilly October morning.

Our eager and excited group of 32 NYCH staff, volunteers, friends and family members ran and walked the 5k and half-marathon routes. While crossing the finish line was a great achievement in itself, we were also able to raise over \$10,000 in the process! We look forward to beating our own record in 2015.



2014 | FINANCIAL STATEMENT

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2014

REVENUE	2014	2013
Government grants	\$ 4,027,613	\$ 4,051,238
United Way	798,731	802,734
Foundations	210,185	179,038
Fees for service	82,709	159,795
Investment income	30,726	20,284
Other	23,548	68,800
Total	5,173,512	5,281,889

EXPENSES	2014	2013
Salaries and benefits	\$ 4,250,948	\$ 4,310,432
Occupancy	297,431	282,613
Office	167,599	143,833
Program supplies	136,323	183,593
Program snacks	55,047	55,144
Telephone and internet	41,229	40,913
Participant transportation and outings	41,151	49,159
Publicity and promotion	39,068	26,537
Staff training and transportation	30,769	31,611
Board and volunteer development	14,434	15,513
Insurance	13,538	14,461
Professional fees	9,404	9,705
Other	11,862	12,435
Amortization	9,763	6,813
Total	5,118,566	5,182,762

EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR	54,946	99,127
Net assets, beginning of year	1,698,638	1,599,511
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	1,753,584	1,698,638

*Restricted surplus - In 1990, the organization received \$900,000 from an anonymous donor in North York. The donor stipulated that the original principal of the donation be reserved for the capital costs such as purchase of an appropriate premises. Interest earned on the original principal amount is available for funding expenses.

2014 | VOLUNTEERS



IMPACT

In 2014, we had a total of **390** volunteers contribute over **5000** hours to programs and events. ●

390

2014 | THANK YOU

FUNDERS AND FOUNDATIONS

Citizenship and Immigration Canada	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration	
City of Toronto	Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport	
United Way Toronto		
Canadian Women's Foundation	McConnell Foundation	The Co-operators Foundation
Credit Canada Debt Solutions	Metcalf Foundation	Tides Foundation
George Weston Incorporated	Ontario Trillium Foundation	Toronto Enterprise Fund
Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	PricewaterhouseCoopers Canada Foundation	Toronto Foundation
Maytree Foundation	Samara Canada	True Sport Foundation

MAKING OUR COMMUNITY BLOSSOM | \$1000 AND UP

Euphrasia Walsh Corporation	Whole Foods Market
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HELPING TO GROW HEALTHY ROOTS | \$101 - \$999

Abouharga Amal	Irma Hercules	Marina Novinskaya
Kasthuri Anandagopal	Bonnie Hunter	Lubna Sakhi
Maureen Anglin	Nahid Ismail	Lucy Santos
Jorge Barahona	Sergei Ivanov	Rashmi Sheth
Taramatee Bootan	J. S. Cheng & Partners Inc.	Besma Soltan
CPA Tax Clinic	Zestaline Kim	Biljana Tasevska
Rabia Din	Javiera Mazuelos	Team Telus Cares
Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti	Maxine McKoy	The Bishop Strachan School
Noemi Garcia	Wendy Montejo	Lisa Watson
Gemma Communications LP	Sarwar Mustafa	Yingxin Zhang
Hui Geng	Oksana Nazarova	Shelley Zuckerman

PLANTING STRONG SEEDS | UNDER \$100

Sid Abdullahi	Shamim Begum	Liudmila Elistratova
Lucia Abello	Missah Bihendi	Amparo Escobar
Habtemichael Abraha	Vilma Borda	Jenaly Feria
Shova Adhikari	Yecenia Borja	Judith Fricker
Sonia Agreda	Valentina Camilleri	Judy Fricker
Isaura Agudelo	Norman Edmundo Car	Mauricio Alexander Galeano
Salma Ahmed	Nowshin Hamid Choudhury	Vanya Georgieva
Adnan Amin	Robert Clegg	Ilknur Gonulsen
Deens Arokianathir	Catherine M. Cotton	Yossie J Grinshpan
ASP Parents Donation	Maria Crupi	Maria Guerrero
Danielle Astrug	Ana Isabel Cruz	Merry Grace Guerrero
Beatriz Alvarenga Al Azucena	John Cruz	Ramzan Hamid
Lajosne Babai	Downsview Community Legal Services	Glen Jose Hernandez
Marcedes Baneto	Honey Dresher	Jose Hernandez
Daniel Baracaldo		Verlyn L. Honora

2014 | THANK YOU

PLANTING STRONG SEEDS (continued) | UNDER \$100

Shahnaj Hydari
Nina Ignatenko
Suleyman Karakas
Linda Karlinsky
Ramesh Kordi
Noah Kravitz
Dilani Kronenberg
Lorna Kumar
Marjorie Lazarre
Carmen Lazarus
David Lee
Bharti Lokre
Francia Lopez
Jeannine Lunney
Maria Cristina Marin
Donald Marshall
Dayanne Martinez
Romeo Jose Miranda

Elizabeth Molina
Zoila Montejo
Miguel Moreno
Lalitha Navaratnam
Kim Nguyen
Robert Nixon
Victoria Nixon
Jamshid Noori
Franca Pelaccia
Anthony Peralta
Alejandra Pereyra
Sohela Taghianghanavati
Pourmohannad
Krisanta Quianzon Atazan
Rajith
Jorge Ramos
Fortunato Rao
Julio M. Reyes

Jane Rounthwaite
Rosa V. Salazar Berrones
Moo Moo Say
Edith Scidmore
Bekeenthan Shanmugavadivel
Myer Siemiatycki
Ryan Silva
Sherry Ann St. Clair
David Stacey
Jeya Surendran
TD Bank Group
Vandana Thandira
Ching-I (Mandy) Tsai
Veerasathan Vallipuram
Brenda Vargas
Patricia Vazconcelas
Norman Wellington
Marina Zybina

IN-KIND DONATIONS

Bare Bones and Upfront
Chris Du Vaal
Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti
Holy Blossom Temple's Early
Childhood Centre

Institute of Chartered
Accountants
David Kenyon
Jason King
Naked Creative

North York Harvest Food Bank
Rashmi Sheth
Shamba Foundation
Staples



Margie: NYCH Volunteer

You notice her elegance but it's her grace that draws you in. She is gentle, soft-spoken and kind. Her kindness overcomes language and cultural barriers to create a space of warmth and acceptance. Her impact has rippled across the organization and the community as a whole. She gives hope to those who need it, commiserates with those who are hurting and advocates for the disadvantaged. It's beautiful to see that that which she paid forward is now being paid back to her; those whose lives she touched are now reaching back to embrace her at this moment in her life. The many whom she has helped now make up a part of her circle of support and friendship. It means so much to us to know her and to be a part of her life. She is smiles and laughter and her presence brings lightness to those around her. We are so thankful to call her volunteer, mentor and friend.

- Maxine McKoy, Volunteer Coordinator

(Sadly, Margie passed away just before the printing of this report after battling cancer. She will be greatly missed. April 9, 1941 - May 3, 2015.)



North York Community House

Where Community Lives



GET INVOLVED

As a member of our community, you can have a major impact on the lives of the people who use our services. Your support as a donor or as a volunteer enables us to keep doing the work we do, and enriches our community.

To learn more about how you can get involved, please visit www.nych.ca
call 416-784-0920 or find us online:



/ nychonline

Registered Charity #:
129469029RR0001