



THE DIFFERENCE REPORT

► WoodGreen's COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the frailty and hardship that many in our community face every day.

Most of us go about our daily lives without realizing just how many people are in shelters each night in our city; the number was 10,000 prior to COVID. Thankfully, most of us have food to feed our families; one in four children experience hunger each day. Many of us have not experienced crippling anxiety or mental health issues – one in five Canadians do. Few of us have known homelessness, yet 1,000 of our city's youth are on the streets, alone and at-risk every day.

While COVID-19 and the vulnerability of people in our city might be an eye opener for many, it is something of which the teams at WoodGreen are acutely aware. The individuals and families we serve are already among the most marginalized in our city. So for them, the impact of COVID-19 has been exacerbated.

WoodGreen mobilized quickly to meet increasing needs. Within the first two weeks of the crisis, we saw growing numbers of clients experience food insecurity. With the help of generous donors we distributed groceries, and initiated an emergency hot and frozen meal delivery program. Donor support also provided vital personal protective equipment (PPE) for our heroic front-line workers who work relentlessly to keep frail seniors safe in their homes.

We transitioned to remote service delivery via telephone and online platforms, continuing to provide essential programs – including mental health support to help clients of all ages cope with the stresses of the pandemic, and financial and employment counselling for individuals experiencing job loss – to ensure our clients remained supported.

As we move forward in these uncertain times, the help of our generous community will enable us to respond to evolving needs and continue to build a healthier city for all.



Our PSW team gowned and masked with PPE deliver care to isolated seniors and vulnerable clients.

💧 If this pandemic has taught us anything, it has taught us how precarious life is, how close so many are to the poverty line, and how crucial community service agencies are in keeping our city safe and healthy."

– Teresa Vasilopoulos, Executive Director, The WoodGreen Foundation



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chair of The WoodGreen Foundation, I am so proud of and inspired by the leadership of WoodGreen’s many volunteers, donors and staff members. Through your generosity, expertise, influence and innovative spirit, you have enabled WoodGreen respond to unprecedented need and have impacted the lives of literally thousands of those most vulnerable in our city.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected us all, but perhaps none more than the vulnerable populations that WoodGreen supports each and every day. I have been overwhelmed to hear the incredible response to our #COVID19commitment urgent appeal. The volunteer, financial and gift in kind contributions from our board, donors, volunteers, corporate and government partners have been truly humbling.

For over 80 years, WoodGreen has been developing innovative and holistic programs to address some of our society’s

most complex social needs, and provide individuals with the opportunities and supports they need to live independently and with dignity. Yet, WoodGreen’s work flies under the radar of our government and philanthropic leaders. COVID-19 has sharpened our collective gaze on the fragile nature of our city and has clearly demonstrated why organizations such as WoodGreen are critical to our city’s health and well-being.

In the coming year, and as we apply lessons learned through COVID-19, WoodGreen will be taking an even larger role in senior care. As an anchor partner in the newly formed East Toronto Ontario Health Team (OHT), WoodGreen has been selected to play a leadership role. It is a testament to WoodGreen’s reputation, expertise and commitment to system collaboration and optimum client care.

WoodGreen is also taking a leadership role to help alleviate the escalating affordable

housing crisis in our city. Currently, there are over 100,000 households on a wait-list. Through the establishment of a Housing Finance Fund and innovative partnerships models with the city, developers and philanthropists, WoodGreen is well-positioned to advanced the creation of increased affordable housing.

These two initiatives – senior care and advancing affordable housing – are key components of our *The Difference Makers* Campaign and will have far-reaching impact in addressing some of the most pressing social issues in our city.

It is an exciting time in WoodGreen’s history; thank you for continuing to stand by us on this journey.

Sincerely,

Leo Salom

Addressing Toronto’s Housing Crisis

WoodGreen is taking a leadership role in bringing the affordable housing crisis to the forefront.

On January 24th, The Toronto Region Board of Trade and WoodGreen came together to launch a three-part series to illuminate innovative solutions to the housing crisis. The first Report: *“Housing a Generation of Workers”* was generously sponsored by TD and examines the challenges associated with finding affordable housing in Toronto – especially for workers in key service roles, such as healthcare, education and hospitality – and identifies solutions.

The report encourages collaboration of the private and public sector to come together as *Difference Makers* to find sustainable solutions. Toronto’s Deputy Mayor, Ana Bailão and Jan De Silva, President & CEO, Toronto Region Board of Trade, reinforced the message that we are all part of the solution.

WoodGreen’s President and CEO, Anne Babcock, and Mwarigha, Vice President of Housing and Homelessness, spoke to the leadership role that WoodGreen plays, as one of the largest, non-municipal providers of affordable housing in Toronto. Every day, WoodGreen is on



Anne Babcock and fellow panelists speak at the launch

the frontline of Toronto’s housing crisis, addressing the social and economic challenges faced by the growing population of workers who are impacted by the affordable housing crisis.

The report can be found at <https://workforcehousing.trbot.ca>.

Inspiring *Difference Makers*, the CLARK FAMILY MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE

Tackling Toronto's affordable housing crisis requires that we think differently and act collectively

Ed and Fran Clark are long-time proponents of helping the more vulnerable in our city. This deep-seated desire to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those less fortunate has led the Clark family to turn their attention to an ambitious visionary philanthropic undertaking – they are championing a new and powerful way to tackle Toronto's affordable housing crisis.

With an extraordinary leadership investment in WoodGreen's *The Difference Makers Campaign*, Ed and Fran Clark have established *The Clark Family Difference Maker Matching Gift Challenge*.

Through this Challenge, the Clark family will match every gift made to the housing pillar of WoodGreen's *The Difference Makers Campaign*, dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$3.5 million – doubling the impact of each donation!

As part of our strategic vision to expand affordable housing, WoodGreen has established a social impact Housing Finance Fund. This fund will address the hurdle of up-front feasibility costs associated with the development of new properties and eliminate the barrier to entry that most non-profits face. The Fund will allow WoodGreen to be development-ready to seize new housing development opportunities and unlock government funding to stimulate more affordable housing projects.

The Clark family hopes the Challenge will inspire leadership gifts from other generous donors, which will lay the foundation for this \$10 million *Difference Makers* Housing Finance Fund that will enable WoodGreen to more than triple our affordable housing reach.

As a business leader and community champion, Ed has always said a key to an apartment is not enough; we need wrap-around solutions to lift individuals and families out of poverty.

The Clark family invested in WoodGreen's Homeward Bound – a transformational four year housing, education and employment program for struggling, mother-led families – at its inception. Through their leadership support, hundreds of resilient women and their children, the majority of whom were fleeing abuse, have transitioned from living in shelters to economic independence and new futures.



We are delighted that one of the first projects planned through this Housing Finance Fund will be the creation of a second Homeward Bound campus, so WoodGreen with the support of the Clark family, can transform even more lives. *The Clark Family Difference Maker Matching Gift Challenge* will enable us to make unprecedented strides in creating more affordable housing in our city.

To find out how you can participate in the *The Clark Family Difference Maker Matching Gift Challenge*, please contact, Michelle Kerr, VP Development at 416 645 6000 ext 4006.

💧💧 I'm not asking you to change the world, but I know we can change the world we live in."

– Ed Clark

WoodGreen's Rapid COVID-19 Response

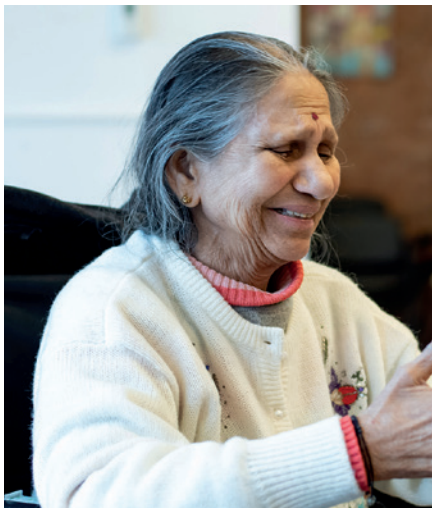
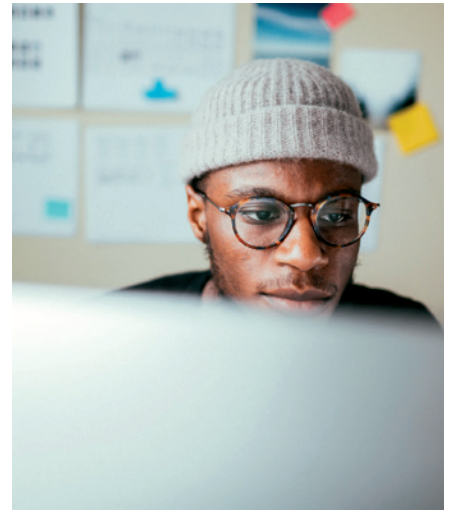
Clients from our First Step to Home program were recipients of a donation of pots and pans to help them cook meals while self isolating.



Our Housing Teams ensured additional cleaning for protection of our staff and clients.



Youth, Newcomer and Employment service teams all transitioned to virtual program delivery to better serve clients.



Our Seniors Helpline requests for support grew from 20 calls to 400 calls per day for food insecurity and isolation crises.



Drop-in Counselling services moved from in-person visits to phone or virtual visits.



Child Care workers stepped forward to sort groceries and deliver Meals on Wheels.

As Toronto moves closer to our 'next normal', WoodGreen is committed to maintaining – and increasing – the vital supports we provide to meet the needs of our community.


Our donors' rapid response to our #COVID19commitment urgent appeal

Thanks to the rapid response to the #COVID19commitment challenge, The Foundation was able to establish a centralized foodbank to respond to clients' unprecedented food insecurity and other essential need requirements.



Thank you to all our #COVID19commitment donors who helped


Wi-Fi
service for a
WoodGreen
housing site

750

Isolation
activity
kits for
kids and
seniors

116

Electronic
devices for
virtual physician visits,
remote programming and
community connections

1,000

grocery
deliveries


Your response kept people safe, fed, connected and out of hospitals



make the following impact:

400  Gallons hand sanitizer for frontline Personal Support Workers

800  Personal essentials and hygiene kits

4,000  Cloth masks and over 3600 surgical masks and shields for front-line teams

Over **12,000**  hot and frozen meals

WoodGreen's Young Leaders Council is CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK

WoodGreen is all about *Difference Makers* and we are thrilled to have a newly established Young Leaders Council with emerging professionals who are raising awareness of WoodGreen and the importance of the social service sector – and championing social change. Not content to wait on the sidelines, they are leading the charge in finding solutions to inequities.

In return for their generous investment of time and energy, these young professionals are gaining valuable learning through panel discussions and access to mentorship from The WoodGreen Foundation's board of directors, including some of our city's most experienced leaders in both the philanthropic and business sectors.

"I disagree when people say millennials are not altruistic. I find the exact opposite to be true; they just look at issues from a different perspective, they aren't satisfied with the status quo. They want to challenge the 'that is the way we always have done

it' syndrome and bring fresh ideas and energy. They are passionate and involved change agents and we are thrilled to have this group of *Difference Makers* working to change the way we all see the world." said Teresa Vasilopoulos, Executive Director of The WoodGreen Foundation.

Here are a few of the activities the YLC have been up to since inception:

On October 10th, World Homeless Day, the Young Leaders Council held a networking event at The Spoke Club. The evening brought together a large group of young Toronto professionals to discuss the critical issues facing our city and to learn more about the innovative solutions that WoodGreen provides.

On May 21st, the YLC kicked off its first in a series of engaging webinars.

The event was a Quarantine Cooking Class with celebrity chef Matt Dean Pettit. This was followed by second event on June 4th, which was a vegetarian inspired cooking class with Chef Rhekia Fahssi. Both virtual events were a blast and raised over \$5,000 for WoodGreen's Covid-19 response.

Stay tuned to see the impact this group will have in bringing awareness and new approaches to the social issues affecting our city. To learn more about WoodGreen's Young Leaders Council visit www.woodgreen.org/foundation/our-people/young-leaders-council/.



Chef Matt Dean Pettit



Chef Rhekia Fahssi



Sponsors and supporters, Roman Hessary, Lisa Diep and Yanal Dhailieh from Peace Collective attend YLC Launch Event on World Homeless Day.



REID IRWIN



ALLIE BRADFORD



JASMINE WONG



EMMA PATRIQUIN



JANIS MCCULLOCH



DR. NINA VITOPOULOS



MAISIE HO



JONATHAN NEHMETALLAH



LISA THOMPSON HORKINS



DR. SARAH FERRERA



ZIVA CLIFFORD-MANDEL

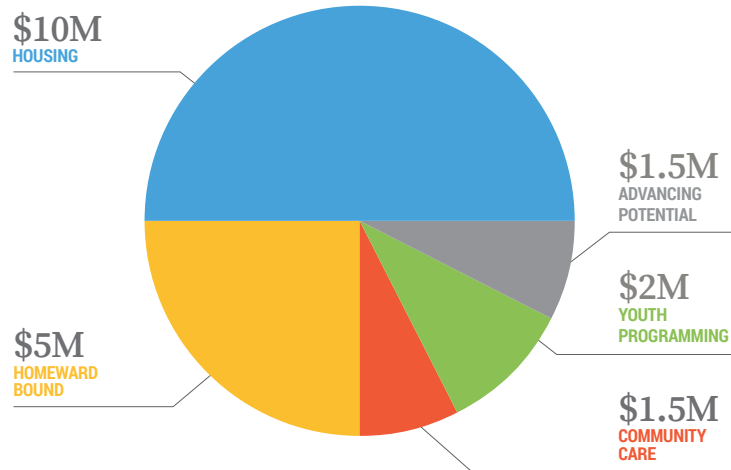


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The Difference Makers Campaign

It's time to be a *Difference Maker*

The WoodGreen Foundation is launching a \$20 million poverty reduction campaign. Our campaign will improve access, expand and enhance vital programs, and inspire innovation to effect real, sustainable change. With your help and WoodGreen's front-line expertise, *The Difference Makers Campaign* will create a more equitable city, where everyone has an opportunity to thrive and fulfil their potential.



\$10M HOUSING

Add more than 2,000 new affordable housing units for seniors, individuals with mental health issues, and those transitioning from the streets or shelters. Revitalize our current properties to improve access and reduce isolation.

\$5M HOMEWARD BOUND

Scale the highly successful women's empowerment model, Homeward Bound, locally, provincially and nationally.

\$1.5M COMMUNITY CARE

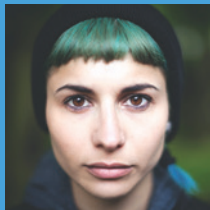
Increase capacity to support critical needs of frail, isolated seniors and those with mental health or developmental issues. Invest in technology to improve response time for senior care and crisis intervention.

\$2M YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Advance the Free 2 Be program for youth transitioning out of foster care, and expand mental health, social and recreational services through a new Youth Wellness Centre for at-risk youth.

\$1.5M ADVANCING POTENTIAL

Provide stabilization, training, employment, and settlement services by investing in the integration and enhancement of our core programs to ensure clients have access to skills training, financial counselling, English language training, education and employment services. Invest in deepening innovation across WoodGreen to test new approaches to service delivery.



WoodGreen is on the front-line of poverty reduction

WoodGreen Community Services has been a *Difference Maker* for more than 80 years. Focused on poverty reduction, WoodGreen helps remove barriers – empowering vulnerable members of our community to live healthier, more independent, productive and fulfilling lives.

40 LOCATIONS IN TORONTO

WOODGREEN is known as a sector leader in developing innovative and holistic solutions to some of our society's most critical social issues.

37,000 PEOPLE SERVED EACH YEAR

WOODGREEN serves 37,000 clients each year creating pathways to opportunities.

75+ PROGRAMS

WOODGREEN'S programs are often examples of best practice models, replicated throughout the province; many are first of their kind in Canada.

The WoodGreen Foundation publishes *The Difference Report* for friends and supporters of WoodGreen Community Services. Your generosity helps WoodGreen continue its efforts to realize our vision of a Toronto where everyone has an opportunity to thrive.

To donate, please visit:
www.woodgreen.org/foundation/donate

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