

JULY 2022

WOODGREEN VOLUNTEER SERVICES NEWSLETTER



Volunteers play a vital role in

WoodGreen’s Income Tax Clinic

Each year, approximately 100 volunteers with WoodGreen's Income Tax Clinic helps Toronto residents living on low incomes to file simple tax returns. The clinic is Toronto's largest year-round free income tax clinic (can assist people with up to 10 years of back taxes—and volunteers play a vital role in its successful operation. This past season, the clinic helped to complete more than 2,200 tax returns.

Volunteers who work in WoodGreen's Income Tax Clinic do multiple jobs, not only in support of clients but also each other. This interconnected process requires precise teamwork from several different types of volunteers. Administrative volunteers help book appointments and are first point of contact for clients. Next, tax prep volunteers help complete all tax returns. Throughout, tax lead volunteers support the tax prep volunteers, plus assist with running the clinic.

The result? Overall the response to tax clinic has been positive. Clients feel grateful for the support; their tax returns have been filed, and they can put aside any worries. Priceless peace of mind made possible at no cost, thanks to the work and dedication of volunteers.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

APRIL-JUNE 2022

CLIENTS

8663

Since April 1, 2022
WoodGreen volunteers
served 8663 clients in
different programs

VOLUNTEERS

212

212 new volunteers
joined WoodGreen and
devoted their time to
serve the community in
the past three months

HOURS

6380

Starting from April until end
of June 2022, our volunteers
devoted a combined 6380
hours to serve the
community.

WoodGreen Volunteers attended a workshop in 2SLGBTQ+

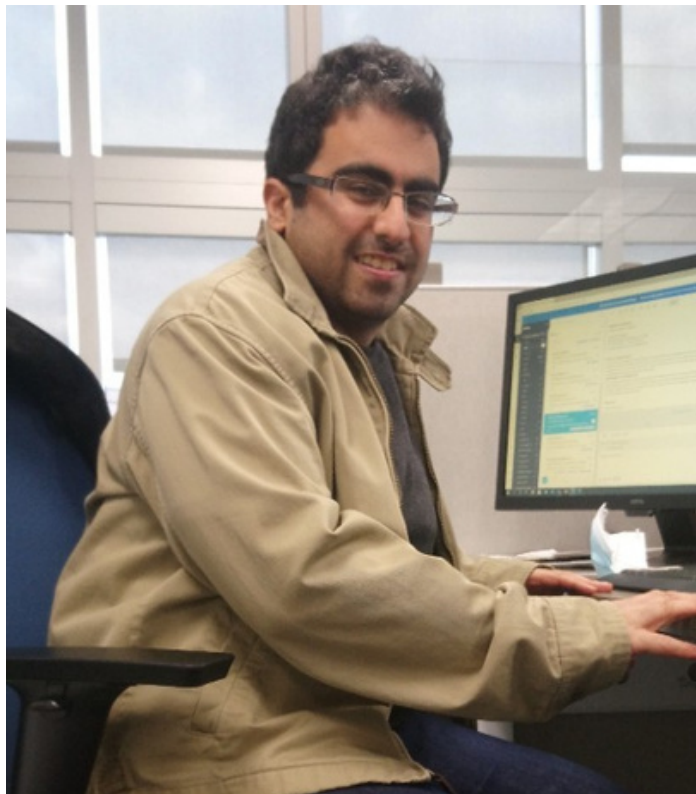
WoodGreen Volunteers attended a workshop about the 2SLGBTQ+ community. The workshop was organized by WoodGreen's Volunteer and Student Services and was facilitated by guest speaker Waem Charafeddine, who is a co-founder of Beyond Toronto Life. This workshop had two sessions about the 2SLGBTQ+ and heterosexual communities and the complex intersectionality that exists between them.

Session one explored deeper into the complexity of cis and hetero normative aspects of current society and workplace, and how LGBTQ+ community is challenging this norm. It also covered components of human identity and gender expression and identity.



Session two explained different types of discrimination, systemic oppression, and racism within these communities, and the negative mental health effects that come from these social inequalities. Volunteers found the session extremely educational, and it enhanced their knowledge in identifying different gender types.

Volunteers of the Month



Amir Soltaninia

Amir Soltaninia joined WoodGreen's Income Tax Clinic as a volunteer because he wanted to make a difference in the community. He's had a chance to do so by volunteering at our tax clinic and helping people to complete their tax returns.

Soltaninia lists working with people, whether volunteer coworkers at the clinic from diverse backgrounds or clients with different tax needs, as among the many rewards of his volunteer work with WoodGreen. He also enjoys receiving the clinic's yearly training. Yet what he values most about volunteering with WoodGreen's Income Tax Clinic is meeting new people and gaining new experiences.

"During my volunteer experience with WoodGreen, I learned to work as part of a team with colleagues from different cultural, educational and work backgrounds, which is satisfying," he said.



Michael Younder

When Michael Younder first joined WoodGreen's Community Connections Program as a volunteer mentor, he was searching for a job and realized he could help others with his experience.

During the eight years he's been involved with WoodGreen, Michael Younder has benefited from the experience; seeing mentees progress, mature and improve has given him a fresh perspective on career challenges. "It's always great to expand your network," he said.

For Younder, the most valuable aspect of his volunteer work with WoodGreen has been sharing up-to-date, real-world feedback on career development. "Plus of course, when I hear about mentees' successes. The best is when they find new jobs," he added.

Mei Lam



Mei Lam volunteers at WoodGreen's Seniors' Active Living Centre (SATC). She joined the program to give back to the community after her retirement. "Having flexible schedule allowed me to help others in the community," she said.

Lam is involved in many volunteering activities of the SATC. Lam says she enjoys volunteering with the Monday lunch program, craft making and selling, cooking, and translating Cantonese and other languages to English at the center.

"Volunteering for the senior groups makes me feel useful. Specially selling the craft products we make with the seniors group and raising money for WoodGreen's senior services. Getting positive feedback from the people who bought the products and seeing them wear the products makes me feel good," said Lam.

Upcoming Events

Culturally Responsive Communication 101

Living in one of the most diverse cities in the world comes with challenges and opportunities. Communicating with people that have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds tests our intercultural competence and understanding.

Being familiar with the fundamental characteristics of your home and host culture can help you develop effective communication skills and become an adept member of this multicultural society.

In this training session, you will learn about different sets of lenses through which people see the world and discuss their impact on daily interactions.

When: August 23, 2022

New Volunteers Virtual Orientation

All volunteers who have joined WoodGreen

Community Services recently are required to attend the volunteer services orientation session.

This session includes:

- Introduction to WoodGreen Community Services' programs
- Policies & Code of Conduct
- Volunteer opportunities within different programs
- Volunteer engagement, benefits & recognition

When: August, 2022

Volunteer Opportunities

- Therapist Volunteer - Walk-in Counselling Clinic
- Friendly Visitor for Senior-Ukrainian or Russian Speaking
- Mandarin-speaking Virtual Program Volunteer
- Meals on Wheels Runner
- Meals on Wheels Driver
- Medical Escort for Seniors
- Friendly Caller
- Income Tax Clinic Administrative Volunteer
- Food Program Assistant
- Comprehensive Care and Integration Volunteer
- Employment Service Administrative Assistant
- Settlement Mentor
- Friendly Visitor - Seniors Program
- Career Mentor for Women in Trades
- Administrative and Program Assistant - Homeward Bound
- Tax Preparer - Off-season
- Special Events Assistant

Student Placement Opportunities

- Digital Marketing and Social Media
- Seniors Program