

FALL NEWSLETTER

IS IT FALL ALREADY!?

MONIKA FOX - DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY

Can you believe that summer is already over? I'm still trying to wrap my head around it. But when I think about everything we've accomplished in the past three months, it's no wonder the time flew by. We celebrated nine SIS youth graduates, and Wendy, our SIS Manager, made sure it was a party to remember, complete with a red carpet, streamers, and balloons. Jonathan and Latoya worked tirelessly to secure jobs for ten youth, which is no easy feat. Somehow, they always ensure our youth are job-ready and connected with employers.

Even with the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) no longer available to our youth, Laura found stable housing for twelve of them. To help our former residents stay housed, Andrea spent 722 hours visiting them daily, and Tiru prepared 104 food packages. Our Primary Care Managers (PSMs) held 341 meetings with our current residents, helping them build their own paths to success.

We always say it takes a village, and at YWS, it truly does. Our 'village' includes the wraparound supports and services delivered by our amazing frontline staff and program leads, and we couldn't do any of it without your help. Over the past 3 months, our volunteers painted, cooked, gardened, and cleaned, contributing 634 hours. Our Futures of Tomorrow campaign in August surpassed its \$25,000 goal, and since July 1st, we've raised nearly \$300,000 for all programs at YWS!

So yes, the summer was busy, but it was definitely worth all the effort. Now we can take a breather -- oh wait -- the holidays are just around the corner, our busiest season of the year! Let's roll up our sleeves and keep going.

On a personal note, I would like to share that my dog Beno celebrated his 5th birthday on August 15th. This summer, he chased countless squirrels, went camping three times, and is now in the middle of hiking his 7th section of the Bruce Trail.

From our 'village' to yours, we hope you're doing well.

Monika and Beno

MONIKA FOX
DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY



VOLUNTEER AT YWS!

Here is a glimpse into volunteering at YWS! At Youth Without Shelter, we welcome the involvement of individuals who share our commitment to helping end homelessness, one youth at a time, one step at a time. We offer a range of volunteer opportunities for individuals who want to make a difference in their community. From yard work, to painting, to cooking in the kitchen, if you are interested in volunteer opportunities with Youth Without Shelter, don't hesitate to get in touch with **Alexandra**, our Volunteer & Events Specialist, at **416.748.0110 x 62**.

Thanks to the many groups and individuals who volunteered this season! While below are just a few highlights of recent volunteer engagements at YWS, please know that we are grateful for each and every one of you who took the time to volunteer.



GEN RE



SOFTCHOICE



D & H



YOUTH SAFETY

ANASTASIA KEMP - GOVERNMENT AND STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS MANAGER

As the lobbyist for YWS, I'm frequently asked, "What's happening at City Hall?" My usual response is, "How much time do you have?" This year has been particularly eventful, with significant developments in housing, renoviction policies, access to shelter beds, and more. One key area I'm closely monitoring is school and neighbourhood safety for youth.

Growing up in Scarborough in the 2000s, I was keenly aware of the importance of safety in my community and school. That's why I was encouraged when, in June, the City of Toronto's Executive Committee voted to enhance school community safety and well-being. In July, Toronto City Council adopted the *Community P.E.E.R.S.* and the *Restorative Justice Programs*, committing to establishing at least one Youth Space or Youth Hub in each of the City's 31 Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIA) and emerging neighbourhoods. I'd like to thank Councillor Crisanti (our local City Councillor) and Councillor Mantas for championing this motion.

While I hope YWS residents feel safe in their schools and communities, the reality is that safety remains a concern in many parts of our city. Fortunately, YWS is located within the Mount Olive-Silverstone-Jamestown NIA, which is set to receive at least one new Youth Space or Youth Hub. I'm thrilled that YWS youth will soon have another safe and positive space in their community beyond our shelter. Initiatives like the City of Toronto's *Youth Violence Prevention & Intervention* programs are critical. Programs such as *Restorative Justice* and *Community P.E.E.R.S.*, along with integrated crisis responses are designed to address the root causes of youth violence and I hope they can make a positive impact on our community. With these promising developments, we remain hopeful for a safer, more supportive environment for the youth we serve and for youth across the GTA.

GET IN TOUCH!

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SPENDING MY FIRST NIGHTS IN CANADA ON THE STREET

I LEFT NIGERIA AND ARRIVED IN CANADA IN EARLY FEBRUARY IN THE MIDDLE OF A REALLY COLD WINTER. WITH VERY LITTLE INFORMATION AND NOTHING BUT MY SMALL SUITCASE, I WAS INSTRUCTED TO CONNECT WITH A LOCAL ORGANIZATION TO FIGURE OUT MY NEXT HOUSING AND IMMIGRATION STEPS. THEY SIMPLY TOLD ME TO CONNECT WITH CENTRAL INTAKE TO FIND A TEMPORARY SHELTER BED. NO SUCH BED WAS FOUND AND I ENDED UP SPENDING SEVERAL DAYS SLEEPING IN THE STREETS OF TORONTO NOT KNOWING ANYBODY OR ANYTHING ABOUT HOW THE CITY WORKS...

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2023-2024 YWS
ANNUAL REPORT



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