

CELEBRATING

120
YEARS

@annmarie.cheung



2022-23

ANNUAL REPORT

Empowering Women & Their Families – Everyday

A Message from our Board President and Executive Director

December 2022 marked our 120th anniversary as a YWCA in St. Thomas-Elgin! We are rich in history and innovation as an organization who has adapted, grown, and responded to the changing needs of women and girls with diverse programs and services. We are proud of our place in the fabric of St. Thomas and Elgin County and as a member within a bold national movement. While the realities and needs of women and girls continue to evolve, the YWCA's mission, programs and services continue to create turning point opportunities that empower growth, build stability, and enhance wellness.

In 2022, we dedicated much of our learning to Indigenous truth, decolonization, inclusion, diversity, and equity. With financial support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, staff and volunteers participated in learning opportunities and immersion experiences to broaden our knowledge and awareness. Together we are re-learning history and challenging stereotypes and misconceptions.

We successfully reached the first milestone of our Project Tiny Hope Capital Campaign with our blitz fundraising efforts and early donors contributing over \$2 million. In addition, we received a \$3 million pledge from the City of St. Thomas building strong commitment to our housing project. With our project partners Doug Tarry Homes and Sanctuary Homes we achieved many milestones and are excited to be shovel ready as we await funding announcements from the federal government. The community has come forward with generous donations demonstrating that our housing development is important and relevant to many as we collectively work towards ending experiences of homelessness and building housing stability. We are proud to be dedicating half of the units to women, ten percent to Indigenous people, a quarter to youth and ten percent to Community Living Elgin residents. We will have a diverse and vibrant community at 21 Kains Street, in downtown St. Thomas!

A successful volunteer recruitment strategy was launched inviting new community members to join us as key supporters within the organization. With over 45 applicants we have new volunteers joining us at reception, building maintenance, fundraising, Canada Connects and special events. We are grateful for all the time and talent our new and seasoned volunteers give. They truly make a difference!

To help newcomers build meaningful social connections and more fully engage in community life, the YWCA launched an exciting, new mentorship initiative during the year. Canada Connects matches newcomers to Canada with more established community members to build mutual understanding and respect and a community where everyone feels safe and included.

With the support of YWCA Canada, we provided critical supports and funding to women fleeing violence and building housing stability with the National Emergency Survivor Support Fund. National support also helped us launch the Next Accelerator Program assisting families with low incomes to access Canada Learning Bonds and break down barriers to financial institutions.

International Women's Day was celebrated with the unveiling of our new mural on Mary Street West. This beautiful design, "A Brighter Future", created by Ann-Marie Cheung embodies women's empowerment and resilience.

Our gratitude and appreciation go out to our funders, donors, volunteers, staff, and supporters who continue to champion our work within St. Thomas-Elgin. We are deeply grateful for all their contributions over the year.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on building equity and inclusion for those most vulnerable and creating an inclusive community. Our staff, volunteers, partners, and donors are all part of our modern history 120 years in the making – empowering women and their families since 1902 – it is an honour and a privilege!



Lindsay Rice,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Ashley Dunn,
BOARD PRESIDENT

2022-23

OUR MISSION

Providing leadership, advocacy, opportunities, and a voice.
Empowering women and their families, every day!

WE BELIEVE

A Women's Perspective

Women must take leadership in shaping society's direction in order to achieve equity and equality for all women.

Community Mindedness

Healthy communities, free from violence, racism, and other abuses of power, nurture the whole person. Individuals committed to equity advance the growth of such communities.

The Whole Person

Strength, wisdom, and character come from the balanced development of the whole person in body, mind, and spirit.

Global Interdependence

The world-wide struggle for equity and equality interconnects all women.

Difference and Diversity

In order to achieve social and other forms of justice, we must embrace difference and diversity among peoples.

Land Acknowledgement

YWCA St. Thomas Elgin rests on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, Attiwonderonk, and Mississauga peoples, which are covered by the Upper Canada Treaties, specifically Treaty 2 (McKee Treaty, 1790) and Treaty 3 (Between the Lakes Purchase and Collins Purchase, 1792). This area is also covered by the Dish with One Spoon wampum, under which multiple nations came together in peace to care for the land and the resources of the Great Lakes. Today, Elgin County is also bordered by the communities of Munsee-Delaware First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Oneida Nation of the Thames. We are grateful to work on this land as we strive to build a more equitable and just community.

Executive
Director



Lindsay Rice

Board
Chair



Ashley Dunn

Board Members:



Helen Button



Alicia Connolly



Sherene Casey



Carrie O'Brien



Maria Fiallos



Claire Hinatsu



Natalie Huston



Kat Jacobs



Kara Lynds



Heather Stillitano



We contribute to a welcoming and inclusive community.

More than
361
newcomers
participated in
Conversation Circles
and Youth
Club.



Did you know?

YWCA supported newcomers from over **41** different countries of origin, speaking more than **32** languages.

21 members representing local organizations make up the St. Thomas Elgin Local Immigration Partnership (STELIP) council.

Volunteers contributed **153** hours of service to the settlement program.

Social Issue

In 2022, Canada welcomed the largest number of newcomers ever in a year in Canadian history. This record of admissions was also felt in St. Thomas-Elgin where the YWCA welcomed newcomers from diverse countries and backgrounds. The number of racialized community members also increased, nearly doubling in St. Thomas from 2016 to 2021. Immigration brings enormous benefits to both urban and rural communities including new ideas, productive skills and enriching the cultural fabric of neighbourhoods. At the same time, newcomers require support in order to successfully settle and participate in their communities to their full potential. Many lack the literacy and language skills they need to navigate daily life or integrate fully into the labour market using their skills and talents. In St. Thomas-Elgin, newcomers also experience unique challenges to their settlement such as barriers to transportation and social isolation which impacts their sense of belonging and wellbeing. Over the course of the year, one of the single, largest groups the YWCA served was individuals and families from the Ukraine.



Diversity is our reality, and inclusion is a choice we make every day.

YWCA Response

Recognizing diversity as a strength, the YWCA offers a wide variety of programming to help newcomers at every stage of their settlement journey. Clients are empowered to build the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their lives and to navigate Canadian culture with confidence. With support from community partners, individuals, families and youth are also provided opportunities to build new connections that foster their sense of belonging. In the year ahead, the YWCA looks forward to continue supporting new and returning clients and building a welcoming and inclusive community.

160 newcomers attended YWCA events for newcomers, including a Summer Barbeque and a Welcoming Bus Tour.



We offer quality childcare to local families.

More than
275
children attended our
licensed childcare
programs.

Did you know?

The YWCA is the largest school-aged childcare provider in St. Thomas & Elgin County. We provide Before and After School Programs as well as Summer, March Break and PD Day Camps.

39

School Age Childcare Educators connect with families daily as consistent, caring adults in the lives of our community's children.

With the implementation of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare System, families with children aged 0-6 are now benefitting from a 52% reduction in childcare fees in our Before and After School Programs and Day Camps.

Social Issue

Recently, there has been significant investment in childcare from both the provincial and federal governments, with the roll-out of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare system and a commitment to create 86,000 new affordable, licensed childcare spaces between 2019 and 2026 in Ontario. Ensuring access to quality, affordable childcare is a crucial part of increasing women's equality and financial security, allowing for participation in the workforce and skill development. When children have access to licenced childcare, they develop higher levels of empathy, resilience, and prosocial behaviours. The need for Childcare Educators continues to raise with the goal of maintaining and expanding local childcare spaces. Workforce retention and attraction must include provincial wage subsidies for these professionals.



YWCA Response

The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin has been participating with local and provincial initiatives to help elevate, recruit, and retain qualified Childcare Professionals in the Elgin/St. Thomas region. We are proud of each of our educators and their dedication to building children's wellbeing and social development. Last year our educators participated in several professional learning opportunities such as Building Relationships: Self Regulation and Co-Regulation, Cultivating Professional Friendships for Leaders, and Three Mindsets for Resilience. These learning opportunities support us to grow together in our approaches to support children, families, and ourselves while recovering from the impacts of the pandemic.

Children are at the centre of our services. Our pedagogy "How Does Learning Happen?" is an ongoing beacon to ground ourselves as Educators and tune into children as curious, competent, co-learners in our program environments. Keeping our pedagogy at the centre of what we do reminds us that relationships are the single most important attribute of healthy, supportive play and learning environments. Our collaborations with Thames Valley District School Board, All Kids Belong and St Thomas-Elgin Children's Services strengthen our ability to provide high quality licenced childcare for diverse children and families.

The YWCA serves **9** area schools with **12** programs.



We respond to food insecurity and reduce hunger.

156

individuals
participated in
programs that
included food
literacy.

Did you know?

The YWCA is part of a local food network that ensures access to healthy food options for everyone and diverts food waste.

10

children and youth participated in Kids Creative Cuisine classes to prepare and enjoy simple and healthy recipes while building confidence and learning safety tips for the kitchen!



Social Issue

Food insecurity is a pressing issue in our community. Across Canada, food prices are soaring, with February 2023 marking the seventh consecutive month where food inflation rose more than 10% year over year, which is more than double the current overall inflation rate. Local food banks are seeing the highest ever demand, including the St. Thomas-Elgin Food Bank, which saw a 50% increase in use from November 2021 to November 2022. Access to healthy and culturally appropriate food supports is crucial for wellbeing.

YWCA Response

The YWCA is part of a local food network. We facilitate access to free, healthy food options through our partnerships with local organizations. We offer a food cupboard in our building as well as doorstep food drop-offs. We also incorporate food literacy into many of our programs. We believe that food security is a vital part of our work, which ensures everyone in our community is treated with dignity and respect. It sets up program participants for success; with a full stomach it is much easier to learn, grow, and make decisions. Additionally, building access to food facilitates fellowship and community connection when we bring people together to eat. Addressing food insecurity and hunger is an important pillar of the work we do.

473 healthy meals provided.

126 collective meals prepared and shared together.

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark grey tank top and black pants, sitting on a brown armchair and reading a magazine. In the background, there is a tall black bookshelf filled with various board games, including titles like 'Battleship', 'Outburst', and 'Yahtzee'. A framed picture of a rabbit wearing a hat hangs on the wall. The scene is partially obscured by a large blue diagonal overlay.

We provide
housing stability
and prevent
homelessness.

13,785
overnight
stays within our
housing
programs.

Did you
know?

The YWCA has

46

units within our
communal homes.

193

is the average
number of nights
spent within our
Housing program.

76

individuals accessed
our Housing
Programs, as a place
to call home.

160

youth, women
and men accessed
intensive housing-
based case
management.

36

youth and adults
were diverted from
homelessness by
accessing YWCA
rental supports.



Social Issue

Rent prices continues to rise in St. Thomas and Elgin County, like many communities across the country. Coupled with reduced availability, in part due to very low vacancy rates, many people are struggling to access safe and affordable housing. Homelessness in our community is often hidden, especially for women and youth, who rely on staying with family or friends or in other temporary accommodations to ensure a safe night's sleep. Homelessness in all its forms, including those sleeping rough, staying in emergency shelters, staying with friends, or staying in other temporary accommodations, continues to be a pressing issue for our community. Last year, 223 people were identified as experiencing homelessness on the By Names List, and 121 of them are now stably housed.

YWCA Response

The YWCA has been providing safe and affordable housing since 1928. Youth, women, men, and gender diverse individuals have benefitted from diversion from the system, rapid rehousing and intensive housing-based case management within a supportive environment. Through our community's Youth Homelessness Protocol, case managers build housing stability and opportunities for education, employment, positive social relationships, family reunification and improved health and well-being. Last year we made great strides in understanding the realities of women-led family homelessness in St. Thomas and Elgin County, with local research gathered from women with lived experiences and other community stakeholders. Advocacy for a systematic change, breaking down barriers, and improving housing stability for adults, youth, and families is at the forefront of our work. We are guided by the notion that housing is a human right, and that ending homelessness is possible.

Brightening Lives. Building Community.



Project Tiny Hope

It was a big year for Project Tiny Hope:

- The St. Thomas City Council approved our zoning and amended the by law to support our proposed build.
- A public meeting was held with many positive comments from the community for the project and support from council.
- Our site plan approval process was completed and approved by the City.
- And as the land was originally brownfield and fully remediated, we received our Record of Site Condition from the Ministry of Environment.

**OVER
\$5 MILLION
RAISED**

“Stable housing provides a foundation for health, well-being, and prosperity for children, families, and communities. We are eager to expand our housing services to include 40 new rental units at 21 Kains Street to grow our impact and create greater stability for those in need.”

Lindsay Rice, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



With these key milestones achieved we are shovel ready and awaiting federal funding! None of this would have been possible without the steadfast dedication and generous contributions of our project partners Doug Tarry Homes and Sanctuary Homes.

Our Capital Campaign Committee met with donors from businesses, foundations, service clubs, churches, families, and foundations. Their efforts and networking allowed us to exceed our first fundraising milestone with over \$2.7 million raised by year end. These donations combined with the \$3 million pledged by the St. Thomas City Council allowed us to submit a Rapid Housing

Initiative application with a 40% contribution match earning top points in that category!

We are eager to move forward with servicing the land and building our donations as we know how critical new affordable housing units are to St. Thomas and the impact it will have on those most vulnerable to experiences of homelessness and couch surfing.

**DONATE
TODAY!**

**Tiny Homes.
Big Vision.**



Thank you to our Capital Campaign Committee: Bryan White, Andrew Gunn, Laurie Intven, Andrea Hayes, Mary Jane Ferriman, Marla Champion, Sarah Lounsbury and Lindsay Rice.



We connect people to their community.

Thank you
to our volunteers,
who together
contributed
2500
hours of
time.

**Did you
know?**

72

communication devices including phones, laptops, and tablets were provided to residents and clients.

117

people participated in the Women's Day event.

Get Gorgeous
FOR GRAD

58

youth left feeling their best after accessing YWCA's Get Gorgeous for Grad boutique.

108

sessions of counselling and mediation were supported by the YWCA.

25

new volunteers contributed to the YWCA's work.

Social Issue

Social connection is imperative for wellbeing. It can decrease anxiety and depression, help regulate emotions, and lead to higher self-esteem and empathy. But loneliness is on the rise, which increases the risk of premature death from all causes and is associated with higher rates of depression and anxiety. Moreover, marginalized groups are more likely to experience loneliness and exclusion, including new immigrants, elderly people, and people experiencing poverty and homelessness. Social connection is also especially important for youth. This means that it is imperative to foster social connection and provide opportunities for connection, particularly for those most at risk.



YWCA Response

Social connection is an integral component to health and well-being and as such the YWCA creates opportunities for connection and building a sense of belonging through our array of programs and services. Connections are enhanced when a newcomer to Canada joins our youth group, or a young adult attends a YWCA youth independence program, or when one of our residents is connected with a community mental health support. In each of our programs we invite people from all walks of life to build prosocial skills, independence, self esteem, and new relationships. We offer one-on-one support, group-based support and system navigation with warm referrals to outside community supports. New connections were made last year with the introduction of Canada Connects, the SHE Program, National Emergency Survivor Support and our Becoming a Leader Program for Youth.



**We support
children to grow
and thrive.**

214

children and youth
participated in
swimming lessons
and lifesaving
training.

Did you
know?

137

children and
youth engaged
in skill building
activities that
build self-esteem
with peers and
caring adults.

Close to

50

people attended
recreational
swimming
each day of the
summer at the
Outdoor Pool
in Aylmer to be
active, have fun
and connect!

Children from

13

different
communities
attended YWCA
Children's
Programming
such as Kids
Creative Cuisine,
Stay Safe and
Babysitting
Course.



Social Issue

Physical activity, recreation and group social settings help children and youth build confidence, manage emotions, enhance mental health, and promote overall wellbeing. Recreational programming not only provides youth with opportunities for physical activity, but also social connection, which is equally as important in fostering skill-building and positive mental health. Swimming lessons and other aquatics programs are particularly important given the location of Elgin County along the shores of Lake Erie. These programs are a critical part of a drowning prevention strategy. According to the 2022 Ontario Non-Fatal Drowning Report prepared by the Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada, there are an average of 152 drowning deaths in Ontario each year. Supporting child and youth wellbeing is also particularly vital as we grapple with the impact of the pandemic. Youth were especially impacted by the pandemic, with a national survey comparing mental health in 2018 and 2020 finding the largest drop in ages 15-24 who reported having excellent or very good mental health (down from 62% to 40% in 2020).

YWCA Response

The YWCA brought children and youth together to have fun, develop skills, build self-esteem and feel included. Children and youth prepared healthy meals, tried new foods and recipes, learned how to be safe at home and in their communities without the direct supervision of a guardian, developed basic first aid and caregiving skills, and engaged in leadership training and experiences to promote active recreation, water safety and contribute to their community. Amid ongoing pandemic impacts on the aquatic sector, the YWCA continued its commitment to providing water safety education, swimming lessons, and supervised recreational swimming. Although indoor pool facility access was not available during the school year, the outdoor pool in Aylmer came alive during the summer! Swimming lessons, lifesaving training on the pathway to become a lifeguard and recreational swimming was provided for children, youth, families and individuals to promote fitness, physical activity and water safety.



We create opportunities for workforce entry and skills development.



192

people accessed
employment readiness
and coaching services
through YWCA
programs.

Did you know?

Our region continues to grow, and employers are facing challenges in the recruitment and retention of their workforce. As of March, there were

1,150

jobs posted for Manufacturing, Health Care, Support Services, Retail, Food Services, and Construction in St Thomas-Elgin. Nonetheless, there are many under-represented groups in these same sectors.

37

women received training in technology, manufacturing, and construction.

Social Issue

As our region's economy is expected to continue to grow rapidly, this is the time to support the under-represented and marginalized groups in our community including women, youth, adults with lower levels of education, people living in poverty, and newcomers to our community. They may have little to no attachment to the workforce, and fear facing racism and "othering" in the workforce. Their lack of confidence can be a tremendous barrier, often resulting in many of them disengaging and not participating in the workforce. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce notes that with various sectors growing, including the digital and green economies, it's critical that employment sectors develop inclusive strategies and invest in supports like childcare and upskilling/reskilling.



YWCA Response

The YWCA's education and employment programs create and deliver education sessions including upskilling and reskilling to respond to both employer and client challenges. This year we successfully delivered Landscaping, Customer Service, Build Your Financial Toolkit, and multiple Digital Skills sessions. These were developed with input from job developers and employers.

We also connected 37 women with free college-level upskilling through the regional YWCA UPLIFT program. We'll continue to support workforce needs and connect under-represented groups to in-demand jobs to build a more diverse and skilled workforce.



We help break
the cycle of poverty
and support life
stabilization.



13

people graduated
from the Getting
Ahead Poverty
Intervention
Program.

Did you
know?

52

people accessed
the National
Emergency
Survivor Support
(NESS) Fund.



30

youth were
supported by our
Youth in Transition
Worker while
transitioning into
adulthood and
working on life
stabilization.

162

people were
supported with
transportation.

59

households received
funds to help access
furniture.

16

young adults
participated in the
Youth Independence
Program.

Social Issue

According to the Elgin St. Thomas Coalition to End Poverty, over 12,000 people live below the poverty line in our community, which is more than the populations of Aylmer, West Lorne, Port Stanley and Port Burwell combined. This represents over 10% of the population of Elgin County and St. Thomas. Poverty is a multi-faceted issue with wide-ranging impacts that likewise needs multi-faceted solutions. People living in poverty may struggle to access safe and affordable housing, reliable transportation, sufficient and nutritious food, and other basic needs. They may also experience social isolation and are at a greater risk for various health problems, including mental health issues like anxiety and depression. Each of these characteristics of poverty compounds, and is compounded by, other characteristics.

The Youth Independence Program has taught me so so so much! The facilitator is an amazing teacher and friend. I highly recommend this program. It teaches life skills, communication, punctuality and so much more. I had an amazing 3 months."

YWCA Response

Poverty is multi-dimensional, and the YWCA employs a targeted, intentional, and integrated approach to reduce its effects on individuals, families and the community. The development of programming includes social inclusion, collaboration, and respect. Through direct education and support in classrooms, group workshops and one-on-one interventions, knowledge and access to resources increases, social inclusion opportunities are provided, personal empowerment and self-sufficiency is encouraged.

Did you
know?

78

women identified
an increase in
social connection
from the program.

SHE Group

The SHE (Social, Healing, Empowerment) Program is a women's group that offers a place of healing, where women build friendships and work towards acceptance of their mental, physical, and emotional health, while obtaining supports to manage their lives and implement change. This group welcomes all those in Elgin County 18+ identifying as women. Accommodations are available to support with transportation and childcare as needed. Discussions and support topics range from mental wellness, career building, job retention, self-care, the cycle of poverty, trauma, abuse, housing stability, and parenting. Each meeting includes creative activities and a nutritional component.

NESS – National Emergency Survivor's Support Fund

"The funds
are going to
help me get
into my new
apartment
and start
my new
life, I am so
thankful for
the help!
You don't
know how
much it
means to
me."

Launched in 2022, the YWCA's National Emergency Survivor's Support (NESS) Fund provided immediate financial support to help survivors with urgent expenses including housing, utilities, storage fees, furniture, moving and travel expenses. Survivors have been connected to wrap-around transition services including counselling, and connections to healthcare, employment, and legal assistance as needed. Last year 52 women were supported through our NESS fund.

"It was a huge
help to get my
family and I into
a safe living
space and out
of transitional
housing."



128 identifying women engaged
in the SHE program.

46 women identified more engagement with
their community because of the program.

2022-23 Financial Highlights

As of March 31, 2023

Revenue and Expenditures

RECEIPTS

▶ Grants	\$3,043,121
▶ Program Fees	\$734,653
▶ Donations, Capital Fundraising and Event Proceeds	\$499,918
▶ Residence Rent	\$200,191
▶ Investment Income	\$61,055
▶ Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions	\$71,189
▶ Capital Funding Deferred	\$360,292
▶ Deferred income decrease (increase)	\$223,711
TOTAL	\$4,026,124

EXPENSES

▶ Salaries and Benefits	\$2,864,343
▶ Professional Fees and Contracted Services	\$210,456
▶ Materials and Supplies	\$406,900
▶ Repairs and Maintenance	\$321,120
▶ Promotion and Publicity	\$15,479
▶ Professional Development	
▶ Fundraising	\$8,814
▶ Office and Administration	\$113,213
▶ Service Charges and Bad Debt Expenses	\$8,778
▶ Amortization	\$75,104
TOTAL	\$4,024,104

We advocate for change

We remained a strong voice in the community creating opportunities for conversation and advocacy for women and families experiencing homelessness. We continue to be a trusted partner to collectively address complex social issues whether it be housing stability, racism, food security, settlement services or access to education. As a partner with other YWCAs in Ontario, we participated in several advocacy campaigns over the year highlighting the need for change and advancement of issues facing cis and trans women and girls. Together we engage in systemic advocacy to advance gender and racial equality in our province with calls to action and campaigns for change.

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin conducts ongoing advocacy at the local level centred around the individuals

we serve and rooted in education and evidence. Last year we met with our City Mayor and Council Members, MP, MPP, the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development,

and the Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Youth on issues related to housing stability, homelessness, access to childcare, workforce development, skills training, settlement services and opportunities for youth.

We joined YWCA leaders from across Canada for YWCA Day on the Hill in Ottawa. In meeting with over 60 Members of Parliament and Senators as well as ministerial staff our ask was focused on calling the government of Canada to implement

shelter, transitional and affordable housing projects to address the gendered housing crisis. We had the privilege of marching in the 19th annual Sisters of Spirit Vigil lead by the Native Women's Association of Canada to honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, two spirit and gender-diverse people.

Safia Siddiqi, a renowned poet and former Afghanistan

parliamentarian, was our keynote speaker at our annual Women's Day where she spoke about the goals of supporting and empowering women with examples of her own lived experience.



We work in partnership

The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin continues to work towards common goals through partnerships and collective impact projects. Our participation on several community committees demonstrates our interest and ability to work collectively with community stakeholders across St. Thomas-Elgin. Through broad cross-sector coordination our reach and impact are greater together!

Turning Points

As a newcomer to Canada, the YWCA was the first place that helped me adjust to life in a new country and learn a new language. I have been in Canada for several years now and the YWCA is still the first place I go to when I have a question or need help. I will never forget my English teachers and all the staff who have helped me to reach my goals including becoming a Canadian citizen. Thank-you YWCA for your help and always being there.

~ SOCHARITA



It was a great opportunity for me to be a part of the City Hall tour organized by the YWCA. As a new immigrant to Canada and a local of St. Thomas, it was a wonderful chance to hear from the Mayor and learn more about the facilities and services provided by the City of St. Thomas. The tour gave me a sense of community and I am grateful to be a part of this heritage city.

~ PRADEEPA

Getting Ahead and the Keep Moving Forward programs run by Donna Rankin have helped me greatly in learning about what poverty is, why poverty happens, and that it can happen to just about anyone due to circumstances that arise in one's life. It has helped me to recognize generational patterns and those that have contributed to myself being in poverty as an adult, and how growing up in an impoverished family has taught me the same ways of life as I grew up. These programs helped me to learn the skills to break that cycle, how to properly budget and set SMART goals. The program also helped me to understand politics a bit better so that when voting I can make the best decision on which party to vote for based on where to find the platforms for each party and understand them.

~ K.G.

Thanks for all the support, encouragement and for going out all the way to accommodate me and making sure all the books and materials are in place. I appreciate your kindness in my learning journey in this program.

~ UPLIFT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

Thank you to all for making my day so special [with Get Gorgeous for Grad]. I will remember this for many years to come.

~ JESSICA

Donors and Funders

*Donors marked with a * are monthly pledge donors.*

\$750,000 - \$1,000,000

Doug Tarry Homes Ltd.

\$500,000 - \$749,999

McLorn Family Estate

\$250,000 - \$499,999

The Sweetgrass Fund within Elgin-St. Thomas Community Foundation

\$150,000 - \$249,999

Ardent Industries and the
White Family
YWCA Hamilton

\$50,000 - \$149,000

Barrie Family Community
Fund within Elgin-St. Thomas
Community Foundation
Canadale Nurseries Limited
CJDL Consulting Engineers
Geerlinks Home Hardware
Kinsmen Club of St. Thomas
La Farge Canada Inc.
Owens Corning
Sanctuary Homes
United Way Elgin Middlesex
United Way Simcoe Muskoka
YWCA Canada

\$10,000 - \$49,000

Adobe Home Comfort
Canadian Tire St. Thomas
Diana House
Duggie & Ted Gill
Elgin Carpet One Floor & Home
Family and Children Services of
St. Thomas and Elgin
Great-EST Need Fund within Elgin-
St. Thomas Community Foundation
James Hardie Building Products
Joan & Matthew James
Julia & Kirk Maltby
LP Building Solutions
Masco
Presstran Industries Ltd.
St. Thomas Lions Club
TORLYS Inc.
VDK Group Inc.

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Debbie Hamilton & Associates Ltd.
and Co-operators
Fanshawe College Urban 360 Lab
Green Lane Community Trust
IODE Stirling Chapter
Judy & Robert Upsdell
Kiwanis Club of St. Thomas Golden-K
Krista & Jon Seabrook
Laurie & Thomas Nagge
M.P. General Contracting
Margaret Carroll
St. Thomas Royal Canadian Legion
Branch 41

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Aylmer Community Foundation
Cole-Munro Foods Group Inc.
Devonshire Consulting
Hayhoe Homes
Junior Jumbo Poverty Initiative Fund
within Elgin- St. Thomas
Community Foundation
Optimist Club of Talbotville
Port Stanley Lioness Club
Scotiabank

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Altus Group Limited
Action Financial Group, iA
Private Wealth
Anne Thompson & Mike Reardon
Bowsher + Bowsher
Casey's Creative Kitchen
Cathy & Greg Grondin
Central United Church
Don & Hazel Williams Charitable
Foundation
Don West Custom Homes
Donna Kraft
Elgin Dental Centre
Erica & Dave Arnett*
Helen & Gerald Phillips
HIRA LTD
HVAC Delineation Inc.
Keri Johnston & Darren Renton
Locky Lane Visual Design

Marla Champion*

Mary Jane Ferriman
McGregor Morris Fund within Elgin-
St. Thomas Community Foundation
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The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated to us from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

While every single donation makes a positive and lasting difference, we would like to recognize those who gave donations totalling \$100 or more.

We regret any errors or omissions. Thank you to all our supporters who generously contributed and believe in our mission.



