

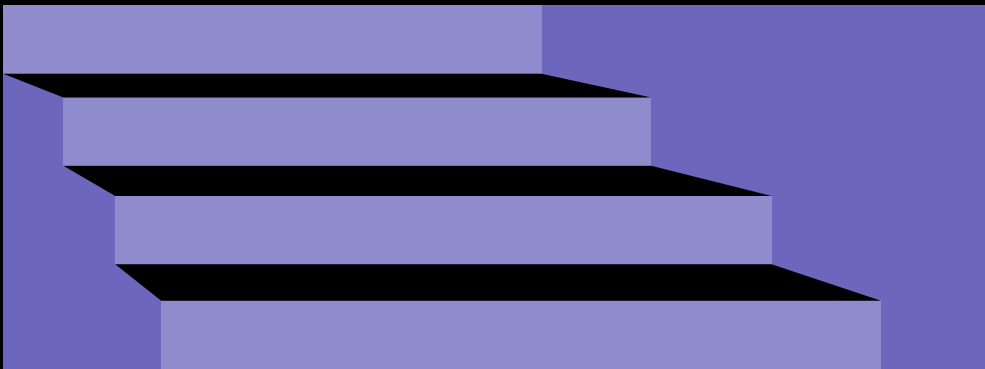
2023



THE WORLD

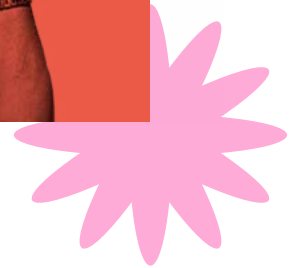


AT OUR



THE 519

DOORSTEP



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The 519 is in Tkaronto (now known as Toronto), which in Mohawk means "where there are trees standing in the water." Today, Tkaronto is covered under Treaty #13 and the Williams Treaties. It is the traditional territories of many First Peoples, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnaabe, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. Tkaronto is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples – including 2 Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQ+ communities.

This territory is part of the 'Dish with One Spoon' wampum, a Treaty made between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas, and Haudenosaunee, where nations entered into an agreement to protect the land and responsibly care for its resources in harmony. As settlers, newcomers, refugees, and Indigenous peoples, we have all been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect. We recognize our responsibilities as Treaty people to engage in a meaningful, continuous process of truth and reconciliation.

This city was built on stolen land and stolen African Black labour and resources. One cannot be remembered without the other.

CONTENTS

- 4** About The 519
- 5** Letter From our Leadership
- 6** Annual Highlights
- 8** New to Canada Programs
- 10** Child & Family Programs
- 12** Youth Programs



- 14** Access to Justice & Health
- 16** Advocacy
- 18** Housing Support
- 19** Food Security
- 20** Drop-in Programming
- 21** Peer Programs & Direct Support
- 22** Volunteers
- 23** Education & Training
- 24** Signature Events
- 26** Philanthropy
- 28** Donor Recognition
- 34** Financial Summary
- 35** Board of Management

48 years

In operation

91

Staff

635

Volunteers in 2023

53

Community led groups called
The 519 home in 2023

ABOUT THE 519

The 519 is Canada's largest 2SLGBTQ+ organization. A City of Toronto agency, registered charity, and community centre established in 1976, The 519 is dedicated to promoting community well-being, equity and justice for 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Built by and for 2SLGBTQ+ people, we respond to the needs of our diverse communities through advocacy, direct services, and by providing space to our communities to come together and build a better future.



A Letter From Our Leadership

In the 1970s, the building that is now home to The 519 was slated for demolition. In disrepair and long past its glory days, a group of dedicated neighbours and activists came together to save the building. When The 519 opened its doors a couple of years later, it was the beginning of a new model for the City. Almost and almost five decades later we continue to demonstrate the value of community-centred governance, accessible placemaking, and responsive programming.

A lot has changed since those early days and we as a community have experienced some incredible victories as well as heart wrenching losses over the years. Through struggle, perseverance and love 2SLGBTQ+ communities have made incredible progress towards a more equitable and just world and remain vigilant against attempts to roll back our hard-fought wins. From a small group of dedicated staff and volunteers to Canada's largest 2SLGBTQ+ community centre, The 519 has evolved over the decades to meet the needs of the communities and neighbours we are here for.

This year, The 519 saw unprecedented growth in the number of LGBTQ+ refugees turning to The 519 for support. We're proud to be a trusted partner in the lives of so many people who come to Canada seeking refuge. Our New to Canada programming helps build opportunities for some of the most vulnerable members of our communities. As we build new systems and programs to respond to the broadening refugee crises, and the ways it intersects with access to housing, health, justice, and employment, it is a poignant reminder that meeting the unique needs and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ refugees can't happen in isolation. It must be a shared responsibility across all levels of government, settlement and social service partners, and community-based responses that meaningfully support LGBTQ+ refugees and celebrate their contributions to Canadian society.

Our work as a community centre has always focused on how supporting individuals creates stronger communities, and how strong communities create opportunities for individuals to flourish. This year we implemented a new two-year community wellbeing plan, focused on co-creating a stronger and healthier neighbourhood through community development, engagement and enhanced supports for our neighbours who are marginalized. We also launched our community resiliency project, focused on understanding how climate change will affect the health and wellbeing of 2SLGBTQ+ people and the role community organizations can play in ensuring that emergency responses and community support models reflect the needs of 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

As we respond to the present day needs of our communities, we've continued to invest time and resources to ensure that The 519 is well equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. This year the Board of Management completed a comprehensive by-law review process, modernizing The 519's guiding documents to better reflect who we are as an organization. We invested in new data management software and continued to invest in our staff's capacity building and professional development. As an organization deeply committed to equity and justice for all, we worked across the organization to embed confronting anti-Black racism and our responsibilities to truth and reconciliation into our work, policies, and strategic plans.

Just as it was in the 1970s, the work of The 519 is only possible because of the countless people who, in ways big and small, work together to build a better world for 2SLGBTQ+ communities. The brilliance and dedication of The 519's staff can be seen every day in the ways they show up for each other. From packing meals to providing pro bono legal support, our volunteers are the engine that makes The 519 run. The generosity of our funders and donors powers our work, helping us make queer magic happen.

We are so grateful to everyone who walks through our door and contributed to making The 519 such a special place. Everything you will find in the following pages is made possible by you.



Paul Saguil (he/him)
Chair, Board of Management

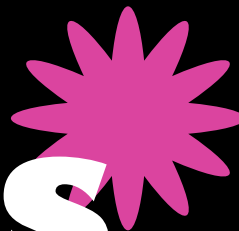
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Jonathan Saguil".



Maura Lawless (she/her)
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maura Lawless".

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS



TAX CLINIC

\$3.9M+

In tax returns

1,996

Tax Clinic clients



EDUCATION & TRAINING

6,580

Education & Training workshop participants

HOUSING

57

People accessed
Shelter at
Pacewood



LEGAL CLINIC

1,035

Legal Clinic clients

“The 519 provided me a safe space that helped me adapt to my life in Canada. I love giving others the same care.”

– Laura, Program Participant and Volunteer



NEW TO CANADA

15,293

Refugees and newcomers served

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

100+

Organizational partners

13,873

Harm reduction items provided

8,895

Visits to EarlyON programs

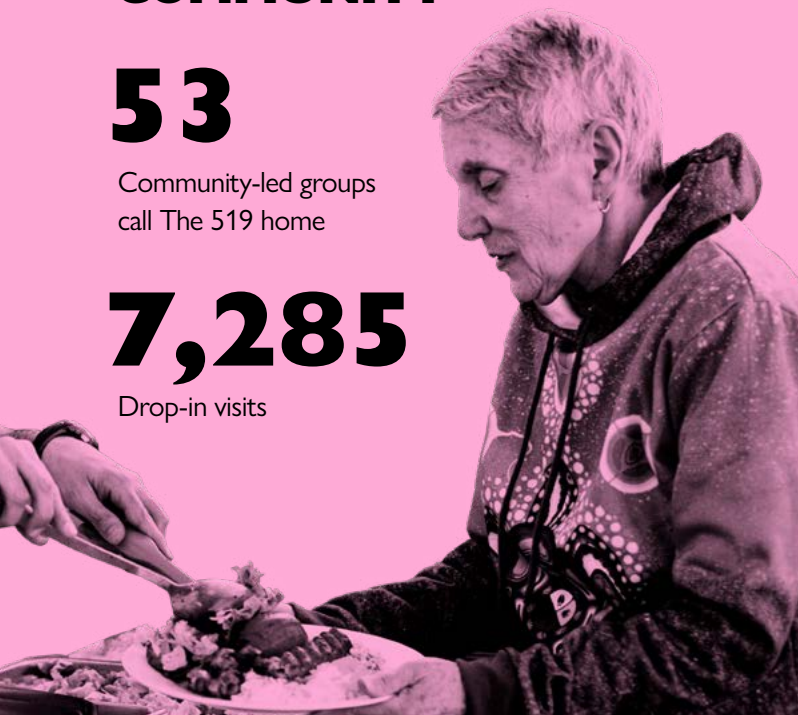
COMMUNITY

53

Community-led groups
call The 519 home

7,285

Drop-in visits



New to Canada Programs



A couple of suitcases, a folder of documents, and a hope for a better future. These are often the few building blocks that LGBTQ+ refugees have to create a new life in Canada.

The decision to leave home is never an easy one, even when someone is fleeing persecution. When LGBTQ+ refugees and newcomers arrive at The 519 for the first time, accessing support can feel overwhelming. Our first task is always the same: make people feel safe and welcome.

In the past year, anti-2SLGBTQ+ hate and rhetoric has been growing at a frightening pace. From state-sanctioned violence and legislation in Uganda and Russia, to the persecution and killing of LGBTQ+ people worldwide, the continued criminalization of LGBTQ+ people means that every day, people from around the world are showing up at our doorstep in search of support and community.

This year, our **New to Canada** team saw an unprecedented increase in LGBTQ+ refugees seeking urgent assistance. Over 7,000 LGBTQ+ refugees turned to us for help. That's than six times as many requests as we got in 2022.

Welcoming people from every corner of the world, earning their trust, and being a partner in their journey of building a new home in Canada is a profound responsibility. As our programs continue to evolve and grow to meet the overwhelming number of people in search of support, it is a responsibility we do not take lightly.

The road to calling Canada home is paved with paperwork. Every day, we meet with clients to help them navigate the complex process of obtaining work permits, securing legal representation, housing, and more. Our staff aids community members on their settlement journeys through initiatives such as our **Narrative Support and Writing Program**, which helps people explain their experiences and build their claim. Our **Mock Hearing Program** builds on this by preparing claimants for their hearing with the Immigration and Refugee Board.

We also know that settlement goes beyond just paperwork, access to financial assistance, and hearings. Our long-standing **Among Friends** program works with our New to Canada clients to foster community while exploring the ins and outs of life in Canada. Weekly, we saw 200+ participants join us in person. The escalating refugee housing and shelter crisis is, as far away as Windsor and Kingston, leading to an average of 1,000 participants joining us online each week from across Ontario.

Our dedication to cultivating inclusive spaces for diasporic communities was reflected through programs like **Henna Hangs** and the **Black Health and Wellness Hub**. Tailored to the needs of Black LGBTQ+ newcomer communities, the Hub offered specialized programs aimed at addressing barriers to accessing health and wellness services for Black newcomers. It served as a platform for participants to engage in open discussions, connect with essential resources and support networks, and provided a regular opportunity for community members to meet, share experiences, and learn from one another.

8,154

Newcomer clients

7,137

Refugee Claimant clients

10,836

Among Friends attendees

80

Settlement workshops



★ IMPACT STORY:



FROM HIDING TO HOPE

Davi is passionate about respect for Black hair. “Since coming here, I’ve been on a journey locating my hair. Where I come from there’s a lot of hair discrimination, so I’ve loved learning about other Black people’s experiences with how they navigate the workplace with Black hair,” he says. “In Toronto I have the liberty to grow my hair, and also be employed.”

Davi is a convention refugee from Jamaica who attends the Black Health and Wellness Hub at The 519. “Back home, homosexuality is illegal. You can go to prison. You can be killed for being gay, or for being suspected of being gay,” he says. “But Black Health and Wellness hub is affirming of both my sexuality and my culture.”

New refugees are often living at the intersection of many experiences. As they explore new freedoms, they also encounter new dynamics of prejudice, all while also attempting to maintain a connection to their home culture. Davi finds the Black Health and Wellness Hub supports him in navigating the complexities of his new life in Canada.

“It centres around your Blackness and those nuances that you don’t get to discuss every day. You realize your experiences are not that unique to you,” Davi says. “You also get to hear other people’s solutions; how they overcame those struggles.”

The Black Health and Wellness Hub fosters conversations on community health issues every month. As a newcomer from the Caribbean, Davi found the session on Seasonal Affective Disorder enlightening. “My mood changes when it gets dark at 3:30pm. It mixes me up and I get serious anxiety,” Davi says. “We reminded each other that it only lasts for a season. We talked about ways to distract ourselves from it, how to keep going.”



“I’ve even learned a lot about the nuances of the identity spectrum in Black Health and Wellness Hub. It’s new for us to get to have that conversation in a liberated way,” he says. “At home we would only talk about sexuality in secret, and it would come from a place of fear and paranoia. Now we can talk about it from a place of bravery.”

Davi says being in a country that’s safer for him with new resources to navigate issues in an affirming way has taken a huge weight off his shoulders. “Back home, hiding this secret took over my whole life. Now I have room to be a better version of myself and get on the path to social functioning. I can talk about goals,” he says.

Child and Family Programs



For 2SLGBTQ+ people, the concept of ‘family’ can transcend traditional boundaries, opening new doors of possibility to find love, community, and support across cultures, languages, and differences.

Through circle time, storytelling, fun, and play, our **EarlyON Child and Family Centre** nurtures inclusive spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ families and allies to learn and grow with mutual empathy and respect. In 2023 there were 5,358 visits to the centre, and we welcomed 316 new families to our diverse and vibrant EarlyON community.

Expanding our reach, our **Glitterbug** 2SLGBTBQ+ Mobile EarlyON program brought enriching experiences to various communities across Toronto. Together, we celebrated Pride, shared stories, and fostered affirming and respectful spaces.

Quality alone time can be hard to come by for parents and caregivers. Through our **Date Night** program, we created opportunities for 101 people to go to restaurants in The Village. Creating some much-needed time for 2SLGBTQ+ couples and parents looking to spend quality time with each other we provided childminding and homework club support to parents and caregivers so that they could enjoy their time together carefree.

We expanded our **Kids Action and Arts Space** (KAAS) programs in response to the changing needs of participants. Collaborating with local BIPOC 2SLGBTQ+ artists, we facilitated social justice arts-based programs, went on field trips, and visited the Science Rendezvous and Riverside Sound Bites Tour events, among others.

We also organized a **Trans Care Fair** in partnership with the **Trans Youth Mentorship Program**. 70 people attended the day to access trans-specific information, resources and workshops on trans wellness and mental health care.

“

“I love sending my daughter to KAAS, not only because it makes her happy, but because I know the staff and volunteers create a safe space for important conversations around 2SLGBTQ+ rights that will counter and confront any misinformation she might have been exposed to in other places.”

– K.G., EarlyON and KAAS participant

316

New EarlyON families

450

Workshop participants

402

KAAS visits

101

Date Night participants



ALL FAMILIES



ARE EQUAL

“

“These programs are something we count on for connection, meaning making, and to support identity formation so our kiddo has a nuanced vision of all the things that make up her, her culture, and her family.”

– Missy, EarlyON participant



Youth Programs

This year we launched **Building Power**, which included our Advocacy Academy as well as arts-based programming. Designed specifically for 2SLGBTQ+ BIPOC youth, Building Power is tailored to support young people with shared lived experiences, the skills needed to advocate for change. Through learning about 2SLGBTQ+ history, developing advocacy and employment skills, pottery classes and conversations with leading advocacy groups, Building Power youth continue to work together to create the world they deserve. In partnership with The ArQuives and the City of Toronto Archives, Building Power participants carried out an impactful archival exhibit about The 519's history of advocacy.

Our **Youth Action and Arts Space** and **Youth Working Group** built community for 2SLGBTQ+ teens throughout the year, exploring experiences of cyberbullying, racism, and discrimination. Culminating in an exhibition at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre with a night of visual art, poetry, and dance. Our **Teen Drop-In** and **Making the Maker Summer Arts** program created opportunities to meet and learn from 2SLGBTQ+ creatives, mixing opportunities for arts-based learning with information and tips about what a career in the arts looks like.

41

YAAS
workshops

248

Teen Drop-in
visits

15

Partner organizations
supported
Building Power

Our long-standing **Trans Youth Mentorship Program (TYMP)** focuses on social support and skills building for trans and gender diverse youth who are interested in seeking employment or furthering their education. With an average of fifteen youth joining the program on a weekly basis, TYMP's unique blend of social and employment readiness support has helped many participants gain steady employment in their field of choice while building strong community ties.

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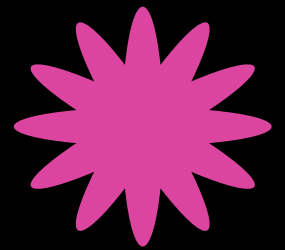
“Initially, I was looking for ways to meet up with other queer people of colour because I found that was a very difficult thing to do in my area. It takes almost two hours to get here, but I find it really cool that I can find queer people of colour here who are role models. That is something I couldn't find anywhere else.”

– Youth Participant



★ **IMPACT STORY:**

“In a perfect world, I would love to just be a teenager.”



Jayan's passion and leadership are obvious to anyone who meets him. Over the past year, through our Building Power Youth Advocacy Program, Jayan has helped plan protests, engaged in art therapy, learned social justice advocacy skills, and helped curate an exhibit connecting our past with our present and future.

“It's really cool to be able to have these resources. I also run the Asian Student Alliance at my school, and through Building Power I was able to get guest artists to come in and talk to us,” he says. “Before Building Power, activism involved a lot of dead ends. I had no idea where to start.”

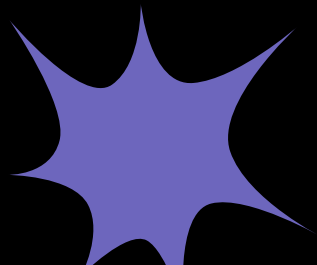
As anti-trans and queerphobic hate activity rises in Canada, much of it targeting 2SLGBTQ+ youth, Building Power participants are putting up a fight. “If a child is an activist, we've already failed that child. In a perfect world, I would love to just be a teenager,” Jayan says. “It doesn't matter if it's fair or not. The question is ‘What we're going to do about it?’”

Since being part of Building Power, Jayan has gotten more comfortable in front of a crowd. “I don't enjoy public speaking. I'm your average art school kid who'd rather be behind the camera,” he says. But last year he took a big leap and co-hosted The 519's Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR) event with Nicole Tanguay, a coordinator with The 519's 2SLGBTQ+ Older Adults Program.

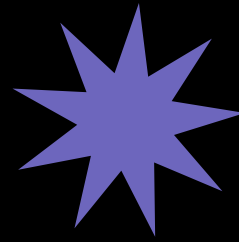


In a political climate where many seek to invalidate trans youth, Jayan feels pressure to be an all-knowing authority for his peers. He says TDoR, where he got to connect with trans elders, was a reprieve from that. “Nicole and I had this moment where they said, ‘Thank you for showing me that the kids are gonna be alright,’” he says. “That was really special; to see how much it meant to them to see me prospering despite everything that's happening. There was so much love in that room.”

As for the future, Jayan is hopeful. “We've always been here, through every political climate humanity has ever known,” he says. “There's a narrative that we're all sensitive snowflakes, but what are we if not resilient? Even if you're not an activist, or you don't come out to anybody, you are brave. You are anything but fragile.”



Access to Justice & Health



The Legal Initiatives Department provides inclusive spaces for queer and trans communities to access legal education, advice, and support services related to the law and justice systems. Barriers to accessing timely legal supports are ever-present, but through our eight specialty legal advice clinics, we expanded our reach and supported hundreds of 2SLGBTQ+ community members by providing summary legal advice and guidance. Our **Trans ID Clinic**, **Mock Hearing Program**, **Notary Clinic**, and **Narrative Support and Writing Program** were in high demand, saving clients both time and thousands of dollars in administrative fees.

Access to justice means little in a vacuum. In response to the needs our team saw, we piloted a legal casework navigational support program for BIPOC 2SLGBTQ+ people who are experiencing legal issues within the housing, family or criminal legal systems. This pilot integrated additional wrap-around supports to help people when they need it the most.

This year, we developed a cross-departmental, community-based **Health Justice Program**, providing blended legal and health services tailored to the public health needs of 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Working with 25 partners, we built on what we learned through the COVID-19 pandemic and leveraged our community-based health access model that harnesses a social determinants of health framework to understand and meet the holistic health needs of 2SLGBTQ+ and Downtown East communities.

“

“Participating in the cacao workshop at The 519 was a phenomenal experience. Cacao is our sacred medicine, however being part of the Guatemalan diaspora, my teachings are incomplete, and they cut off at a certain point in time. Having a safe space to learn about cacao as well as what kinds of ideas and strategies Indigenous Peoples have been currently developing was invaluable.”

– Belle, program participant

880

Legal Advice Clinic clients

155

Trans ID Clinic clients

1,400

Participants in 33 legal education workshops

2,880

Hours of pro bono support provided by 80 Legal Clinic volunteers

36

health clinics



JUSTICE



FOR ALL

“

“When my landlord told me he was going to evict me to do renovations, I was terrified. After talking with a with a Housing Clinic lawyer. I understood my rights. I got connected to some great resources and felt ready to fight back.”

– Housing Clinic client

Advocacy

This year underscored that progress can't be taken for granted. 2SLGBTQ+ rights are under attack at home and abroad, with hundreds of laws tabled across the world targeting our communities.

In Canada, coordinated efforts to repeal our hard-won achievements were evident coast to coast. At drag queen story time, school board meetings, online and in the streets, radical anti-trans zealots, and their political allies across the country, leaned on old, hateful stereotypes to build political power by stoking fear.

This year made it clear that when queer and trans people fight back, we win. That when we resist, we prevail. That the radical power of queer and trans joy is powerful, and that we are not going anywhere.

In April, we united with Ugandan Torontonians against new laws in Uganda criminalizing homosexuality. We supported protest efforts that made clear that discrimination and hatred should be left in the past. At our International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia event, we celebrated queer and trans joy alongside hundreds of allies in Barbara Hall Park, finding strength in each other and in our shared unapologetic queerness.

We brought trans activists, artists and leaders from across Ontario together to speak against anti-trans hate through an impassioned panel, focusing on exploring how our communities can work together to defend and advance trans equity.

Amid our shared work of fighting hate, we continued to raise important issues that effect the health and wellbeing of 2SLGBTQ+ communities. With rising costs of food and housing, we saw the challenges many face in meeting their basic needs. We launched campaigns highlighting the impacts of Toronto's growing housing crisis and food insecurity on the communities we serve, also talking about equitable ways to address these issues.

Just as we take to the streets demanding action, we take our seat at the table to drive change. Through deputations, letters, briefings, and coalition building, we were part of small but important victories on topics like highlighting the importance of 2SLGBTQ+ specific approaches to substance use treatment and mental health in the City's new action plan. We continued to work with partners across Canada on advocating for a more equitable and humane immigration and refugee system, and to push for equitable access to life-saving gender-affirming care.



★ IMPACT STORY:

NO SPACE FOR HATE



In September, the news broke that radical anti-trans activists were planning a day of action across Canada, determined to spread their hatred targeted largely at trans youth and students. In cities and towns big and small, 2SLGBTQ+ communities were united in their determination to make sure these hateful voices didn't go unchallenged.

The 519 was proud to lead the efforts in Toronto and support actions across the GTA, working closely with partner organizations, allies in the labour movement, and enraged 2SLGBTQ+ people to send the message that there is no space for hate in Toronto. Over 2,500 people showed up on short notice to unite with 2SLGBTQ+ communities, making it loud and clear to the public and leaders across the country that our rights are not up for debate, and that every student deserves to be safe and supported at school.

One of the largest 2SLGBTQ+ protests in Toronto's recent history, our Army of Lovers came together knowing that our solidarity and joy is stronger than hate.

“

I want to talk about what we're fighting for, and how we're going to fight. We're fighting for a province where a trans kid doesn't have to choose between being who they are and having a roof over their head. We're fighting for a province where we can hold our partner's hand and walk down the street and feel safe. We're fighting for a province where whether I'm in Toronto or Timmins, I feel safe, I feel welcome, and I'm with my community like I am here right now.

We're going to fight with joy. We're going to fight with love. We're going to fight with the understanding that the queer movement is built on radical joy and love. That is what we're about. That is what we know. That is why we do what we do. We are an Army of Lovers because we must fight, we will fight, and we will win.

– Excerpt from protest speech by Curran Stikuts,
Director of Advocacy and Strategic Communications



Housing Support

Affordable housing is an ongoing crisis in our city, one that continues to put unsustainable pressure on Toronto's shelter system.

For years The 519 has advocated for and envisioned 2SLGBTQ+ affirming shelter support. As part of that vision, we launched **Pacewood** – Toronto's first shelter for 2SLGBTQ+ adults – in 2022 in partnership with Homes First and the City of Toronto.

Throughout the year our staff built new programs and stronger supports for Pacewood residents. We offered respite and refuge for LGBTQ+ newcomers, refugees, and trans people. The 519's follow-up support program ensured that people who transitioned out of the shelter remained stably housed. At the same time, our comprehensive social and support programs cultivate a sense of belonging and comfort among residents.

While Pacewood represents a crucial step forward, it falls short of meeting the extensive needs of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals experiencing homelessness. To address this gap, our shelter and housing sector capacity building project introduced new educational and training initiatives for staff across the sector. These initiatives focused on broadening comprehension and responses to the diverse needs of 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

Focusing on the structural systems of oppression that underpin many issues facing our communities, these trainings use real-life situations to inspire change while providing thoughtful leadership and education in support of 2SLGBTQ+ communities, particularly 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary people.

Access to housing is a basic human right, and we're committed to helping people find safe, affordable, and dignified places to call home.

224

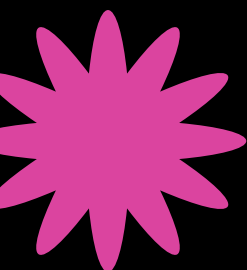
Requests for housing support

57

New residents

26

Residents moved into permanent housing





Food Security

Food is at the centre of all our programming. The simple act of sharing a meal has profound power in fostering connections among people.

Food insecurity is a growing concern in our city and neighbourhood. We see firsthand the challenges that many have in accessing affordable and nutritious meals. Through our food security initiatives, we strive to make access to food community-driven, and stigma free.

Our **Frozen Meals** program, offering a weekly supply of frozen ready-to-eat meals, experienced growing demand throughout the year. Recognizing the importance of cultural affirmation, our food security initiatives team prepared dishes from over 75 countries. In addition to this service, we provided supplementary support such as community meals and grocery items.

“

“This program helped me during a really difficult time. I was grateful to have a break and it had a part in helping me get back on my feet.”

– Jonas, program participant

Through strong partnerships, we provided food security support to other organizations across Toronto, increasing and improving access to nutritious food while ensuring a consistent supply of grocery items which we provided through our programs.

We also began planning for the relaunch of our catering social enterprise, a key way that we fund our programs and services, while providing employment training and opportunities to community members who are traditionally underrepresented in the hospitality industry.

If the kitchen is the heart of the home, it brings us great joy to be able to nourish everyone that comes to our doorstep.

118,686

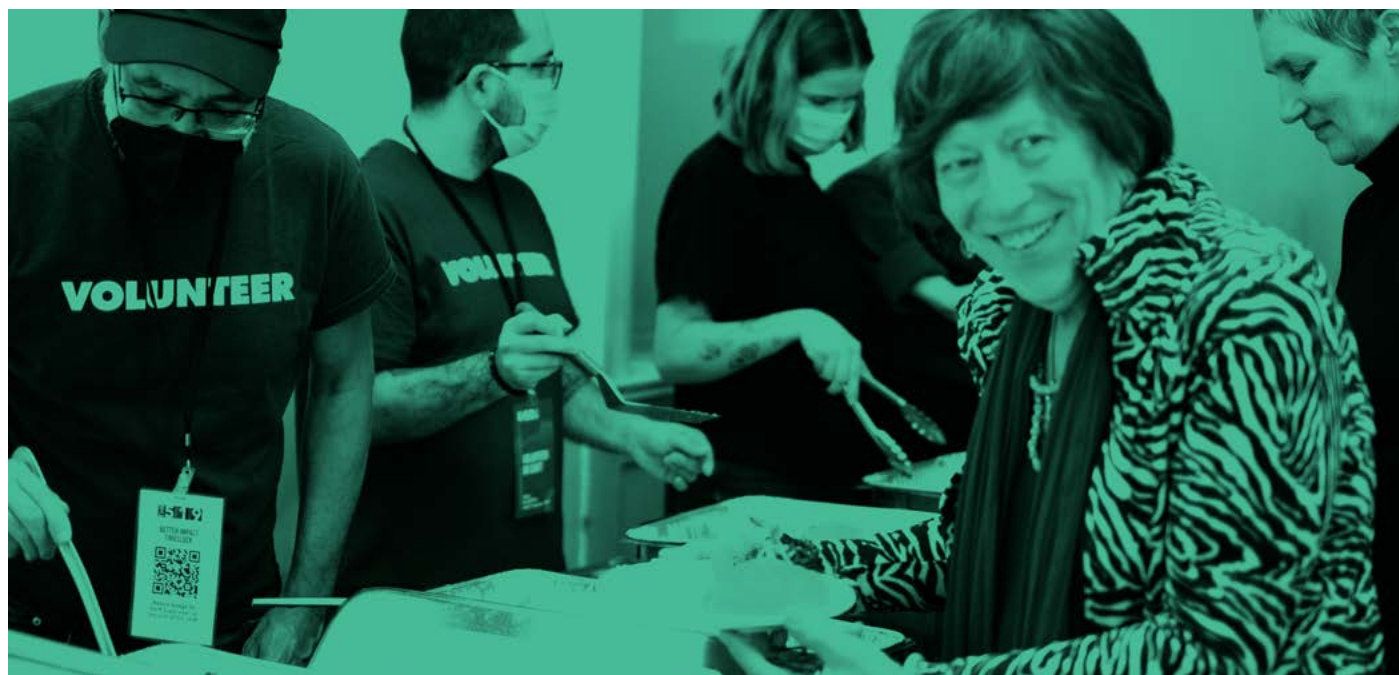
Meals served on site

92,745

Meals distributed to partner organizations

2,735

Meal program participants



Drop-In Programming

Drop-in programs have been part of what we do since our earliest days as a community centre. Shaped by evolving community need and context, these programs are often the first time a community member steps into our space looking for affirmation, support, and belonging – a place to feel at home.

Our **2SLGBTQ+ Older Adults** program runs four times a week, offering older 2SLGBTQ+ people opportunities to socialize, develop critical skills like digital literacy, bond over board games, and enjoy field trips across the city. Participants also eagerly anticipate annual events such as Pride, Queer-o-ween, and International Day of Older Persons.

Sunday Drop-In offers a supportive and inclusive environment for 2SLGBTQ+ people of all ages facing poverty or homelessness. In 2023, 1,885 participants attended 48 Sunday Drop-In workshops, where they received meals, referrals, participated in skill-building workshops, and enjoyed outings.

Meal Trans is an affirming trans-only drop-in program for lower-income, street-involved, homeless and sex-working 2 Spirit, trans and non-binary people. As one of Toronto's earliest and longest-running trans-specific programs, Meal Trans is deeply rooted in and informed by local trans history and community. In 2023, we saw 1,654 visits to our Meal Trans program, where people share meals and access referrals and support services.



3,746

Older Adults Program visits

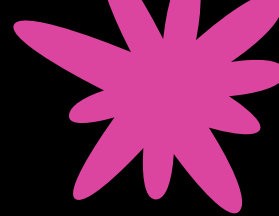
167

Older Adult workshops

1,654

Meal Trans visits





Peer Programs & Direct Support

The **Trans People of Colour Project** (TPOC) continued to support racialized trans and gender-diverse people with resources, referrals, connections over shared lived experiences, and cooking culturally-affirming meals together. TPOC symbolizes the coming together of individuals from diverse backgrounds to cultivate collective care, affirmation, and access to supports. TPOC went on a brief hiatus for a few months as we reimaged the program and sought continued funding and partnership opportunities. It has relaunched with a new model that integrates a partnership network to better support and serve racialized 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary communities with wraparound supports and multi-agency connections.

We're committed to meeting people where they are and supporting their journeys through harm reduction, capacity building, resources and support. Our **Breaking The Ice** (BTI) community engagement and outreach initiative supported people who use crystal meth in Toronto's Downtown East. With a specific approach focused on understanding the needs and barriers faced by 2SLGBTQ+ people who use drugs, the team had 8,329 engagements with hundreds of people across The Village and broader Downtown East.

We also supported people with substance use and mental health needs through our weekly community peer support group, **S&M**. With 600 program visits, we discussed substance use safety and public health strategies, practiced self-determined wellness, and explored peer-driven supports and methods of mutual care.

Through our **Pay it No Mind** fund we directly supported 60 BIPOC 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary community members. This fund helped recipients meet their housing, mental health, and food security needs. The Kyle Scanlon fund supported three community-led projects across Ontario focused on advocating for and improving the lives of trans community members, and deepening our connections and supports with agencies and teams working to advance 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary wellness, engagement, and access to supports.

Thanks to the dedication and leadership of 28 volunteers, our long-standing **Tax Clinic** successfully returned nearly \$4 million into the pockets of 1,996 community members. This initiative alleviated the stress associated with the tax process while ensuring that our community members receive the entitlements they deserve.



13,873

Harm reduction items provided

8,329

Engagements with people who use drugs

855

Naloxone kits distributed

4,914

Referrals made

315

TPOC Program visits

Volunteers

Whether someone volunteers at The 519 to find community, express their allyship through action, or to give back to a place that helped them when they needed it the most, our volunteers have one thing in common: the desire to make a real difference in people's lives.

So much of what we do would not be possible without the love, dedication, and talent of folks who turn their care into action everyday.

In 2023, 635 volunteers donated 15,469 hours in service to our communities. Hundreds of first-time volunteers joined our Army of Lovers, helping us amplify the impact of our work. Bringing heart, innovation, and talent to support our youth and older adults programs, community meals, tax clinics, Green Space Festival, and so much more, our volunteers truly wear their purple tees with pride.

We can't wait to create more magic and care alongside our volunteers.

15,469

Hours of support contributed

635

Volunteers donated their time

256

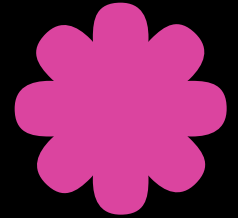
Volunteers donated **3,177** hours in support of Green Space Festival

46

Volunteers prepped, packed, and distributed free meals over **2,887** hours, ensuring folks experiencing food insecurity don't go hungry

66

volunteers donated **1,891** hours of support to our EarlyON child, youth, family, and Glitterbug programming



Education & Training

Facts over fear has always been the surest way to create inclusive, affirming, and authentic spaces for all.

Education and training are essential pieces in building better workplaces and services for 2SLGBTQ+ people.

In 2023, our Education and Training team provided year-round inclusion and equity training to 110 organizations of varying sizes. Through raising awareness about 2SLGBTQ+ communities and the issues impacting us, consulting around policy review for employers seeking guidance on how to affirm 2SLGBTQ+ colleagues in the workplace, our team trained 4,080 participants.

The 519 Pride Speaker Series built on its success, making it easier for over 2,500 participants across 60 organizations to learn about creating authentic spaces promoting year-round allyship.

“

“We are thankful for the safe and supportive space The 519 created, allowing us to learn and grow. The training resonated personally and professionally with our staff, and we are eager to continue this journey, applying the principles we’ve learned to create a truly inclusive environment for all.”

– Dana Elsaid, Autism Ontario

251

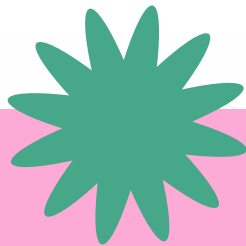
Workshops

170

Organizations trained

6,580

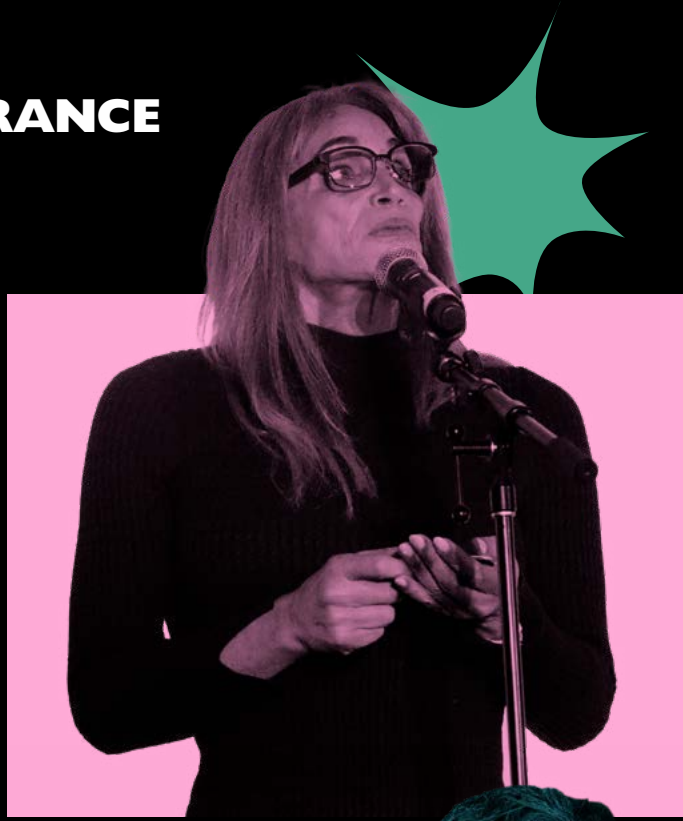
People trained

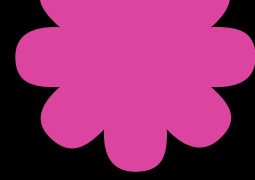


SIGNATURE EVENTS

✦ TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Trans Day of Remembrance (TDOR), held annually on November 20, remembers 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary community members we have lost to transphobia and violence. While we grieve, we find community and celebrate our collective resiliency. In 2023, over 350 people attended our event both virtually and in-person.





✳ **BACK TO SCHOOL BASH**

We celebrated the end of summer with our 7th annual Back to School Bash! With a DJ, free haircuts, lots of health information and so much more, we served over 1,400 families from across the Downtown East.



✳ **SPORTS DAY**

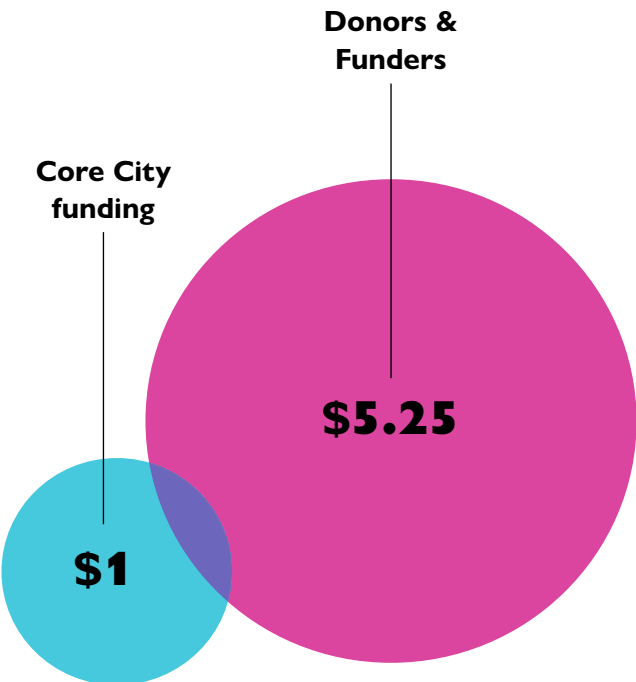
Our 4th annual Sports Day event, a collaborative effort with Hart House, drew in over 200 participants, promoting community-building through inclusive physical activities. Held at the Varsity Centre, this fun day in the sun combined physical activity, light competition, and a whole lot of laughs.



Philanthropy

Donors are vital to The 519's ability to support and advance the rights of 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

In 2023, for every \$1.00 in core city funding, The 519 raised \$5.25 to provide vital resources, foster safer spaces, and drive positive change. Your contributions provide not just financial support but also demonstrate a profound belief in a better future for 2SLGBTQ+ communities.



✱ THE 519 ANNUAL GALA

We were thrilled to have the return of The 519 Gala, presented by our honorary patron Salah Bachir. With entertainment by the legendary Audra McDonald, a tribute to the long-standing allyship of acclaimed author John Irving, and a special appearance from the iconic Nelly Furtado, it was truly an incredible night, raising over \$450,000 in support of the communities we serve. We are grateful for Salah's transformational commitment to The 519.

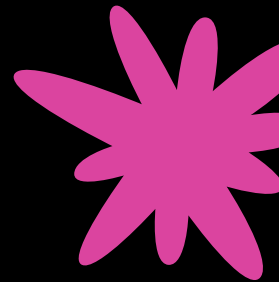




“

“The 519 is the really heartbeat of the Village. Every Village needs a centre like this. It’s important that we keep supporting them - not just during Pride - but all year long.”

– Brooke Lynn Hytes



GREEN SPACE FESTIVAL

There simply isn't a better pride party than our Green Space Festival. 2023 set a new bar for what it means to party for a cause. With electric performances, tens of thousands of attendees, and five full days of fun, Green Space raised a record \$1.7M+ to power the work of The 519 year-round.



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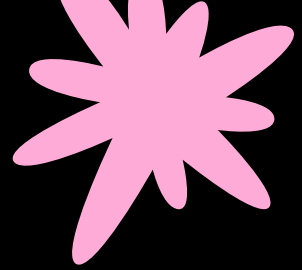
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Green Merchant	Narcotics Anonymous	Sentry	Wave Financial Inc.
Green Shield Canada	(Out in Recovery)	Shop Love Collective	Weddings By Alexandra
Greenstone Financial Services	National Public Relations	Shopify - T-Shirt Sales	Whyte & Mackay Limited
Canada Inc.	Nicki Iskander; RMT	Siemens Canada	Workday Inc Canada
Guru Animation Studio Ltd.	Nitro Skates	Skinfix	WSB Massage & Wellness
Halfani Haji Ngatwanga	OCSWSSW	Soho House Toronto	Yahoo
Hey Niki Creative	Octopus App Inc	Split Brain Sound	York University
Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd.	Office of the Children's Lawyer	Square Canada	Z Zurich Foundation
Honeycomb Hospitality	One Academy	St. Roch Catholic Secondary	Zarek Taylor Grossman
Humanist Association of Toronto	Ontario Hospital Association	School	Hanrahan LLP
Humberside Collegiate Institute	Ossington / Old Orchard	Stikeman Elliott LLP	
HVE Healthcare Assessments	P.S. General	Stock and Row + Anice Jewellery	
Hydro One Employees' and	Overeaters Anonymous	Stratford Festival's RENT	

THANK YOU



Our Board of Management



Paul Saguil
He/Him, Chair



Tom Spence
He/Him, Vice-Chair



Zoe Robinson
She/Her, Treasurer



Erika Voaklander
She/Her, Secretary



Vanshika Dhawan
She/Her, Member



Aaron Hewitt
He/Him, Member



Brett House
He/Him, Member



Natalie Miller
She/Her, Member



Juan Camilo Rendon Ocampo
He/Him, Member



Min Oh
He/Him, Member



Jaris Swidrovich
He/They, Member



Councillor Chris Moise
He/Him, Member ex-officio



Financial Summary

The Financial Summary is unaudited. Audited Financials will be available on our website.

REVENUE			2023	2022
Grants	City of Toronto	Core	2,138,190	1,914,234
	City of Toronto	Grants	1,231,046	1,524,820
	United Way		463,910	414,855
	Government of Canada		1,174,527	1,234,406
	Others		790,331	389,795
	Province of Ontario		80,000	126,250
	Total Grants Revenue		5,878,004	5,604,360
Donations			1,895,714	1,335,120
Fundraising			2,109,018	1,429,118
Catering			22,111	59,442
Education & Training			247,191	232,839
Rental fees			43,285	3,533
Other revenue			20,669	2,928
Interest			102,147	28,147
Amortization of deferred capital contributions			13,313	13,313
TOTAL REVENUE			10,331,453	8,708,801

EXPENSES				
Salaries and wages			4,527,259	3,934,760
Employee benefits			1,203,877	990,200
Purchase of services			2,910,749	2,261,304
Materials, supplies, and services			1,468,509	1,460,463
Amortization of capital assets			28,978	28,978
TOTAL EXPENSES			10,139,371	8,675,705

NET REVENUE OVER EXPENSES			\$ 192,082	\$ 33,096
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OUR JOY

The 519 is Canada's most prominent 2SLGBTQ+ community centre and service provider. We are committed to the health, happiness, and full participation of our communities in Toronto, and beyond. Join us in our work!

DONATE TO THE 519

The519.org/donate

THIRD-PARTY OR IN-KIND SUPPORT

Write to Giving@The519.org

VOLUNTEER WITH US

The519.org/volunteer



MATTERS



519 Church Street
Toronto, ON, M4Y 2C9

✉ Info@The519.org

☎ 416-392-6874

🖱 The519.org

@The519



The 519 is an agency of
the City of Toronto.

Registered Charity No.
11931 0761 RR0001