



AN ARMY OF LOVERS
NEVER STOPS



1. ABOUT THE 519

Located in downtown Toronto, The 519 is a City of Toronto agency, a registered charity, and Canada's most prominent LGBTQ2S community centre and service provider.

The 519 strives to make a real difference in people's lives while contributing to the advancement of LGBTQ2S rights and inclusion in Toronto and beyond. We take pride in being an organization that responds to the existing and emerging needs of our communities – by delivering essential programs and services for the most underserved, and leading advocacy, access to justice, and anti-violence initiatives.

The 519 has been a valuable and vibrant community hub offering **Service, Space, and Leadership** for LGBTQ2S communities and the Church-Wellesley neighbourhood since 1975.

Learn more about us at www.The519.org



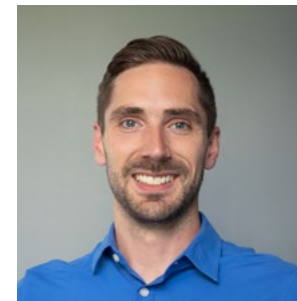
LGBTQ2S Family Event: Winter Wonderful Celebration, 2019



2. MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



Maura Lawless



David Morris

Reflecting on our work in the year 2019-2020 brings up bittersweet emotions. The world has changed drastically in the wake of a global pandemic and so has our work. But our commitment to our mandate and our communities remains as strong as ever.

In 2019-2020, we made significant progress towards the implementation of our three-year Strategic Action Plan. Our increased focus on integrated programming and robust internal and external partnerships led to many successes. We advanced our Anti-Violence Initiatives by launching a rapid crisis-response model and expanding counselling services for survivors of violence in collaboration with our Trauma-informed Counselling and Refugee Support programs. We also expanded our Legal Clinics and launched various Access to Justice initiatives including Trans ID Clinic, Mock Hearing Program for LGBTQ Refugee Claimants, and specialty clinics. We were at

the forefront of several visible advocacy initiatives throughout the year and developed strong partnerships across sectors to advance our work in Toronto and beyond. Our other community services and programs – integrated with our Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives – continued to grow and evolve based on a consultative approach and an ongoing assessment of existing and emerging needs.

In March 2020, The 519 had to close our doors to the public due to COVID-19. It was a challenging reality for a community centre that provides critical social and service infrastructure for LGBTQ2S communities and our local neighbourhood. The pandemic amplified the challenges and inequities that are the lived realities of vulnerable members of our communities. To respond to the crisis, we immediately transformed our operations and mobilized to serve daily

takeaway meals, distribute essential supplies, and roll out a virtual community check-in program. We moved many of our services such as counselling, settlement, legal clinics, and tax clinics to over-the-phone supports. Furthermore, we continued our on-ground anti-poverty work by facilitating temporary housing for encampment residents, and took several high-profile initiatives to advocate for our communities, neighbourhood, and LGBTQ2S-run businesses through government and public relations efforts. We want to take a moment to appreciate our staff who stepped up to the challenge in remarkable ways to make all this possible.

Our building reopening strategy in July 2020 contemplated the devastating impacts of COVID-19 on our communities, their most pressing needs, health and safety considerations for staff and public, and our continued commitment to take leadership

especially in times of crisis. We are prioritizing modified on-site services, continuing our virtual programming, and working hard to develop processes that will allow us to welcome our community-led groups safely back on-site in the future. We know that recovery will be a long and challenging journey, and we intend to stand by our communities through those challenges and beyond.

Like many other organizations, we have lost significant sources of revenue due to the pandemic and are facing serious financial pressures. But we continue to power through, keeping our communities and their needs at the heart of everything we do. Thanks to our communities, partners, donors, funders, and volunteers whose support has been overwhelming and heartwarming. We hope for your continued support to get through these very difficult times.

We are an Army of Lovers, and an Army of Lovers Never Stops. We are proud of who we are and what we do, and we are incredibly proud of our communities, now and forever.



Maura Lawless,
Executive Director



David Morris,
Board Chair



3.

HIGHLIGHTS

April 2019 – March 2020*



Space Use

546,767
visits to The 519
138,707
visits to staff-led programs
325
community-led groups hosted
4,596
community meetings held
111,988
information and referral requests at the Front Desk

Our Army of Lovers outside The 519.
Photo by Ian Lawrence



EarlyON Programs

14,242
visits by children, parents, and caregivers to The 519 EarlyON Child and Family Centre
Glitterbug – LGBTQ2S Mobile Program
128
hours of consultations and **10** workshops with EarlyON centres across Toronto
136
engagements with **44** EarlyON sites



Education and Training

7,341
people received inclusion training across **114** organizations



Drop-Ins

1,455
visits to Meal Trans
10,117
visits to Sunday Drop-In
4,093
referrals made



Food Security

25,040
free meals served by FABARNAK across all programs



Older LGBTQ2S Programs

1,728
visits to weekly drop-in
450
Friendly Check-in phone calls made to older adults



Trans Youth Mentorship Program (TYMP)

119
visits to weekly program
300+
visits to TYMP-led events



Back to School Bash – Moss Park

500+
participants.
300 school bags with supplies distributed



LGBTQ Refugee Support

1,578
new refugee claimants registered

One-on-One Support

1,404
refugees received one-on-one settlement support

Group Support

3,862
visits to Among Friends LGBTQ Refugee Support Program
674
visits to Fuel: Physical Activity for LGBTQ Newcomers and Refugees
32
members in A Place to Talk, group counselling support for LGBTQ refugee claimants



LGBTQ Newcomer Support**

976
LGBTQ newcomers received one-on-one settlement supports
1,194
visits to newcomer support programs and workshops
1,050
participants attended Newcomer Orientation workshops



Trauma-Informed Counselling

207
people received one-on-one single-session and short-term counselling services across **543** sessions
101
people participated in group programs focused on holistic wellness



Housing Support

182
youth received one-on-one housing support
11
sessions of LGBTQ2S Roommate Mixer completed

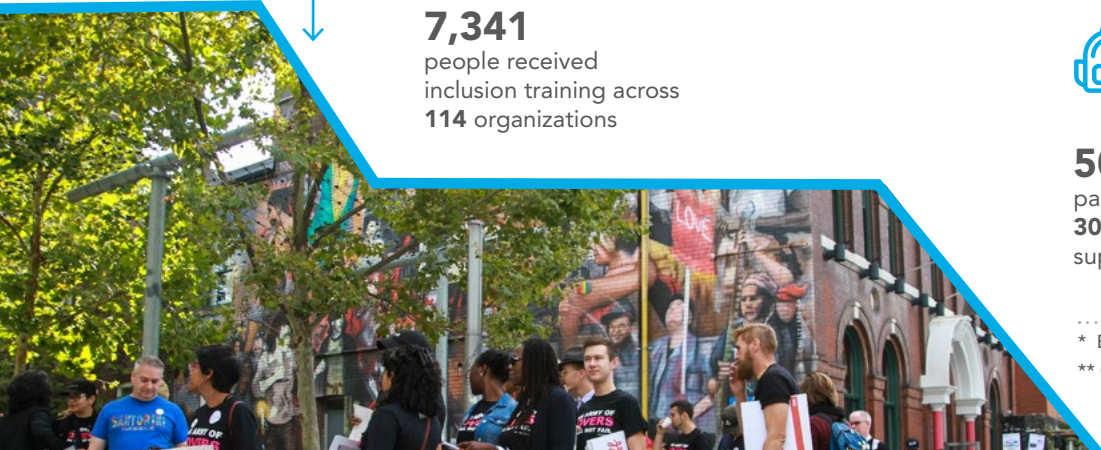


Skill-Building Programs

48
participants attended Sew What? sewing workshops
12
participants attended Hair Me Now! barbershop workshops
10
participants attended Infinite Potentials – employment skills training for LGBTQ refugees and newcomers

* Before COVID-19 disruptions

** Convention refugees, permanent residents, and live-in caregivers





Access to Justice – Legal Supports and Public Legal Education

560

people accessed free legal services including LGBTQ Refugee Mock Hearings, Legal Clinics, and Trans ID Clinic

500

volunteer hours donated by **44** volunteer lawyers and **10** volunteer law students

24+

public workshops and training sessions delivered on understanding rights, systemic and interpersonal violence, and harm reduction



Anti-Violence Initiatives

Individual Support

41

people received one-on-one crisis counselling support

30

people received anti-violence case management supports including support for intimate partner violence, and discrimination in housing and accessing affirming healthcare

1,310

hours of court support provided to victims of violence and families

Group Support

51

participants received self-defense training

37

participants attended Coping Together & Healing Together groups focused on understanding and coping with the impacts of violence and trauma

Peer-led Programs

306

visits to Cooking with Trans People of Colour (TPOC) weekly drop-in

82

people participated in community conversations as part of our peer-led Breaking the Ice, a methamphetamine needs assessment project

March – July 2020 COVID-19 Response



25,000+
takeaway meals served to communities



15,074
essential supplies distributed including gift cards, clothing, harm reduction, and hygiene supplies



2,272
phone and email interventions through our Friendly Check-in program and Front Desk to address social isolation and provide information and referrals



170
Virtual Tax Clinic sessions with **10** volunteers completed



174
virtual Legal Clinic clients served



154
LGBTQ refugees and newcomers received virtual Settlement Support



171
virtual Counselling Support sessions completed



30
virtual Education and Training sessions delivered



10+
COVID-19 resources developed including Newcomer Resources, Mental and Emotional Health Resources, Systems Navigations, and Older LGBTQ2S resources



15,519
visits to our website pages with COVID-19 information and resources

COVID-19
Takeaway
Meals service



4.

IN-FOCUS: 2019 - 2020 (Pre COVID-19)

We made significant progress with our strategic priorities in 2019. In response to the increasing violence and systemic barriers experienced by LGBTQ2S communities, The 519 prioritized the expansion of our Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives, built robust strategic partnerships, and led many advocacy initiatives. We also continued to build upon our existing programs and services to respond to the needs of our communities.



In September 2019, The 519 mobilized our communities to resist several attempts by anti-LGBTQ2S groups spreading hate in the Church-Wellesley neighbourhood. More than 500 people joined us to **Defend Church Street** in a peaceful demonstration. Together we were able to stop the hate-filled procession from crossing our streets.



4.1 Featured Highlights

Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives

Our Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives portfolios work hand in hand, not only to provide rapid on-ground community support, but also to fearlessly advocate for LGBTQ2S communities' human rights every step of the way. These portfolios focus on developing long-term models and best practices that centre our communities' lived experiences of systemic and interpersonal violence. They also include public legal education as an important ongoing tenet of access to justice, and are integrated across all our anti-poverty and trauma-informed programs and services to provide holistic supports.

Individual Support:

In 2019, we introduced one-on-one anti-violence case management supports for community members facing systemic barriers when accessing housing, interacting with the criminal justice system, and experiencing harassment. This work provided invaluable crisis intervention and counselling supports, systems navigation support, and critical referrals.

IMPACT STATEMENT

"We have been in the courtroom every day throughout this trial and continue to fight to keep our streets and communities safe. We work to respond to violence in its many forms as an important part of our function as a community centre at the heart of the Church and Wellesley neighbourhood."

– Excerpt from our Community Impact Statement – **Tess Richey, We Say Her Name**

by Becky McFarlane, Senior Director, Programs and Community Services.

Read full statement here: www.The519.org/news/community-impact-statement-250320

Group Support:

After a positive response to our program **Coping Together** – a community-based group program for LGBTQ2S individuals with histories of trauma – we introduced **Healing Together** – a support group for women, non-binary, and two-spirit folks who have experienced emotional or physical violence.

Legal Support:

In 2019, with funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario, we expanded our Legal Clinics under a refreshed brand identity and increased the number of clinics being offered including specialty legal clinics. We also launched The 519 **Trans ID Clinic**, and The 519 **Mock Hearing Program for LGBTQ Refugee Claimants**. Building new partnerships with

justice sector organizations and legal service providers has been an instrumental part of our strategy, allowing us to expand our reach in responding to community needs. We are grateful to our partners and volunteer lawyers for their fierce commitment to our communities' human rights and access to justice.



The 519 Legal Clinic introduced a new logo in 2019, featuring Lady Justice as a drag queen. Inspired by our **Army of Lovers** campaign look and feel, the logo signifies our bold approach to our Access to Justice work.



→
Local drag artist, Mikiki, reveals a 'queer miracle' as part of our **Cluck-Off** campaign and protest against the opening of Toronto's first Chick-fil-A store in September 2019. The campaign and protest were widely covered by media outlets and gained traction on social media.



Top: **Defend Church Street** counter-protest, 2019

Bottom Left: **Take Back TPL** community-led protest, 2019

Bottom Right: **TRANScend/TRANSform**: A teach-in with trans folks and allies was hosted at The 519 in January 2020. Led by a panel of prominent community leaders, the teach-in was in response to transphobic actions at a major public institution and was meant to educate the public about issues affecting trans communities.

Read more: www.The519.org/news/trans-teach-in-2020



Public Legal Education:

Public legal education is embedded within all our Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives to support community capacity-building and foster self-advocacy skills. Each time we mobilized our communities for an advocacy initiative, we raised awareness about legal rights and civil liberties through workshops and resources. Our Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives teams also participated in various speaking engagements across the sector for service providers and other equity-seeking groups.

Advocacy Initiatives:

The 519 has a longstanding history of supporting and leading advocacy initiatives in relation to issues impacting LGBTQ2S

communities and our local neighbourhood. Over the last few years, we have continued to lead by taking visible advocacy positions and supporting campaigns led by various community groups, organizations, and trusted social justice leaders. This work is in alignment with our strategic priorities that encompass the expansion of Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives and implementation of our Anti-Racism and Equity framework.

In 2019, we saw an increase in homophobia, transphobia, and violence towards our communities. We mobilized to defend Church Street and counter hate and targeted violence. We protested against Chick-fil-A's homophobic and transphobic policies through our public

campaign and street action. When Toronto Public Library made the decision to give space to transphobic discourse, we supported community-led initiatives and campaigns to resist, respond, and raise awareness. We engaged mainstream media throughout the year to highlight the escalating homophobic and transphobic incidents, and elevated community voices at several decision-making tables. During the federal elections, The 519 led civic engagement initiatives to highlight the issues impacting queer and trans communities. We were and continue to be at the forefront of the fight for social justice for LGBTQ2S communities.



↑ Community workshop on rights and considerations while (counter) protesting, 2019

“ VOLUNTEER VOICES

“As a refugee lawyer in private practice, I represent refugees who are fearful of interacting with authorities even after they arrive in Canada. This is often because refugees come from countries where authorities are the persecutors. A Canadian refugee hearing is an incredibly stressful experience because of this fear of government and persons in positions of authority. The 519’s Mock Hearing Program allows refugees to become familiar with being asked questions by persons in positions of authority. It gives refugees the opportunity to have a ‘trial run’ so that by the time they appear before the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB), they are able to properly explain their fear of returning to their country of origin. This makes the actual IRB hearing much easier on the government decision-maker, on counsel, and most importantly, on the refugee claimants themselves.”

– Volunteer Lawyer, The 519 Mock Hearing Program for LGBTQ Refugee Claimants

“ COMMUNITY VOICES

“After the mock hearing, I felt ready and prepared. The mock hearing lawyer pointed out my positive side, which strengthened my belief in succeeding at my hearing. This was really helpful because we have to be confident about ourselves during the hearing. The lawyer also told me how to improve, which I worked hard on before my real hearing.”

– Program participant, The 519 Mock Hearing Program for LGBTQ Refugee Claimants

Peer Leadership Programs:

We continued to enhance community-informed service delivery and practice rooted in principles of self-determination. Our peer-led programs have been an important part of that approach.

Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC):

The Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC) is a peer-led program designed to provide access to training, skills development, employment opportunities, and affirming sexual health information and services to racialized trans community members. In 2019, under the leadership of TPOC peers, the program's weekly drop-in continued to be a space for trans people of colour to gather, cook, share a meal, and access referrals to services. The program has also been working on a cookbook that will highlight the leadership of TPOC, and present important sexual health promotion tips, as well as recipes that focus on healthy eating on a budget. TPOC peers led several community events and Education and Training workshops throughout the year attended by more than **900** people.

Read a media story about TPOC here: bit.ly/TPOCMediaStory2019



Cooking with TPOC weekly drop-in program



TPOC's peer leaders with The 519 program coordinator

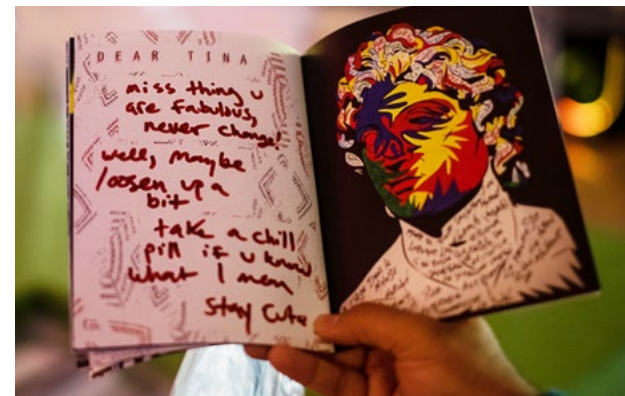
COMMUNITY VOICES

"Were it not for TPOC I would have no community, none! So I hope that this program continues. It helps individuals like me who are alienated simply for who we are."

– Participant, Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC)



Breaking the Ice Community Knowledge Share event, attended by more than 130 participants



Letters to Meth zine

Breaking the Ice (BTI):

In 2019, The 519 worked with incredible leaders from Toronto's harm reduction community to develop a peer-led program to conduct Crystal Meth Needs Assessment within the Village. The team successfully created safe and welcoming spaces for folks to have open and honest conversations about their relationship to crystal, their experiences with its use, the barriers they face in accessing meaningful health and social service supports, and the strengths they bring to being experts in their own experiences.

The peer-led project completed its research with **82** participants; reviewed **19** policies and procedures; launched the artistic project 'Letters to Meth' with **110** contributions; and hosted a Community Knowledge Share event. The project will continue this work to action some of the key findings with the objective of improving access to information and services for people who use meth.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"I use meth because I sleep hard... and I'll often buy myself like a couple of grams to keep myself awake, to keep myself safe...I keep myself awake to be on guard. So, that's why I do it."

– Crystal Meth Needs Assessment focus group participant

"People who use drugs are completely dehumanized. People who live in poverty. People who live on the streets. People who are homeless. Completely dehumanized."

– Crystal Meth Needs Assessment key informant interview

STAFF VOICES

"Our most consistent finding, throughout multiple conversations and platforms, was the very real stigma and shame experienced by people who use crystal meth, creating barriers to being able to meaningfully access health and social service supports and connections to community life. We look forward to continuing to support people who use crystal in our communities to combat this pervasive stigma and employ harm reduction philosophies that reduce potential harms, both personal and social."

– Jaymie Sampa, Manager, Program and Partnership Development



→ 175 residents attended our event **An Army of Lovers Votes - a Federal Elections Debate**. We also published detailed online resources highlighting the key issues impacting our communities including justice and law; equitable access to healthcare; immigration, refuge, and settlement; and housing. We also developed an accessible resource to support our communities in navigating the voting system.



COMMUNITY VOICES

"Over the past five years, The 519 Education and Training team has provided Soulpepper with annual workshops on awareness and understanding about LGBTQ2S communities. This has fostered continued learning throughout the organization by giving staff, artists, and educators a shared toolkit and language with which to improve our practices and our policies."

– Fiona and Jacob, Soulpepper Theatre Company



The 519's **Education and Training** team is a productive enterprise that provides LGBTQ2S rights and inclusion training to public, private, and social sector organizations throughout the year. Last year, the team trained more than **7,341** people.



COMMUNITY VOICES

"TYMP helped me connect with others in my community and pursue endeavours that support the career I am interested in."

– The 519 Trans Youth Mentorship Program (TYMP) participant



Trans Film Fest 2019. Led by our Trans Youth Mentorship Program participants, The 519's Trans Film Fest is a community-based annual film festival that celebrates the works of trans, two-spirit, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming people.

Expansion of EarlyON Services

As we highlighted in our last annual report, The 519 launched a first-of-its-kind LGBTQ2S EarlyON mobile program, **Glitterbug** to work with EarlyON centres across Toronto to promote inclusion and affirmation of gender and sexual diversity among children and families.

In 2019, Glitterbug continued to build programs and partnerships, and successfully launched ongoing programming for LGBTQ2S families at three designated

EarlyON centres across the city. The team provided program support to **44** EarlyON sites through **136** engagements and **128** hours of consultation. In addition, Glitterbug developed and facilitated various capacity-building workshops for Early Childhood Educators related to LGBTQ2S identities and experiences, and launched a [resource](#) about best practices for creating LGBTQ2S-affirming environments for children.

Our EarlyON Child and Family Centre also expanded by introducing an additional day of Glitterbug family programming at The 519 on Saturdays. The team continued to support our

LGBTQ Refugee Support Program parents and run successful quarterly **LGBTQ2S Family Events**. The program also hosted several educational workshops including 'Raising Sexually Healthy Children' in partnership with Toronto Public Health, and 'Becoming an LGBTQ2S Foster Parent' in partnership with the Children's Aid Society of Toronto.

The 519 LGBTQ2S Family Event:
Winter Wonderful Celebration, 2019



The 519 LGBTQ2S Family Event Love=Family, 2020

COMMUNITY VOICES

"We needed this to shake off the sadness of not having any family here in Canada."

– A parent from our Among Friends LGBTQ Refugee Support Program, at an EarlyON social event, 2019

"We first attended the Glitterbug program with the intent to expose our kids to other children and similar families with same-gender parents. We quickly realized that the Glitterbug program provided us with so much more. The mealtime has been a welcoming space for us to interact and chat with other parents about our stories, challenges, and ask each other questions without judgment. We've also made friends through Glitterbug. We always left the Glitterbug program with a smile on our faces and Thursdays have become our favourite day of the week."

– Participant, East End Children's Centre (Kimbourne) – one of the designated EarlyON sites for The 519 Glitterbug LGBTQ2S EarlyON mobile program



LGBTQ Refugee Support Program

Our LGBTQ Refugee Support Program continued to experience increasing community need and mounting funding pressures throughout the year. Each year, more than 1,500 refugee claimants register for our **Among Friends** program, an LGBTQ refugee claimant support group. In 2019, in order to meet the needs of this growing client group, program participants were assigned to two separate cohorts of the Among Friends program, which they could attend bi-weekly on a drop-in basis, using a pre-posted schedule of activities.

We also continued to develop integrated programming to provide holistic supports in response to emerging community needs. These programs included our Mock Hearing Program, Coping Together trauma support program, Trauma-informed Counselling individual and group services for refugees, employment skill-building programs, and Fuel: Physical Activity for LGBTQ Newcomers and Refugees.

The top **10 countries of origin** represented by **1,578** refugee claimants registered in our programs in 2019:

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| 1. Nigeria | 6. Jamaica |
| 2. Uganda | 7. Tanzania |
| 3. Kenya | 8. Iran |
| 4. India | 9. The Bahamas |
| 5. Turkey | 10. Mexico |



The 519 Annual Sports Day, 2019



Participants after a session of dance and Zumba with **Fuel: Physical Activity for LGBTQ Newcomers and Refugees**. This program is hosted in partnership with the University of Toronto's Hart House and Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education. In 2019, the program had **674** visits, hosted **24** activity sessions and **4** special events, and carried out a Participatory Action Research project focused on LGBTQ newcomer needs.



COMMUNITY VOICES

"If I had not come to The 519, I would not have been able to pick up the pieces of my life. I wouldn't have found my chosen family."

– Gloria, LGBTQ Refugee Support Program participant, and volunteer. Read Gloria's story: www.The519.org/support-the-519/impact-stories/gloria-2019



Gloria volunteering at one of our LGBTQ2S Family events, 2019



Older LGBTQ2S Programs

There are few places in the city where older LGBTQ2S community members find trauma-informed spaces that not only address their need for services but also provide affirming social interactions. Our longstanding Older LGBTQ2S programs remained an important focus in 2019. In addition to our weekly drop-in, which serves as a hub for social activity and as a platform for addressing food insecurity within this group, we launched several initiatives for older LGBTQ2S adults. These include our **bOlder together** program – a year-long series of monthly intergenerational

skill-building workshops and community social events focused on the mental health and well-being of older LGBTQ2S adults.

LGBTQ2S folks in general, and older community members in particular, are much more likely to live alone and without family support. Our volunteer-led **Friendly Phone** program continued to connect with isolated older LGBTQ2S folks to provide social connections and referrals. This program became the foundation of the modified Friendly Check-in program launched to support our communities during COVID-19.



↑ **bOlder Together** queer slow dance social event, 2020



← International Day of Older Persons event, 2019



“We are living in a time when the fundamental human rights of the most marginalized in our world are being consistently called into question and threatened. The 519 will continue to fight for the day when no more names are added to the list of those who have passed away due to transphobic violence. Join our Army of Lovers, organize, rise up, and refuse to remain silent in the face of transphobia. Actively work to disrupt narratives and behaviours that fail to recognize the humanity of trans, two-spirit, and non-binary communities and commit to ending violence in all its forms.”

– Excerpt from our public statement on
Trans Day of Remembrance, 2019.

Read full statement here:

www.The519.org/news/tdor-19-publicstatement

The 519 Trans Day of Remembrance event, 2019



Trans Engagement Strategy

The 519's Trans Engagement Strategy embeds an intentional framework across The 519's programs, services, and community engagement activities to address the pervasive issues that continue to marginalize trans communities. The strategy supports positive change for our trans communities by striving to improve their quality of life and create pathways to full participation.

In 2019, in addition to reviewing and updating our own human resource processes, initiating a global environmental scan and internal programs review process, as well as conducting external policy reviews and advocating for trans-inclusive policies with various public institutions, The 519 launched the **Kyle Scanlon Memorial Fund**. The fund was created to memorialize Kyle Scanlon, a beloved member of our staff team and local trans communities. The Kyle Scanlon Memorial Fund is given out annually and is proud to provide funding to community programs and initiatives that focus on bettering the lives of two-spirit, trans, and non-binary communities.

Anti-Racism and Equity Framework

As part of our strategic priorities, we continued our work on building a robust Anti-Racism and Equity Framework. This priority is embedded across our organization and has been a significant element of all our work. In 2019, we successfully completed four senior leadership consultation sessions, and one Board of Management consultation session.

The Framework and Action Plan will go through another round of stakeholder consultations before being presented to the Board for final approval.



↑ At the **Kyle Scanlon Memorial Fund** launch event in September 2019, The 519 renamed its community kitchen as the 'Kyle Smith Scanlon Community Kitchen', in memory of Kyle Scanlon (September 5, 1971 – July 3, 2012).

↓ Jennifer Lu, Chief Coordinator of Marriage Equality Coalition Taiwan with our amazing panelists discussing queer experiences in Toronto, South Korea, and Taiwan at **Dreaming the (Im)possible** – an event organized by The 519 in 2019 to commemorate the legalization of equal marriage in Taiwan.



↑ Our International Women's Day 2020 celebrations **'Own it!'** featured a power brunch, panel discussion, marketplace, and riveting performances.





5.

IN-FOCUS: 2020 COVID-19 Response

5.1 Featured Highlights

After the City of Toronto ordered the closure of community centres in Toronto in March 2020 due to COVID-19, we reimagined our programs and services to respond to the most urgent needs of our communities during very challenging times. We immediately launched our essential services including daily distribution of takeaway meals, clothing, harm reduction supplies, hygiene products, and safer sex supplies. We also operationalized over-the-phone services including settlement, counselling, community check-ins, and legal clinics while we mobilized to provide rapid response supports on the ground. Since our building reopening in July 2020, we have continued to provide daily takeaway meals and virtual supports, and have resumed in-person supports and on-site programming with modified operations.



COMMUNITY VOICES

"This is the family that always has your back, rain or shine."

– Community member, regarding COVID-19 essential services by The 519



Staff at our Takeaway Meals service

Daily Meals and Essential Supplies

Before COVID-19, we had three regular weekly drop-in food programs. We also served snacks and meals during our other on-site programs, and had introduced a takeaway grocery bag initiative in our Older LGBTQ2S and Meal Trans programs to address issues of chronic food insecurity in our communities – a reality that intensified with the onset of the global pandemic. We were thus well-positioned to immediately launch our Takeaway Meals program in March 2020, serving hot meals seven days a week. Through this operation, we have been providing healthy meals and snacks to impacted community members and are also distributing other important resources such as harm reduction supplies, gift cards, hygiene supplies, and information resources. This service became an important way for us to continue checking in on our communities to offer support, crisis intervention, and referrals in the absence of our regular on-site programming.



COMMUNITY VOICES

"I don't know what I would have done without you folks here. I don't have any family nearby and this has been a huge help for me. Thank you so much."

– 50+ community member, regarding COVID-19 Takeaway Meals service



← Takeaway Meals service prep



COMMUNITY VOICES

"To everyone working at The 519 during the COVID-19 virus, THANK YOU SO MUCH for the hot meals. I greatly appreciate it. The food is so yummy. Keep up the good work you are doing and please stay safe."

– Community member, regarding COVID-19 Takeaway Meals service



STAFF VOICES

"Food insecurity is a hard reality, especially in times of crisis like this. It is truly an honour to be able to make a difference in the community with my skills. Food is a powerful thing. It has the ability to bring people together to share a beautiful moment. If I can feed someone and bring them a moment of joy in all this chaos, I could not ask for more."

– Zoey Luker, Kitchen Lead at The 519 →



Friendly Check-in

During the pandemic, LGBTQ2S seniors have been some of the most impacted community members experiencing increased levels of social isolation and anxiety, and facing significant risks to their health. As part of our immediate response, we built upon our existing Friendly Phone program model and launched a staff-led Friendly Check-in program to reach vulnerable community members including seniors, and offer support and referrals via phone and email.

Inspired by the response to this program, our Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC) peer leaders, EarlyON team, and Older LGBTQ2S program leads are rolling out their own friendly check-in programs to remotely engage program participants across the city.

Front Desk staff on-site



STAFF VOICES

“Many folks are feeling the emotional and social impacts of physical distancing. They are experiencing a lot of anxiety, uncertainty, and loneliness. Older adults, in particular, are struggling with the impacts of social isolation and might not necessarily have access to or comfort with using technology to stay connected. The 519’s Friendly Check-in program during COVID-19 is an important effort to maintain relations with our communities at a time when we are cut off from each other.”

– Jo Jefferson, Program Assistant, Older LGBTQ2S program →



Settlement Support

It has been an intensely stressful time for vulnerable LGBTQ refugees and newcomers with disruptions in services leading to potentially dire consequences. When our on-site settlement services were paused, we quickly introduced over-the-phone crisis settlement services to continue providing support to LGBTQ refugees and newcomers. With our building reopening in July 2020, we have resumed in-person services by appointment and are continuing to offer virtual supports.

Counselling Support

We modified our Trauma-informed Counselling services to offer single-session and short-term counselling sessions over the phone to LGBTQ2S communities experiencing increased levels of trauma, violence, and social isolation during COVID-19.



A note from a community member

Tax Clinic

During tax season, our Tax Clinics are in high demand. With the city-wide shutdown of services, many who relied on our free, affirming services were dealing with the additional stress of how to file their annual taxes. We responded to this need by introducing our Virtual Tax Clinic to support low-income community members in Downtown East. The 519 staff and volunteers published several taxes and benefits resources on our website for additional support. The 519 Virtual Tax Clinic was showcased by Volunteer Toronto as a model case study in engaging volunteers in virtual supports and services.

Read the full case study here:
bit.ly/The519TaxClinicCS

Access to Justice and Anti-Violence Initiatives

Legal Support:

Our Legal Clinics provide critical services to LGBTQ2S communities throughout the year. During COVID-19, when we could not conduct in-person clinics, we launched over-the-phone Legal Clinics to continue providing the much-needed services. With support from our partners and volunteer lawyers, we were also able to modify our **Trans ID Clinic** and **Mock Hearing Program for LGBTQ Refugee Claimants** to be delivered virtually.



VOLUNTEER VOICES

"I have been working as a criminal lawyer for more than 10 years and volunteering with The 519 Legal Clinic for much of that time. The clinic is essential to providing access to justice for the most vulnerable members of our community. I am proud to offer legal advice to people for whom time with a lawyer would otherwise be out of reach. My reward is the relief I often hear in a person's voice at the end of a consultation because they can now clearly see the road ahead of them."

– Lead Volunteer Lawyer, The 519 Legal Clinic

Advocacy Initiatives:

In the wake of a global pandemic, the challenges faced by marginalized and vulnerable communities including LGBTQ2S communities have increased. The closure of queer- and trans-run businesses, increase in targeted and systemic violence, limited access to basic services – COVID-19 has intensified the existing social and economic inequities experienced by our communities. During this time, The 519 has been on the frontlines demanding equity and justice, working with partners to provide immediate support in crisis, and elevating important issues while mobilizing critical resources.

LETTERS FROM THE 519

"If local queer- and trans-owned businesses in The Village cease to exist post COVID-19, the few remaining positive and safer spaces in The Village will disappear. To our community, these spaces are central to the history of our community and its future. It is in these bars where we found love. It is in the streets where we found our voice. And it is within the walls of The 519 where we found community. The impact of losing these vital spaces cannot be measured only in dollars and cents. It is about losing the very fabric of who we are as an LGBTQ2S community."

– Excerpt from the letter from Maura Lawless, Executive Director of The 519, and David Morris, Chair of The 519 Board of Management seeking immediate government action to save Toronto's LGBTQ2S Village.

Read More: www.The519.org/news/letters-to-govt-may8



LETTERS FROM THE 519

"It should come as no surprise that our community is experiencing a sharp rise in targeted homophobic and transphobic attacks. While laws have changed, the protections they offer are often experienced in our communities theoretically. Our laws are only as strong as those tasked to uphold them – the police and the broader criminal justice system continues to be plagued by discriminatory attitudes and a lack of insight into what it means to be queer or trans in our country, particularly at the intersections of race and class and all of the other ways that we are made marginal."

– Excerpt from the letter written to the Prime Minister, seeking solutions to the alarming increase of LGBTQ2S abuse, particularly in urban communities across Canada. Read More: www.The519.org/news/letters-to-pm-may2020

DEAR MINISTER MORNEAU, PREMIER FORD,
MPP SUZE MORRISON, MAYOR JOHN TORY,

**Urgent Government Action is
Required to Save Toronto's
LGBTQ2S Village**

NOW IS THE TIME.

THE519.ORG/NEWS

THE 519
SPACE FOR CHANGE



↑ Community messages

Resource Development and Distribution

In addition to sharing relevant information with our communities to support them in navigating such challenging times, The 519 developed and disseminated more than 10 comprehensive resources in March-April, 2020. These included resources for LGBTQ2S youth, older adults, newcomers, and parents/caregivers, and they focused on community needs for housing, mental health support, access to food and services, grieving and caregiving resources, among others. With the generous support of MCIS Language Solutions, we were able to make some of our resources available in more than 12 languages.

STAFF VOICES

"The 519 acknowledges the significant loss of life in our communities in the face of COVID-19 – compounding already extremely violent and difficult lived realities for LGBTQ2S communities and specifically Black and Indigenous communities, People of Colour, queer, trans, and two-spirit folks."

– Jaymie Sampa, Manager, Program and Partnership Development



COMMUNITY VOICES

"I am so appreciative that you are posting these tools and will be using them during this caregiving marathon. Thank you!"

– Community member, regarding COVID-19 Mental and Emotional Health Resources compiled by The 519



Kids' submissions for our very first **Virtual LGBTQ2S Family Pride** party which featured circle time, performances by special guests, and art and craft activities for children. The Virtual Family Pride party was hosted by our EarlyON Child and Family Centre and Glitterbug LGBTQ2S EarlyON mobile program in June 2020.



**Good morning, good morning,
good morning to you,**

**Good morning, good morning,
and how do you do?**

**Your face is like sunshine,
you bring us great cheer,**

**We're happy to see you,
we're glad that you're here.**



Virtual LGBTQ2S Circle Time with Glitterbug: Ep. 3

↑ Our EarlyON programs have been running weekly **Virtual LGBTQ2S Circle Time** sessions during COVID-19.

6.

PHILANTHROPY & FUNDRAISING

Highlights - 2019

For every \$1 of core City funding, The 519 raised \$3.7 to support our programs and services in 2019



The 519 is thankful to all our donors, funders, partners, fundraising events guests, and to our productive enterprises clients.

46% of our program revenue was generated through Donations and Fundraising



Your support makes all the difference.

\$350,000* was raised by The 519 Annual Gala 2019 presented by Salah Bachir



We are grateful to our honorary patron Salah Bachir for presenting our 15th Annual Gala, our biggest single-day fundraising event.

851 volunteers donated a total of 15,555 hours to The 519 in 2019



Thanks to our amazing volunteers for their generosity, time, talent, and commitment. We couldn't have done it without you.

.....
* Gross amount

COMMUNITY VOICES

"I am proud to support my community. I hope you can help support The 519 with a donation by phone."

"We supported The 519. When we come together as a community, our impact is limitless!"

– Messages from donors on social media





Support from Our Communities in 2020

The 519 [Green Space Festival](#) 2020, our biggest fundraising event of the year, was cancelled due to COVID-19. This cancellation along with the disruption of our productive enterprises resulted in a significant loss of operating revenue that supports our year-round services. Despite the loss, The 519 has continued to provide essential services to our communities.

We are overwhelmed with the generosity of our donors, funders, partners, and third-party fundraisers who stepped up to support our work in this time of great need. The online donations, third-party supports, corporate partnerships, and in-kind donations during this time have been making it possible for us to continue our essential work.

The road to recovery is tough for the rest of the year and the next – but with you by our side, we will continue to serve and lead.



↑ We are grateful to our many donors who offered their generous in-kind support for our communities during COVID-19.

7.

DONOR RECOGNITION – 2019

Our heartfelt gratitude to all the individuals, organizations, and community groups that supported our work through their thoughtful donations and involvement, including through our direct appeals and our special events, such as the Green Space Festival and the Annual Gala. You have made a difference in the lives of the hundreds of people who come into The 519 every day.

This donor list reflects donations received from January 1 to December 31, 2019. The 519 makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of our donor list. For any inquiries, please email Giving@The519.org.

Major Funding Partners



United Way
Greater Toronto



Honorary Patron

Salah Bachir

Individuals

Visionary Circle

(\$25,000+)

Anonymous
Salah Bachir & Jacob Yerex
Andy & Valerie Pringle

Patrons Circle

(\$10,000-\$24,999)

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Brian Cartwright
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Joe Brennan
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Paul Noble

Leadership Council

(\$1,000-\$9,999)

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Matthew Campbell
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Lara Shewchuk
Randy Ulene
Grant Van Rensburg
Michelle Walker &
Molly Reynolds
Ian Watson
Mike Zaranyik

Benefactors

(\$500 - \$999)

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Luis Aguila
Tami Aitken
Donald Altman
Doug Arcand &
Alnoor Karmali
Morgan Bailey
Paul Bent
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Elizabeth Brandt
Marco Calabretta-Duval
Matthew Cutler &
Dr. Avery Miller
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Jeff Straw
Richard Sutton
Brian Terry
Sam Tyson
Cathy Vine
Estate of William George
Vine
Alfred Whitehead
Brian Wilding &
Brian McKeen

**Advocates
(\$250- \$499)**

Anonymous (x 7)
Souvik Adhya
Julie & Graham Allen
Stacy Ann
Gord Asmus
Jorge Barillas Monge
Victoria Bautista-Hodgson
Caroline Baycroft
Chris Biri
Nancy Bramm
Lacey Brannen
Jack Brannigan
Marina Brown
Eric Buan
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Jody Chan
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Don Cole
Meri Collier
Kevin Conway
Gord Cooke
Alex Cooling
Kevin Cormier
I. Loui Dallas
Mith Das
Belinda David
Jonathan De La Cruz
Sarah Del Favero

Adam Di Pardo
Jake Douglas
William Dowkes
Natalie Edwards
Trisha Egberts
Adam Fabicki
Jean-Pierre Fernandes
Juan Carlos Fernandez
Dennis Findlay
Malgorzata Folda
Prentice Fraser
Sandra Gandola
Jake Tobin Garrett
Rebecca Gillis
Aleksandar Golijanin
Stuart Gray
Neil Guthrie
Kathleen Harquail
Scott Harrison
William Henbest
Kameron Hilroy
Lauren Hodgson
Andrew Horberry
Pam Hrick
Heidi Janson
John Jordan
Brad Keenan
John Kenyon
Eric Kim
Scott Knox
Sharon Korpan
Mark Laliberte
Ryan Lax
Luc Levasseur
Amber Ley
Julian Liurette
Victoria Loucks
Kanchan Maharaj
Jeremy Maunder
Sue Mayrand
Robert McCullough
Paul McGovern
Lloyd McKell
Mark Medland
Joseph Micallef
Adrian Mitchell &
Bruce Yungblut
David Moffat
Tim Morgan
Dawn Mortimer

Laura Muirhead
Patrick Pearse Murray
Georgina Myles
Oyeyiola Oyeyinka
Michael Patrei
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Ken Popert
Ryan Porter
Bryan Porterfield
Lesley Pysklywec
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Will Webb
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Christine Pearson
Oskar Westin
David Whitney
Timothy Wichert
Peter J. Wren

**Supporters
(\$20 - \$249)**

Thanks so very much to the **2,779** Supporter-level donors who collectively donated **\$120,000** to help The 519 build a more inclusive world. The full donor list is available at www.The519.org/support-the-519/supporters

Green Space
Festival Lipstick
Jungle, 2019.
Photo by
Aydin Matlabi



Corporate, Foundations, and Community Partners

Luminaries (\$50,000+)

Anonymous
BMO Financial Group
Delta Air Lines
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Trendsetters (\$25,000-\$49,999)

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Champions (\$10,000-\$24,999)

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Eska Water
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Leaders

(\$1,000-\$9,999)

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Bisha Hotel
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Think Research
Toronto Gay Hockey
Association
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Action Positive AIDS/HIV
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AMR LLP
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HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic
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Howl Toronto
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Humanist Association of
Toronto
Instacart Ink
Interflora UK
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Jayjay Kings
Keller Williams Real Estate
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Local 2484 Toronto
Daycare Workers
Lorne Park Secondary
School
Manifold
Mariposa Cruise Line
Markham District High
School
Medtronic
Molar Horrors Web Series
MORBUS
Mosaic Yoga
Narcotics Anonymous
Nationwide Appraisal
Services
Ontario Cannabis Store
Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt
LLP

Overeater's Anonymous
Peel Elementary Teacher's
Local
Penguin Random House
Canada
PepsiCo Beverages
Canada
Physiohealth Studios
Positive Space EI &
Processing, Service
Canada
Power Worker's Union
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Promo Guyz
Rakuten Kobo Inc.
RBC Church Street Branch
Rehabilitation Consultants
Reid's Distillery
Research Strategy Group
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Anonymous
Sexual Compulsives
Anonymous
Sirius XM Canada
Slack Technologies
Smart Recovery
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Stephen Thomas Ltd
Suncor Energy
Swingin' Out Club
Taylor Hazell Architects
TESS PISG Team
The Churchmouse
The Coyles
The Letters at Rotman
The Promises Group
The Sandbox Agency
The Sixty Three
Foundation
The Ultimate Software
Group of Canada
The Writers' Union of
Canada

TO Comix Press
Tonic Blooms
Toronto Go Club
Toronto South Central
District 10 AA
Triangle Squares
Union Yoga + Wellness
University of Toronto
Department of Medicine
VIACASH INC
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Women's Health in
Women's Hands
Woody's
WSIB
Yellow House Events

Contact Us

If you would like to learn more about giving to The 519, including making bequests, gifts of securities, or other directed gifts, or to get your organization involved, please contact Giving@The519.org.

Green Space
Festival
Treehouse
Party, 2019.
Photo by
Aydin Matlabi





8.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY - 2019*

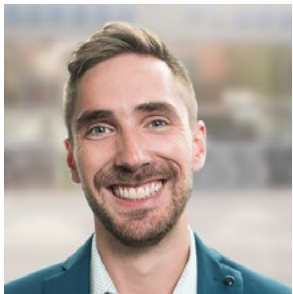
REVENUE			2019	2018
Grants	City of Toronto	Core	1,571,619	1,478,975
		Grants	615,096	758,906
	United Way		378,509	279,004
	Government of Canada		657,342	568,009
	Others		431,974	233,754
	Province of Ontario		207,073	217,118
			3,861,613	3,535,766
Donations			1,164,657	951,972
Fundraising			1,526,494	1,199,070
Café			509,249	539,565
Education & Training			241,699	255,822
Rental fees			38,455	52,644
Other revenue			11,547	13,171
Interest			21,883	10,410
Amortization of deferred capital contributions			20,204	20,203
TOTAL REVENUE			7,395,801	6,578,623
EXPENSES				
	Salaries and wages		3,598,492	3,035,516
	Employee benefits		879,463	772,742
	Purchase of services		1,980,313	1,539,884
	Materials, supplies, and services		1,062,674	1,101,414
	Amortization of capital assets		37,578	53,761
TOTAL EXPENSES			7,558,520	6,503,317
NET REVENUE / (NET EXPENSES OVER REVENUE)			(\$162,719)	\$75,306

* The 2019 audited financial statements have been reviewed approved by The 519's Board of Management. The statements have not yet been received by our Membership due to the postponement of our Annual General Meeting as a result of COVID-19. To view the completed audited statements, visit: www.The519.org/about/annual-reports

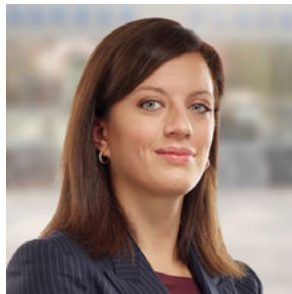
9.

THE 519 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2019-2020

We are thankful to our Board of Management for their leadership and support.



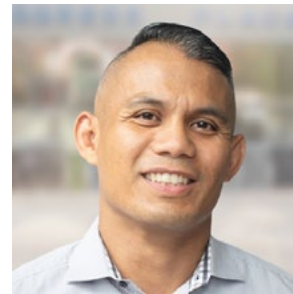
David Morris
Chair of the Board



Pam Hrick
Vice-Chair of the Board



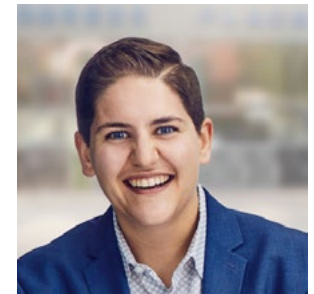
Marco Calabretta-Duval
Treasurer of the Board



Paul Jonathan Saguil
Secretary of the Board



Biko Beauttah
Member of the Board



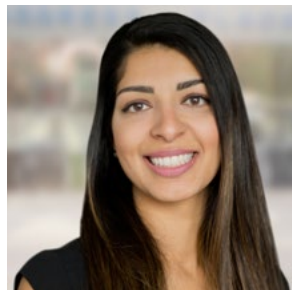
Michael Cherny
Member of the Board



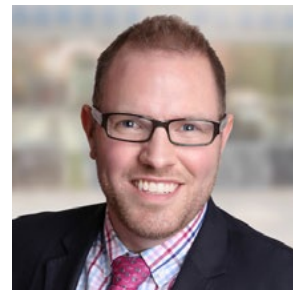
Paul Noble
Member of the Board



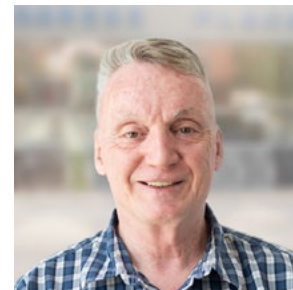
Sarah Zerihun
Member of the Board



Shazia Vlahos
Member of the Board



Tom Spence
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Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam
City Councillor for Ward 13 -
Toronto Centre, and
Ex-Officio Member of
the Board of Management

The 519 is committed to the health, happiness,
and full participation of LGBTQ2S communities
in Toronto and beyond.

Join and support us in this work.

Donate to The 519:

www.The519.org/donate

Third-Party or In-Kind Support:

Giving@The519.org

Front cover photo: (Left) The 519 staff
and community members at the **Defend
Church Street** counter-protest, 2019.
(Right) A staff member at the service
window for our **Takeaway Meals**
service, 2020.



519 Church St.,
Toronto ON, M4Y 2C9

✉ Info@The519.org

☎ 416-392-6874

🌐 www.The519.org

📘 🐦 📷 @The519



The 519 is an agency of the City of Toronto
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