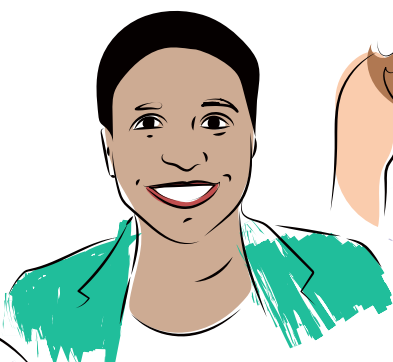
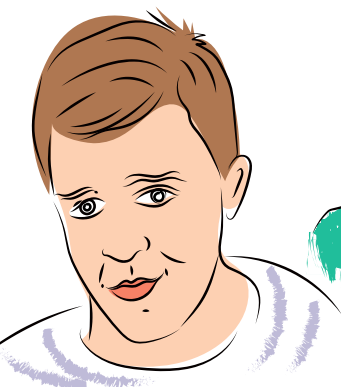
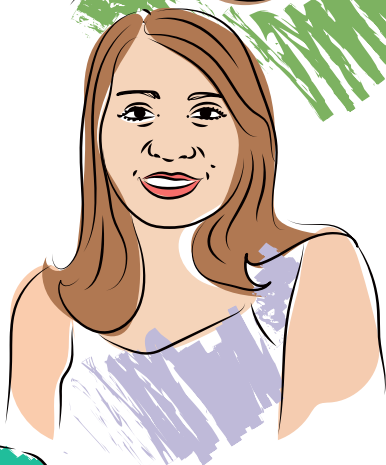
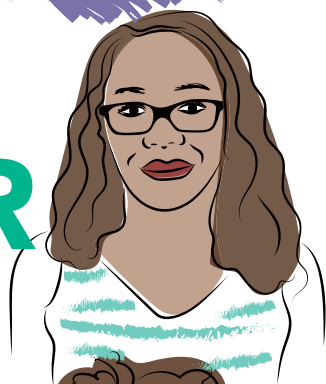


TOGETHER

IMPACT THROUGH
COMMUNITY



2015/16

THE 519 ANNUAL REPORT

It has been a year of important progress for LGBTQ communities in Canada, including the introduction of new human rights protections at the federal level that offer greater legal protections for trans and gender diverse people. Changes to provincial referral guidelines that reduce wait times and improve access to those seeking gender-confirming surgeries have also been introduced. The 519 continues to engage all three levels of government to push for policy and legislative change that meets the diverse needs of LGBTQ people. We're working to ensure that those most marginalized have the support and resources that will allow them to benefit equally from the rights we have all fought hard for and won.

It has also been a year of great loss – violence continues to affect LGBTQ people here at home and around the world – unfathomable rates of bullying and suicide affecting LGBTQ youth, violence targeting trans communities of colour, and state-sanctioned violence against LGBTQ people around the world are all sobering reminders of how far we have left to go. The Pulse Nightclub shootings were a searing reminder of just how fragile our lives and freedoms are – but more importantly they forced many of us to reflect more deeply on the ways that LGBTQ communities of colour are disproportionately impacted by violence and discrimination. The 519 is committed to both facilitating and participating in thoughtful conversations about race and racism – both inside our organization and beyond.

We continue to be proud of our work and of our efforts to broaden and strengthen our support of LGBTQ communities over the past year, including the expansion of Newcomer and Refugee Programs to ensure that we are effectively meeting the needs of queer and trans asylum seekers and the development of new initiatives like the Trans Youth Mentorship Program, which provides a safe, welcoming space for trans youth to explore their education and employment aspirations. Program Co-ordinator Dani Araya (who is profiled in this annual report along with 14 other members of The 519 community) says the mentors help program participants learn the soft skills that are so important to thriving: "It isn't about learning to sell yourself," she says. "It's about loving yourself."

We hope you will take the time to read through our annual report and learn more about the work that we are doing and meet a few of the many people who are contributing in countless ways – the parts that make up our whole.

OUR VISION

The 519 is committed to the health, happiness and full participation of the LGBTQ community. A city of Toronto agency and a registered charity with an innovative model of Service, Space and Leadership, we strive to make a real difference in people's lives while working to promote inclusion understanding and respect.

The 519 believes that community centres are vital in our City's social infrastructure – our commitment to creating equitable, accessible spaces for all forms the basis of our partnership with the City of Toronto and the local Moss Park community to develop plans for new community and recreation facilities and park space in Moss Park. Inside this report, you can find out more about the work we've been doing together to shape a collective vision for the new facilities, which we believe will strengthen local communities and demonstrate best practices in social inclusion and accessibility.

We know that so many of you share our commitment to building a safer and more just world – demonstrated through your participation in our organization, through tens of thousands of volunteer hours, through your individual financial donations totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars, through your funding investments, and through your willingness to engage with us as we move forward.

Together, our community makes a massive impact.
Thank you to all of you for being part of it.



**Executive
Director
Maura Lawless
and Board
Chair Jacob
Porpossian**



WHEN WE COME
TOGETHER AS A
COMMUNITY OUR
IMPACT IS LIMITLESS

57,940

information/referral
requests through
our Front Desk

3,973

MEMBERS

510,720

ANNUAL VISITS
TO THE 519

visits to programs led by The 519

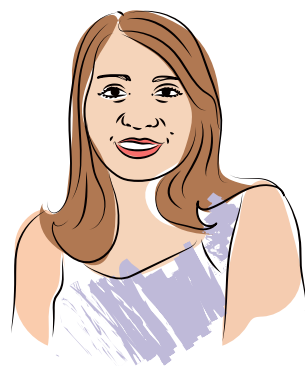
88,460

FOR EVERY \$1

of city funding, The 519 raises \$3.57 through
our philanthropic and fundraising efforts.
Your support makes a difference.

YOUTH

DANI'S DREAM: A NEW MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR TRANS YOUTH



Dani Ayara starting coming to The 519 after having transitioned when she was 16 years old. She was in search of a community during a challenging time. "I wasn't comfortable being part of the trans community then," Dani says. "I was still learning about who I was." But after discovering more about herself through a two-spirit storytelling group, Dani began volunteering in the kitchen for Meal Trans – The 519's drop-in program serving meals to lower-income, street-active, homeless and sex working trans people.

Dani calls those her formative years during which she became more committed and involved, both with The 519 and the trans community as a whole, developing her professional skills in social work while continuing to volunteer. By 2008, she wanted to help expand The 519's support of the trans community, so she joined the Trans Access Project and facilitated workshops for trans people experiencing challenges finding housing and employment.

The 519's trans-specific programming has grown considerably since then (it now includes queer and trans youth arts, a trans youth in sport program and housing supports, among other initiatives). This year, Dani helped add an exciting new offering with the launch of the Trans Youth Mentorship program, which supports young people aged 16-29 with education, training and career goals. While the program focuses on employment

I found opportunity at The 519

and post-secondary education, its approach is much broader: It helps trans youth with transitioning and dealing with transphobia in the workplace and also provides mentorship by pairing a young trans person with an older, established mentor who has experience and an identity that's aligned with the mentee. "Trans people need mentors," she says. "I met people who became my chosen family but I also saw older trans women of colour who were inspiring and opened up the world to me with their own experiences."

For Dani, it's about being a role model to trans people like herself, who had difficulty finding themselves but realized their true identity along with the community she discovered at The 519. "I found opportunity," she says. "And I want to create opportunities for people like me."

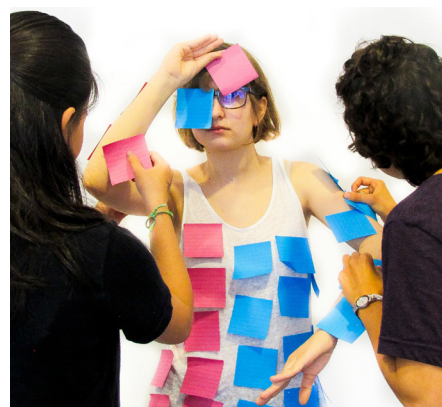
Support for LGBTQ Youth

- Queer & Trans Youth Arts
- Newcomer Youth Mentorship Program
- Youth Engagement Program for Newcomers
- LGBTQ Youth Housing
- Trans Youth Sports Project

LGBTQ2S youth who are experiencing homelessness face systemic barriers in the shelter system. We worked with Dr. Alex Abramovich, a leading researcher in this area, to develop a national curriculum and materials to support the training of shelter staff. It includes a set of 10 infographics that offer advice on how to reduce barriers and prevent chronic homelessness. Check out a sample of our work on page 34.

600

This year we visited 22 schools and spoke to more than 600 young people about LGBTQ inclusion and accessibility.



The Queer and Trans Youth Arts Project – a collaboration with community-based arts educators – enables queer, trans, gender-independent kids and the children of queer and trans families to explore their own relationships with gender, sexuality, body image and identities through activities like photography, improv and spoken word.

At The 519 we believe in the importance of preparing youth for leadership roles in the community. Student Newcomer Access Program (SNAP) supports newcomer youth in gaining skills and expanding their knowledge and understanding of community resources in Toronto as well as LGBTQ accessibility and inclusion.



supports four weeks of free yoga classes for trans and gender non-confirming youth, including supplies and refreshments.



I wasn't comfortable being part of the trans community when I first transitioned.



From the beginning, I knew this was the place I had to go.

EVERY LGBTQ REFUGEE HAS A STORY. THIS IS SHADY'S



It was over as soon as he saw the blog post. An online entry that bore the heading "Egypt Gay Scandal" outed a number of Egyptian LGBTQ activists in 2014, exposing them as gay in a country that, as **Shady Khalil** describes it, "is very afraid of anyone who is 'other.'" Shady had to flee, leaving friends, social networks and a venture he was achingly proud of: a social enterprise he'd started in 2010 that celebrated freedom and diversity through art and culture.

He found The 519 before he left Egypt, reading descriptions of its work online and resolving to come here. "From the beginning I knew this was the place I had to go," he says. Resourceful and highly self-reliant, Shady taught himself a lot about Canadian refugee and immigration policy by reading information available online, but there were still holes in his knowledge that The 519's programs for newcomers helped fill. "It's what they do so well – fill in those gaps for people."

*I knew this
was the place
I had to go*

Shady has been filling in his gaps quickly. With help from The 519's Among Friends program for Canadian newcomers, he applied – successfully – for refugee status. Then he moved on to Next Steps, a program that offers workshops,

group discussion and opportunities to connect with community groups and professional organizations. Now he's working to help others, by offering his services as a translator to The 519 and by establishing a community-led group for Arabic-speaking LGBTQ newcomers. "It's amazing to me that there's a space here for us, and it's free, and we can use it for whatever we need."

His proudest moment in Canada to date: speaking at a Refugee Pride event this year organized by The 519. "Pride reminds us what it means to be a LGBTQ person," he told his audience. "It means not just accepting the privilege you enjoy, but actively working to make sure that it stays – and that everyone has it."

The 519 provides safe welcoming space and support to LGBTQ newcomers and refugees

- Among Friends, a support program for refugee claimants
- Next Steps, a weekly group for Convention Refugees and Permanent Residents
- One-on-one support and counselling for newcomers and refugees
- Breakthrough Network, a volunteer-led committee that organizes social networking events
- Emerge, group mentorship for newcomers

90%

Of refugee claimants who
received supports from The 519
are successful in their claim.



A weekly community kitchen hosted by the Among Friends program provides an opportunity for LGBTQ refugees to learn cooking skills and gain work experience. \$255 allows us to run our weekly community kitchen program for eight LGBTQ refugees.

\$110

ensures that an LGBTQ refugee arriving
to Toronto during winter is provided
with a warm coat and boots.



The 519 is family. When Karlene asks me to translate, I can never say no!



I'm so proud that we offer newcomers a space where they feel connected.

REFUGEES

FROM REFUGEE TO 519 MANAGER:
A NEW LIFE IN CANADA



As an LGBTQ activist in Jamaica, **Karlene Williams-Clarke** always dreamed of a place such as The 519 existing freely and openly in her country. “We had a tiny space where we tried to help people,” she says. “But we couldn’t tell anybody where it was. We were always hidden away.” Eventually, her life as an activist became too risky and she came to Canada in 2009. “Here was this huge, amazing space doing all these things for LGBTQ people,” she says, recalling how she marveled at The 519’s visible presence on Church Street.

“I couldn’t believe it when I saw it.”

We’re giving
voice to
diverse voices

She soon became involved in the LGBTQ community, first as a participant in 519 programs for newcomers to Canada, then as a volunteer. Soon, she was letting herself imagine the impossible: getting paid to work with the LGBTQ community. In Jamaica, where she’d had a career in financial services, opportunities like that didn’t exist. But a position had opened up at The 519. Now she’s acting manager of direct services, overseeing many of the programs that had so impressed her when she first arrived.

“When people thank me for what we do, I say, ‘Don’t say thank you to me. What you need to do is just live, breathe and be yourself. That is the way you can pay me back.’”

A fervent supporter of global human rights, she’s encouraged to see The 519 advocating for LGBTQ rights for all. “We’re growing in that area,” she says. “We’re giving voice to diverse voices. We’re making sure that we’re representing people who may not see themselves in this work. That’s the direction I’m proud to see us go in.”

TOP 10
COUNTRIES OF
CLIENT ORIGIN

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Nigeria | 6. Bahamas |
| 2. Ukraine | 7. Uganda |
| 3. Turkey | 8. Sri Lanka |
| 4. India | 9. Cameroon |
| 5. Barbados | 10. Jamaica |



2,706

LGBTQ Refugee Claimants Participated In
Settlement Related Workshops/Group Sessions.

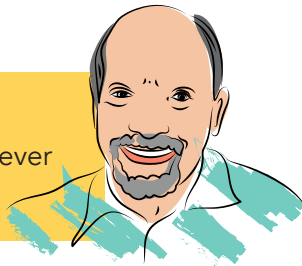


Many LGBTQ refugee claimants have highlighted The 519 as the sole positive space they have experienced since coming to Canada. In the last year, 978 LGBTQ refugee claimants received one-on-one settlement support.



When I found The 519,
I found community.

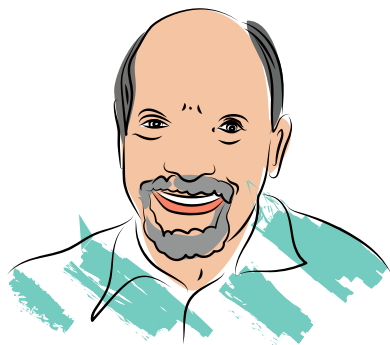
I’ve met so many
people here – I never
get lonely.



SENIORS

BORED? LONELY?

NOT THIS PRIMETIMER



Lyle Kersey can remember when the Gay Village wasn't much of a village. "I moved here in 1977 and there was a newspaper, I think, and Glad Day bookstore had just started up, but there wasn't a vibrant LGBTQ community like there is now."

He watched the Village grow through the 1980s and 90s, but he was too busy with work to get involved with the community, even as bath house raids and the AIDS crisis galvanized so many others. It wasn't until he retired in 2000 that he began coming to The 519 regularly, and now that he does, he can see the benefits it offers for older LGBTQ people, who can become isolated and inactive if they don't have a support network. "There are so many activities here," he says. "There's something on just about every day."

Lyle's favourite is the Primetimers, a community-led group of seniors who meet to play cards, go for meals and socialize. Other programs

for older community members include book clubs, an Older LGBTQ Drop-in and the Senior Pride Network, for individuals, groups and organizations with a focus on social services. (From social events like the Time After Time dance to the widespread delivery of LGBTQ-inclusion workshops to advocacy work at the first annual City of Toronto Seniors Summit, the Senior Pride

Network and The 519 are working more collaboratively than ever to continue to meet the needs of older LGBTQ people.)

Through Primetimers, Lyle has reconnected with several acquaintances from his childhood and also made a number of new friends, including a group of five or so who whisked him off to Cuba this year. "One of the chaps has been there many, many times, and he kept saying it might be his last time to go. Of course, he says that all the time," Lyle says. "But I chose to take him at his word."

Support for LGBTQ Seniors

- SPN/Long Term Care Home Project
- 50+ Older LGBTQ Program
- Youth & Elders Project
- Community Workshops

1,365

Care providers received 519 training to help them better address the needs of LGBTQ seniors through our Long Term Care Project.



What's So Queer About Dying? That was the name of an intergenerational panel and community gathering that drew more than 100 people to discuss end-of-life planning, advocacy for the elderly, ability and disability and other important issues.

We're excited about two new performance-based initiatives this year: *Tell It Like It Is*, an intergenerational storytelling series, focuses on the lives of community elders who have fought for our rights, and *The Youth and Elders Project*, a partnership with Buddies in Bad Times and the Senior Pride Network that features queer youth and elders presenting an oral history of queer lives. Watch for its premiere in June 2017.



\$6.35

supports the completion and filing of a tax return for a low income senior in our community.

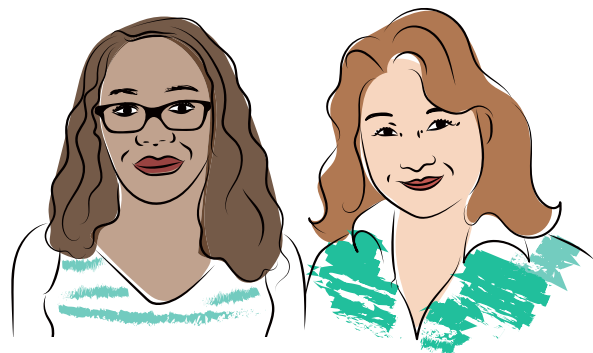


It's great to have so many opportunities for older LGBTQ community members.

We love to have all generations at the Family Resource Centre!



AT THE 519, FAMILIES DEFINE THEMSELVES



Sharn Peters and **Joanne Chong-Kettle** understand there's no such thing as a one-size fits-all family. The 519's Family Resource Centre provides support for families of diverse identities and configurations, from single parent units to sprawling, multi-generational families. "This is a generation of children – and their parents – who are going to school where it's not unusual to see kids with same-sex parents," says Joanne. "And that's wonderful."

To support LGBTQ parents and their children, Joanne, Sharn and the rest of the Family Resource Centre team provide a supportive space to meet, play, talk, learn, grow and eat nutritious snacks. If that sounds like daycare, there's one big difference: "With a daycare, you drop your child off and leave," says Sharn, The 519's

Co-ordinator, Child and Family Support Programs. "At the Family Resource Centre, you stay with the child in your care. You are given all of the things you'd have in a daycare centre, but you now have to engage with your child and you can't just walk away." The approach builds strong family relationships, and enables participants to develop parenting skills not only by accessing Family Resource Centre resources like reading materials and workshops, but through peer learning too.

Another outcome from so many different families coming together at the Family Resource Centre is a forming of bonds between families, who begin to look out for each other. From caring for one another's children to forming neighbourhood groups who carry out safety audits for the splash pad in Barbara Hall Park, new parents – and their children – aren't being isolated by their circumstance anymore.

The Family Resource Centre also offers monthly events for queer and trans families as well as programs for new and prospective parents, including Daddies and Papas 2B, Dykes Planning Tykes, and Queer and Trans Family Planning. "The great thing about The 519 is no one is put into any particular slot," says Sharn. "I wish I'd had something like it when I was a kid."

We support queer and trans families in a number of ways

- Family resource centre, daily program
- Queer parenting programs
- Queer and trans family events
- Arts projects



Our queer and trans family events celebrate LGBTQ diversity. Popular gatherings include the annual Family Pride celebrations (more than 300 people joined us at the barbecue), Halloween Hullabaloo and Light Fantastic.

7,483

adults and 7,665 children have visited our Family Resource Centre over the past year.



\$15

adds a book to our children's library, ensuring that our resources are reflective of diverse families.

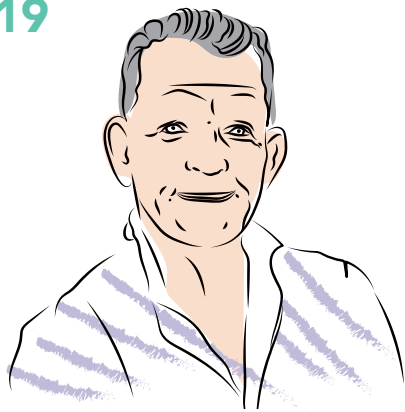


Joanne is like my work wife – we're trying to go see a play together.



We're all family at The 519.

MEET ALEX HERD: A FRIEND OF THE 519



As a long-time member of Toronto’s LGBTQ community, **Alex Herd** knew that many people around him faced challenges but it wasn’t until he retired and started doing volunteer work that he came to appreciate the extent of them – and the role that The 519 plays in supporting LGBTQ people.

Alex began volunteering with The 519’s Meal Trans program, preparing meals for low-income, street-active, homeless and sex-working trans people. “Through my work,” says Alex, “I’ve gotten to know more about trans people.” Over time, he became more aware of sensitivities around pronoun use and what’s unique about trans experience. “I had to learn how to talk to people,” he says. “It’s made me more of a person.”

More than anything, Alex loves to cook for people. He has plenty of opportunity through the Meal Trans program and the Sunday Drop-In, which serves a healthy breakfast and lunch to LGBTQ people who may be underhoused or experiencing poverty. The two programs served close to 12,000 meals over the past year.

As Alex started doing more volunteer work at The 519, he found his community was growing and his sense of responsibility to people around him strengthened. “We’re all family,” he says. “I’ve helped people on the street, people having problems in their relationships – it keeps me busy.” His presence here has become so integral that he has become known to some as “The icon of The 519.” To Alex, The 519 is the glue holding the people he loves and wants to help together.

“If we don’t have this space we’ll have nothing,” says Alex. “We always feel comfortable here.”

We’re all family

Support for LGBTQ Homeless community members

- Meal Trans, a weekly drop-in program
- Sunday drop-in
- One-on-one referrals

4,748 Number of annual visits to our Sunday Drop-In program.



Sunday Drop-In sometimes draws awesome surprise visitors. Like actress, DJ and internet sensation Ruby Rose, who dropped by The 519 on her 30th birthday to volunteer.

MEALS SERVED **8,997**

\$75 will allow us to accompany an LGBTQ young person who is homeless to meet with a potential landlord.

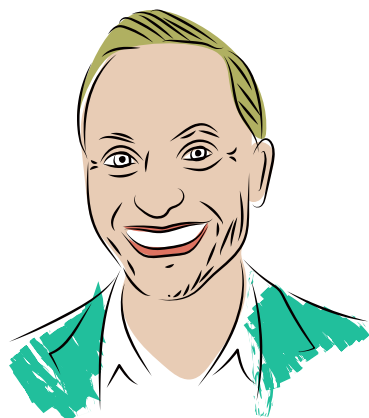


I meet new people every time I’m here.



When people wander in, we say, ‘Come sing with us!’

A SPACE FOR ALL MEANS A PLACE TO SING – OUT



It was a warm spring day, and the windows were open. People walking past could hear music – a sweet Jane Siberry tune, *Love Is Everything*, that sounded so gorgeous they couldn't stop themselves: A handful walked into The 519 and asked where the choir was.

They were in the ballroom, rehearsing, as they do every week, and the onlookers stood and listened for the rest of the evening. "For me that was a small but really special moment," says **Howie Dayton** president of Singing Out, the LGBTQ community choir that makes The 519 its home. "We've been able to really engage with the community in a much more pronounced way since we moved to The 519."

More than 250 community organizations use The 519 space – at no charge – to deliver programs and activities, not to mention awe-inspiring music. Some of the groups and events we've been pleased to host over the past year include Artists Without Barriers, a collective by and for artists with dis/abilities; Franco-Queer, a monthly LGBTQ newcomer session/social in French; and Sunset Service Toronto, a space for sexual minorities, people of colour, and members of marginalized racial and ethnic communities to come together for inquiry and inspiration.

For Singing Out and many other groups, The 519 offers distinct advantages: The choir saves money on rehearsal space fees, the building has gender-neutral washrooms, policies and practices, and it offers choir members access to resources like the Queer and Trans Youth Arts Programs, Trans Youth Mentorship, counselling and support in coming out.

Singing Out also contracted The 519 staff to "take us on an educational journey," Dayton says, to help the choir become more inclusive to trans and gender-non-conforming people. "We learned a lot," he says, "and we're in a much better place now, thanks to The 519."

The 519 offers space, service and leadership to more than 250 community groups and partner organizations who use our facilities at no cost to them on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

12,832 FACILITY BOOKINGS



The 519 is proud of its partnership with **Nuit Rose**, a free annual festival of queer-focused art and performance that showcases works by diverse artists. **Nuit Rose** happens each June.

Sunset Service
Toronto is a space for celebration and inquiry for people across all faith communities and cultural backgrounds.



Photo: Jah Grey



The 519 is a great place to share our love of music.



I love singing too!

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH ENGAGEMENT



How can a public consultation over the redevelopment of an arena, a community centre, and park space be a truly inclusive process that meets the needs of all – including marginalized and underserved communities whose voices aren't always heard?

This was the challenge presented by More Moss Park, an initiative launched by The 519 and the City of Toronto to consult the public about the possible redevelopment of Moss Park Arena, John Innes Community Centre and the surrounding park space. And it's being met through the efforts of people like **Jaymie Sampa** and **Curran Stikuts**, The 519 Community Organizers who have been working tirelessly

since May to ensure that this public consultation is equitable, accessible and includes everyone in Moss Park.

It's so great to see community-generated ideas

Over the course of the summer, the team has conducted dozens of focus groups, presentations, information-

table sessions and interviews in at least five languages, hosted events like barbecues and summer skating parties, and teamed up with the community to tidy up the park.

It all adds up to more than 2,500 conversations with over 1,800 residents who represent an incredible range of community groups. Curran, Jaymie and the other members of the Community Organizer team (including Shava, who is profiled on the next page) have worked full time to build and strengthen relationships with youth, seniors, indigenous and LGBTQ groups, and with marginalized and underserved communities such as sex workers, street-involved residents and people with accessibility needs.

"It's so great to see how community-generated ideas could simultaneously address strengths and gaps in the neighbourhood," says Jaymie.

"This consultation process is the beginning of a much longer discussion," says Curran. "But in the short time that I've been lucky enough to spend in Moss Park, it's been inspiring to see the hard work and dedication that community members put into caring for their neighbours and tending to their neighbourhood."

When communities come together we make our neighbourhoods BETTER FOR ALL

Community centres are vital to our city's social infrastructure and we're proud to have been working with local Moss Park residents this year to develop plans for new facilities and green space in Moss Park.



Photo: Yasin Osman

Everyone is invited to share ideas and advice about Moss Park. Kids too!

2,500+

conversations have shaped plans for Moss Park so far.

**+ 4 public meetings, 6 community events
a design competition and an online survey**



Shava's Zumba classes are the best!

You should see me shoot pool.



SHAVA'S MISSION: TO GET GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN MOVING



Shava McLean understands The 519's More Moss Park project on two levels. First, she's a Community Organizer who has been talking to local residents about what they'd like to see in new facilities and park space. And second, she's a community member herself, with a deep understanding of how inclusive, accessible spaces change lives.

When she came to Canada as an LGBTQ refugee a few years ago, she looked for a place to pursue her talent in track and field. Growing up, she'd devoted herself to athletics and competed with her university's track team. "I did everything," she says. "The 800-metre, the 200-metre, long distance... but here I discovered it wasn't that easy to find a place to do track and field. There were barriers. It's hard to find spaces to do what you want to do when you come to a new country."

I had to find a way to do sports

But anyone who knows Shava knows that she's an unstoppable force, both on and off the field. She decided to solve her own problem. "I had to find a way to do sports, plus, if I

didn't have access, where would others like myself go? Sometimes you have to change the rules of the game or invent when there's nothing. So I started a soccer program for girls and women."

A passionate advocate for empowering girls and young women through sports and physical activity, she wants the new Moss Park facilities to be accessible to all, offering opportunities to people who don't necessarily feel welcome at most gyms and recreation centres. And she's made a point of organizing consultation activities like Zumba classes and basketball games that reflect her interest in healthy movement. "Activities like that really bring people together," she says.

"Being a Community Organizer on this project has really offered me an opportunity to connect with people in ways that would never happen otherwise. It's a chance to create community and create opportunities for other people. And change lives."



To document the diverse range of people who use Moss Park, we organized the Moss Park Portrait Project, a day-in-the-life of the park through the eyes of local artists. Eight illustrators, photographers and other artists spent a day and evening creating portraits, while the subjects shared ideas and advice about the proposed new facilities.

A summary of the consultation results will be included in a feasibility study that City Council will consider in early 2017. If Council approves the report, a funding plan will be developed that includes a capital fundraising campaign.

Hundreds of kids have shared their ideas and dreams too. About 75 entered our Children's Design Challenge, which asked kids to show us their vision for Moss Park.



allows us to take a group of over 100 newcomers skating, including skate rentals and refreshments.



The 519 has been almost like a mother figure to me.



This community really supported me when I was coming out as queer and trans.

BY TRANS FOLK FOR TRANS FOLK: A TOOLKIT FOR 'TOUGH CONVERSATIONS'



What makes a workplace or organization seem safe and welcoming to all? Environments that are inclusive of gender identity and gender expression do more than just tell people they're welcome. They make them *feel* welcome, through language, signage, policies and a variety of best practices that staff member **Jack Hixson-Vulpe** has documented in a new toolkit produced by The 519 called

Creating Authentic Spaces. The toolkit consists of nine shareable infographics that help businesses and groups and community organizations create spaces where everyone – including trans and non-gender-conforming folks – feel comfortable. (A few tips: Use gender-neutral pronouns; educate yourself; make 'ally' a verb!)

The downloadable bilingual toolkit – the first of its kind in Canada – also clearly outlines the rights of trans individuals and offers advice on transitioning on the job. "It's meant to help people start conversations – tough conversations," says Jack, who says that one of the best things about the project was the opportunity it created for trans people to dialogue with each other. "There aren't a lot of opportunities for trans people to come together and be at the forefront of discussions that are actually about them," they say. "There were a lot of things we had to work through, and it brought out the notion that we are not one community. We are many communities, and talking about that was a really positive experience." (See page 35 for a sample infographic.)

An education and training specialist at The 519, Jack co-ordinates research and conducts workshops and training designed to promote LGBTQ-inclusive policies and practice. The toolkit is one of their proudest accomplishments from the past year, but Jack's also excited about a new project: public consultation work exploring what it means for governments to collect sex and gender information. (The work has been commissioned by the Ontario provincial government, which is planning to introduce gender-neutral documents.)

"Doing this work at The 519 feels great," Jack says, "because I can remember coming here at 15 and wondering what my life would be like. Coming back now feels like completing a wonderful circle."

Leadership and Advocacy Supports

- Education and Training
- Advocacy Campaigns and Resources
- Consultation Services
- Community Outreach
- Partnerships

Over the past year the
Education and Training
team delivered

234

WORKSHOPS

90%

After engaging The 519's Education and Training resources, 90% of participants felt their knowledge had increased to "good" or "excellent" when it came to support a trans identified colleague. Before the sessions, 10% felt confident providing support.

In partnership with Rainbow Health Ontario and trans and gender-diverse community members, The 519 developed and released a Media Reference Guide: Discussing Trans and Gender-Diverse People. This document outlines how to share information and stories about trans and gender-diverse people in an accurate and respectful way.



We're not one community – we're a lot of communities.

The 519 is becoming more representative of Toronto.



THE 519: 'AN IMPORTANT COMMUNITY RESOURCE'



The 519 advances community conversations about issues that are important to the LGBTQ community and to society at large – issues like trans inclusion, Black Lives Matter, the importance of intersectionality and the growing need to advocate for global human rights. “It’s an important community resource,” says **Debbie Douglas**, a committed social activist and executive director of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants.

At a panel discussion that she moderated in June – one of a series organized by The 519 to explore human rights struggles, challenges and triumphs – she listened as participants and audience members connected the dots between race, gender, disability, mental health, single parenting, gender fluidity, feminism, the importance of organizing, the role of allies and a number of other important issues that need to be considered to truly affect social change. “It was quite empowering,” she says. “There were so many amazing things discussed.”

It's diversifying in real ways

Those Pride Month panels aren’t the only reason Debbie views The 519 as an important partner and ally. “It’s made a commitment to working with racialized folk,” she says, pointing to The 519’s support of OCASI’s Positive Spaces Initiative, a project that works to create safe spaces for LGBTQ2S newcomers to Canada as an example. Just as importantly though, that commitment extends to The 519’s own leadership team: “The 519 is diversifying in real ways,” she says. “The leadership of the organization is becoming more representative of the city of Toronto.”



All of us at The 519 felt an incredible sense of shock, loss, sadness and anger in the wake of the horrific massacre at the Pulse Night Club on June 12. To honour the victims of Orlando, we joined with the Toronto Sisters of JOY and other community organizers to host a Candlelight Vigil, a powerful forum for bringing our community together to grieve and to reaffirm that love conquers hate. That solidarity continued for weeks, with the establishment of a spontaneous community memorial on The 519’s front steps. About 10,000 community members came to lay flowers, light candles and pay their respects in an amazing outpouring of support. For us, it was our communities coming together and the outpouring of support that got us through.

3,000+ community members attended the Orlando Candlelight Vigil.

The 519 has long advocated to secure equal rights and protection for trans and gender-diverse Canadians. This year, we’ve been pleased to support and celebrate:

- The introduction of a Government of Canada bill protecting the rights of trans and gender-diverse Canadians
- The Canadian Human Rights Commission’s work on policies protecting gender identity and gender expression under the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code
- The Government of Ontario’s commitment to make it easier for people in the trans and non-binary communities to have official documents that align with their identities

We’ll continue to advocate for truly inclusive environments and services in Canada in partnership with community.



The 519 really is a welcoming space.



I love that I meet people here from all kinds of backgrounds.

WHEN HE'S NOT SCRAMBLING EGGS HE'S FUNDRAISING



Matthew Logue has cracked a lot of eggs for The 519. Food prep isn't part of his 9-5 worklife – from Monday to Friday he works as executive vice-president at a sports marketing firm called S&E Sponsorship Group – but every Sunday morning he heads to Church Street to begin cooking breakfast and lunch for The 519's Sunday drop-in program. "It's a lot of cracking, a lot of chopping," says

Logue, who helps prepare healthy meals for anywhere from 80 to 130 people. "And it's not something I had experience doing when I started volunteering about two years ago. But it's where The 519 needed help and now it's one of the highlights of my week."

Matthew's first encounter with The 519 was at the Green Space Festival, not long after he'd come out. "It was my first Pride, and I was going through a bit of a rough time, and The 519 was a community – I really felt that," he says. "What impresses me about it still is that it's a community for everyone: it's offering support to people with low incomes, new Canadians, parents and families, refugees... people from all kinds of different backgrounds. And I get to meet them all on Sundays."

It's a lot of cracking, a lot of chopping

Matthew has been so inspired by The 519's work he's become a donor, and this year, a party organizer for The 519. He co-ordinated a fundraising event on Feb. 29 called One Giant Leap – a leap year party that raised about \$3,500 for The 519.

"I had no idea how to organize an event!" he says now, laughing as he remembers all the questions he asked philanthropy staff at The 519. "I probably bugged them about way too many things. But that's what I love about this place. Every time I've come to The 519 with an idea I've always been met with open arms. They could have said, 'Thanks, but we've got our own thing going on.' But they said, 'Go for it.'"

"To me The 519 is so much more than a building. It's the people, the programs, the amazing community – it's everything inside it."

Volunteerism and Philanthropy Supports

Our Donors and Volunteers find many ways to give back to The 519:

- Making a personal financial gift
- Making a monthly gift
- Organizing third-party fundraisers for The 519
- Volunteering time for our programs and special fundraising events

Our goal is to be the charity of choice for our LGBTQ communities.



Firefly Pub, our new pub series, offers safe, welcoming, inclusive space while raising vital funds for The 519. Our first event in March raised \$11,589.

In 2015 the number of community members supporting rose by

30%

We love individuals and groups that organize third-party activities to raise money for The 519. One great example: Klick Health's #ASeatForAll campaign.



There are so many people here who are committed to making this a great place – they put on music, say hi, make sure everyone's having a good time.



There are days when I just think, I can't wait to come back here tomorrow.

SHE'S THE FACE AT THE FRONT OF THE ROOM WHO SOON BECOMES A FRIEND



Whenever she steps out into the street, **Gail Lynch** knows there's a good chance someone will call her name and wave happily. Or walk up to her with a triumphant grin and say, "Remember me?" It may take her a minute – she meets about 80 new faces a month through her volunteer work at The 519 – but she usually does. Or at the very least, she recalls where she met them: at

The 519's orientation session for newcomers to Canada, where they usually looked noticeably different.

They come in uncertain, a little nervous, wondering if they're going to be uncomfortable, or bored. But then they start to listen. Gail tells them they're going to play games that will help them understand what it is to be LGBTQ in Canada, what harassment looks and feels like, and what services are available to support them – including programs like The 519's Among Friends LGBTQ Refugee Support Group and the Breakthrough LGBTQ Newcomer Network. "At first they don't even want

to talk," she says. "But by the end they're all talking – they all have something to say."

They talk to her about their next steps in Canada – how they're going to apply for refugee status, or permanent

residency or how they want to look for work – and she knows that when she bumps into them again, they'll have stories to share.

Newcomer support services like these were unimaginable when Gail came to Canada 25 years ago from Barbados. "I understand what it is to be gay and not be able to express yourself," she says. "What The 519 offers now would've been perfect for me." That's one of the reasons she makes herself available to facilitate newcomer sessions (and occasional resume workshops for job-seekers): She wants to help others discover how to be themselves in Canada. "So many of these people are coming from a place where they've left everything behind or they've been tortured badly, and they walk through these doors and it's like a weight is lifted off their shoulders. 'I feel so welcome,' they say. You hear that constantly. That's what keeps me coming back."

This year The 519 volunteers donated

2,148

hours of counselling
services, legal help
and tax advice

THE 519 IS PROUD

to have been one of the beneficiaries of the 2016 Pride and Remembrance Run. Funds raised through this year's Run supported Not Alone, a program that builds trauma-informed services for LGBTQ survivors of sexual violence.



Corporate volunteer teams bring tremendous energy and enthusiasm to The 519. Shout out to our friends from **OutForce**, the diversity group at **SalesForce**.

The annual **AIDS Candlelight Vigil** – supported by more than 75 volunteers – remains one of our community's most important, and most moving, events.





WITH THANKS TO OUR DONORS

The 519 extends a heartfelt thank you to the following donors and funders who made financial gifts in support of our work in 2015. Through your contributions, you have helped The 519 make an even bigger impact in the lives of the people and communities we serve.

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Green Space Festival Sponsors

Each year, The 519 raises vital funds in support of our programs and services through our Green Space Festival. Many thanks to our 2015 sponsors.



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PrideHouseTO was a comprehensive, province-wide engagement and activation strategy for LGBTQ communities in Ontario leading up to and during the Toronto 2015 Pan Am & Parapan Am Games. Led by The 519 in a coalition with other LGBTQ and allied organizations, PrideHouseTO aimed – and succeeded – in making the Toronto 2015 Pan Am & Parapan Am Games the most LGBTQ-inclusive multi-sport games in history. With thanks to our sponsors.



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Delta Air Lines	Molson Canadian
DGS Events	

Salah Bachir Presents The Annual 519 Gala

Special thanks to our Honorary Patron Salah Bachir and the following sponsors for their support of our 2015 Annual 519 Gala hosted on October 18, 2015.



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Counselling Room Refurbishment Supporters

In 2015 The 519 invited law firms and leading lawyers to help us renovate our three counselling rooms. Many thanks to our supporters for helping us transform our spaces.

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The 519 is pleased to acknowledge and celebrate the following individuals, organizations and corporations for helping to raise funds for The 519 through third-party events they hosted, or by encouraging directed donations to The 519 in celebration of special occasions.

I'll Show You Mine: Charles Pavia, Deko-Ze, Ticky Ty, Kevin Bailey, Mike Vieira, Joshua Reid, Thien, Men's Room, Pitbull, Judy Inc.	Jacob Porpossian
Pink Market Toronto: Kyle Burton, Natalia Manzocco and the 35 amazing vendors of PINK XMAS	TJ Tasker
Halloqueen 2015: Senior Pride Network	Danny Nashman & Frank Prendergest
Queen's Care 2015: David Taylor & Steve Savage, Pantages	Pride at Work Canada
Martini Week – Pantages	Out on Bay Street
Dudebox/YES YES Y'ALL	HSBC Pride Network
OutForce at Salesforce	I'd Tap That
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	Rainbow Steps Academy
	The Ontario HIV Treatment Network
	Mayhem North (Club 120)
	Butch Femme Salon

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The 519 is proud to recognize TD Bank for their support of our Education and Training work and year-round volunteer programs.



The 519 is delighted to recognize Delta as our Official Airline Sponsor.

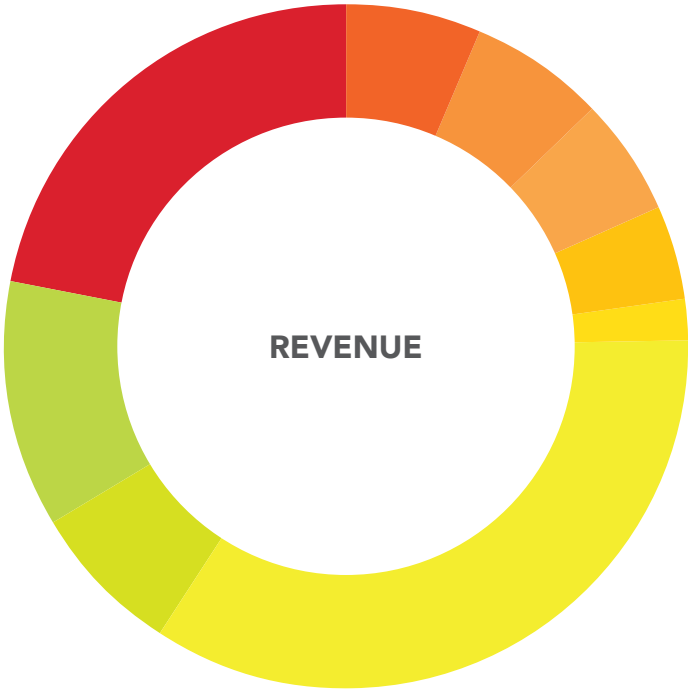
Donor List from January 1 to December 31, 2015. The 519 makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of our donor list. If you wish to change how your gift is recognized please email Members@The519.org.

k.d. lang! Our annual The 519 gala hosted by Salah Bachir featured an intimate evening with the unforgettable singer, raising more than \$400,000.

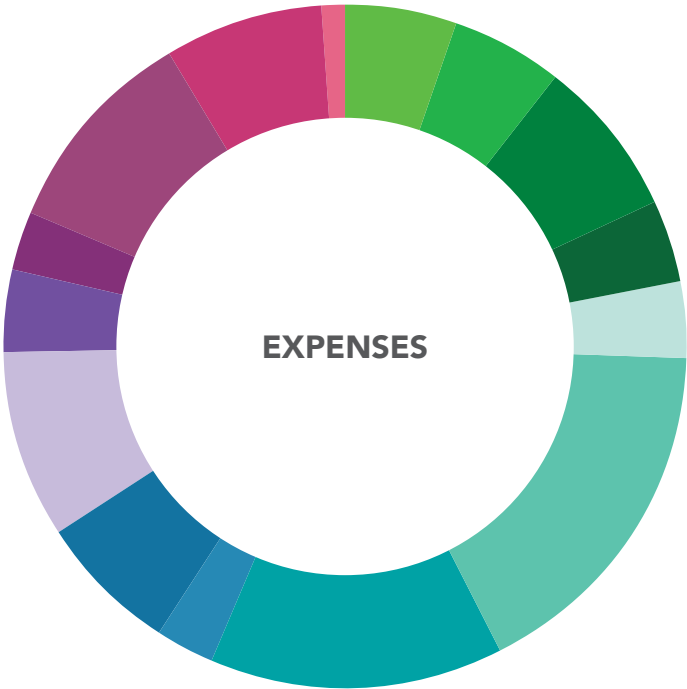


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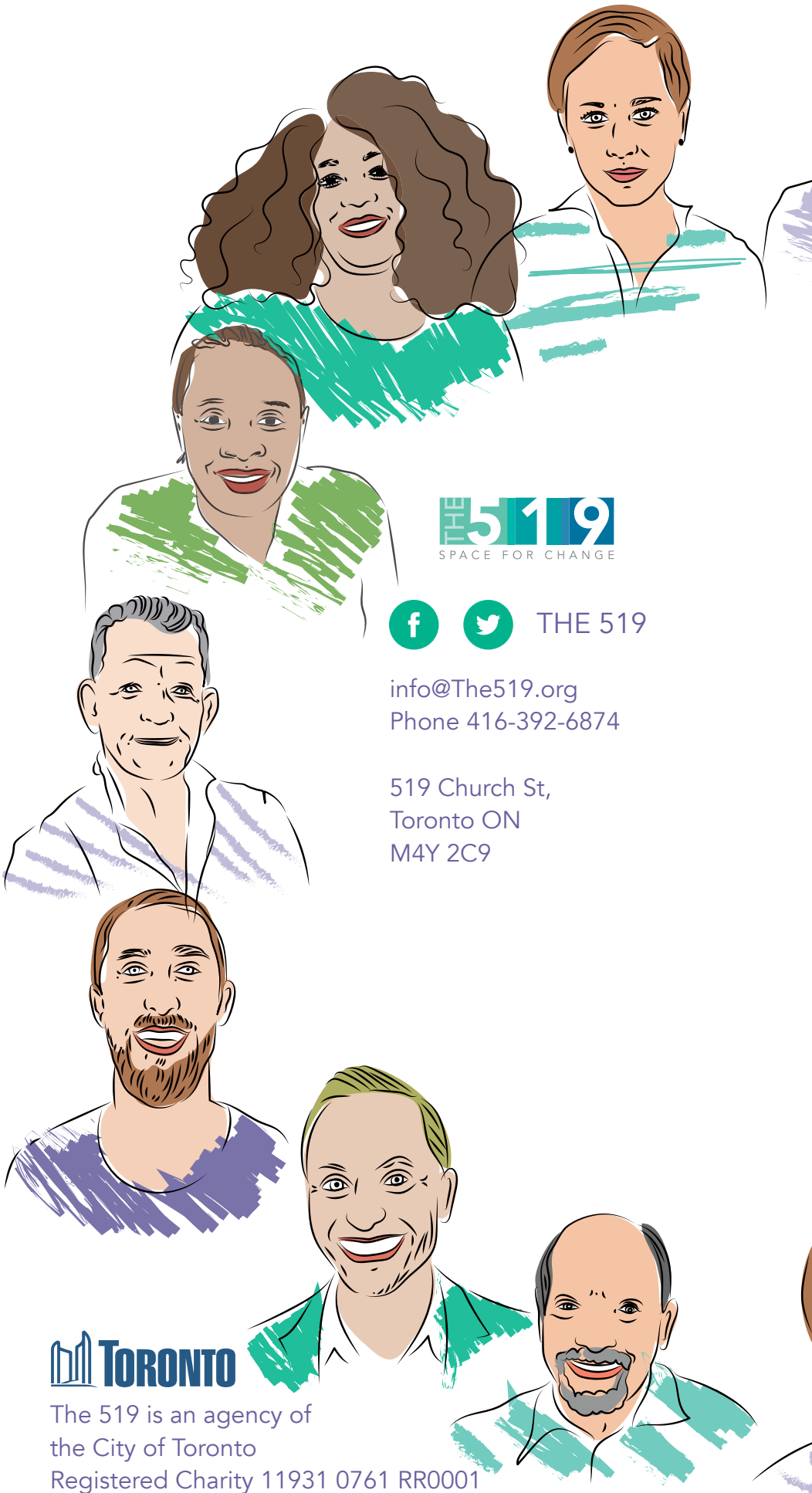
FINANCIAL SUMMARY



REVENUE	2015	2014
<div></div> Core City of Toronto Funding	\$1,289,319	\$1,229,436
<div></div> Community Partnership Investment	\$4,597,070	\$4,108,495
Government Grants		
<div></div> City of Toronto	378,998	461,314
<div></div> Government of Ontario	382,259	317,281
<div></div> Government of Canada	329,101	274,644
Philanthropy		
<div></div> United Way	251,723	234,100
<div></div> Foundation Grants	122,595	136,615
<div></div> Philanthropy & Special Events	2,024,935	1,818,855
<div></div> Special Projects	432,684	354,231
<div></div> Productive Enterprise	674,775	511,455
TOTAL REVENUE	\$5,886,389	\$5,337,931



EXPENSES	2015	2014
Core Funded Expenses	\$1,289,319	\$1,229,436
<div></div> Centre Administration	322,330	307,359
<div></div> Information & Referral	309,437	295,064
<div></div> Building Maintenance	438,368	442,597
<div></div> Program Support	219,184	184,416
Partnership Expenses	\$4,569,380	\$4,099,032
<div></div> Community Engagement	220,874	149,481
<div></div> Philanthropy & Special Events	996,954	1,080,930
<div></div> Sport & Recreation Initiatives	799,357	525,646
<div></div> Children & Family Programs	168,812	188,717
<div></div> Community Drop-In Programs	393,507	331,417
<div></div> Education & Training	515,817	289,501
<div></div> Newcomer & Refugee Services	223,919	321,569
<div></div> Counselling & Support	161,605	135,450
<div></div> Social Enterprise	596,742	564,074
<div></div> Special Projects	432,684	434,012
<div></div> Depreciation	59,109	78,235
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,858,699	\$5,328,468



THE 519

info@The519.org

Phone 416-392-6874

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Toronto ON
M4Y 2C9



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