

REBUILDING IN COLLABORATION

We have experienced a period that most of us never anticipated. Hopefully we are now gradually restoring our lives to what may not be quite the same, but some sense of normality. As you engage in your own restoration process, also consider your role in the collective rebuilding of our community. With all there is to do, the ability to positively contribute to the lives of others might be forgotten. This is not only a loss to the person who could benefit from your gifts, but you also could miss an opportunity to receive the rich rewards that flow naturally from acts of kindness.

What you give you get, ten times over.
 ~ Yoruba proverb

The best gift you can give to others is the gift of knowing and experiencing YOU - especially now that some individuals have become very isolated during the pandemic. Your conscious decision to connect through time spent in the presence of others benefits us all. What positive gifts and experiences can you give? At SWC, our volunteers have made a decision to contribute to the lives of others by supporting our services and offering direct support to a woman who has expressed a need. Your contribution might take a different form. Here are some



other things to consider as you collaborate on community rebuilding efforts:

- Giving has no set rules. It might be a smile, a hug, a meal, or sharing information.
- The words that you speak impact those who hear them. Be conscious of what you are saying to others.
- Be clear about what you say and have committed to so that you avoid the risk of not following through.
- Conscious and healthy forms of giving can offer fulfillment that stands alone. Make efforts to appreciate generosity as a gift in and of itself. Try to avoid being connected to the outcome.

One of the most effective motivators for healing and progress is when someone else believes in your ability to overcome challenging circumstances. The times when someone encouraged you to find the internal strengths that you didn't know even existed. As we engage in our own personal rebuilding journey, let's also remain aware of opportunities to contribute to the collaborative possibilities.

Carol Soares, RSW, Counsellor

After three and a half great years at the Centre, Carol is moving on to new adventures as of September 2021. We wish her all the best!

You are invited to the Scarborough Women's Centre

VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, September 29th, 2021 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Our AGM will be held virtually via Cisco Webex Events and our guest speaker this year will be Cindy Stradling, author of "Becoming a Self-Defined Woman"

Please RSVP by Friday, September 24th, 2021 to receive a link to the meeting by emailing: agm@scarboroughwomenscentre.ca

Real Time Captioning will be available.

STILL SUPPORTING WOMEN DURING COVID-19 & BEYOND!

We are pleased to announce that Scarborough Women's Centre recently received funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Resilient Communities Fund. The purpose of this fund is to support organizations in rebuilding and recovering from the impact of COVID-19.

With this funding we have been able to:

- Deliver educational webinars on a variety of topics such as: healthy relationships, gender-based violence, women's health issues, housing, and family law
- Develop interactive training sessions that have supported our facilitators to adapt their workshops into webinars which are accessible, engaging, and promote principles of care
- Recruit new volunteers and develop interactive training sessions that have increased their ability to host and moderate SWC webinars
- Pilot real-time captioning during our webinars in order to learn more about the benefits and best practices
- Complete a safety audit and review best practices to help us determine when and how it will be best to welcome folks back to our physical space

Thank you to the staff, students, volunteers, facilitators, and the Board of Directors for the role you have played in still supporting women. None of this work could have been done without you! Thank you to the Department of Women and Gender Equality Canada, The Province of Ontario, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Canadian Women's Foundation for supporting the empowerment of women during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Hopefully by the time you receive our next newsletter, we will already have moved to providing access to our programs and services both online and in person. Until then, know that our virtual door remains open and you are always welcome. For the latest updates and more information about our COVID-19 response plan, please visit: www.scarboroughwomenscentre.ca. Be safe & stay well!

Melissa Simas, MSW, RSW, Program Coordinator, Expanding the Reach: Outreach to Women with Disabilities
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A RIPPLE EFFECT: OUR YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM!

This summer, our Young Women's Leadership Development Program ran successfully yet again and another set of young women have moved on with the tools they will need to be effective and confident leaders. This year so far more than 40 young women have completed the program. However, the impact of our leadership development program does not stop there. The impact spans much further than that.

It is no secret that when you empower a young woman you are doing more than just supporting her individually; you are creating a ripple effect of change. By empowering young women, the whole community will benefit from their leadership and their role modelling will pave the way for future generations of young women. That is what our Young Women's Leadership Development Program is all about. Empowering Scarborough's young women to believe that their voices have power and showing them how to use that power to create lasting positive social change.

In order to demonstrate this to the young women, as part of our program they work together on a creative project to raise awareness about a gender issue of their choosing. This summer, our young women worked together to create poems and spoken word pieces that dealt with a number of gender issues, such as double standards. Additionally, the young women complete multiple training sessions that focus on building their leadership skills. Some of the topics that are covered in the sessions include active listening, communication, conflict resolution, intersectionality, and ally-ship.

This would not be possible without the support of the Sicoli family and friends. Our Young Women's Leadership Development Program has been generously funded through a fundraiser in honour of Bianca Sicoli, who was herself a leader and social activist. The legacy of Bianca's efforts to create positive social change will live on through all the young women who become leaders because of our program, and the young women who come after them, thus creating a ripple effect of positive social change. Thank you to Mackenzie Investments Charitable Foundation and the Johansen-Larsen Foundation for their continued support of the Building Strong Futures program!

Nadya Lim-Douglas, BA (Women's Studies), Program Coordinator, Building Strong Futures: Young Women's Outreach
specialproject@scarboroughwomenscentre.ca



MOVING FORWARD: SUPPORTING WOMEN FOR NEXT STEPS TO TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

We are delighted to have received funding from the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (Women's Issues) to help expand our capacity to support women as they move forward in their lives.

Many women we serve have been marginalized by poverty, isolation and abuse. The pandemic has created more barriers to their ability to participate in the workforce. They may be caught in toxic relationships, living in precarious housing situations, or working in high-risk jobs because of lack of training, education and/or self-confidence.

The last year has been especially challenging. Many have been laid off work, not able to pursue their education to improve marketability, forced to continue in jobs that make them vulnerable to illness or forced to leave work to care for their children at home.

Scarborough residents are also one of the hardest-hit groups according to Toronto Public Health research because they are more likely to be living in crowded conditions and not able to protect themselves from those who are ill. Some women have found themselves locked down with their abuser, and are increasingly vulnerable as the pandemic lengthens past what anyone anticipated.

Some women returning to the workforce after being away for more than a year are entering a "next normal" workplace where they are expected to be comfortable with digital tools and ways of working that may be new and require them to "catch up".

Other women may be afraid of being away for too long because of how much the workforce has changed. Opportunities for mentorship and to develop tech skills would help with the transition and addressing fears.

All of these women can be supported by the development of new tools and strategies to address their barriers to success in the workforce. Our program will focus on this pre-employment preparation. Too many women go for multiple "career" programs without addressing their personal barriers, life challenges that erode their stamina, self-confidence, and competence. Our aim is to support them at that level so that they are then free to move forward to next steps in training, education and employment, free to build brighter futures for themselves and their families!

We are pleased welcome Project Coordinator, Jessica Ayoub, BSW. For more information, you can email her at nextsteps@scarboroughwomenscentre.ca.

Lynda Kosowan, MSW, RSW, Executive Director
ed@scarboroughwomenscentre.ca

ARE YOU HAVING FUN YET?



Hopefully, you had a good spring and summer regardless of lockdowns, and COVID. Hopefully you developed a new skill or tried a new activity. If you haven't, start something now. I bought a COVID violin, mini harp, and mini sax and am happily trying to play them. Whether it is learning a new language or skill, it is important to have a focus that keeps you challenged. These things teach you skills that make you practice dealing with frustration, doing research, and trying to resolve any difficulties that you have when facing challenges.

I have asked this question before. I ask it again. Are you having fun yet? Each moment of our life there are difficulties to deal with, things or people that we are grieving for. Equally in each moment there are times of enjoyment, times to have fun, and laugh. Enjoy nature, learn from others and the world around you. Do what you value and change the things that you think should be changed. This is your time - use it!

Jacynth Fennell, PhD., Counsellor
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Our Counselling program is made possible thanks to the Government of Ontario-Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (Women's Issues), the City of Toronto, United Way Greater Toronto, Bell Let's Talk, Royal LePage Shelter Foundation, Ontario Realtors Care Foundation, Tippet Foundation, and other generous individuals and groups.

THANK YOU!

OUR INNER RESOURCES

We are now living in a very different world. For many of us, the pandemic shifted our workplace and school to our home. New "normals" evolved like virtual school, virtual meetings, virtual doctor appointments and virtual "socializing". It has been quite challenging for people who enjoyed their time outside going for trips, socializing with their friends, visiting their family and enjoying their favorite sports. It is often difficult to engage ourselves inside the house or have fun inside the four walls.

The pandemic taught us that exploring what we have inside is equally important as exploring the outside world. We tend to find happiness and satisfaction connecting with the outside world, engaging in activities that are sometimes programmed to meet our needs without giving us a chance to reflect on what we can contribute. A simple example is how you are programmed to use a calculator when you can add up numbers without it, or you depend on a reminder app to get things done.

So, how do we explore ourselves and see what we have inside us? Mindfulness helps in focusing and being aware of what you are sensing and feeling in the moment. It helps you to focus on what you have within you in the moment and how best you can use it in the moment. Practicing mindfulness may look difficult for some people but it is always good to remember that, like any other skill, mindfulness is learned through doing. In mindfulness you allow yourself to ask different questions about things which are unclear to you and to see what you discover.

Inner resources and mindful living cannot be purchased like external resources. A smart watch, a digital reminder or a robotic device that aids you with your daily tasks are external resources that can be easily accomplished. Instead let's uncover inner resources that are already inside us.

Saji Jose Nelliserry, MSW, RSW, Counsellor
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OUR GENEROUS DONORS - THANK YOU!

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada, Service Canada, The Government of Ontario - Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (Women's Issues), City of Toronto-Community Service Partnership Program, City of Toronto-Investing in Neighbourhoods Program

FOUNDATIONS & N.G.O.s

The Canadian Women's Foundation, GIVE Foundation, Johansen-Larsen Foundation, Mackenzie Investments Charitable Foundation, Ontario Realtors Care Foundation, Ontario Trillium Foundation, PayPal Giving Fund Canada, Rochelle & Calvin Sager Foundation, Royal LePage Shelter Foundation, Tippet Foundation, Unifor Social Justice Fund, United Way Greater Toronto

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GROUPS

Agincourt Pentecostal Church (One Church), Canadian Federation of University Women-Scarborough Chapter, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Ontario Nurses' Association, Rotary Club of Agincourt, Rotary Club of North Scarborough, Scarborough Guildwood Women's Federal Liberal Club, Unifor Local 6006

INDIVIDUALS

Anonymous, Oddhay Adhikary, Vicki Alexopoulos, Farhat Ali, Sharena Ali, Shaima Al-Khalili, Danny Amaral, Chantelle Anderson, Mary Neil Avergonzando, Yvette Bailey, Beverly Baird, James Beardmore, Karen Bell, Alan Bilinski, Madison Blois, Marina Boehm, Jennifer Bonsu, Anna Bortolus, Edo Ten Broek, Myya Bryan, Joe C., Virginia Caldwell, Jeremy Campbell, Zenia Castanos, Nicole Cemkov, Christiana Chen, Adanna Chow, Brenda Clarke, Brittany Clarke, Samantha Clarke, Tim Clarke, Ko Clementson, Patricia Coles, Janel Collins, Teri Corea, Liza Cote, Marcus Cote, Aleksandar Crnatovic, Nazeera Dan, Elaine Dandy, Kirsten de los Reyes, Andrew Denham, Megan Desjardins, Filomena de Sousa, Anita Desrosiers, Erin Deviney, Reshma Dhrodia, Izzat Dhrolia, Sophia Dhrolia, Brenda Dipasquale, Emily Dontsos, Ashley Dresser, Brian Dubeau, Rob Duckworth, Jenny Dundas, Claire Earle, Célestine Fakoubé, Doris Figueroa, Loretta Fines, Carolyn Forbes, Claudia Fuller, Nadia Garcia, Allison Garland, Reem Gedeon, Geraldine Gerardo, Emma Gerster, Suzanne Gibson, Robertas Goloburdo, Joe Goode, Candice Gregoris, Chanel Grenaway-Mills, Karen Grimshaw, Shakira Hakimzadah, Sunita Hanlon, Tamara Harduwar, Asna Haris, Shaneela Harpaul, Arthur & Mary Heinmaa, Elika Heshmati, Francine Hickman, Kera Hinds-James, Julie Hiroz, Fran & Dennis Hitchmough, Wai Man (Ray) Hui, Ahillan Ilangko, Michelle Indyarta, Lauren Inouye, Gino Jacobs, Khaliel James, Ian Johnstone, Kourosh Kanani, Irina Katsnelson, George Kay, Zahra Khan, Kathy Killinger, Salima Kissoon, Deborah Kopansky-Giles, Lynda Kosowan, Chelsea Lair, Arnaud Lallouette, Venesse Lewis, Ying Ping (Lillian) Li, Carolyn Ling, Kaiya MacDonald, Judit Marincan, Douglas Mark, Bonnie McBride, Helen McCubbin, Robin McCullough, Lyn McDonnell, Nancy McGibbon, Kayla McKenzie, Suzette McLarty, Jane McLellan, Karen Mcneil, Elena Melnik, Jyothi Menezes, Taje Mohabir, Annisa Mohammed, Farah Mustafa, Sara Mustafa, Bhaginy Nadarajah, Lan Natasha, Wanjiro Ndungu, Janice Nicholson, Kristen Nolan, Desmond Nwachi, Dele Ojelabi, Randy Ouimet, Jennifer Ozungur, George Papayiannis, Ann Patterson, Elizabeth Phillips, Gabriela Jacqueline Hogg Pichardo, Judith-Karin Poku, Anugya Punetha, Ben Rastin, AmaanRaza, Jerusha Retnakanthan, Mary Riccardi, Heerea Rikhranj, Leslie Rinaldi, Camille Robinson, Mandi Romanski, Caroline Scott, Neeti Sharma, Linda Sicoli, Vicki Sloom, Kelly Snow, Carol Soares, Jayanthan Sritharan, Vithika Sritharan, Francesca Stea, Shawn Stillman, Penelope Stuart, Nadia Taylor, Sean Thomas, Taylor Thompson, Bianca Thompson, Tiro Timmers, Elizaveta Topounova, Tatiana Topounova, Correne Tran, Aarsh Trivedi, Dimitra Tsagaris, Mary Valid, Maggie Vernon, Tiana Vuckovic, Leslie Walker, Ross Webster, Oskar Westin, Ruihi Wihongi, Barbara Wisner, Evonne Wong, Caroline Wood, Jess Woods, Chantel Zamora, Chu Lin Zhou, Andrew Johnston & Christina Friend

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EXTERNAL EVENTS

Krispy Kreme Holiday Fundraiser, Liza's 42km #RollerbladeChallenge for Scarborough Women's Centre, Lowes Rona Heroes Campaign, Nicey's Eatery-International Women's Day Fundraiser, Reah's Essence-International Women's Day Fundraiser, Royal LePage Estate Realty-Unplugged for Shelter Concert, Young Women's Leadership Program Fundraiser in Honour of Bianca Sicoli

SUPPORT THE CENTRE!

Scarborough Women's Centre assists women and girls to become economically and emotionally independent, and free from violence. You can help support this mission by making a donation to our work. Secure online donations can be made here: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/scarborough-womens-centre/>.

You can also make a donation by mailing a cheque to:

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