



# THANK YOU



2020–2021  
Gratitude Report



WOMEN'S CENTRE  
OF YORK REGION

Embracing Change. Empowering Women.



# 2020–2021 Gratitude Report

- 4 Impact Overview
- 6 Letter from the Executive Director
- 7 Programs and Services
- 8 #HelpKeepHerSafe
- 9 Donations at Work
- 10 Giving Together Gallery
- 12 Letters from the Board
- 14 Board of Directors



WOMEN'S CENTRE  
OF YORK REGION

335  
WOMEN  
took part in the  
MAKING  
CHANGES  
PROGRAM



47 Women moved on to the second level of the program - *Getting Unstuck*

WINTER WARMTH

Provided  
**102 women and children**  
with gift cards to purchase food, toys and winter clothing for the holidays and colder months

THE  
FINANCIAL  
EMPOWERMENT  
PROGRAM

Served  
**131**  
WOMEN

Provided  
**\$6,000**  
in Grocery Assistance

**10**  
FINANCIAL  
SEMINARS

THE  
ENTERPRISING  
CAREERS  
PROGRAM

**SERVED**  
**130**  
**WOMEN**

One-on-One Career  
Coaching for

**83**

**10** CAREER RELATED  
SEMINARS

WCYR  
COUNSELLING

**1570**  
HOURS

for Emotional  
Counselling and  
Transitional  
Counselling to

**135**  
WOMEN

Transitional Counselling  
specifically helps women  
exit abusive  
relationships safely



**768**

We helped  
768 women  
and their  
families!

# LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It is an honour to represent an organization whose success has exceeded 44 years in York Region. Women's Centre of York Region continues to be a strong source of hope, inspiration, support, and transformative change for women in our community.

Over the last year we have seen the impacts that the pandemic has had on women and we are very proud that we have been able to continue to offer all of our programs while increasing our capacity due to the growing need. We pride ourselves in our trauma-informed services, free of cost, to anyone in York Region who identifies as a woman. Our commitment to serving our community has never been stronger.

It is with much gratitude to our funders that enable us to offer these vital services. Our donors whose generosity is changing lives. Our dedicated staff and volunteers who have continued to show strength, dedication, and perseverance through these challenges times. To the courageous women who come to WCYR, we are honoured to support you on your journey.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Liora Sobel".

Executive Director  
Women's Centre of York Region

## PROGRAMS & SERVICES

### **Making Changes Life Skills**

A group program that enables women to develop basic skills necessary to become clearer and stronger decision makers. Focus is on developing confidence and accepting responsibility for choices they make in their lives.

### **Enterprising Careers**

An exploration program helping participants take the first steps to become "job ready" by showing them how to access their current skills, make informed decisions.

### **Exploring Self Employment**

Participants weigh risks and benefits to understand if this option is right for them.

### **Financial Empowerment**

Participants are empowered to take greater control of their personal finances to progress toward their life goals. Lessons include household budgeting, buying a car, managing debt, saving for education and more.

### **One-on-One Counselling**

Individual counselling for women who experienced violence, domestic or otherwise, helping them regain confidence and work towards a sustainable livelihood, free from abuse.

### **Transitional Housing and Support Counselling**

Provides emotional and practical support to ensure women and their children can leave an abusive relationship safely.

# VISIT THE WCYR COMMUNITY RESOURCE HUB

The Women's Centre of York Region recently launched the Community Resource Hub, a directory comprised of 27 outreach categories.

The hub links residents in need of specialized services to partner agencies and resources in our community.

[wcyr.ca/get-help](http://wcyr.ca/get-help)

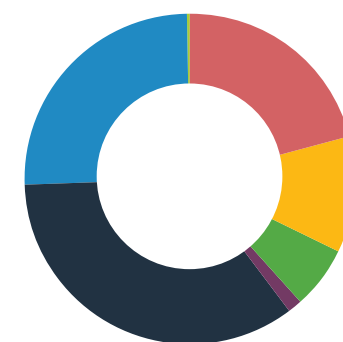
## #HelpKeepHerSafe

Women's Centre of York Region started the #HelpKeepHerSafe Campaign at the onset of COVID-19 when intimate partner violence (IPV) skyrocketed. The campaign allowed us to pivot online and continue to provide free services despite the loss of funding.

The ongoing purpose of the campaign is to meet the needs of women in the community experiencing violence or living in poverty as the needs emerge. #HelpKeepHerSafe recognizes the meaning of 'safe' and 'help' are not the same for all women, each woman has different needs to keep themselves and their families safe. This funding allows us to do just that. In 2020 with the funds raised we were able to:

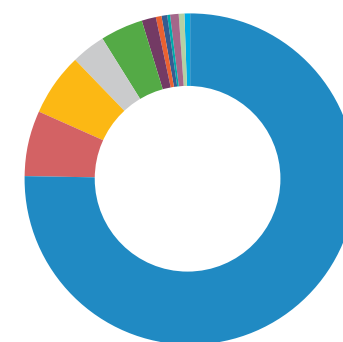
- Hire a 4<sup>th</sup> counsellor
- Provide 20 Chromebooks to women who did not have access to their own device to participate in services
- Provide \$1970 in emergency food support
- Provide \$15,000 to 150 women and children through our Winter Warmth program
- Continue providing all group programs and counselling services online and /or by phone
- Provide \$2500 in the form of \$50 gift cards to clients for International Women's Day
- Create a new online resource hub for women, service providers and community member to easily find the social supports they need, Visit [www.wcyr.ca/get-help](http://www.wcyr.ca/get-help) and scroll down to community resources!

## DONATIONS AT WORK



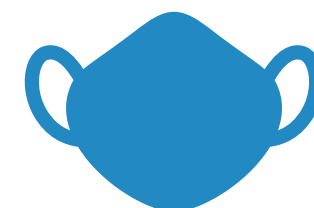
### 2021 Revenues

The Regional Municipality of York	\$ 217,901
United Way of Greater Toronto	120,544
Ontario Trillium Foundation	0
Third party grants	64,788
Newmarket Charitable Gaming Association	13,555
Donations and fundraising	361,299
Ministry of Community and Social Services	264,248
Provincial Grants	2,213
	<b>\$ 1,044,548</b>



### 2021 Expenses

Salaries and benefits	\$ 555,394
Occupancy	47,703
Office and general	44,263
Professional fees and insurance	26,478
Client support	29,427
Fundraising and promotion	9,584
Education	4,044
Telephone	5,265
Subcontractors	2,639
Travel	5,740
Bank charges	3,327
Depreciation	3,504
	<b>\$ 737,368</b>



In March 2019, we saw a dramatic increase in domestic violence with the outbreak of COVID-19. In response, we created the **COVID-19 Relief Fund**. #HelpKeepHerSafe

“

## EMMA'S STORY

I needed help but I didn't know who to turn to. I lost my job at the beginning of the pandemic and I was forced into isolation with a partner whom I feared. Without the autonomy of an income I had nowhere to go. I felt hopeless and scared. After seeing an ad on social media for employment supports, I called the Women's Centre of York Region. That one call changed my life. I had hopes and dreams that I felt I could not achieve. Through the process of counselling I began to realize that I could achieve my dreams, rather it was the emotional abuse from my partner that was holding me back. I began to work on my self and felt empowered to set my own boundaries and take charge of my life. While it was a very difficult time, the staff at the Women's Centre helped me through each step. I was able to leave my relationship and find a safe place to live. I was given a laptop to join the Enterprising Careers Program and I began to explore new career options and ways I could follow my dreams. I was looking for a new job but instead, I found myself.

*Emma*

Giving Together



We would like to extend a special thank you to the community partners who have helped us, help others.

"It takes someone with a very big heart to gift their time."

# LETTERS FROM

## JENNIFER GIBBS BOARD CHAIR



It is an honour and privilege for me to serve as the incoming WCYR Chair. For decades, the WCYR has been supporting and empowering thousands of courageous women in our communities to overcome significant challenges and barriers, resulting in better lives for themselves and their families. It has done so through the incredible passion and dedication of past and present WCYR Staff, Board Members, Community Partners and Funders.

The WCYR is strongly positioned to maintain and expand our critical work, and to respond to an increasing demand for our services amidst ongoing social stress and uncertainty. I am so grateful for all the people on this journey with us, helping women and families in need, in such a meaningful and impactful way.

*Jennifer Gibbs*

Chair of the Board of Directors

## JUDITH PUTTOCK PAST CHAIR



After another unprecedented year maneuvering through the Pandemic I am delighted to report that WCYR remains a strong and vital agency in our community. As I step down from Chair to Past Chair I wish to acknowledge our dedicated staff who have worked collaboratively, adapted and endured, accomplished and celebrated successes in the face of daunting challenges. My gratitude extends to them and our funders who enable our work.

It has been my honour to serve the organization as the Chair of the Board. I am excited about the direction and future under the very capable leadership of Jennifer Gibbs, Chair and our dedicated Board of Directors.

*Judith Puttock*

Past Chair of the Board of Directors



# THANK YOU

A special thank you to our past Board of Directors members for bringing your passion, intellect, insight, experience and resources to the table.



**John Ostime, P.Eng.**  
Past Vice-Chair



**Kim Powell**  
Past Secretary



**Kelly Broome**  
Interim Executive Director  
and Past Vice-Chair

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Judith Puttock, CHRP, CHRL**  
Past Chair

Senior Human Resources Professional with over 15 years of progressive leadership and consulting experience including Magna International, Maclean Hunter (Quebecor), the Jim Pattison Group and World Vision Canada. Judith is a highly skilled communicator with proficiency in building positive relationships between management and employees with competencies in dealing with issues related to human resources, including employee relations, change and/or downsizing. She has the ability to coach and develop both leaders and employees, resulting in improved teamwork and increased company productivity. Industries include automotive, printing/publishing, insurance, not for profit and consulting.



**Jennifer Gibbs**  
Chair

Jennifer is an accomplished Data and Technology executive with over 20 years of experience leading globally distributed organizations. Jennifer is also an entrepreneur and the founder of Jennifer Gibbs Coaching, Inc., a career coaching company empowering women to create incredible careers full of adventure and possibility. Jennifer is a passionate advocate for diversity and inclusion. She feels very fortunate to have the opportunity to leverage her network and skills to serve her community and those in need. Jennifer has an Honours Bachelor of Computer Science Degree from the University of Windsor, an Executive MBA from Ivey Business School, Western University and a Life Coach Certification from The Life Coach School. She moved to York Region 20 years ago and is currently living in East Gwillimbury with her husband, 2 kids and 2 spoiled cats.



**Diane White, CHRP, CHRL**  
Vice-Chair

Diane has worked as a Human Resources Professional in the retail sector, and as a Professor at Seneca College in the School of Leadership and Human Resources for over 35 years. Diane has consulted with small and medium sized organizations and has experience in strategic planning, employee recruitment and retention, curriculum design and higher education teaching strategies. She is a Certified Human Resources Professional and Leader and is currently pursuing a Professional Coaching Certification. A resident of Aurora for over 30 years, Diane is committed to her community and to serving women to help them learn, grow and thrive. She brings human resources and higher education expertise to the organization.



**Caroline Lee, CPA, CA**  
Treasurer

Caroline is an accounting professional and obtained her Chartered Accountant designation in 2003. She has more than 18 years of experience in the financial services industry providing a broad range of expertise including accounting advisory, risk management, and asset and liability management support. With two young daughters, Caroline is passionate about empowering women, promoting equality, inclusivity and diversity and has acted as a mentor and coach to young women. A long time resident of York Region, currently Caroline is co-founding a project to launch a language and literacy program geared towards assisting children with intellectual disabilities within the community.



**Taiwo Olubamise**  
Secretary

Taiwo's professional journey started 10 years ago, and she has worked in multiple industries leading project deliveries and managing cross-functional relationships. She currently works at TD leading the delivery of several strategic initiatives. She is passionate about connecting with women and girls to help them thrive and achieve all they can on their journey. She has served in several volunteer capacities, including fundraising for charity and providing mentorship to high school STEM students & undergraduate students. Taiwo holds a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and an MBA from Schulich School of Business, York University.



**Fiona Cao, CFA**  
Member

Fiona began her involvement as Member of the Board through the Girls on Board program by Fora – launched in 2009 at the Clinton Global Initiatives. She has over five years of experience working in the Financial Services industry and is passionate about delivering impactful strategic initiatives that add value and drive strong results for business partners. In her role as a Manager on the Capital Market's Cost and Productivity Advisory team, she supports the identification, analysis and ongoing monitoring of benefits on cost initiatives while enhancing Finance's capabilities on NIE reporting. Fiona graduated from Schulich School of Business at York University with a Bachelor of Business Administration. Fiona Cao is a CFA® charterholder.



**Elle Meija**  
Member

Elle started her real estate career in the industrial sector at Cushman & Wakefield in 2010, before attaining her real estate license. In 2015, Elle moved into retail leasing for a private company, completing high level retail leasing transactions across Canada, the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Singapore, South Africa, and New Zealand. Her "deals done" portfolio is inclusive of high street, AAA shopping centre, airport retail, and open air centre locations. In 2014, Elle founded PrettyGirlsWork, an online community for women founders & entrepreneurs, where she currently serves as lead for both the Retailers & Real Estate Houses. She is a competent, professional coach, teaching both time-tested & modernized strategies. Elle finds balance through yoga and reiki.



**Toyin Omotoso**  
Member

Toyin is a lawyer with a focus on human rights, ADR, workplace investigation, and training. Her areas of expertise include women's rights, Indigenous Peoples rights, and anti-Black racism. She has served at various levels of government, including the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario. She has several years of experience in policy development and advisory roles, using both formal and informal resolution mechanisms to achieve legislative compliance. Toyin has a Master of Laws degree from the University of Saskatchewan. She is a member of the Law Society of Ontario, the Nigerian Bar, and ADR Institute of Ontario (ADRIO). She lives in the York Region where she volunteers as Council Member of a School. In her spare time, Toyin enjoys reading classics and gardening.



**Aleksandra Pressey**  
Member

Aleksandra is a lawyer at a human resources law firm, where she practices in all areas of labour, employment, and human rights law. She advises and represents employers on a broad range of issues. She also regularly conducts workplace investigations and workplace culture reviews as a third-party investigator for organizations across industries. Aleksandra writes and presents on educational topics for employers and human resources professionals. She is committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion, and is passionate about empowering and supporting women to allow them to thrive.





WOMEN'S CENTRE  
OF YORK REGION  
Embracing Change. Empowering Women.

16775 Yonge Street, Unit 207, Newmarket, ON L3Y 8J4  
905-853-9270 info@wcyr.ca

[wcyr.ca](http://wcyr.ca)

THANK YOU TO OUR  
FUNDERS, FOUNDATIONS, DONORS,  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
AND VOLUNTEERS

---

*Your generosity has been  
life changing for a woman  
in our community.*