Our work, accomplishments and impact

Annual Report 2013/2014
Our Mission

To provide strong and effective national leadership on long-term solutions to homelessness through partnership and collaboration with diverse stakeholders, investment in local communities, and public education.

What We Do

- Engage diverse partners, including frontline community agencies, corporations, researchers, governments and youth, in strategic, collective efforts to alleviate homelessness across Canada;

- Fund local, grassroots agencies working to alleviate homelessness in their communities; and

- Educate Canadians about the true nature of homelessness and its solutions.
MESSAGE FROM
President and Executive Director

Dear Friends of Raising the Roof:

We have had a very successful year at Raising the Roof and are proud of our accomplishments towards long-term solutions to homelessness across Canada. Raising the Roof is grateful to all of our partners and supporters who help make this important work possible. This includes partnerships and collaboration with other national networks, with innovative front-line agencies, corporations, foundations and governments. Our efforts to inform and engage the general public have also been successful and have demonstrated to us that many Canadians do care about homelessness and are interested in helping to address this issue.

Raising the Roof is leading change through our various community-based initiatives, public education projects and by helping to raise funds for front line agencies. We are pleased to be part of the changing conversations and responses to homelessness that are taking place across Canada, and continue to use our strong brand and national voice to make a unique contribution to ending homelessness. As importantly, we have been able to leverage our relationships with community partners to develop practical tools and resources for those working directly with the homeless.

Our work and its impact

In the fall of 2013, we launched our thought-provoking Childhood Photo Campaign to challenge some of the misconceptions people have about those who face homelessness. Through in-kind support, this campaign was developed and circulated nationally in newspapers, magazines and transit shelters. In February 2014 we released Child and Family Homelessness: Building a comprehensive framework to address child and family homelessness in Canada: Phase I, an environmental scan and announced eight community partner agencies. This was the first step in our Child and Family Homelessness Initiative, a four-year project aimed at helping families with children who make up a growing segment of Canada’s estimated 235,000 homeless.

We also recently released a report on youth homelessness and employment called Activation of Youthworks Employment Toolkit (2014). Building on results from It’s Everybody’s Business: Engaging the Private Sector in Solutions to Youth Homelessness and the resulting Employer/Agency Toolkit (2012), we worked with four community agencies to enhance the strategic approach used when engaging local businesses/corporations to provide employment opportunities.

Raising funds and awareness

Our 2014 National Toque Campaign was very successful. This year’s campaign allowed us to partner with two national corporate partners and to ultimately benefit forty-three community agency partners. This campaign also gave front line agencies the opportunity to raise awareness about the work they are doing in their local communities to help the homeless. This year we added to our toque campaign by selling socks, which were a big hit. Equally important to the success of the campaign was the tremendous amount of national media coverage we received, ensuring the campaign and its message about homelessness reached every corner of the country.

Partnering, collaborating

Our accomplishments are made possible because people believe in the work we are doing to solve homelessness. None of these accomplishments would be possible without the support and generosity of our partners, all of whom are mentioned within this year’s Annual Report and on our website. Their guidance, support and in-kind contributions allow us to do this groundbreaking work and be a catalyst for change.

In recognizing the tremendous benefits of pooling resources and expertise, we seek out opportunities to support and collaborate with others. Here are just a few examples:

We are a member of the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH), The Home Depot Foundation Canada Committee on youth homelessness as well as a part of the 43% Coalition (Justice for Children and Youth, COH, Raising the Roof) who are looking at how to prevent youth homelessness through strengthening the child protection system. The Coalition had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Children and Youth Services in Ontario regarding Bill 88 in March. We are also part of the national Steering Committee for Eva’s Mobilizing Local Capacity to End Youth Homelessness and the Community Advisory Committee on Research on Homeless Newcomer Youth: Hidden in our Midst. We have continued to work closely with the Federal Government and, in April, we were invited to speak in Ottawa about Bill C-23 by the government’s Standing Committee on House Affairs to talk about the Fair Elections Act. We were honored to be asked to present at Beyond Housing: A National Conversation on Child Homelessness and Poverty in New York City as the only Canadian presenter! We also participated in a panel presentation on family homelessness at the National Conference on Ending Homelessness in Ottawa in November 2013.

Saying Farewell

We are thankful for Sean Gadon’s dedicated service as Board President. Sean was President of Raising the Roof for more than a decade and was deeply committed to decent and affordable housing for all Canadians. Sean provided strong leadership to the organization over a period of substantial growth and development. During his tenure, Raising the Roof developed many successful partnerships with the private sector, strengthened our role in public education, conducted and shared groundbreaking research on homelessness, and helped inform social policy at local, provincial and federal levels of government.

Thank you

Thank you to all those who support and partner in our work; our Board of Directors, whose guidance and support are key to our success, and the Raising the Roof staff whose skills and passion for their work deserve our deep admiration and gratitude. We are confident that by continuing to work together we can reach our vision of the future where “all members of Canadian society have access to a safe and stable home, together with the supports they need to achieve their potential”.

Stephen Gaetz, President
Carolann Barr, Executive Director
More than 37% of Canadian households are having difficulty maintaining housing and more and more families are relying on emergency shelters. Between 2005 and 2009, the estimated number of children using those shelters grew from 6,205 to 9,459. Despite its severity, there is no national, coordinated response to address this issue.

Our Commitment
In 2013, Raising the Roof committed to a four-year Child and Family Homelessness Initiative in order to address an issue that has received surprisingly little national attention. The purpose of the initiative is to discover and review programs in place throughout Canada in order to identify best practices and develop recommendations, a comprehensive framework for addressing family homelessness, and tools to assist communities, agencies, and governments in responding to this national tragedy.

Our Progress
In the first year of the initiative, we sought to learn more about innovative approaches currently being used to address child and family homelessness in Canada and internationally. As part of this process, we also identified organizations that have been effective in addressing family homelessness, including prevention and early intervention programs, shelters and transitional housing programs, as well as policy and research.

We have successfully completed the first step in the Child and Family Homelessness Initiative through the creation of an Environmental Scan. The scan outlines a preliminary framework, includes interviews with over forty service providers, advocates and researchers, and identifies the eight partner agencies selected for the second phase of the project. Agencies were chosen based on a variety of criteria, which included geography, programming, diversity of populations served, and agencies using the Housing First approach. Of these eight partner agencies, three in Ontario were also chosen to do a more in-depth study of systems-based responses to homelessness. The scan also details preliminary findings and recommendations. Additionally, we have received support from the RBC Foundation for the Children’s Mental Health Pillar of the initiative. We will work with the selected partners to study the impact of mental health issues among Canadian children experiencing homelessness and develop a holistic response to inform programming, systems, and other related initiatives.

The information gained in this first year acts as a critical foundation moving forward with the Child and Family Homelessness Initiative. The next step of the project is to test and build-upon the preliminary framework. All eight partner agencies will participate in this process, including research conducted with providers, advocates, researchers and service users. Once this stage is complete, we will host a summit where key stakeholders from across Canada will be invited to evaluate and provide feedback on the framework.

For a comprehensive timeline and for more information on the Child and Family Homelessness Initiative, visit our website.

“Family homelessness is complex, and requires a more comprehensive intervention. In our 2012 Homeless Count, we found about 100 homeless families, however, we know that the problem is much greater as many families couch-surf, stay in motels, or find themselves in other situations out of the public eye. Homelessness also puts families at greater risk of separation, and children who experience homelessness are more likely to experience it again as adults. We’re aiming to break this cycle. Understanding the challenge, and the best response, is critical to our work of ending homelessness.”

– Susan McGee, Chief Executive Officer at Homeward Trust (Partner Agency)
When people think of the homeless, stereotypical pictures of troubled youth and unkempt panhandlers often come to mind. Many of us also assume that homeless individuals are somehow ‘different’ from the rest of us. It’s not true.

Homeless people are no different than you or me, except they are in crisis and they likely don’t have family or friends to support them. Our recent national public education campaign set out to challenge misconceptions about people experiencing homelessness. Ads in newspapers, magazines and transit shelters, featured pictures of three apparently happy, thriving children. Each image sits alongside a picture of the same child as an adult ravaged by the elements and difficulties of homelessness.

The point: even those with “normal” childhoods aren’t safe from unfortunate, often unforeseen life events that, without the right systems and support, can lead to homelessness.

“This campaign really touched me,” says Nancy McIntosh, Community and Development Coordinator, Community Care, St. Catharines – an organization that offers emergency food, shelter and supports to people facing hardships. “No one grows up wanting to be homeless. Poverty can happen to anyone...it was very brave of the people in these campaign posters to expose their lives in a way that could help others.”

The work was conceived (gratis) by Leo Burnett Toronto, and brought to market with the generous support of M&K Media.
The goal of the award is to acknowledge a youth who has demonstrated initiative, personal development, and/or outstanding progress toward their individual goals.

Jennifer was a compassionate, caring individual who wanted to make a difference in the world. Jennifer’s passion was long-term solutions to youth homelessness, and in her twelve years at Raising the Roof she not only built the organization into the nationally recognized entity that it is today, but helped to put youth homelessness on the national agenda where it belongs. Jennifer brought a wealth of experience, skills, ambition and tremendous drive that resulted in the successful growth of Raising the Roof. Her tireless work helped build the foundation of many of the organization’s successes over the past decade.

Jennifer’s contribution to the field of youth homelessness has had a huge impact on a national level. Her passing in 2012 touched many people. As a way of celebrating Jennifer’s contributions to this very worthy cause, her friends and family have chosen to pay tribute to her with an award in her honour, granted to a Canadian youth. The goal of the award is to acknowledge a youth who shows exceptional initiative and progress towards improving their lifestyle, living situation and/or success in obtaining the necessary skills to lead them toward independence. The award (in the amount of $1,500) is granted to a youth between the ages of 16-24 that will help him/her with the pursuit of independent goals. This award is used to purchase an item (or items) to assist with the work or educational endeavors the winner wishes to pursue (i.e. a computer, tools for work, uniform, tuition, etc.).

In its first year, the award prompted a fantastic response from the community, with applicants from across the country. After careful consideration of all applicants, Jordan LaFontaine became the first youth to receive the Jennifer Parnell Award. Jordan was described by the committee as “the type of youth who displays strength and determination in the face of adversity”. The award will be used to support his pursuit of becoming a trade-certified carpenter.

Raising the Roof is very grateful to the individuals and organizations who offer to plan and coordinate fundraising events to benefit our work. Each event, no matter how big or small, helps support our work toward long-term solutions to homelessness.

This year we received support from several very successful events, including an annual golf tournament, a commemorative walk (in two cities!), and a pumpkin carving contest! Together, these events raised an incredible $34,016. We would like to say a big THANK YOU for the support of all those associated with the following events:

- Al Green Gallery
- Bake Sale – Regal Road Public School
- Echoage events in support of Raising the Roof
- Heather’s Walk for Homelessness, Toronto and Vancouver
- HOMES Publishing Group’s 10th Annual Golf Tournament
- Lemonade Stand
- Pumpkin Carving Contest – Wayne Van Sickle

Get Involved
If you have a great idea for an event of your own we’d love to hear from you. Our website has examples of successful events along with tips and tools to help you.

You can also call Stacey Charles at 416-481-1838 ext. 1 to talk about how you can get involved.
These were only a few of the fantastic events that took place across Canada in support of our Annual Toque Campaign.

Each year, this signature campaign brings together partners and community agencies from around the country in order to generate awareness of the ongoing problem of homelessness in Canada and raise much-needed funds to support Raising the Roof’s national initiatives for long-term solutions.

**The 2014 campaign was a great success, raising $375,000!**

This could not have been possible without the tremendous support of our National Partners: Intact Financial Corporation and the Canadian Traffic Network (CTN), our Supporting Partner: Crystal Glass Canada Limited, and our Advertising and Media Partners: Leo Burnett Toronto and M&K Media, respectively.

There was another important group that ensured the campaign’s success: dedicated volunteers! Braving Canadian winter temperatures, hundreds of volunteers participated in Toque Tuesday and other campaign events.

Thanks to our partners, the 2014 campaign was supported by incredible media coverage. This included two television PSAs produced pro bono by Leo Burnett Toronto, which aired on 45 channels in communities across the country thanks to M&K Media. Multiple news and media outlets across the country covered the campaign, including television and radio airtime courtesy of CTN. Toque Tuesday also gained traction through social media, where photos, posts and comments could be found across multiple platforms.

This year, a new, non-toque item was added into the mix… socks! Thanks to the fantastic work of Leo Burnett, bright red bilingual socks with the phrase ‘Ask me about my socks/Parlez-moi de mes bas’ were included in this year’s campaign and sold across the country.

For more information about the Toque Campaign, visit our [website](#).
After 10 years as President of Raising the Roof, I want to offer a big “shout out” to everyone who has helped make the organization what it is today and what it has the potential to become in the years ahead.

From the vision of the founding Board of Directors to the strong brand that we have built today, I see a prosperous future for Raising the Roof. As your President, I’ve been honoured to have contributed to our mission and to have helped make a real difference in communities across Canada.

Some of the many highlights have included branding and launching the Youthworks Initiative; promoting the partnerships with major national and international corporations; engaging municipal, provincial and federal politicians in our work; strengthening our public education; representing Raising the Roof internationally in London and Washington; and, most importantly, seeing our work in action in partner communities nation-wide.

I’ve also been blessed with an understanding employer in the City of Toronto which has over the years supported my volunteer work with Raising the Roof. It would only be proper to leave with some thanks and reflections. So here goes!

Thanks to the Board of Directors past and present. What a unique and special organization with members blended from the private sector, government and non-government organizations.

Thanks to staff past and present. You hold the place together and help keep us on the map day in and day out.

Be proud and celebrate our continuing accomplishments. In several years we will have sold one million toques nation-wide. We have demonstrated year after year that Canadians do care and want action to end homelessness.

Be ambitious in the future as the voice for change in Canada. Continue to have Raising the Roof at the cutting edge of new programs and policies, while strengthening the partnership work with governments, non-profit and business organizations.

All the while continue to do the work with passion, a spirit of optimism and an ounce of fun! Yes, for now I will stay on as Past-President to help with the transition. But, for me, it’s onward and upward with what life brings next. Stay tuned for my next chapter!

Sean Gadon, Past President
Director, Affordable Housing Office
Sean has been active in local, provincial and national housing and homeless advocacy for more than 30 years, and is currently Director of Affordable Housing for the city of Toronto.

In his capacity as the Director he led the development of the city’s Housing Opportunities Toronto 10- year Action Plan. He also oversees the delivery of a range of housing initiatives from housing renovation, rental housing development and new affordable ownership opportunities.

Deeply committed to the cause of providing decent and affordable housing for all Canadians, he has served as senior advisor to three Toronto mayors and Executive Assistant to two Ontario housing ministers. He has also coordinated the development of over 2000 non-profit homes for the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto and York Region.

Sean served as President of Raising the Roof from 2003 to 2014. During Sean’s tenure, Raising the Roof has developed many successful and innovative partnerships with the private sector through fundraising and employee engagement initiatives.

Sean is a graduate from the University of Toronto’s Urban Studies Program and a long-time resident of Toronto where he lives with his family.
Our work is made possible through our valued partners and supporters who understand the serious issue of homelessness and contribute the funds and ‘in-kind’ gifts that allow us to pursue long-term solutions. We thank each of them for the difference they make.
Statement of Financial Position

As at June 30

2014

Assets

Current
Cash $460,150
Accounts receivable 916
Sales tax receivable 13,872
Inventory 37,286
Prepaid expenses 3,218

515,442

Equipment
Computer and office equipment 14,591
Less: accumulated amortization 13,199

1,392

$516,834

Liabilities

Current
Accounts payable and
accrued liabilities $191,545

Net Assets

Unrestricted net assets 25,289
Continuation Fund (Note 3) 300,000

325,289

$516,834

On behalf of the Board

Stephen Gaetz, Director
David Bradshaw, Director

Please note: For a copy of the complete financial statements
contact Raising the Roof.

Statement of Financial Position

Year Ended June 30

2014

Revenues

Donations from foundations, corporations and individuals $335,644
Donations from toque campaign 371,087
Special events 34,016
Government funding 98,247
Interest and other 2,712

$841,706

National Program and Development Expenses

Grants to community groups 222,045
Youthworks program 65,671
Child & Family Homelessness Initiative program 174,052
Public education 48,263
Toque purchases 63,151
Venues, food and events 5,267
Marketing 7,877
Purchased services 1,452
Salaries and benefits (Note 4) 61,304

$649,082

Administrative Expenses

Rent 44,769
Office and general 37,462
Postage and courier 9,098
Insurance 4,386
Bank charges 4,337
Telephone 14,232
Printing 7,317
Board teleconferencing and meeting 3,763
Audit and bookkeeping 6,029
Salaries and benefits (Note 4) 35,449
Amortization 696

167,538

Total expenses $816,620

Excess of revenue over expenses for the year $25,086
WHERE YOUR DONATIONS GO
For the year end June 30, 2014

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<th>2014</th>
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<td>Charitable Programs</td>
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**Including in-kind donations**

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*Includes $2,303,380 of in-kind donations for creative development, website development, printing and media air-time and space for our Charitable Programs.
Governance

Board of Directors

Stephen Gaetz, President
Director, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH)
Professor, Faculty of Education, York University

Sean Gadon, Past President
Director, Affordable Housing Office, City of Toronto

David Bradshaw, Treasurer
Vice-President, Sales and Service, Tangerine

Leeann Signorotti, Secretary
Regional Vice President
Private Banking – RBC Wealth Management

Katie Davies
Managing Director – Youth Housing and Shelter
Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary

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Franklin Templeton Investments Corp.

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John Hall
Partner, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP

Wayne Helgason
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James D. Hughes
President, Graham Boeckh Foundation

Eileen McCormack
Senior Director, New Product Planning
AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, U.S.

Sheldon Pollett
Executive Director, Choices for Youth

Denis Pouliot
Vice President – Information Technology
Intact Financial Corporation

Michael Rosset
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Full Bios for Board Members and Staff can be found on our website at:
www.raisingtheroof.org/About-Us/Our-Team.aspx

Select the following links for a list of associated members:
Board of Advisors

Credits:
Caitlin Boros, Writer and Editor
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