LOFT COMMUNITY SERVICES
Opening doors to hope

# CONNECTIONS

YOUR SPRING 2024 COMMUNITY UPDATE

## **Transforming Young Lives:** Your Generosity in Action

Regina's journey with LOFT's Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) program reflects the impact of your support.

Regina experienced anxiety and depression and when she began having trouble balancing her academic responsibilities and social relationships, she knew she needed to reach out for help.

LOFT's TAY program offers support and resources to young adults facing the challenges of adulthood. Specifically designed for youth aged 16-24, the program includes a wide range of services such as mental health counselling, employment assistance, educational support, life skills training, housing solutions, and connections to community resources.

Regina came to LOFT to get help with her mental health, build a community, and learn healthy ways to handle anxiety and depression. The TAY program connected her with crucial supports and introduced her to a community through its social and treatment groups like Creative Writing and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT).

"I enjoy interacting with LOFT staff; I appreciate our relationships and connection," Regina shares. "LOFT has helped me learn skills to deal with coping in the moment when I'm having anxiety or depression."

Regina recently graduated from LOFT's Transitional Aged Youth Program and has maintained a spot on the honour roll and Dean's list at Humber College. Your contributions help us support more youth like Regina and foster a community of hope and transformation.

Accredited
IMAGINE CANADA

## **Imagine Canada's Standards:** LOFT's Re-Accreditation

We proudly announce that LOFT has been re-accredited under Imagine Canada's Standards. With this recognition, we become part of a respected community of non-profit organizations dedicated to operational excellence.

The Imagine Canada Standards is a recognized non-profit accreditation created to provide best practices that help organizations improve governance and operations in crucial areas: board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, human resources, and volunteer involvement.

# Empowering Youth through Fitness

Thanks to the RBC Foundation, the gym at Beverley Lodge provides more than just a place to exercise – it positively impacts the lives of youth aged 14 to 25. The gym offers various ways to stay active with equipment like a multi-purpose Smith Machine, dumbbells, a stationary bike and more. The space has become a central spot for positive interactions.

Woldeh, a youth worker, shares, “It’s a place to build relationships with the youth, teach them about fitness, and encourage a healthier community.”

The gym doesn’t only benefit physical health; it also helps with stress and mental well-being. For Woldeh, it’s an unexpected and valuable part of an already great workplace. Your ongoing support ensures this vital space continues to thrive, leaving a lasting impact on the lives it touches.

## Donor Impact: Shaping Success Stories through Campus Mental Health Support

Evan’s journey unfolds within the LOFT Campus Mental Health Program, a vital resource for students encountering complex mental health challenges. This program is available to students enrolled at the University of Toronto and Toronto Metropolitan University.

Battling chronic pain, an eating disorder, severe depression, and ADHD, Evan faced a crisis point. Fortunately, within the program, he gained access to vital mental health services, such as personalized counseling, therapy sessions, and support groups tailored to his unique needs.

The Campus Mental Health Program provides one-on-one case management, access to support workers, safe housing, mental health and addiction services, academic planning, employment support, crisis intervention, psychoeducation, and social groups. Donors play a crucial role in sustaining this transformative program, helping students like Evan overcome obstacles, achieve academic success, and find renewed hope on their journey to graduation. Join us in empowering students to build brighter futures through your continued support.

# An Update from **Heather McDonald, CEO**

Our collective impact on individuals facing homelessness, substance use, and mental health challenges is truly significant. Your rapid and generous responses serves as the foundation of hope for our community.

As spring unfolds you are invited to join us for open houses to witness our impactful work, where your participation strengthens community bonds and deepens our shared mission understanding.

I'm thrilled to announce that LOFT has received the Non-Profit Employer of Choice (NEOC) Award for 2023. This recognition reflects the extraordinary dedication of our staff and the positive work environment we've collectively nurtured. Your ongoing support has been instrumental in establishing LOFT as one of Canada's premier non-profit employers.

Another notable achievement is that LOFT has been accredited under Imagine Canada's Standards. This accreditation underscores our commitment to operational excellence, adhering to best practices in key areas. It positions us among a community of non-profit organizations dedicated to creating a lasting impact.

Additionally, we're expanding our impact with Life Enrichment Services, including Transitional Age Youth and Adult Supportive Housing Services. Thanks to donor generosity and regional funding, this initiative supports diverse needs, emphasizing connection, reducing isolation, and building crucial life skills.

A heartfelt thank you! Together, we're forging a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

## Upcoming Open Houses

**April 30** | 416 Community Support for Women

**May 30** | Humber House

**Our open houses are open to LOFT's community. For more information and to RSVP, please contact us at fundraising@loftcs.org or 416-979-1994.**

# Gratitude for Our Generous Donors

### CIBC Foundation

Thank you to CIBC Foundation for its incredible $100,000 donation, in support of LOFT's engagement with the Thorncliffe Park Youth Wellness Hub. This initiative addresses the pressing need for local, low-barrier resources for youth facing complex mental health, addiction, and academic challenges in Thorncliffe Park. The Youth Wellness Hub offers specialized services, including mental health assessments, addiction treatment, psychiatrist referrals, reskilling and upskilling, employment, and housing support. CIBC Foundation's thoughtful contribution enables us to provide integrated care for our community's vulnerable youth, fostering a brighter future.

### Blair and Cara Driscoll

We extend our deepest gratitude to Blair and Cara Driscoll for dedicating their time, valuable insights, and contributions to LOFT. With their recent donation to our co-op housing programs, we are able to empower youth to cultivate and hone their independent living skills, in a supportive community where they can learn and grow.

This support enables more young people to access our community's health and housing services, allowing everyone to strive for their best health and well-being in an inclusive setting.

### Schulich Foundation

We thank the Schulich Foundation for supporting LOFT's Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) Youth Programs. With their generosity, we provide valuable group sessions for youth facing challenges like anxiety, depression, and borderline personality disorder. Our DBT Drop-In groups, DBT Closed Groups, and the Black, Indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC) DBT Closed Group (pilot) offer essential emotional wellness support. Launched in March 2022, the BIPOC group has positively impacted 29 unique clients. The Schulich Foundation's dedication ensures that these crucial services are accessible to youth who might otherwise lack support, significantly impacting their lives.

**DONATE TODAY** AND HELP OPEN DOORS FOR THE YOUTH IN OUR COMMUNITY.

SCAN ME

**CALL:** 416-979-1994 EXT. 2033#
**OR VISIT:** LOFTCS.ORG

LOFT COMMUNITY SERVICES
15 TORONTO STREET, 9TH FLOOR
TORONTO, ON M5C 2E3