

# Ernestine's Women's Shelter Annual Report 2016-2017



# Ernestine's Women's Shelter

Ernestine's Women's Shelter provides support, counselling, and emergency shelter for women and children escaping violence. Our frontline staff strive to provide sustainable housing options for families amidst a growing housing crisis. We also assist women and children in rebuilding their lives by providing crisis intervention and a range of holistic support services, while acknowledging the multitude of issues facing survivors of abuse.

## Our Mission

Ernestine's Women's Shelter, an organization run by women, provides support and shelter for women and children escaping violence.

We assist women and children with rebuilding their lives by providing crisis intervention and a range of holistic support services, while acknowledging the multitude of issues facing survivors of abuse.

We adapt our services to honour diversity and the unique needs of the individual.

We promote awareness and education, and advocate for early intervention and prevention.



## Guiding Principles

We recognize the impact of violence on children and acknowledge that the rights of children are separate and distinct from those of their parents.

We recognize each woman's right to self-determination.

We acknowledge that violence can be physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual.

We are a participatory organization, accountable to our Board of Directors and Stakeholders.

We operate from a feminist, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive framework.

# Table of Contents

- Message from the Chair .....6
- Board of Directors.....8
- Strategic Priorities .....9
- Message from the Executive Director .....10
- Shelter Program Report .....12
- Hopes for the Future.....16
- Events.....17
- Ernestine Affair .....22
- Staff Highlights .....26
- Partnership Highlight .....28
- Shelter Statistics .....30
- Messages from the Community .....32
- Volunteers .....33
- Our Supporters .....36
- Ernestine’s Staff .....39
- Recognition List .....40
- 2017 Financial Highlights.....46

## Message from the Chair

Dear Friends and Supporters of Ernestine's,  
The great successes of 2016-2017 can be attributed to a solid foundation in governance and operational excellence, and resulted in 45 women and 45 children finding a safe haven and pathway to new beginnings at Ernestine's over the course of this year. Our 24/7 Crisis Line answered 1,351 calls from women in need.

These services could not be delivered without adequate funding in place, reinforced by strong fundraising efforts. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express a heartfelt thanks to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the United Way Toronto and York Region United Way, the City of Toronto, and our many generous corporate and individual donors from the past year.

This year's Ernestine Affair continued to grow in attendance, which is crucial for awareness and support of such an important cause, as well as in revenue numbers to ensure delivery of Ernestine's vital programs and services. We were also honoured to have the inimitable and talented Sonia Rodriguez host the evening, and regale us with an exclusive performance.

What Ernestine's stands for everyday cannot be accomplished alone. The 22nd Annual Ernestine Affair was an evening to behold, with so many generous supporters standing up for women and standing up for Ernestine's! And this was all possible through the leadership of our Board member, Cara Henry, who once again chaired the Ernestine Affair Committee. We are so thankful for her expertise and drive, and for the remarkable committee that she led including Catherine May, Melissa Coghlan, Alan Forsyth, Kim Harris, Cailin Perry, Sandra Kim, Catherine Chang, Steph Porter, Trevor McCurdy and Michelle Burr.

We continued to implement recommendations from the 2015 Organizational Design Review, specifically related to operational resources. Making sure that management has 'the right people in the right places' helps Ernestine's deliver its services in the most effective way. So, in 2016 we welcomed a fulltime professional fundraiser and a designated finance administrator to our formidable Ernestine's team. I would like to thank the entire Ernestine's team, led by Executive

Director, Sharlene Tygesen, for their work in delivering our programs and services, day after day. And of course, the many volunteers that generously gave their time to support our great shelter.

Our Board of Directors focused on key foundational pieces from a governance perspective: developing better risk management policies related to financial oversight, enhancing succession planning processes, ensuring that tools and resources were in place to help us be an effective governing body, and focusing on education to increase the Board's financial literacy and adherence to governance best practices. All of this is to say our diverse and dynamic Board spent many volunteer hours establishing a better oversight framework, enabling us to mitigate any potential future risks for Ernestine's. Ultimately, this will allow Ernestine's to focus on its core delivery of services, and continue to be a leader amongst its peers in the social services industry.

I would like to thank our Board members for their time, passion and relentless commitment to good governance and risk management. Catherine May, Martha Hancock, Jillian Bannister, Cara Henry, Josephine Ho, Chengli Tang, Seher Goderya, Rita Said, Julia Nanos, Jessica Rayne, Jennifer Altosaar, Tieu-Minh To – your hard work and support in the past year has made Ernestine's even stronger. I would also like to thank the volunteers that served on our standing Board Committees: Jasmin Earle, Jennifer Shiller and Seema Khumbkarran.

As we move forward in 2017 and beyond, I am proud of what Ernestine's accomplished in 2016 and am excited about our future. The Ernestine's family is strong and vibrant, and together we will continue our efforts to eliminate violence against women and children, assist as they rebuild their lives, and raise awareness of these issues throughout our community.

Siloni Waraich  
Board Chair  
Ernestine's Women's Shelter

## Board of Directors

Siloni Waraich, Board Chair

Josephine Ho, Board Vice Chair

Tieu-Minh To, Board Treasurer

Jennifer Altosaar, Board Secretary

Catherine May, Past Chair

Jillian Bannister

Seher Goderya

Martha Hancock

Cara Henry

Julia Nanos

Jessica Rayne

Rita Said

Chengli Tang

### Board Committee Volunteers

Jasmin Earle, Governance Committee

Seema Khumbkarran, Fundraising & Finance Committee

Jennifer Shiller, Governance Committee

## Meet our new Chair!

Siloni Waraich is a stakeholder management and strategic communications professional with over 20 years of experience in senior roles in the public and private sectors. She is currently Vice President, Stakeholder Engagement at Tarion Warranty Corporation where she oversees the organization's external relations functions and manages the public consultation process. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Masters in Business Administration. Siloni's political experiences as a former School Board Trustee, and as a former President of a provincial political party, have solidified her passion for advocacy. Since joining the Board in 2015, Siloni has had the privilege of chairing the Governance Committee and is now honoured to become Chair of the Ernestine's Board of Directors. She is excited to continue to advocate for women's issues and lead a valuable organization that endeavours to end violence against women and children.





## Strategic Priorities



### Partnerships

We will develop community partnerships with agencies and grassroots groups to enhance our excellent service delivery to women, youth, and children impacted by violence. These strong partnerships will support community engagement and diversifying funding opportunities.



### Education

We will develop and deliver, alongside our Stakeholders, multi-platform education about gender-based violence. We will continue to use an anti-racism and anti-oppression framework for this education. These initiatives will provide opportunities to build new partnerships and connect with potential funders.



### Financial Sustainability

We will build a long-term sustainable funding model that supports Ernestine's to deliver valuable services for women, youth, and children impacted by violence.

## Message from the Executive Director

Dear friends and allies,

When I was appointed Executive Director in 2014, Ernestine's was already in the process of a complete reinvention. We had established a three-year strategic plan and hired an outside consultant to review our operations and organizational structure. It seemed like there was a never-ending series of challenges as we realigned our programs, closed some of the gaps we had identified, and at the same time, took the organization in new strategic directions. Nevertheless, like the women and children we service, giving up was never an option for us. We drew inspiration from the courage and tenacity of our clients and worked to build a better Ernestine's Women's Shelter.

The 2016-2017 year offered plenty of proof that this hard work paid off.

We fully implemented our new organizational structure, which includes the addition of the Manager of Finance and Operations position. Our management team is now fully in place and our organization is aligned with our values and mission.

We continued to expand our influence through our partnership with Crossroads International.

This year we sent counsellors from Ernestine's to Tanzania to help establish shelter services, sponsored by Crossroads International. We also hosted Elizabeth Minde (Advocate & Managing Director) and Angel Ottaru (Front-line Volunteer) from KWIECO (Kilimanjaro Women's Information Exchange and Consultancy Organization), who operate the 18 bed shelter for women and children fleeing violence. Elizabeth and Angel stayed with us for two weeks in December, in order to observe our operations and get first-hand experience with our service delivery model and best practices.

We continued to lead the field in the delivery of our programs and services. For the third year in a row, an Ernestine's Counsellor has received the Woman Abuse Council of Toronto's "Soul of a Warrior Award". In fact, Ernestine's staff have been recipients of this award every year since its inception. This year Monica Ameyia has made it her mission "to empower women to have self-determination in all aspects of their lives and to be role models for their children."

We continued to receive the support of our outstanding volunteers, We must thank Susan Forrest, Susan Elsley, and Steve DeMarco, who spent the last year developing, writing,

and shooting our first ever Public Service Announcement (PSA). A huge thank you to the many volunteers who participated in this endeavour and especially the youth who inspired the story.

Thank you to Marsha Clarke of Justbecuz Inc. for developing, designing, and producing our first ever welcome magazine to help our new clients get to know our shelter.

Once again, the Ernestine Affair Committee members and volunteers made the 22nd annual Ernestine Affair our most successful ever. This could not happen without the leadership of Cara Henry, Alan Forsyth, and the dedicated committee members.

We continued to extend Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression training to our board and staff in order to strengthen our commitment to value the identity of each individual who has experienced violence.

And of course, we kept the shelter operating 24 hours a day, for another 365 days, making a difference in the lives of the 45 women and 45 children who stayed with us, as well as the 402 women and children who accessed events and workshops through our outreach and transitional program, and the 168 women and 354 children

who accessed our onsite foodbank.

These are just some of the outstanding successes that we've enjoyed in 2016-2017. As with every year, it's the never-ending dedication of our staff, the leadership and commitment of our Board members, the support of our volunteers, and the incredible generosity of our donors and funders who made this possible.

We said goodbye to our outgoing Chair, Catherine May, and thank her for her tireless leadership. We welcomed our new Board Chair, Siloni Waraich, and we look forward to tapping her experience and passion for women's issues.

As we do every year, we invite you to continue to support us by attending an event, organizing a fundraising activity with your friends, staying in touch with us on Twitter and Facebook, or organizing an awareness activity at your work or school.

Thank you for continuing this journey with us.

The destination is a better world.

In Sisterhood,

Sharlene Tygesen  
Executive Director  
Ernestine's Women's Shelter

## Shelter Program Report

### Counselling

The Women's Program at Ernestine's provides 24-hour crisis intervention and supportive counselling to women and children living within the shelter. Our counsellors work with clients to rebuild their lives by helping them set goals for the future and make plans to achieve those goals. We assist each of our clients with the creation of safety plans and teach them the fundamentals of safety planning.

All of our clients also receive advocacy support for various community and social agencies, as well as assistance with access to health and social services. Five days a week, the Women's Program provides culturally inclusive meals to help women and children feel safe and welcome in the shelter. The Women's Program also operates the shelter's 24-hour crisis line, providing counseling support, information, and referrals for women who call seeking shelter and support.

This year, our counselors supported 1,134 women over the phone, provided 517 counselling sessions and 339 referrals to support the goals of women residing at our shelter. Furthermore, 365 safety plans were created with women over the past year.

**This agency [Ernestine's Women's Shelter] helped me in every way. Now I know who I am because now I am aware of my rights what I have in this country.**

– Former resident

**I come in the right place, they provided the help that I need and my son need. Thank you so much for helping us.**

– Former resident



### Child and Youth (C&Y) Program

The Child and Youth Program is dedicated to supporting children who have witnessed or experienced violence. This included infants, children and youth between the ages of zero to 18, male youths up to 18 years old, pregnant women and mothers.

The Child and Youth Program provides support to all families as they adapt to the shelter and say good-bye to their old communities when moving into their new communities. At Ernestine's Women's Shelter, we believe that children have the right to be separate and distinct from their parents and, as a result, this program is designed to meet children's individual needs.

The Child and Youth Program works with the children and youth at the shelter to overcome the trauma of witnessing violence and/or being abused. This is done through counselling, self-expression, routine establishment, exercising creativity, and the unlearning of unhealthy behaviours. Additional program activities include homework clubs, reading circles, arts and crafts activities, and one-on-one time.

This past year, 431 one-on-one sessions were provided to children under the age of 4, 434 one-on-one sessions were provided to children between the ages 5-12, and 566 one-on-one sessions were provided to youth between the ages of 13-18.

### **Transitional Housing and Outreach Support (TH&OS) Program**

The Transitional Housing and Outreach (TH&OS) Program provides support to women and children who are currently experiencing, or who have experienced violence, and are presently living in the community. The program also provides counselling, advocacy, and access to our food bank, as well as legal, housing, and resource allocation supports.

This year, 111 counselling sessions were provided to the women living in the community. Additionally, 77-advocacy engagements were provided to women. Furthermore, 168 women and 354 children accessed our Food Bank in the last year. Women and their children accessed the food bank a total of 347 times.

The primary goal of the TH&OS Program is to provide support to women and children as they find and secure affordable housing. In addition, the program counsellors plan and facilitate community workshops and special events.

### **Housing and Legal (H&L) Program**

Ernestine's Housing and Legal Program provides essential resources for women leaving an abusive relationship. Women that arrive at the shelter have a need to find safe, permanent, and affordable housing. This is an important step to establish and maintain their independence, as well as rebuild their lives. Our clients often do not understand the various social programs available to them or how to navigate an often confusing bureaucratic system.

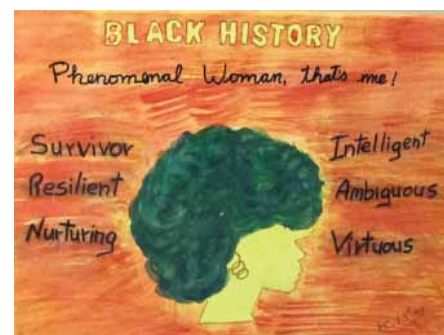
This year, our Housing and Legal Counsellor provided 232 housing engagements with women to support their goal in obtaining and securing housing. Further, 204 legal advocacy engagements were provided to ensure that women's safety and goals were supported.

## Skills Exchange Program

The Skills Exchange Program supports women's mental well-being by allowing them to share their experiences of violence, without shame or guilt. In addition, this program develops and strengthens coping skills to help women deal with past and present trauma. During group sessions, women share their skills, knowledge and life experiences.

Discussion topics can include: healthy sexuality, healthy relationships, employment, education, financial literacy, assertive communication and parenting in trauma. These topics are framed within a feminist, anti-racist, and anti-oppression framework. This foundation of shared experience breaks a woman's sense of isolation, helps build self-esteem and enables her to become self-empowered.

This year, 148 counselling sessions were provided to women, 141 referrals were made and 161 advocacy engagements were conducted to support women.



The Skills Exchange program at Ernestine's Women's Shelter strives to provide programming that is important and culturally relevant to our clients. For Black History Month, the Skills Exchange program participants created artwork (as depicted above) to honour and celebrate the diversity within the black community at Ernestine's, as well as their contributions to the enrichment of our community.

## Hopes for the Future

Our shelter is occupied over capacity and, as a result, we have been converting programs and operating spaces into rooms for women and children. We are taking in extra families because all of our sister shelters are full, and one of them is closed for much needed renovations over the next year. Due to the strain on the system and the lack of services and beds, we are not able to help as many women and children fleeing violence.

We are creating a new position of Settlement Counsellor to support the needs of women with precarious immigration and housing issues. This role helps facilitate our clients' transition from emergency shelter to stable housing amidst a growing housing crisis in the Greater Toronto Area, and will allow us to accept more clients as space becomes available within the shelter.

We have increased our capacity from 32 to 35 beds, so we are starting to see more women and many more children. The continuation of our settlement program is vital to ensure that women's housing and status issues are being addressed, to continue meeting the needs of our community. The continuation of this much-needed program is contingent on funding.

This year we have experienced an enormous rise in our number of child and youth clients, especially those between the ages of 0-4. In regards to servicing the needs of these vulnerable clients, we hope to be able to recruit

another Child and Youth Counsellor to provide sufficient support and resources to the growing number of families staying within the shelter.

We also hope to receive stable and consistent donations to our Food Bank, as we have seen a rise in the number of families who are dependent upon accessing meal support from Ernestine's.

Finally, we have witnessed a pressing need to increase our involvement within the community. By expanding our drop-in and counseling programs, increasing our community engagement and strengthening partnerships, we will facilitate early violence intervention and prevention.

### Special Acknowledgment

A very special thank you to the Programs team at Ernestine's Women's Shelter for all their laborious efforts to support the needs of the women, children, and youth, in spite of the lack of organizational capacity and resources, and the growing list of client needs.

Front-line service work can be emotionally and physically exhausting, so we acknowledge and greatly appreciate all the work that our service providers do to support the clients at Ernestine's.



## Events

This year, the staff and clients at Ernestine's Women's Shelter hosted and participated in various events within the community. These events are great opportunities to engage within the community, provide outreach, stand up to violence against women, and offer much needed activities for survivors of violence. Some of the celebrated events from this past year are depicted below.

### Winterfest

Our annual Winterfest Holiday Party is held every December at Fantasy Fair. Every year, past and present clients come together to catch-up, reconnect, and enjoy a fun-filled evening of rides, food, and games. Through the generosity of new and long-term donors, we are able to share gifts with our in-house and Outreach clients.

Special thanks to Woodbine Mall and Woodbine Entertainment Group for the generous donation of the space, as well as all the hot chocolate and volunteer support.



Volunteers from: Woodbine Entertainment Group



Ernestine's staff members, Monica Amenia and Deborah James-Sargeant



Ernestine's staff members: Melody Pomares, Iliana Mena, and Vanita Budhai



### Back to School BBQ

Every August, we celebrate our annual Back to School BBQ. This year's event was hosted by Ernestine's and supported by our community partner, Home Depot. The team from Home Depot came onsite to facilitate activities with the women and children. TJX Canada provided gift cards for the families to purchase new coats and shoes for school, and our generous donors filled over 150 backpacks with school supplies.



Ernestine's staff members, Kathleen O'Gorman, Kylee Goldman and Sharlene Tygesen.

## Camp Week

At Ernestine's Camp Week, children and youth have the opportunity to experience camp and all the benefits that come along with camp activities, such as making new friends, having new experiences, learning new skills, and more. This event allows children and youth opportunities to feel like kids again, while they heal from violence.

In the summer of 2016, with the help of Rotary Etobicoke, we were able to send four school-age children to camp, and create a Camp Week for those children and youth who were otherwise unable to go.



## Humber College – Take Back the Night

Ernestine's participated with community partner, Humber College, for Humber's first Take Back the Night march on September 28th, 2016. Students, teachers and community partners marched in solidarity with survivors of sexual violence. Every year Ernestine's Women's Shelter marches in commitment to end all forms of violence.



Ernestine's staff members, Deborah James-Sargeant, Jian Feng, Melody Pomares, Vanita Budhai, Khadija Kathy Ali



Ernestine's staff members: Khadija Kathy Ali, Sharlene Tygesen, Melody Pomares, Vanita Budhai, Deborah James-Sargeant, Jian Feng, Monica Amenya

## Pride

Ernestine's was honoured to be part of the 2016 Toronto Dyke March. We have participated in the Dyke March since it started in 1996. At the march, LGBTQ+ allies and advocates occupied space, raised their voices and took part in the political demonstration. It was a day for inclusion, solidarity and standing up for all women.



Ernestine's staff, supporter, board member: Martha Hancock, Jennifer James, Silvia Olivas, Ernestine's Supporter, Sharlene Tygesen, Vanita Budhai, Kathleen O'Gorman, Monica Ameyna. Image of clients have been blurred because safety and confidentiality measures have been applied



Ernestine's Women's Shelter Pride Tank Tops



Ernestine's Staff member, Silvia Olivas

## Fusion of Taste

Ernestine's was proud to join the Albion Islington Square BIA at the Fusion of Taste Festival. There was great music, food, and fun! Minnie and Mickey Mouse even stopped by our booth to send their greetings to the children at Ernestine's Women's Shelter!



Mickey and Minnie Mouse giving their regards to the kids at Ernestine's at Taste of Fusion



Ernestine's volunteer and staff member, Khadija Kathy Ali, at Ernestine's booth

## Turf Race

Ernestine's Women's Shelter participated in the annual United Way Turf Race at Woodbine Racetrack on September 11th, 2016. The relay team, made up of employees and friends of Ernestine's, were spectacular as they ran on the track to Stand Up For Women and Protect Children. Thank you to the United Way and Woodbine for supporting local charities.



Ernestine's staff member, Linda Akpan (left), and community supporters at Turf Race

## 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Ernestine Affair

The 2016 Ernestine Affair was a wonderful way to celebrate, honour, and fundraise for the women and children at Ernestine's Women's Shelter. This year we welcomed new friends and long-term supporters who have supported the shelter and the Ernestine Affair for more than 20 years, plus all the dedicated friends in between.

This year's event host was National Ballet of Canada Principal Dancer Sonia Rodriguez. She graced us with a beautiful performance that she first performed when she was inducted into the Canadian Walk of Fame.

Further, this year we had the special honour of recognizing two youth for the Natalie Novak Youth Award: Miriam and Saliha Khan. The Khan sisters protected each other and fought for their safety, advocated for their wellbeing and have become inspiring youth leaders.

The Ernestine van Marle Award was presented to Gurinder Ghuman, a former client who fought for her life through severe mental and emotional abuse, and is now excelling in the field of Human Resources and using her

newfound voice to advocate for others.

The Raise Your Hand portion of the evening was the most successful to date. We raised more than \$41,000 for safety planning, legal accompaniments, and the celebration of kids' milestones. More than 180 people stood up for women and helped us continue to protect children.

This year's event would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the committee members and volunteers. Special thanks to the 2016 Ernestine Affair Committee!

Cara Henry, Committee Chair  
Michelle Burr  
Catherine Chang  
Alan Forsyth  
Kim Harris  
Sandra Kim  
Catherine May  
Trevor McCurdy  
Cailin Perry  
Steph Porter  
Kathleen O'Gorman, Staff



Guests at the Ernestine Affair raising their hands to support Ernestine's



Michael Bonacini, Sharlene Tygesen, Sonia Rodriguez



Auctioneer, Charlene Nero



Award Recipients: Saliha Khan, Maryam Khan

#### Recipients of the Natalie Novak Youth Award: Maryam and Saliha Khan

After the passing of Maryam’s and Saliha’s mother, their home became an abusive, prison-like environment. They eventually discovered Ernestine’s and sought refuge at the shelter. They described their experience at Ernestine’s as a “most incredible and privileged” one. Ernestine’s helped Maryam and Saliha set the path towards recovery and find a new home, free of abuse.

Now, the sisters are about to graduate from their respective college and university programs and are preparing to further their education. Receiving the Natalie Novak Youth Award last year inspired the sisters to impact the world positively and to give back to Ernestine’s. Once the sisters become established, they plan to start a like-minded nonprofit organization that will assist Ernestine’s, “because the world needs places like Ernestine’s to empower, inspire and heal people”, they stated.



Award Recipient: Gurinder Ghuman

#### Recipient of the Ernestine van Marle Inspiration Award: Gurinder Ghuman

Gurinder first connected with Ernestine’s Women’s Shelter when she sought help from a legal counselor. Her husband (now ex-husband) was abusive, and the resulting isolation, fear and depression was taking its toll. The dedicated staff at Ernestine’s helped Gurinder feel safe and realize that the abuse was not her fault.

Ernestine’s helped Gurinder regain her self-confidence and go back to school. After enrolling at York University and completing Job Ready programs, Gurinder now works as an HR Coordinator at one of the best healthcare technology companies in Toronto. Receiving the award last year reignited Gurinder’s confidence, courage, and resilience. She recently got married and is excited about this new chapter in her life.

## 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Ernestine Affair Continued...



Award Recipients and Event Host, Saliha Khan, Sonia Rodriguez, Gurinder Ghuman, and Maryam Khan



Ernestine Affair: View of Room



Past and Present Board Members at Ernestine Affair



Sonia Rodriguez performing at the Ernestine Affair



Guests from the Violence Against Women Network at the Ernestine Affair



Volunteers at the Ernestine Affair's Registration Desk



# THE Ernestine AFFAIR



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Sponsors



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## Staff Highlights



**Happy Anniversary, Sharlene!**

**This year we are celebrating Sharlene Tygesen's 25th Anniversary with Ernestine's Women's Shelter!**

When our Executive Director, Sharlene Tygesen, started at Ernestine's in 1991, the shelter was a grassroots 14-member collective management team in a two-story back-split building located in what is now our parking lot. During this time, 22 women and children called Ernestine's home and shared six bedrooms. Families had to eat dinner in shifts. We did not have computers or a fax machine and Sharlene found donations of toys for the annual holiday celebration via the yellow pages.

Sharlene was a Child and Youth Advocate, with a background in early childhood education. She worked with children and their moms to help them cope with their experiences of violence and abuse and was an early advocate for an awareness of children as separate clients, with distinct rights and needs: "servicing children is servicing women [mothers] and servicing women is servicing children."

After eight years in that role, Sharlene moved into the Outreach Program and then the Human Resources and Fundraising. It was at this time that Ernestine's secured funding from the Ministry of Community & Social Services to build a new 32 bed shelter. It was also during this time that Ernestine's moved from its collective structure to a three lead model, and as a lead Sharlene was responsible for Fundraising, Facilities & Human Resources. In January 2006 Ernestine's opened the doors of their new 15,000 square foot accessible shelter.

Sharlene has been recognized for her unceasing advocacy and community work with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013. In 2014, she spoke before the Government of Canada's Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

Continuing to lead the change at Ernestine's, Sharlene became the shelter's first Executive Director in 2014. Since then, she has led Ernestine's through an organizational redesign and a partnership that saw Ernestine's staff travel to Togo and Tanzania to support efforts and share tools and resources.

Sharlene has an undimmed passion for, and commitment to, helping women and children live lives free from violence and abuse. "It has been an honor working with women who find the courage to leave and the strength to stay out. Be the change you want to see. If you want to see change in the world, do something about it."



In February, Ernestine’s Outreach and Follow-Up Counsellor, Monica Amenia, was a recipient of the 2017 WomanACT’s Soul of a Warrior Award. Monica was described as “the ultimate social worker” and we couldn’t agree more. The awards gala was a lovely affair. It was a wonderful way to celebrate International Women’s Day, by honouring the work of front-line service providers who are often overlooked, despite their incredible and difficult work.

Well done, Monica!

Monica Amenia wins WomanACT’s Soul of a Warrior Award



Ernestine’s staff and student placements participating in annual Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression (ARAO) training

### ARAO training

Ernestine’s Women’s Shelter operates from a feminist, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive framework and, as such, it is vital that all of our staff members and placement students are informed about how to provide services within an intersectional framework that reflects our organization’s core values. This framework not only affects our frontline service provision, but also our communications within the community, outreach, education and much more.

## Partnership Highlight

### International Partnership with Crossroads and KWIECO in Tanzania

In August last year, Crossroads International generously sponsored a trip for three staff members from Ernestine's Women's Shelter to visit KWIECO (Kilimanjaro Women's Information Exchange and Consultancy Organization) in Tanzania, to facilitate a two-week training program that helped build KWIECO's capacity to better manage its first women's shelter. The representatives from Ernestine's Women's Shelter were Laverne Blake, Manager of Programs and Client Services, Monica Amenya, Outreach and Follow-Up Counsellor, and Deborah James-Sargeant, Facility Coordinator.

Founded in 1987, KWIECO is a human rights organization that seeks to resolve gender-based issues in Tanzania. They work to defend the rights of women and children, and offer psychosocial support and shelter to victims of violence. Their main programs include: legal, human rights, and gender education, as well as legal counselling, litigation, lobbying, advocacy, women's economic empowerment, social support for survivors of gender-based violence, and support for children who have escaped abusive and exploitative situations.

The staff from Ernestine's developed and provided KWIECO's shelter with sustainable structures, safer systems, best practices, skills,

tools and training on how to implement all these new systems and procedures. They also trained KWIECO staff on how to manage the shelter to encourage holistic and transformative impacts for its beneficiaries. Lastly, the staff at KWIECO were also trained by Ernestine's staff on how to institute policies that operate within an anti-racist, anti-oppressive framework.

Ernestine's strives to promote awareness and education, and advocate for early intervention and prevention. This partnership with Crossroads International and KWIECO Crossroads helped develop the capacity of KWIECO's shelter in Tanzania, to provide safe, sustainable, and anti-oppressive shelter to women and children escaping violence in Tanzania.

In November, two staff members from KWIECO visited Ernestine's Women's Shelter, as well as our other community partners, to witness our operations first-hand. Through their site visit, the staff from KWIECO were able to learn about how Ernestine's engages within the community, organizes volunteers, fundraises, and ensures client safety and privacy.

The site visit by KWIECO staff was featured in the Toronto Star newspaper in December, 2016.



Left: Angel Ottaru (Counsellor) and Anna Kissanga (Matron) working with clients at KWIECO in Tanzania



Right: Monica Amenya and Left: Deborah James-Sargeant from Ernestine's Women's Shelter with KWIECO Team



Artwork created by women clients at KWIECO shelter



Children's program space in KWIECO shelter



KWIECO women's shelter

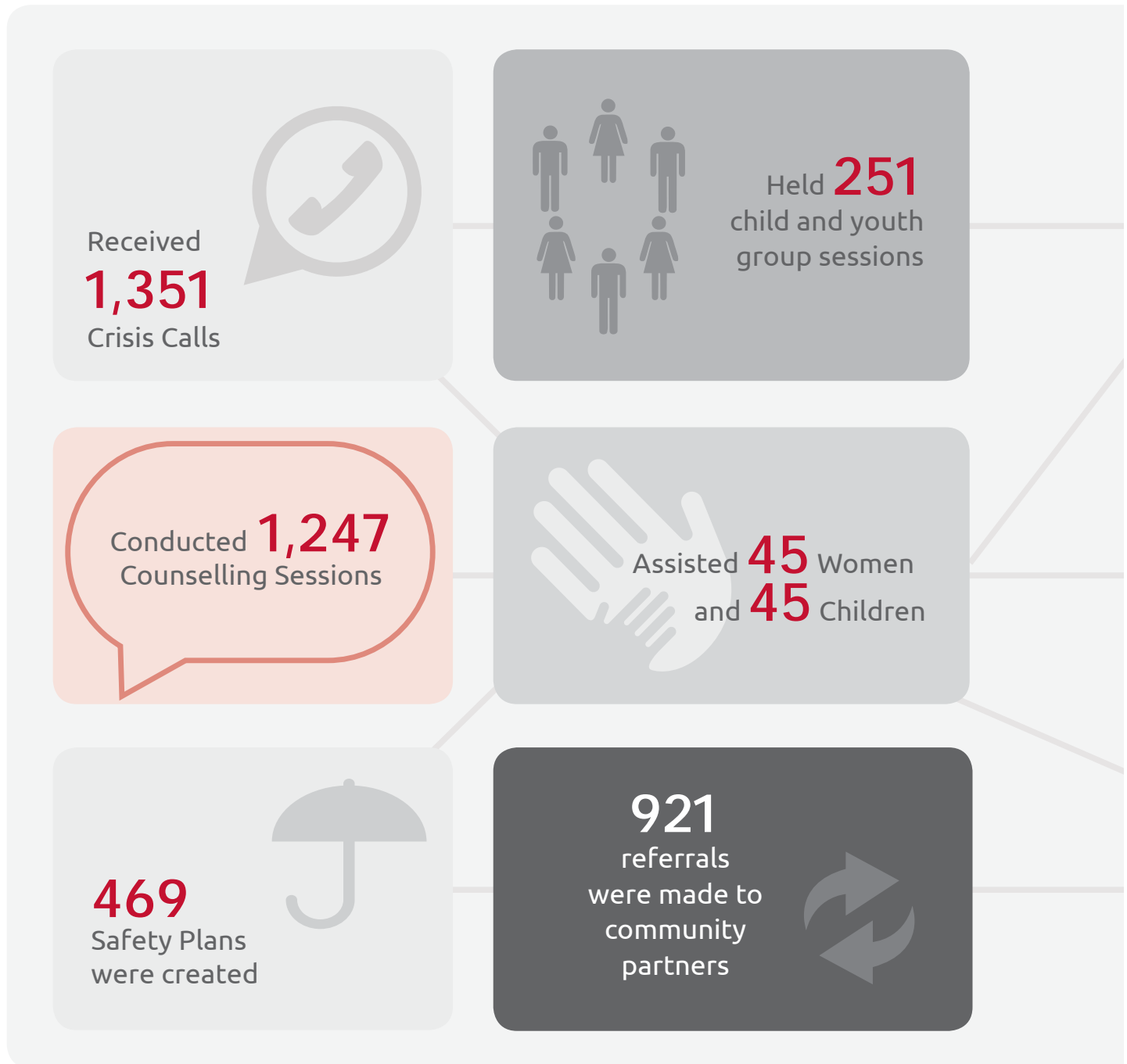


Artwork created by the children at KWIECO shelter



Left to Right: Sharlene Tygesen, Elizabeth Minde (Executive Director of KWIECO), Annie Kashamura Zawadi (Program Officer at Crossroads), Deborah James-Sargeant, and Monica Amenya

## Shelter Statistics



Average length stay is 10 to 12 months

Children and youth  
counsellors engaged with  
our children and youth for  
individual support  
**1,997** times



**125**  
referrals  
for legal  
support



**111** counselling sessions were  
provided to community clients

**212**  
accompaniments were  
provided to clients for  
various appointments



**62**  
referrals  
for housing  
support

**59**  
housing  
applications  
submitted



## Messages from the Community

“The staff at this centre made me feel very safe, cared for and empowered. They always made an opportunity to fulfill my need.” – Client


“I felt home [at Ernestine’s]. Thanks a lot for that.” – Client

“I was so inspired by you as I saw your dedication care, commitment and passion in making a difference while you promote holistic growth for children and women residing at the shelter. “I am behind you” team is very aligned with what you are trying to accomplish.”  
– Vannu Ghandi,  
Founder of “I am behind you”

## Follow us on Social Media

f ErnestinesWS


🐦 @ErnestinesWS #StandUp4Women

 **Concierge Home Services Etobicoke**  
Apr 30, 2016

Like or share this post because it's the LAST DAY to support Ernestine's Women's Shelter for the month of April.

It's organizations like this that helps to create a strong Etobicoke community.

[Read Less](#)



 **Reclaim Your Voice**  
May 15, 2016

Thank you Ernestine's Women's Shelter for supporting Weapon of Voice 2016!  
#2016WOV



 **Etobicoke Guardian** @ETGuardian · 19 Dec 2016  
#Etobicoke's @ErnestinesWS teams up with @haweeco\_Tanzania to set up first women's shelter in the country bit.ly/2hA0wF1



 **PIMCO Foundation**  
Jul 27, 2016

By teaming up with Ernestine's Women's Shelter this #GWV2016 we are helping #empowerwomen & break the cycle of violence.



 **United Way TYR** @unitedwaytyr · Mar 10  
A special congrats to @ErnestinesWS's Monica Amenia who received a @WomanACT Soul Of A Warrior Award for her amazing work in women's housing

 **We Talk Women** @WeTalkWomen · 29 Nov 2016  
Women fleeing violence rely on shelters like @Interval\_House @YWCAToronto @TheRedwoodTO @ErnestinesWS, give if you can! #GivingTuesdayCA



## The Power of Volunteerism

At Ernestine's, volunteers are a strong component of maintaining all areas of the shelter. In 2016/2017, Ernestine's had a phenomenal year of volunteer engagement. We had 41 groups and 616 individuals, who together contributed 7,214 hours of people power.

Our volunteers assisted with committees, including the Board of Directors and the Ernestine Affair Committee, as well as cooked meals and organized shelter spaces, such as the Food Bank and child and youth rooms. They also help to maintain our outdoors spaces in the spring and fall, wrap gifts during the holidays, and much, much more.

Volunteers also shared their talents and expertise through workshops, educational seminars, art and spoken word performances, etc. Events like the annual Back to School BBQ, Winterfest Holiday Party and the Ernestine Affair gala would not be possible to run without the help of volunteers every year.

**THANK YOU!**



Volunteers from Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

## PSA Production – The Magic of Volunteers

In April of 2016, Ernestine’s was approached by a long-time supporter, Susan Forrest. She wanted to support Ernestine’s Women’s Shelter and use her connections and expertise in the TV Production industry to create a PSA for the shelter.

Over the next six months, Susan mobilized teams of volunteers, writers, directors, sound, marketing, and production crews. Thanks to Susan, we had the perfect team and a vision. We would create a PSA that told the story from a youth’s perspective of arriving and staying at a shelter. With inspiration from five of Ernestine’s former youth clients, the story came to life.

In January 2017, Ernestine’s was turned into a TV set, with 23 visitors consisting of volunteer cast and crew members. They came together for two days of filming, night and day, to create a story that really needed to be told.

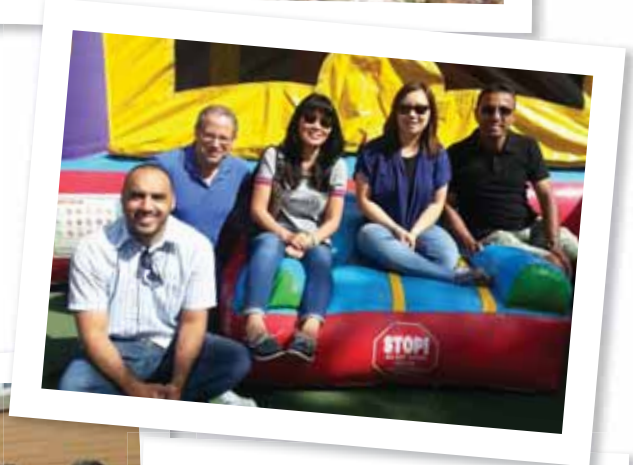
We are immensely grateful to Susan Forrest for always thinking of Ernestine’s and for introducing us to the PSA writer, Susan Elsley, and Director, Steve Di Marco. This project would never have been possible without all the hours of effort and passion from the dedicated and talented cast and crew.



The four photos above depict the volunteers involved with the PSA

## Volunteers Continued...

We are incredibly grateful to all the groups who visited us and provided support on-site!



## Thank you!

### In-House Volunteers (individuals)

- Tanya Bharda
- Kelly Esquat
- Nadia Frost
- Hayley Hackett
- Nishat Hasan
- Jennifer James
- Laurie Perri
- Natalie Pusateri
- Ashley Sabbe
- Janssen Shared Services
- Cleopatra Simmonds
- Carron Thomas
- Paulina Tushumina



## Our Supporters

### Ramadan Drive

During the holy month of Ramadan, Ernestine's community supporters brought in donations of food and toys for the children in-house as well as those who are part of our outreach program. A special thank you goes to the TARIC mosque, the Azeez Foundation, the Al Huda Institute, ICNA Sisters Canada, the Northern Lights Relief Foundation, and the Nile Academy Girls and Boys School.



ICNA Sisters Canada



The Nile School: Boys Division

### The Sherwin-Williams Paint Company

In March, the National Management Team from Sherwin-Williams came onsite to repaint the third floor of the shelter. The team did a fantastic paint job and we are grateful to them for brightening and refreshing our Shelter space.





## Holiday Season

Each year Ernestine's has many volunteer teams that come onsite at the shelter during the Holiday Season, bringing much needed holiday gifts, cheques, and gift cards. Thank you to all the supporters who came out to our shelter for the holidays!

Our families would not have...if you did not give.

Thank you to the individuals and groups who have supported us over the last five years!

Maria Alfano  
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TD Bank Group  
The Sun Products Canada Corp  
Toronto Congress Centre  
Toronto Star Boxes  
Toronto Tea for Teens  
Transfiguration Catholic Women's League  
Value Village  
Deborah Wright

## Mondelez

In the summer, the Women's Business Council of Mondelez Canada hosted an evening BBQ for the women and children at the shelter, bringing their passion, enthusiasm and face-painting talents. The team also brought treats such as bubbles, frisbees and delicious chocolate filled baskets for our clients. We had the honour of welcoming them back once again on Mother's Day when they treated all the women and children at the Shelter with a feast and generously provided each of the families with gift baskets, roses, and chocolates.



Gift from Mondelez



Volunteer Crew from Mondelez

## RBC

In May, Ernestine's Executive Director, Sharlene Tygesen, and Volunteer Coordinator, Khadija Ali, participated in a fireside chat hosted by RBC's BOSS Royal Performance Committee. RBC teams were challenged to create structures out of non-perishable food items. All of the food items were later donated to the shelter by VP Josie Merenda and her team, along with the food, gift cards, TTC tokens and a monetary donation.

Thank you RBC for all your support throughout the year and for this great opportunity to raise awareness about the issue of violence against women and children.

The RBC team continued to support Ernestine's in 2016/2017 by sending volunteers on-site to plant raspberries, strawberries and vegetables in our backyard garden. The RBC team also planted roses in the memory garden and flowers in the front yard, and helped stock the food bank.



Khadija Kathy Ali and Sharlene Tygesen at Fireside Chat



Sharlene Tygesen at Fireside Chat

## Ernestine's Staff

Thank you to our dedicated staff!

Rafiat Adutwumvaa  
Farhia Ahmed  
Monis Ahmed  
Rafiat Ahmed  
Linda Akpan  
Khadija Kathy Ali  
Monica Amenya  
Nadesam Anusooya  
Stephanie Bellini  
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Paulette Hoffstead  
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Sharlene Tygesen  
Kamara Ukachukwu  
Vivian Unnah  
Donnica Williams



Khadija Kathy Ali, Laverne Blake, Vanita Budhai



Zoya Islam, Amara Ifeanyi-Okoro, Deborah James-Sargeant, Cleopatra Simmonds



Kamara Ukachukwu at her Baby Shower

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Triumphant Church of Jesus Christ  
Cynthia Turner  
United Way Burlington & Greater Hamilton  
University of Toronto - Annesley Hall  
Fatima Valentim  
Robyn Vander Vennen  
Nisha Vashisht  
Natalie Vinet  
Diane Visentin  
Deepa Viswanath  
Lisa M. Voutt  
Kathryn Vrancart  
Anne Vranesic  
Siloni Waraich  
Paula Wells  
Wetherlys Interiors  
Dawn White  
Tanya White  
Chris Whitehead  
Giselle Whyte  
April Williams  
Donnica Williams  
Linda H. Wilson  
Madison Wilson  
Jeff Wolpert  
Zoe Wolpert  
Jason Wong  
Mavis Wong  
William Wong  
Yi Quang Wong  
Brian Woodman  
Stephanie Woodside  
Deborah Wright  
Patricia E. Wright  
Julia Wytsma  
Tanya Yanaky  
Laiyal Yassawi  
Trevor Yaworski  
Daryl Yeo  
Libra Yeung  
Sara S. Young  
Sherry Yuan Hunter  
Zizzo Strategy

## Gifts In-Kind

23 Division Toronto Police Services  
Abundant Life Assembly / Breath  
of Life (BOL) Food Bank  
Esther Adu  
Vanessa Agius  
Atiqa Ahmed  
Al Huda Institute Canada  
Vanessa Almeida  
Diane Amato-Gauci  
American Eagle Outfitters, Inc  
Carolyn Antoniuk  
Blair Armstrong  
Associium & Associium Gain  
Maggie Atkinson  
Susan Atwell  
Attwell Employment & Social Service  
David Avdichuk  
Laura Avola  
Cleopatra Azavedo  
Colette Baker  
Bank of Montreal  
Margaret Barrie  
Mary Bart  
Shirley A. Bates  
Gemma Battista  
Scheril Beckford  
Bell-Business Intelligence  
Jennifer Bennett  
Marika Berni  
Bishop Allen Academy  
Bloordale United Church  
BMO Bank of Montreal  
Danielle Borromeo  
Bosley Real Estate Ltd.  
Choise Braham  
Branksome Hall Parents Association  
Denise Brown  
Alicia Bruner  
Nirvara Buligan  
Michael Burns  
Kulbinder Saran Caldwell  
Sarah Campbell  
Canadian Tire Store #150  
Canadian Women's Foundation  
Capitol Banquet Centre  
Jennifer Cardella  
Jennifer & Jason Carlucci  
Mike Caroleo  
Certus Automotive Inc.  
CEVA Logistics  
Jennifer Chapman  
Snowball Church  
CIBC Mellon Global Securities Services  
Martha Clarke  
Catrina Clarkon  
Pia Collaco  
Lucia Colussi  
Kathy Corbett  
Marissa Corrigan  
Nicole Crawford  
CSA Group  
Darrel Hotz Barrister & Solicitor  
Rosalba De Marco  
Melina De Maria

Nancy Dennison  
Roxanne DeNobrega  
Desjardins  
Discovery Community Christian Centre  
Anne M. DiTomaso  
DLK On Avenue Inc.  
Nikki Dobbins  
Betty Donohue  
Mitzi Donohue  
Stephanie Donovan  
Mala Dorai  
Dress Responsibly  
Kirsty Duncan  
enVy Pillow Co.  
EWGA Canada (Executive  
Women's Golf Association)  
Fellowship Presbyterian Church  
Nadia Frost  
Gardiner Roberts LLP  
Cindy Genug  
Gilead Productions Inc.  
Jana Girdauskas  
Rachna Goel  
Tara Gosling  
Greater Highway Redemption Ministries  
Sue Grimes  
Viswanathan Hariharon  
Rick Harper  
Ryan Harper  
Paula Headley  
Janet Heidker  
Lauren Henderson  
Diane Henderson  
Home Depot Store 7114  
Dean Hooker  
Alexandra Hopkins  
Jason Houle  
Lorraine Housego  
Teresa Howe  
Tessa Howes  
Humber College Child Development Centre  
Ann Hunt  
Lydia Hunziker  
Eileen Hutcheon  
Laura Iannacci  
ICNA Sisters Canada  
Shaista Imran  
James Ireland  
Islington Evangel Centre  
Larysa Isoki  
Toni Ivison  
Brenda Iwanicki  
Judith A. Jackson  
Maxine Jelilyan  
Lorie Jenkin  
Johnson and Johnson  
Margaret Johnston  
Ruth Johnston  
Joy Jolie  
Anne-Marie Jones  
Vera Kalbol  
Gurinder Kaur  
Debi Kelley  
Heather Kent-Sorokolit

Samina Khan  
Poonia Killpal  
Carol Kim  
Lynn King  
Rob Kosmala  
Carolyn Koziskie  
Jane Krisko  
Elizabeth Kuntz  
Karolina Kuras  
Cathy Laakso  
Linby Ladies  
Rosina Lafrate  
Lesleigh Landry  
Dianne Lang  
Lucy LaPenna  
Corinne Lavric  
Bill Law  
Rachel LeBeau  
Barb LeFleche  
Christine Leung  
Catharine Lewis  
John Littlefair  
Christopher Love  
Andrea Love  
Stephanie Lumsden  
Beth Lyons  
Catherine MacGregor  
Madonna Catholic Secondary School  
Lissa Manganaro  
Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (MLSE)  
Nick Marino  
Martin Air Heating & Air Conditioning Services Ltd  
Martin Grove United Church Outreach Committee  
Judith Mason  
Massey Centre  
Monika Mavec  
Catherine May  
Mosa McNeilly  
Uliana Melnychenko  
Jessica Meneses  
Josie Merenda  
Metrolinx-Go Transit  
Domenica Michela  
David Mielke  
Milgram & Company Ltd  
Olga Missdos  
Mondelez Canada Inc.  
Denise Munro  
Kiran Nagi  
Maria Natale  
Christine Nawas  
Newediuk Funeral Homes  
Newton's Grove School  
Liz & Jeff Niehaus  
Nile Academy Girls School - Blue Haven Campus  
Victoria Ninols  
North York Women's Shelter  
Northern Lights Relief Foundation  
Kaitlyn Nowakowski  
Sam Nyhuus  
Kathleen O'Gorman  
Ondo Foundation Canada International  
Linda Ondrack  
Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

Jeffrey Orchard  
 Irene Ott  
 Our Saviour Charismatic Ministry  
 Helen Papachronis  
 Vanessa Parasram  
 Perin Pardiwala  
 Lee-Anne Partchenko  
 Andrea Pearson  
 Karyn Pendenque  
 Gia Pereira  
 Perennial Design  
 Joanne Pickard  
 Planet E Beverages Inc.  
 Stephanie Porter  
 Petal Powell  
 Liz Probert  
 Production Canada  
 Project Linus  
 Proudly Canadian Plumbing  
 Natalie Pusateri  
 Nadia Radovini  
 Kathy Rapoo  
 Jessica A. Rayne  
 RBC Shared Services  
 Redeemed Christian Church of  
 God - Dominion Chapel  
 Noreen Reid  
 Lizia Renna  
 Harvey Richardo  
 Maureen Richards  
 Rotary Club of Etobicoke  
 Royal Bank of Canada  
 Royal LePage Real Estate Services  
 Salvation Army Temple Etobicoke  
 Vanessa Samuel  
 Nicole' Saqui  
 Annamarie Saunders  
 Bhavana Sawhney  
 Prabha Saxena  
 Carol Schultz  
 Sharon Sedev  
 Seneca College-Human Resources  
 Rebecca Shaw  
 Theresa Sherwood  
 Sherwood Heights Elementary School  
 Simply Chic  
 Michelle Sinardo  
 Natasha Singh  
 Siron Technologies  
 Skinprovement  
 Michelle Solimine  
 Marva Solomon  
 Carol Spratts  
 Florence Spurvey  
 St. Andrew's Catholic School  
 St. Benedict's Catholic Mother's Group  
 St. Georges Golf & Country Club - Curling Group  
 St. Mary and St. Martha Anglican Church  
 St. Mike's Mamas  
 Nadia T. Stephens  
 Gene Strzelecki  
 Tangerine  
 TARIC Islamic Centre  
 TD Assurance

Elizabeth and Susan Tettman  
 The Krinkle Project  
 The Period Project  
 The Sherwin-Williams Paint Company  
 The Shoebox Project for Shelters  
 The Sun Products Canada Corporation  
 Third Act Productions  
 Debborah Thomson  
 TJX Canada Foundation  
 Toronto Airport Marriott Hotel  
 Toronto Blue Jays  
 Toronto Congress Centre  
 Transfiguration Catholic Women's League  
 Value Village  
 Kim Van Pelt  
 Vandegrift Canada  
 Venus Beauty Supplies LTD  
 Keshani Vijjh  
 Fred & Olga Ward  
 Sandra Watson  
 West Humber Collegiate Institute  
 Barb Wiseberg  
 Virginia Wojcik  
 Penelope Wood  
 Joanne Woolford  
 World Changers Worship Centre  
 Veronica Wu  
 Xerox Canada Limited  
 Marcia Young  
 Youth Without Shelter  
 Frances Zaza  
 Elizabeth Zucchiatti

For over 22 years, we have received generous annual gifts from an incredible supporter and advocate. To recognize her generosity and show our gratitude, this year we planted roses in our garden in honour of this incredible woman. They are pictured here in full bloom.



## 2017 Financial Highlights

### Ernestine's Women's Shelter Condensed Statement of Activities For the Year Ended March 31, 2017

	31-Mar-17	31-Mar-16
<b>Revenue</b>		
Government Grants	1,330,386	1,298,186
United Way of Toronto & York Region	337,993	345,773
Fundraising & Donations	570,818	392,954
Amortization of Deferred Contributions	137,134	146,817
Investment and Other income	53,962	26,674
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>2,430,293</b>	<b>2,210,404</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Direct Program Delivery <sup>1</sup>	1,545,689	1,437,955
Resident's Expense	189,717	196,339
Capacity Building & Training	41,568	43,265
Community Engagement & Fundraising	93,575	88,981
Amortization of Capital Assets	154,813	161,532
Administration	293,425	186,756
Severance <sup>2</sup>		108,307
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,318,787</b>	<b>2,223,135</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses for the year<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>111,506</b>	<b>(12,731)</b>

<sup>1</sup> Salary and benefits expenses have been moved from "Community Engagement & Fundraising" to "Direct Program Delivery" to better align the costs to the work they performed. As a result, the comparative 2016 have been restated.

<sup>2</sup> Severance of \$108K in March 2016 relates to the execution of our strategic plan to match our organizational structure with our service delivery model.

<sup>3</sup> The excess of revenue over expenses for the year ended March 31, 2017 is the result of unanticipated donation and fundraising efforts and contribute towards the agency's Reserve Fund.

**Ernestine's Women's Shelter**  
**Condensed Statement of Activities**  
**For the Year Ended March 31, 2017**

	31-Mar-17	31-Mar-16
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and short-Investments	\$59,570	\$196,044
Receivables and Pre-Paid Expense	165,066	208,913
Long-term Investments	813,874	632,729
Capital Assets	3,723,944	3,801,979
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$4,762,454</b>	<b>\$4,839,665</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued charges	\$155,358	\$173,097
Current portion of operating deferred contributions	79,832	75,329
Deferred tickets and sponsorship revenue	0	61,648
Long-term debt	785,554	822,220
Deferred contributions related to capital assets	1,958,525	2,035,692
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>2,979,269</b>	<b>3,167,986</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>1,783,185</b>	<b>1,671,679</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$4,762,454</b>	<b>\$4,839,665</b>

The 2017 Condensed Statement of Activities and Statement of Financial Position are derived from the Audited Statements of Ernestine's Women's Shelter as audited by BDO.



## Standing Up for Women. Protecting Children.

Ernestine's Women's Shelter is working towards a world free from violence and abuse. We provide support and shelter, crisis intervention and a range of holistic support services for women and children escaping violence.

We promote awareness, education, and advocacy for early intervention and prevention of violence and abuse.

For more information on becoming a partner of Ernestine's Women's Shelter, contact Kathleen O'Gorman at 416 746 3701 x 2010 or [kathleen@ernestines.ca](mailto:kathleen@ernestines.ca).

### Stay connected with us:

P.O. Box 141 Station B Etobicoke, ON M9W 5K9

Tel: 416 743 1733 24/7 Crisis line: 416 746 3701 x 0

[engagement@ernestines.ca](mailto:engagement@ernestines.ca)

[www.ernestines.ca](http://www.ernestines.ca)

 ErnestinesWS

 @ErnestinesWS #StandUp4Ernestines

Registered Charity Number: 10167 8969 RR0001

