

THE DOOR YOUTH CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

2024

OPEN TO ALL
YOUTH AGES 12-18
MON-FRI: 4PM-8PM
FREE MEMBERSHIP

30 YEARS
30 YEARS

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

RICK DESCLOUDS

Chair

The Door Year 2024 was a time of transition – some disappointment mixed with opportunity and many successes. Our dedicated, experienced staff oversaw a large nightly attendance boost with almost 25 youth taking part in a variety of stimulating programmes.

The disappointment came as four of our five outstanding workers moved on to other occupations (before year's end) where their education and The Door training enabled them to find exciting new opportunities with longer hours and higher wages. Fortunately for us, with the quality of volunteers in our organization and under Malik's steady hand, we were able to replace our staff (mainly from within) and, not only carry on our excellent programmes, but enhance them with the creativity and enthusiasm of our new leaders.

A giant thank you to Nadira, Elijah, Evan, and Najwa for their giant contributions to The Door's success over many years. Kudos to our new staff Vanessa, Vincent, Eva, and Rabah for fitting in so quickly and maintaining the level of excellence we expect from our staff. Special thanks to Malik, our Executive Director, and Susan, our Program Co-ordinator, who oversee all of our projects and ensure the outstanding level of programming delivery at The Door.

A quick perusal of our Monthly Schedules reveals the incredible variety and depth of our activities at The Door. It would take a ten thousand word essay to fully describe the vast array of choices at The Door. To just highlight a few significant efforts this year, there were: the Black Youth Leadership Program, Club Nourish, Outdoor Team Sports Initiative, Multiple Field Trips, Young Chefs Program and Girls' Day.

The engagement of the youth with the leaders in all of our programming has been very encouraging. I would like to commend a very hard-working Board of Directors who have been highly focused on organization and implementation regarding the Five-Year Strategic Plan. I would also like to express gratitude to Julie Fallon, our Treasurer, and Sergei Tabatchenko, our legal expert, for their significant contributions to our organization this year.

The Door would not exist without the financial, emotional, and logistical support we receive from our community who validate our goals and motivate us to excellence. Many thanks also to the countless volunteers who enhance our work and especially the Fundraising Committee led by Taysham Shaw and Kristin Horton who work many hours in support of The Door.

A final word has been reserved for a very special group who have been an inspirational lifeline for us – McPhail Baptist Church. This incredible congregation has provided monthly nutritious meals to our youth for over 20 years and special dinners at other times of the year. While they are “retiring” this year, they promise to continue serving us a Christmas feast along with extra treats for the youth. Their “humble” example of service to this community is a wonderful example to our youth and a powerful message of, “It takes a village to raise a child!”

We are forever thankful for these wonderful people and to all of you who encourage and support all of us as we continue our work in preparing youth for their future responsible roles in our community.



Malik Ayass, Executive Director, and Catherine McKenney, Member of Provincial Parliament for Ottawa Centre, at the 30th anniversary celebration



WHO WE ARE

VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is one of a **safe and welcoming place** where young people acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours that help them realize their full potential and participate actively in their communities. Our mission is to provide **integrated social and developmental activities** within an accessible and supportive environment. We are open to all youth and our programs are **free of charge**. The Door is the only youth centre in the Centretown West area, fulfilling a need that would otherwise go unmet in the community.

HISTORY

The Centre was modelled after The Door New York, a youth centre located in the heart of New York City. Art Stinson, the former head of the School of Social Work at Carleton University, saw a need for a place for young people to make new friends and access services in Ottawa. This vision led to the opening of the Centre in May 1994. In recognition of his vision, the Centre annually awards the Art Stinson Achievement Award to an outstanding young person who demonstrates good leadership and has made a difference at the Centre.

Staff

Malik Ayass - Executive Director
Susan Agobia - Program Coordinator
Vanessa De Luca - Youth Supervisor
Vincent Bigras - Youth Worker
Eva Petersen - Youth Worker
Rabah Al Helfi - Kitchen Supervisor

Board of Directors

Rick Desclouds - Chair
Sarah Carneiro - Vice-Chair
Julie Fallon - Treasurer
James Merhej - Secretary
Ashley McMullan - Director
Joe Carrigan - Director

Justin Claros - Director
Kristin Horton - Director
Luc Lalande - Director
Serguei Tabatchenko - Director
Taysham Shaw - Director

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

GIRLS' NIGHTS

Thanks to the support of the **RBC Foundation**, Girls' Nights - workshops and activities specifically tailored to the needs of female-identifying youth - were extended from a three-hour drop-in to a full five-hour structured program once a week. Through this program, girls are empowered to build confidence and life skills in a safe and supportive environment.

This year, youth participants assumed lead roles in planning everything from activities to meals and laid the groundwork for a formal Girls' Advisory Committee to help guide The Door's future programming. The evolution of this program from staff-led to youth-driven demonstrates participants' growing confidence and leadership abilities.

BLACK YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Funded by the **Michaëlle Jean Foundation**, this project focused on empowering Black youth through workshops, mentorship, and cultural programming to help young people embrace their heritage, build leadership skills, and access opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Funding supported the development of a dedicated space for discussions, the delivery of skill-building sessions, and collaborations with community leaders. As a result, participating youth reported enhanced self-esteem, a greater sense of identity, and progress toward their career and educational goals.

In 2024, **276** youth members visited us **5,233** times and we welcomed **182** new members.



BY THE NUMBERS



Snacks and meals

9,730



Homework help

388 hours



Music lessons

125 hours



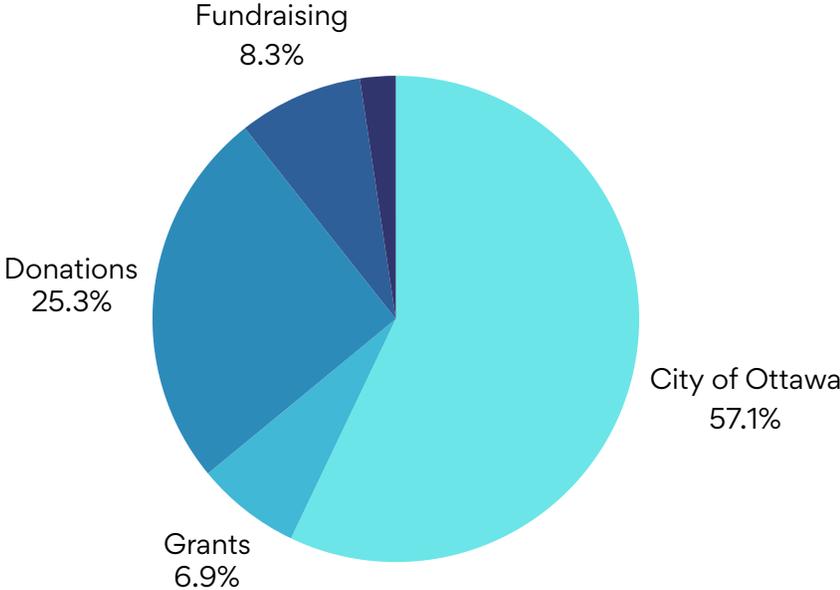
Life skills workshops

162

FINANCIALS

Revenue **\$340,872**

The Centre a strong year with a **10% increase in total revenue over 2023**, fuelled by the ongoing support of the City of Ottawa and growth in donations.

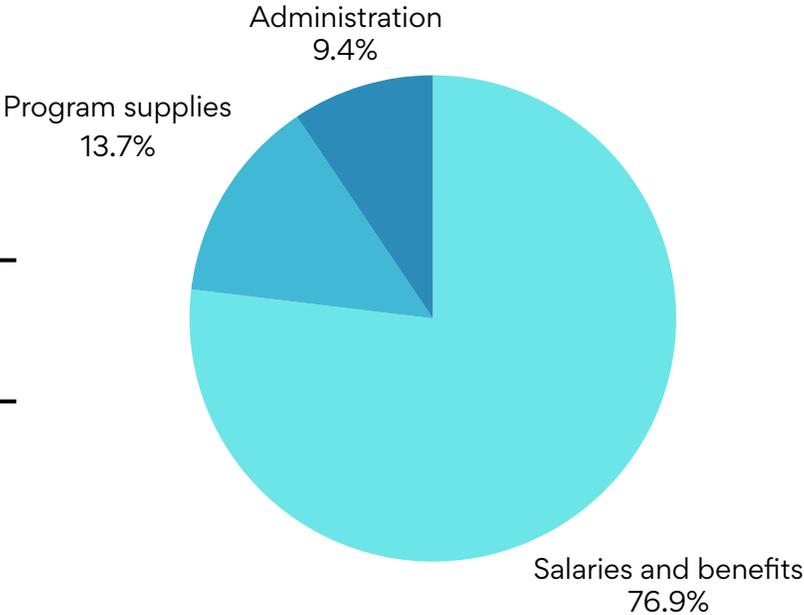


City of Ottawa	\$194,610
Grants	\$23,669
Donations	\$86,286
Fundraising	\$28,234
Other	\$8,073

The Centre’s expenses showed **no substantive change** in 2024 as increases in program expenses were off-set by decreases in administrative costs.

Expenses **\$297,879**

Salaries and benefits	\$229,098
Program expenses	\$40,680
Administration	\$28,101



CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

Every year, the Centre recognizes the individuals and organizations in our community that embody our vision and mission.



Pillar of the Community Award

The **Pillar of the Community Award** is given to an individual or organization who has made a significant positive impact in our community. This year's recipient is the **Ottawa Community Foundation**.

Since 2006, the Ottawa Community Foundation has played a vital role in The Door's growth—from helping us establish a proper kitchen to supporting community art, educational workshops, and recreational outings. Their generosity has opened doors to opportunities our youth might not otherwise have, and their enduring belief in our mission continues to inspire connection, creativity, and belonging in our community.

OTTAWA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Outstanding Volunteer Award - Armaan Bhullar

This award celebrates the exceptional contributions of an adult volunteer.

Art Stinson Achievement Award - Soliana Kifle

In the memory of one of the founders of the Centre, this award is granted annually to a current youth member who is a role model for others.

Our Supporters

The Centre relies on the support of our generous volunteers, donors and community partners to help us support local youth reach their full potential.

- Actua's STEM Programs
- Algonquin College
- Benevity
- BIA Chinatown
- Carleton University
- Charities Aid Foundation Canada
- Christina Mary Hendrie Foundation
- Chrome Divas
- City of Ottawa
- Community Housing Foundation
- David Burns & Associates
- Domino's Pizza
- ESNTL Barbers
- GiftFunds Canada
- Hip Hop Food Drive House of Targ
- Hydro Ottawa
- iA Clarington
- Just Foods
- Kelly Funeral Home - Somerset Chapel
- LaBarge Weinstein LLP
- Laheeb Shawarma & Grill
- Let's Talk Science
- Linda Dickson
- Manphong Supermarket
- Massine's Your Independent Grocer
- McPhail Memorial Baptist Church
- Metamorph Design
- Mr. Lumsden
- OSEG Foundation
- Ottawa Community Foundation
- Ottawa Food Bank
- Ottawa Insulations
- Panorama Wealth Management
- ParticipACTION
- Peace by Chocolate
- RBC Foundation
- Rickshaw Publishing
- Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre
- Somerset West Community Health Centre
- Robert Smart Centre
- Season's Pizza
- Shiraz Market
- Taggart Group
- The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation
- The Rotary Club
- Titans Fields of Dreams
- University of Ottawa
- Willow Youth Network
- Yogatown