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# **2019 Annual Report**

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**Ending Inequity,  
Transforming Lives**

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## Our Vision:

Ending the cycle of inequity

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## Our Mission:

Supporting youth in York South-Weston as they prepare for the future with the resources and mentorship they need to thrive

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## Our Values:

*Equity* - we promote equal access to life's opportunities

*Respect* - we treat each other with kindness, patience, and empathy

*Inclusion* - we welcome everyone; diversity is our strength

*Collaboration* - we work together, share, and learn from each other

*Integrity* - we demonstrate the courage to do what is right, not what is easy

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# A Message from our Board Chair and Executive Director



As we concluded our 2016-19 Strategic Plan, we saw the real impacts and value of our new case management approach and how well it works in conjunction with traditional programming for vulnerable youth to provide wraparound support and care. Youth programs are vital, but alone they are not enough to address the systemic barriers and widening social and economic disparities that Black, racialized and newcomer youth and their families across the Greater Toronto Area experience every day.

The youth we serve in York South-Weston require a holistic person-centered approach that meets them where they are and supports them to get where they want to be. This foundation of support looks like securing housing, accessing counselling, navigating systems and

accessing financial support to help meet their goals. It also means following up on external referrals to make sure they haven't hit any roadblocks and gotten discouraged, or to advocate and file appeals when a young person may not know these avenues are available to them. It means accessing the support they need both at FYI and within the broader community.

The transition to a case management approach has allowed an increase in the quality and breadth of programming we make available to youth in York South-Weston through intentional partnerships with organizations and subject matter experts best-suited to serve the Black, racialized and newcomer youth that make up our client base.

We look forward to continuing to serve the York South-Weston community by advocating for reform and combating the barriers that prevent all youth from achieving their full potential.

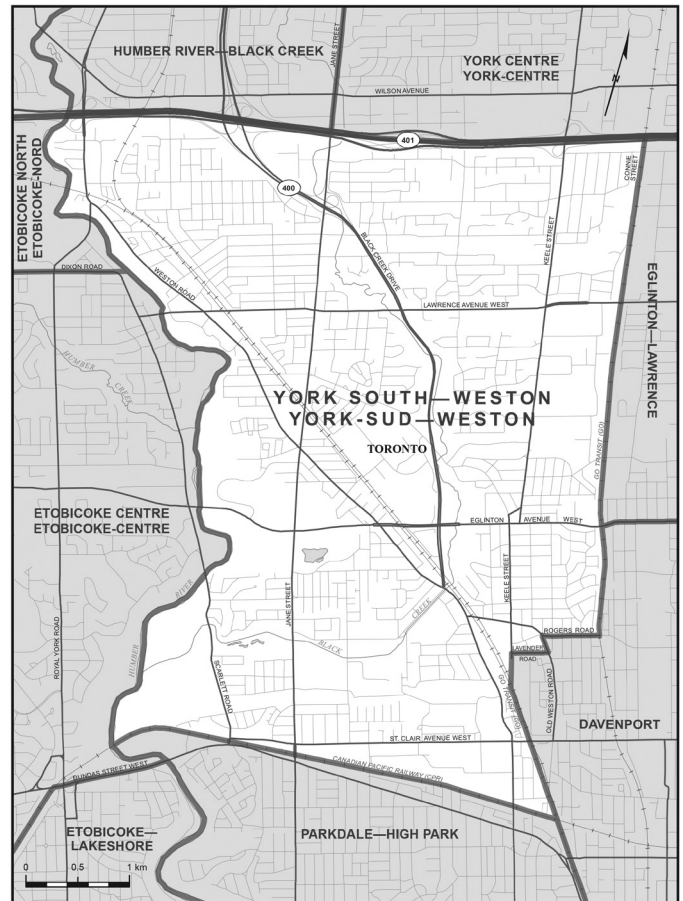
Meghan  
Swinkels  
**Board Chair**

Shaneeza  
Nazseer Ally  
**Executive Director**

# About York South-Weston

York South-Weston is a vibrant community, rich in history and diversity. However, like many neighbourhoods along the fringes of Toronto, it's not without its challenges. York South-Weston is comprised of six neighborhoods that the City of Toronto has identified as communities where funding and social services are needed to address significant social and economic issues.

The population of York South-Weston is young. Many teenagers and young adults live, learn and play here. Their attempts to establish themselves as they transition to adulthood are often frustrated by the barriers that persist in the area. Meagre local employment, and being disconnected from major transit hubs, jobs and post-secondary campuses pose obstacles for York South-Weston youth to fully participate in Toronto's prosperity.



**29%**

OF RESIDENTS OVER AGE 15  
HAVE NO CERTIFICATE,  
DIPLOMA, OR DEGREE

**\$67 954**

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD  
INCOME, \$30 000 LESS THAN  
THE REST OF TORONTO

**32%**

SINGLE-PARENT  
HOUSEHOLDS VS. THE  
CITY AVERAGE OF 21%

**23.6%**

OF FAMILIES ARE CLASSIFIED  
AS LOW INCOME

**34%**

OF RESIDENTS UNDER AGE 17  
ARE CONSIDERED LOW INCOME

**55%**

IDENTIFY AS  
VISIBLE MINORITIES

Source: StatsCan, 2016 Census

# Who We Serve

The youth of York South-Weston are incredibly diverse and the youth who attend FYI reflect that diversity. We serve youth aged 12-29 however given our proximity to local high schools, the majority of our clients are high school-aged or transitioning to postsecondary education and the workforce. All youth are welcome in our space, and we have been a trusted gathering place for newcomers and immigrants, Black and racialized youth, youth from low income families, and justice involved youth since our inception.



**649**

UNIQUE YOUTH RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM FYI

**320**

NEW YOUTH BEGAN RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM FYI

**82%**

OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFY AS BLACK OR RACIALIZED

**67%**

OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS WERE HIGH SCHOOL-AGED

**NEARLY 40%**

OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS WERE NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (IN CANADA UP TO 5 YEARS)

NEWCOMER CLIENTS MOST OFTEN ORIGINATED FROM **AFRICA, THE CARIBBEAN, SOUTH AMERICA, AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

## Nicholas

*"When I came to Canada, I thought it would be very difficult for me to learn English and find a career. I am in grade 12, I have already completed all my ESL classes and I am building more skills and knowledge. Through FYI programs I participated in the English Conversation Circle, where I got to practice my English and meet some of my best friends today. I was also one of the YEP coordinators, and most recently I was able to find part-time employment. Today, I am sure that I'd like to apply for Police Foundations Diploma after I graduate."*

*FYI participant*



# What We Do

FYI is a multi-service youth serving organization located in York-South Weston. We believe that every youth is unique and so are their needs. We provide holistic support and facilitate programming that supports youth to achieve their full potential.

FYI believes in the power of equipping youth with the mentorship and resources to effect change in their own lives and their communities. Through advocacy, education, and intensive support, we strive to help youth graduate high school, enroll in postsecondary education, gain meaningful employment, and prepare for the future. We seek to amplify the voices of youth in their community to address issues that matter to them including barriers to education and employment, social exclusion of marginalized youth, and systemic racism.

Our youth centre is open Monday to Friday for youth to drop-in, schedule appointments with

case workers, and access resources including free tutoring and homework support, computers and printers, daily after-school programs based on youth interests and needs, a recording studio, and a safe space to relax and connect with friends. We also provide hot meals daily after school.

## 2019-20 Impact:

**1045**

**1:1 CASE  
MANAGEMENT  
SESSIONS**

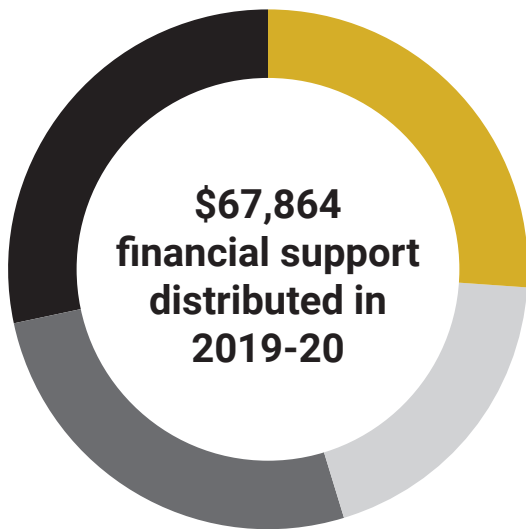
**806**

**YOUTH VISITS IN  
OUR DAILY DROP-IN  
PROGRAMS**

**20+**

**YOUTH ON AVERAGE  
IN OUR YOUTH  
CENTRE PER DAY**





- **Nearly 18K** in TTC tickets and tokens
- **Nearly \$13K** in program honoraria payments
- **\$18K** in scholarships awarded towards post-secondary education
- **Over \$19K** payments in daily meals provided

## A safe, supportive place for youth to grow

FYI is a welcoming environment where youth can come to be surrounded by caring adults and peers. Our case leads and staff reflect the community they serve as well as have specific education and qualifications to support youth in many aspects of their life. We also engage community members and mentors to support youth with mentorship and community engagement.

**WE ENGAGED**

**50**

**ADULT MENTORS  
FROM THE  
COMMUNITY IN  
EVENTS, PROGRAMS,  
AND AS TUTORS**





# Powered by Partnerships

FYI connected youth with local organizations and external partners to deliver over 25 unique programs this year. Our partners include local high schools, postsecondary institutions, employment partners, health and mental health services, and many other diverse organizations in York South-Weston and surrounding areas.



## PROJECT CANOE SUMMER PROGRAM

The Project Canoe summer program gave young people the opportunity to spend 4 days camping and exploring Algonquin Provincial Park. Partnered with seasoned outdoor experts, youth were able to canoe, portage, build campfires and sleep in tents under the stars all while getting to know each other and themselves a little bit better.

*"Camping in Algonquin park was an amazing experience, it was very comfortable, all the equipment was well prepared. It is a beautiful experience that allows you to see Canada's beauty at its highest expression. My favourite part was the views and the food."  
- Samuel M.*







## TRADEPRO ACADEMY - FINANCIAL LITERACY

The TradePro Academy brought in workshops and activities centered around youth and financial literacy. In looking at videos, case studies and real life examples this engaging program explored credit, TFSA's, debt, students loans and how to prepare yourself to be financially responsible. This program was very well-received by our youth as it gathered over 20 youth in each session!

## UNISON HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES - MIND YOUR HEALTH

The Mind Your Health program, in partnership with Unison Health & Community Services, took place over the March break and touched on topics such as nutrition, exercise, mindfulness, depression, anxiety, safer sex and consent. This program was organized and facilitated by peer leaders who took part in health training and designed the activities and workshops.



*"Mind your health is a great program. It helps create important discussions about mental health and how to maintain a good state of mind in youths. I absolutely love spending my time as a participant and a peer educator of MYH because I get to learn new things and spread that new knowledge to many more people. Katie, the facilitator, did a wonderful job of creating a safe space for youths to learn and share their stories. Beside mental health, MYH also touches on the importance of exercise, the use of alcohol, social media, sex education, etc., which are very significant topics for a youth to know. I highly recommend MYH to youths out there who are trying to find a place to learn and make new friends, MYH welcomes all of you." - Derek L.*

## TECHSPARK CODING CAMP

The TechSpark Camp brought together youth who are interested in computers and technology to take part in activities which taught skills around how to code, create your own apps, and website design.

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# Building Leadership and Civic Engagement

In 2019 FYI piloted the FYI Leadership Program in partnership with Institute for Change Leaders (ICL). This program delivered 3 two-day workshops to youth participants in YSW and taught leadership skills such as public speaking, communication, and confidence, all of which are integral for youth to succeed. In recognition of the unique barriers that youth in YSW face, the program was adapted from ICL's adult leadership training into a program that specifically addressed the needs of youth in the community.

This pilot project informed the creation of a Black Youth Leadership Program and will serve an additional 200+ Black youth in 2020.

FYI also ran a number of youth-led and youth-facilitated programs.

- **Youth Empowering Parents (YEP)** - YEP is one of FYI's longest running programs. Youth leaders are paired with seniors in the community who speak English as a second language. The youth leaders then provide one to one tutoring to the seniors to learn English and computer skills.
- **Mind Your Health** - Mind Your Health is delivered in partnership with Unison Health and Community Services. The program empowers youth to learn about their health and then teach their peers.
- **Studio Program** - The Studio Program is run by youth for youth. Participants are able to learn skills to create beats and vocal tracks to write their own songs. Music is also used as a medium to support and expose youth to concepts and resources for mental health through peer support and workshops.

## 2019-20 Impact:

49

YOUTH EQUIPPED WITH CIVIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS

4

YOUTH BECAME PROGRAM FACILITATORS

109

YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN YOUTH-LED PROGRAMS AT FYI



A notable achievement from 2 participants in the FYI Leadership Program, Luqman and Hiqman, was their successful campaign to overturn the ban on du-rags at a local high school in YSW. The ban was implemented because of the mistaken belief that du-rags are a symbol of gang affiliation. Luqman and Hiqman used the skills they learned in the program to gather allies, start a petition, and advocate for the rule to be changed while educating others on the cultural significance and practical use of du-rags. This campaign was a huge win for the Black youth attending their high school.

[https://www.changeleaders.ca/luqman\\_and\\_hiqman](https://www.changeleaders.ca/luqman_and_hiqman)

## Nawal



*After having taken part in the leadership program, I promptly realized that leadership is more than the ability to organize and manage, leadership is about effectively communicating your point to the correct target audience to get the best results. I have taken the skills and tools I learnt and have implemented them into my daily life. I have learnt how to not only organize my thoughts, but also to find the right means of communication to help me in my work and school life. It has made me more efficient as well as has increased my chances to succeed in anything I do. This workshop helped me build my own style of leadership, incorporating my personality and passions and creating the most efficient individual.*

***FYI Leadership Program Participant***



# Supporting Academic Success and High School Graduation

FYI supports high school aged youth by offering tailored academic planning and free, daily on-site tutoring support to achieve academic goals, graduate high school, and provide a foundation for future success. FYI also engages youth in community leadership roles and volunteering to develop transferable skills for the future.

## 2019-20 Impact:

85

HOMWORK AND TUTORING SESSIONS

255

HOURS HOMEWORK AND TUTORING SUPPORT

16

YOUTH GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL

325

GROUP SESSIONS AND WORKSHOPS

1045

1:1 SESSIONS IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY WITH CASE LEADS

Additionally, we run a number of groups and workshops internally and in partnership with community partners aimed at engaging high school students in educational programming, education and career path development, and social support.

## Featured Groups and Workshops:

- **High School Lunch Programs** - FYI staff lead weekly group activities at neighbouring high schools to connect and share information and resources
- **Ryerson SciExchange** - in a partnership with Ryerson University, participants learned about STEM through hands-on experiments
- **Youth Empowering Parents (YEP)** - one of FYI's longest running programs, YEP, provided an opportunity for youth leaders to teach elders computer skills
- **Boys' Club** - by popular demand, a peer support group where social and community issues were discussed
- **Girls' Group** - by popular demand, a peer support group where social and community issues were discussed

## Antonio



*I started coming to FYI when I was 17 years old. I initially came in looking to complete all my volunteer hours with YEP, the gardening program with York Hispanic (Centre), and the cooking program at Unison. I applied to help coordinate the YEP program and I learned so much how to plan, and be more organized. FYI staff helped me understand the education system in Canada. I am proud to say today I have graduated with an honour roll and I am very excited to continue my goals during this new chapter of my life. I will continue my studies and pursue a Bachelors in Science and Justice. I look forward to giving back to the Latin community at FYI and stay connected. Thank you FYI staff!*

# Accessing Post-Secondary Education and Employment

FYI supports high school aged youth who are preparing to enter postsecondary education as well as youth who are already in post-secondary education to explore their options for study, advocate for and connect with bridging and transition programs to get back into school when there's been an interruption in their studies. We assist with course selection, OSAP and financial aid applications, scholarship applications, and other educational system navigation.

Additionally FYI supports youth with the skills to prepare for the workforce including career exploration, resume and cover letter creation,

and job applications. We also partner with employment agencies in the community to make referrals to paid training programs.

FYI also entered into a joint initiative with the Fire and Emergency Services Training Institute (FESTI) and the Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA) to provide a full scholarship and entrance into the firefighting training program for two youth. Admission into this highly competitive program provided these youth with an incredible opportunity to pursue a meaningful career as firefighters.

## 2019-20 Impact:

73

YOUTH APPLIED TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

53

YOUTH WERE ACCEPTED TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

50

YOUTH EMPLOYED WITH FYI

25

YOUTH SECURED EMPLOYMENT

50

YOUTH WERE SUPPORTED WHILE ATTENDING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

## Nicole



*"I had the absolute best time at FESTI! It was where I met so many great people and a lot of lifelong friendships were made there. I am currently working as a paid on call Firefighter now with the township of Guelph Eramosa*

*and in the meantime working 2 other jobs to try and save up for the rest of my Firefighting testing to be able to apply to Fulltime departments."*  
**FESTI Fire Fighting Scholarship Winner**

# Navigating the Justice System

FYI provides person-centred support to youth involved with the justice system. We create an individualized case plan that supports the youth in all aspects of their life including returning to school or work, reconnecting with family, re-integrating into the community, and fulfilling court mandated requirements. To support these goals, we provide family mediation, a variety of life skills programming, leadership and volunteer opportunities, in-court accompaniment, support with legal aid applications and appeals and connecting to legal counsel as needed.

## 2019-20 Impact:

96

YOUTH JUSTICE CLIENTS SERVED

11

YOUTH HAD CHARGES WITHDRAWN

11

YOUTH BECAME EMPLOYED

14

YOUTH RE-ENROLLED IN SCHOOL

78

COURT ACCOMPANIMENTS

FYI is part of a collaborative comprised of Delta Family Resource Centre, Somali Women and Children Support Network, Think2wice, and Urban Rez Solutions, to deliver the Ounce of Prevention (OZ) Program. The OZ Program is a \$5 million program funded by Public Safety Canada over 5 years serving more than 180 clients involved in the justice system. The program seeks to address the overrepresentation of Black youth in the justice system

## Shellie



*"This service has been very integral in validating me and my experiences as a Black person. Even more particularly as*

*a Black woman, there's not a lot of services like this in the city. I think it's very crucial that this is a starting point and that this can hopefully branch out and more agencies can be like this."*

*OZ participant*



# For Youth Initiative Scholarship Program

FYI wants to make attending postsecondary education possible for youth from York South-Weston. We understand that youth face many financial barriers to postsecondary education and increasingly so with the changes to OSAP and rising tuition rates. Financial support is needed more than ever so youth are not prevented from furthering their education and employment prospects. FYI Scholarships are unique as the funds are not required to be used for tuition or books. Rather, funds are provided to students to use in whatever way would be most supportive. This may include tuition and books, but also can be used for rent, food, transportation, or any other area of need.

## Merveille



*"Winning the FYI Scholarship means that people believe in me. It is a motivation to me because it proves that people believe I can achieve my goals.*

*It means a lot to me because*

*it will support me financially and mentally, while pursuing science studies. This scholarship substantiates how supporting the youth has a positive development in many aspects."*

**2019 FYI Scholarship Winner studying  
Chemical and Physical Science**

## 2019-20 Impact:

**\$18000**  
RAISED

**44**  
APPLICATIONS  
RECEIVED

**9**  
YOUTH  
AWARDED  
SCHOLARSHIPS

## Stephen



*"For Youth Initiative is in a riding where many young people face a lot of systemic, social and economic barriers. Also where young people are coming from a low income family. Our par-*

*ents are doing a lot to pay for rent and bills and ensure that we are being fed and taken proper care of, with the cost of going to post secondary school being expensive FYI's scholarship reduces the financial burden on us youth, and puts us one step closer to being able to go to University/ College. Not having the sufficient funds to pay your way through school should not be something that any youth worries about. FYI knows this and they help to make it easier, by offering us youth hope and a chance to be successful in this life through the FYI scholarship."*

**2019 FYI Scholarship Winner studying  
Politics and Governance**

# Our Team

## Board of Directors

**Andrew C. Alleyne**, Vice-Chair  
**Daniel Bonilla**, Youth Board Member  
**Tamer Ibrahim**, Secretary  
**Virginia Kanyogonya**, Board Member  
**Jennifer Kelenc**, Treasurer  
**Lucia Lissozi**, Board Member  
**Stephen Mensah**, Youth Board Member  
**Glenn Stuart**, Board Member  
**Meghan Swinkels**, Chair

## Youth Advisory Council

**Daniel Bonilla**, Co-Chair  
**Stephen Mensah**, Co-Chair  
**Sharifa Makhseem**, Social Media Liaison  
**Princess Owusu**, Secretary  
**Edgar Yanez**, Community Liaison

## Our Staff

**Yasmin Ali**  
Program and Volunteer Coordinator/  
Post-Secondary Case Lead

**Maria Commisso Parise**  
Post-Secondary Case Lead

**Arnaib Khannam**  
Program and Volunteer Coordinator

**Ischel Flores Reyes**  
Youth Case Lead

**Hamid Khan**  
Manager, Youth Programs

**Elsa Lee**  
Finance Lead

**Melanie Matthews**  
Research & Evaluation Lead

**Whitney Mitchell Bush**  
Youth Case Lead

**Sonita Mustapha**  
Program Administrative Assistant

**Richmond Nantwi**  
Youth Outreach Worker

**Shaneeza Nazseer Ally**  
Executive Director

**Crystal Paul**  
Operations and Communications Coordinator

**Cristian Nieto Pertuz**  
Employment Case Lead

**Breanna Phillip**  
Black Youth Case Lead

**Gabriela Pleitez**  
TYES Program Coordinator

**Amanda Ram**  
Office Manager

**Chantal Reeves**  
Community Engagement Coordinator

**Jessica Robinson**  
Manager, Youth Programs

**Benedicto San Juan**  
Senior Manager, Youth Programs

**Mohammed Shaikh**  
Youth Justice Case Lead



# Thank you to our supporters

FYI is grateful for the generous support of our funders, sponsors, donors and volunteers. The work we do is possible because of you!

## OUR FUNDERS



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada



An agency of the Government of Ontario  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



## OUR DONORS

### Donors \$5000+

Doug Brooks  
Valued donors who wish to remain anonymous

## PLACEMENT STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

Amarachi Nwaogu  
Alex Martinez  
Annisa Eshak  
Brittaney Gearin  
Brittney Richichi  
Brian Ng  
Cheyenne Chow  
Christina Blondin  
Daniella Moriss  
Dylan Morrison  
Maria Cosmisso Parise  
Minseo Song  
Manon Yasko

Mario Christiner  
Nicole Carneiro  
Nawal Shah  
Sherry Ann Fernandes  
Shadi Shirazi  
Yaser Ibrahim  
Nina Boban  
Tanvi Ojha  
Brian Enright  
Amin Forouzan  
Ivor Picou





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## For Youth Initiative in Toronto

### Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31

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	2020	2019
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 709,757	\$ 191,268
Investments (Note 2)	-	50,584
Accounts receivable	75,311	120,668
Sales taxes recoverable	23,299	11,675
Prepaid expenses	4,957	5,766
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>\$ 813,324</b>	<b>\$ 379,961</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 156,967	\$ 42,022
Trustee funds payable (Note 5)	3,142	8,120
Deferred contributions (Note 3)	346,027	79,800
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>506,136</b>	<b>129,942</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net assets</b>		
<b>Unrestricted net assets</b>	307,188	250,019
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>\$ 813,324</b>	<b>\$ 379,961</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

*See accompanying notes to financial statements*

\*Access to full financial statements can be made available upon request.

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## For Youth Initiative in Toronto

### Statement of Operations and Net Assets Period Ended March 31

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	<b>Year Ending March 31, 2020</b>	<b>Three Months Ending March 31, 2019</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Grants (Note 4)	\$ 1,212,395	\$ 288,623
Donations and other	67,159	23,666
Trustee net administration income (Note 5)	9,000	15,575
	<hr/> 1,288,554	<hr/> 327,864
<b>Expenses</b>		
Salaries and benefits	744,551	193,184
Project costs	165,809	34,170
Purchased services	127,649	22,614
Rent and permit fees	82,970	27,812
Office and administration	82,786	16,291
Professional fees	12,170	6,143
Insurance	10,402	3,039
Special events	1,968	-
Professional development	3,080	1,233
	<hr/> 1,231,385	<hr/> 304,486
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses for the period</b>	<b>57,169</b>	<b>23,378</b>
Net assets, beginning of period	250,019	226,641
<b>Net assets, end of period</b>	<b>\$ 307,188</b>	<b>\$ 250,019</b>

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*See accompanying notes to financial statements*



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