

# Community Matters



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2016





Photo credit:  
James Peltzer / @james.peltzer

Welcome to the winter edition of **Community Matters**. As we all wind down the year and prepare for the holiday season, we hope you'll enjoy this final newsletter of 2016, where we take stock of what has been a bustling and highly productive year here at the Community Foundation of Ottawa. From the launch of our new Ottawa Insights community knowledge centre, to the delivery of the third annual *New Leaf Community Challenge*, the last few months have seen some exciting new developments and partnerships take shape.

In this issue, our **Community Giving** page takes a look back at the history and achievements of the Foundation's Black Canadian Scholarship Fund, which was established 20 years ago by local family physician Dr. Horace Alexis. Recently honoured with the University of Ottawa's Community Service Award and a City of Ottawa declaration, Dr. Alexis has created a legacy for generations of black Canadian scholars to come who are striving for a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities.

We then take the **Community Pulse** of the current state of Education and Learning in Ottawa, exploring some of the data and information released on the Ottawa Insights website in September, as well as illustrating just a few of the ways the Foundation is working with the community to address related local issues. The results of the 2016 *New Leaf Community Challenge* is then the focus of our **Community Impact** page, while this issue's **Community Chest** contains news about the Foundation's most recent events and exploits, including our role as co-presenters of the groundbreaking *Art and Science of Math Education* conference in November, and the recruiting of some key new staff members.

Finally, we're pleased to profile Karen Green in our back cover **Community Profile**, an integral member of the Foundation's Board of Governors and Deputy Chair of the Grants Committee. She shares some valuable words of wisdom gained through her many years of working to improve conditions for women and Indigenous peoples in Canada, both through her career as a lawyer and leader of numerous Aboriginal organizations, and through her high volunteer engagement in a variety of other charitable causes.

We hope you enjoy this winter edition of our seasonal newsletter, and that it helps provide further insight into the work being conducted by the Foundation and our many partners and community champions. We invite you to visit our website, as well as our Facebook and Twitter pages, where you can stay informed and share your own stories and experiences to help us illustrate the many ways that **Community Matters**.

Join the conversation:  

## DONATION DEADLINES

If you wish to receive a 2016 tax receipt, please ensure gifts by cheque are postmarked no later than December 31 and are made payable to the Community Foundation of Ottawa, specifying the name of the fund in the memo field.

Online credit card gifts must be made before midnight (EST) on December 31. When making gifts of publicly-listed securities, we recommend having your broker file all forms by December 20 in order to ensure that final ownership of the securities is transferred to the Foundation by December 31 (check with your broker regarding holiday hours). Please also complete and send us the Direction to Gift Shares form by the same date.

For more information, please contact **Gary Zhao** at 613-236-1616 ext. 240.

Cover image: **Winter on the Rideau Canal**, by Bhat Boy, www.bhatboy.com



For good...forever    Le bien...toujours



# Community Giving

## Black Canadian Scholarship Fund

When Dr. Horace Alexis first arrived in Canada from Trinidad in 1958 to attend the University of Ottawa, he never could have imagined he would ultimately set the stage for future generations of black Canadians seeking to achieve their own academic dreams. Now a retired family physician in Ottawa, Dr. Alexis was recently presented with the University of Ottawa's Community Service Award for his many years of dedication to education and improving the lives of black Canadians across the country. And he's not finished yet.

Celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, the Black Canadian Scholarship Fund (BCSF) is the vehicle Dr. Alexis founded at the Community Foundation of Ottawa back in 1996 to help black students in financial need who were keen to attend university in Canada. To date, that fund has allowed close to 50 young people to pursue post-secondary education and graduate with degrees that have led them to become doctors, lawyers and successful leaders in a wide variety of other occupations. By helping to enable their future success, the fund he established has also had a hand in enriching and diversifying Canada's cultural and professional landscape.

The seeds for the BCSF were initially planted not long after Dr. Alexis came to Ottawa and began getting to know some of his fellow immigrant schoolmates. "As I became acquainted with some of the other students, I could see how much many of them were struggling to make ends meet - often working all night and eating just one hot dog for lunch," said Dr. Alexis, "That image became seared on my consciousness, and I had to find a way to help people trying to build a better life for themselves here in Canada."

It wasn't until after he was able to overcome significant obstacles in establishing his own medical career

- including systemic racism and intolerance against his family in a small Ontario town - that Dr. Alexis was able to begin realizing that ambition. "As soon as my family returned to settle back in Ottawa in 1974, all my memories of black students grappling with untold challenges while trying to succeed in university came back stronger than ever," he said, "and a fund dedicated to supporting them in their educational pursuits was the ultimate result."

"Establishing the Black Canadian Scholarship Fund at the Community Foundation gave us the credibility we needed to inspire donors' confidence in how their contributions would be managed," said Dr. Alexis. "It was pure gold." In fact, he believed in the Foundation mandate so fully that Dr. Alexis joined its Board of Governors in 1998, serving the broader community for three years as an active member.

Through the organizing of a variety of annual fundraising events, the BCSF began awarding scholarships in 1998, and has been providing \$5,000 - \$6,000 scholarships to several students every year since. Over that time, the fund has built up an endowment worth close to \$500,000, although Dr. Alexis says he won't rest until it surpasses a million.



Dr. Horace Alexis

"We need to ensure that black Canadian students will be able to access this fund for generations to come," he says, "so we can ensure fresh people from diverse backgrounds will have the opportunity to contribute to Canadian society long into the future." As the growth of the fund and his recent University of Ottawa award attest, Dr. Alexis' legacy is certainly assured for the foreseeable future through all he has already done to accomplish that feat.

To make a donation to the Black Canadian Scholarship Fund, visit [www.cfo-fco.ca](http://www.cfo-fco.ca) and click on the Donate button. You may then either search the fund name or find it under our list of Featured Funds. For more information about their vital work, visit [www.bcsf.ca](http://www.bcsf.ca).



# Community Pulse

## ISSUE

### Education & Learning

Appropriate education supports the ability of individuals to navigate, enjoy, and thrive in the various communities and conditions encountered in the course of a lifetime. A well-educated population is better able to contribute to economic strength, and to community and societal well-being more broadly. One of the United Nations' 2015 Global Goals for Sustainable Development is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong opportunities for all.



Photo credit: James Peltzer / @james.peltzer

For more in-depth information about local Education and Learning trends and indicators, visit [www.ottawainsights.ca](http://www.ottawainsights.ca).

#### STATISTICS:

← ACROSS OTTAWA →  
AN AVERAGE OF  
**12%** of kindergarten  
students  
HAVE LOW SCORES IN  
**TWO OR MORE AREAS**  
of developmental health,  
AN INDICATOR OF LEARNING  
CHALLENGES AHEAD.

OVER 50% OF STUDENTS  
PURSUING CONTINUING EDUCATION  
AT ONTARIO COLLEGES ARE  
**35 OR OLDER.**

Ottawa students meeting grade nine provincial standards for **academic math** is **3% HIGHER** THAN THE ONTARIO AVERAGE, & **7% HIGHER** FOR APPLIED MATH.

**10%** OF OTTAWA RESIDENTS have university-level **education** IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING OR MATH.

THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN with **“AT RISK”** scores VARIES GREATLY ACROSS THE CITY, WITH GENERALLY **HIGHER PERCENTAGES** in neighbourhoods with **lower SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.**



Photo credit:  
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## CFO GRANTS ADDRESSING EDUCATION AND LEARNING ISSUES:

### ● EXCELLENCE IN LITERACY FOUNDATION

The **Generation L Expansion Project** recently received a multi-year Community Foundation grant to address the escalating issue of illiteracy in Ottawa. Over a three-year period that began in 2015, the initiative is serving children and youth aged 5-29 from low-income, newcomer, Indigenous, homeless, and exceptional communities by developing and expanding strong partnerships with local schools and community organizations. Partners receive ELF's internationally-recognized literacy and life-skills workbooks, program developer training, ongoing organization-to-organization mentoring, and micro-funding, in order to improve literacy levels in those vulnerable communities.

### ● OTTAWA COALITION OF COMMUNITY HOUSES

A Community Foundation grant will support the **MakerHouse Prototype** project, which builds on the success of the Britannia Woods Community House's "Makey Makey, All Kids Can Code" camps and Digital Media Zone. A year-long project that will focus on conceptualizing and evolving a community-based approach to deliver social change, it will provide enriched opportunities for at-risk children and youth to gain fundamental knowledge and skills in the areas of science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM). The **MakerHouse** project will develop a curriculum based on learnings and experience from the Britannia Woods Community House, test the workshops in other Community Houses, and develop partnerships to further support, sustain, and scale the project to Community Houses across the city.

### ● CHRISTIE LAKE KIDS

In 2017, the organization's Leaders in Training program will partner with the Canadian Wildlife Federation to deliver **It's Wild Outside**, a program designed to increase the wilderness skill sets of youth participants. Featuring group wilderness training, "no-trace camping", and youth-planned community initiatives, the program will provide participants with an opportunity to learn about nature in both the winter and summer seasons, while taking an active role in wilderness protection.

### ● CENTRETOWN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

With the help of a Community Foundation grant CCHC will implement its **Hope, Skip, and Jump to Grade One** project for children aged 4-5 years old to address recent reports that 25% of Centretown children are at risk of experiencing academic failure that may contribute to ongoing physical and mental health issues. Employing a mentoring environment, the program will help children to develop study skills with free resources to enhance their in-school learning. With a strong basis of school readiness, children will build the confidence needed to achieve academic success.

### ● OSGOODE YOUTH ASSOCIATION

With the help of a grant from the Community Fund for Canada's 150<sup>th</sup>, OYA's **Canadian Village** will celebrate the nation's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary by leading youth participation in hands-on workshops sharing the food, culture, history, and art of communities across the country, including Atlantic Canada, First Nations, French Canadians, and new Canadians, as well as a special segment on learning about and creating Canadian art.



# Community Impact



**The Community Foundation of Ottawa presented a cheque for \$125,000 to LiveWorkPlay (LWP) to tackle youth unemployment in the capital in a meaningful, sustainable way at its third annual New Leaf Community Challenge on Nov. 9.**

The Pie in the Sky initiative will involve a massive expansion of LWP’s Employment Task Force (ETF) – from about 20 to 60 volunteer employment champions – in order to build relationships with new employment partners to generate 100 new jobs for Ottawa youths with intellectual disabilities. It was one of the top three proposals presented to a jury of community leaders and experts at the Community Foundation of Ottawa’s third annual **New Leaf Community Challenge** at Saint Paul University in November.

“While the city-wide unemployment rate was 6.4% in 2015, Ottawa’s youth unemployment rate was 15.3%,” said Marco Pagani, President & CEO of the Community Foundation of Ottawa. “That is the highest it’s been in over a decade, and the highest rate among Canada’s six largest cities. That’s why the Foundation felt now was the right time to support the community in tackling this alarming trend in a powerful, proactive way.”

The significant scale-up of LWP’s already successful pilot project will support broader cultural change, promoting a more inclusive city through significantly greater public exposure to young people who have traditionally been stigmatized as “unemployable”. Key elements of the LWP approach, including the use of employment champions and follow-up support for employees and employers, can also be effective for the broader youth demographic.

Originally launched in 2014, the New Leaf Community Challenge was designed to inspire and support innovative, collaborative approaches to addressing critical issues in Ottawa. With a focus in the first two years on food security and local food systems, the New Leaf Community Challenge has previously provided a total of \$250,000 in funding to MarketMobile and the Deep Roots Food Hub. These projects have instigated powerful approaches to improving access to healthy affordable food, and to building longer-term food sustainability for Ottawa.

Focused on demonstrably improving the employment situation for young adults in Ottawa, the 2016 Challenge attracted a diverse array of exciting and innovative project submissions. The top three proposals presented to the jury also included a social enterprise collaborative for youth-delivered IT services, presented by CompuCorps Mentoring, and a collective impact initiative to improve the employment outlook of local youths living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, presented by the Social Planning Council.

“All of the projects presented at this year’s Challenge were highly creative, compelling and, most importantly, designed to make a measurable difference in our community over the long-term,” said Marco Pagani, President & CEO of the Community Foundation of Ottawa. “While I know it was a difficult decision, I am confident that LiveWorkPlay’s project will contribute to improving the employment situation for local young people in a systemic, sustainable way – which, in turn, will contribute to improving the city’s long-term economic outlook and overall wellbeing.”

The New Leaf Community Challenge has attracted a wide range of local champions and supporters. The 2016 Challenge jury was made up of such notable local leaders and experts as Saad Bashir, Tim Brodhead, Lauri Cabral, Cheryl Jensen, Kathleen Kemp, Jack McCarthy, Paul Steeves, and Stephen Willis.

**For more information about the New Leaf Community Challenge and this year’s selected project, visit <http://www.cfo-fco.ca/new-leaf-community-challenge-2016/>.**



# Community Chest



## COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NEWS

### Ottawa Insights

The Community Foundation has now released seven of the eight information areas that will ultimately make up the heart of its dynamic new web-based community knowledge centre, **Ottawa Insights**. Designed to bring together and connect key information and intelligence on status, trends and conditions affecting quality of life in Ottawa, the site's key purpose is to support shared understanding and strategic collaboration towards fostering a more vibrant and equitable city over the long term.

Since its April launch, Ottawa Insights has presented a General Demographics section, along with a suite of over 70 indicators related to the themes of Basic Needs & Standard of Living; Economy & Employment; Health & Wellness; Environment & Sustainability; Education & Learning; and Arts & Culture. The Community Foundation will continue to deliver comprehensive information and data over the coming months in the final area of Community and Belonging. For more information, visit [www.ottawainsights.ca](http://www.ottawainsights.ca).

### Ottawa Math Conference

With the support of two anonymous donors, the Community Foundation co-presented the **Art and Science of Math Education Conference** at Carleton University on Nov. 26 with JUMP Math, Carleton U, Algonquin College, and the University of Ottawa. A resounding success, the conference attracted 200 local educators, school administrators, researchers, and policy-makers, who came together for a critical conversation about the most effective, evidence-based methods for strengthening numeracy in Canada.

"This was an excellent illustration of how we work with donors and partners to initiate transformational change in our community," said Foundation Vice-President Bibi Patel, who introduced Dr. John Mighton, the closing keynote speaker and founder of JUMP Math. "Our donors were so pleased with the conference that they've committed ongoing support to build on the momentum it created – a concrete example of the Community Foundation's role in marrying high-level donor engagement with a critical need."

**JUMP Math** takes a balanced approach to teaching math, using a carefully formulated blend of direct instruction and student discovery called "guided discovery." Teachers across Canada, Spain, Bulgaria, and the US are using it. This year, founder John Mighton won the 10th Annual Egerton Ryerson Award for Dedication to Public Education, and JUMP Math became only the second Canadian organization to win a WISE Award.

CBC Radio news report: **Ottawa Conference explores best way to teach math**

## COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR

The Community Foundation of Ottawa recently welcomed **Shelley Pelkey** to the position of Director of Finance and Administration. A progressive bilingual leader with a track record of developing strategic partnerships and realizing ambitious organizational goals, Shelley has over 15 years of senior management experience applying effective governance principles, sound financial practices and a penchant for excellence in growing organizational profile and influence.

Her background includes 15 years as CEO of the Certified Management Accountants of New Brunswick, where she was made a Fellow in 2007. Most recently, she worked as Executive Director of the Institute of Internal Auditors of Canada. Shelley will be responsible for overseeing the management of the Community Foundation's financial assets and annual budget, as well as the overall administration of the Foundation's day-to-day operations.

We're also pleased to introduce two other new staff members who recently joined the Community Foundation. **Lynn Dubien** has assumed the role of Office Administrator for the Foundation, while **Kasia Kulik** has joined the organization as Finance Assistant.



# Community Profile



## KAREN GREEN

“I’m very proud to be able to contribute to such a well-managed, sophisticated organization as the Community Foundation.”

Karen Green is a woman who understands what it means to struggle to be heard and fight for what you believe in. A genuine community champion for the rights and well-being of many people without a voice, Karen has succeeded in breaking down barriers and bringing attention to the wide array of serious issues facing women and Indigenous peoples in Canada – both in her day-to-day work and through her many volunteer efforts. The Community Foundation is just one of the organizations that has benefited greatly from Karen’s fresh, no-nonsense approach to her work with both its Board of Governors and Grants Committee over the last four years.

A graduate of Trent University and the Queen’s University Faculty of Law, Karen has served as General Counsel to some of the country’s top political figures and institutions, including 15 years with Justice Canada. During this time, she has also been at the helm and on the boards of such highly respected organizations as the Native Women’s Association of Canada, the Odawa Native Friendship Centre, Minwasshin Lodge and the Wa-

bano Centre for Aboriginal Health, as well as acting as the lead adviser and writer of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples’ chapter on Aboriginal women.

A citizen of the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory who started law school as the single mother of a six-month-old son, Karen’s journey to becoming a renowned leader on both the local and national stage has been neither simple nor direct. “I had been working as an employment counsellor for three years when I made the decision that I needed to go into law,” says Karen. “I wanted to be a decision maker, and I knew becoming a lawyer would give me the credibility and influence necessary to have a real impact and make a meaningful difference in people’s lives.”

While she’s become best known as a strong advocate for Indigenous and women’s rights, Karen’s community commitment extends into much wider charitable interests and pursuits. Over the years, she has been an active volunteer and served on the boards of the United Way, the Children’s Aid Society, and the Champions for Children Foundation. “I feel I’ve been able to

bring another lens to some of the more mainstream boards I’ve been on,” she says, “and it’s been especially rewarding to be able to contribute and be part of the evolution of such a strong governance model as exists on the Community Foundation Board.”

As Deputy Chair of the Grants Committee, Karen has her fingers on the pulse of the Foundation’s role as a key community funder. “Helping to chair the Grants Committee has been a particularly powerful experience,” she says. “Working with people who have so much knowledge of our community, and having the opportunity to identify and match community needs with donor interests and priorities is a vital responsibility that can reap infinite rewards when we’re able to work it all seamlessly together.”

“I’m very proud to be able to contribute to such a well-managed, sophisticated organization as the Community Foundation,” says Karen, “and my fondest hope is that it can continue to be a broker for an Ottawa that respects and supports all of the citizens who live here long into the future.”