



WORKING FOR CHANGE



CELEBRATING
20 YEARS
1994 - 2014

Working for Change is celebrating 20 years of providing education and employment opportunities for people disadvantaged by mental illness and addiction issues, poverty, homelessness, gender, violence and newcomer/immigration experiences.

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Working for Change 2014 Annual Report

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CO-CHAIRS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 1994, a small group of community activists and consumer/survivors, led by Diana Capponi, came together to develop employment opportunities for psychiatric survivors and to create a movement that would advocate for increased work opportunities for this community.

Since that time, the consumer/survivor movement has grown, peer workers are being employed in many mental health agencies across the province, recovery has become an accepted concept, and the importance of employment has been widely recognized as a key component of the recovery process.

Working for Change (which started out as the Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses) has grown and changed considerably over the past two decades. While the original vision for OCAB was that it would assist in the development of new businesses for consumer/survivors across Ontario, that focus has now shifted (for a variety of reasons including funding opportunities) to the development of alternative businesses/social enterprises in Toronto and the creation of leadership training programs.

We now operate 5 social enterprises: The Raging Spoon Catering Company, Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises, Out of This World Café and Grill, College Street Café, and Grassroots Research, which collectively employ nine full-time and almost 65 part-time staff. In 2014 the enterprises will generate revenues of approximately \$900,000.

In the summer, in conjunction with Fred Victor Services, we oversee the operations of the City of Toronto's Cooling Centre, an undertaking which provides part-time employment to an additional 35 staff.

Over the years, as the businesses developed, it became evident to us that some people wanted more than work opportunities; they also wanted the chance to participate in arenas where they could impact public policy and work on social justice issues. Voices from the Street, a leadership training program, was developed in 2005 and from it the Speakers Bureau emerged. Graduates are now members of Boards of Directors of social service agencies, they address provincial and municipal committees on issues related to poverty and homelessness and they speak to a range of audiences from social work students and nurses to Rotary clubs, providing the perspective of lived experience.

This growth has been at times challenging and demanding. We are very grateful for the support of our board members who have been extraordinarily committed to the organization and supported its evolution. We would also like to extend tremendous thanks to the office staff, the managers and staff who work at the five social enterprises, and the coordinators and graduates of Voices from the Street and Women Speak Out, who provide public education to a range of audiences and advocate for change on social justice issues.

We cannot forget Becky McFarlane, who co-directed the organization for many years and spearheaded the creation of Voices from the Street and the Speakers Bureau.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the work of Diana Capponi, as none of this would have been possible without her vision and tireless efforts on behalf of consumer/survivors. She is sorely missed by all of us.

Haris Blentic, Co-Chair

Paul Quinn, Co-Chair

Joyce Brown, Executive Director

ORGANIZATIONAL MILESTONES

1994 – 2000

- The Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses is incorporated in 1994 with a mandate to develop employment and training opportunities for psychiatric consumer/survivors and to assist organizations across the province in developing consumer/survivor businesses.
- The Raging Spoon Café is opened at 761 Queen West.
- OCAB assists in the start-up of New Look Cleaning, Inspirations and Prezents of Mind.
- Crazy Cooks Catering is developed with a consumer/survivor group in Peterborough
- Kathryn Church works with OCAB and writes a series of documents including: *Because of Where We've Been, Group Hallucinations: Overcoming disbelief: yes, you can start a community business* (1994); *Voices of Experience: Five tales of community economic development in Toronto* (1995); *Working the Margins* (1995); *Yes We Can! Promote economic opportunity and choice through community business* (1995); *Business (not quite) as usual: Psychiatric survivors and CED in Ontario* (1997).
- OCAB receives funding to develop the documentary *Working Like Crazy* with filmmakers Laura Sky and Gwynne Basen. Laurie Hall, Kathryn Church, Laura Sky and OCAB staff present the film at screenings in Peterborough, Montreal, Ireland, Scotland and England.
- Working on Working program is funded. OCAB receives \$1 million from the Ministry of Health to document the possibilities of developing Alternative Businesses in different locations throughout the province.

2001

- Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises is developed to respond to the employment needs of members of the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC) and members of the local community.

2002

- The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health divests its vocational rehabilitation program, Out of This World Café, to OCAB. OTW becomes the first (to our knowledge) consumer/survivor business to operate from a psychiatric facility. Revenue quickly expands from under \$50,000 to \$150,000 and then \$240,000.

2005

- The first “Voices from the Street” program is launched in order to provide economically, politically and socially marginalized individuals from diverse backgrounds with an opportunity to bring their voices and perspectives forward and contribute to the development of public policy. Graduates of the program become part of our Speakers Bureau.

2008

- In 2008, Grassroots Research takes on its first large research project for WoodGreen Community Services and Habitat Services, “The Bedbug Inspection, Response and Tenant Education Project”, which involves interviewing tenants and operators of Habitat Boarding homes to discover their knowledge about bedbug prevention and treatment.

2010

- Women Speak Out is created with funding from Status of Women Canada.
- OCAB is chosen to coordinate the People with Lived Experience Caucus of the At Home/Chez Soi project for the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

2011

- At the Women's Worlds Conference in Ottawa, Women Speak Out and Power Up (New Brunswick) are approached by Status of Women staff and asked to develop a pilot project that will create a best practice leadership training manual for women's groups across Canada.
- OCAB changes its name to Working for Change to better reflect its current activities (including both social enterprises and leadership training).

2012

- OTW moves to a new storefront location at 100 Stokes Street in the Bell Gateway building at CAMH. Business immediately soars.

2013

- Seeing the success of OTW at its new location, CAMH asks OTW to take over the operation of the cafeteria at 1001 Queen Street.
- Working for Change opens the College Street Café at 250 College.
- Women Speak Out wins the Women Transforming Cities Award.

2014

- Working for Change wins the Toronto Enterprise Fund's, new enterprise competition, which allows for the expansion of the College Street Café, the opening of the Russell Street Cafeteria and the development of a catering service in the commercial kitchen.
- The City of Toronto funds our first pre-employment program, En Route to Employment. En Route will now be funded through 2015.

OUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

The Raging Spoon



The Raging Spoon, Toronto's oldest and most well-known consumer/survivor catering company, employs a full-time manager and 10 part-time employees. In 2012, the Raging Spoon moved from its original site at 761 Queen Street West (where it also operated a small café) to 1658 Queen Street West, which has a new and much larger and better equipped commercial kitchen. This new kitchen has enabled the enterprise to expand its menu and produce a greater range of delicious food items. The Spoon now has a delivery van and provides service to businesses and organizations across the city.

Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises (PGTE)



In 2001, after undertaking a community development process that involved OCAB, PARC, PARC members and community residents, PGTE obtained a contract to provide plant installation and maintenance to the Parkdale Village Business Improvement Association (BIA). The part-time staff (many of whom were members of PARC) were trained in the basics of plant maintenance. The staff pulled wagons with 15 five-litre watering cans and carried an 8 foot ladder to water hanging baskets. The business soon transitioned to the use of 20 gallon self-pressurized watering machines which can be rolled down the street. Watering wands have now replaced ladders.

In 2004, we secured another contract with the Roncesvalles BIA. Currently, we have contracts to install and maintain plants for five BIAs and five YWCA sites. We also have three indoor plant maintenance contracts, including the Direct Energy Centre on the Exhibition Grounds. PGTE also provides box washing services for Foodshare's Good Food Box. We employ 20 part-time staff and train them to undertake a variety of horticultural tasks. The work of PGTE has been highlighted in many community newspapers and in the Toronto Star as well as on the Steve Paikin show, The Agenda.

Out of This World Café (OTW) and The Grill



In 2002, after a lengthy consultation process with its participants, CAMH divested its vocational rehabilitation program to OCAB. The participants became employees who were all paid minimum wage or more and business practices were incorporated in daily operations. Initially, the business operated a canteen, an espresso bar, and a coffee cart that travelled throughout the facility. In 2012, Out of This World Café moved to a new storefront location in the Bell Gateway Building on Lower Ossington. Out of This World was transformed with a modern well-equipped kitchen and both indoor and outdoor seating. Seeing the success of this café, CAMH suggested that OTW consider taking over the cafeteria in the building at 1001 Queen West. As a result, the Grill opened in June 2013. Together the two social enterprises generate approximately \$500,000 in sales and employ six full-time and 30 part-time staff.

College Street Café and Russell Street Cafeteria



Working for Change took over the operations of the College Street Café (in the CAMH building at 250 College Street) in October 2013 with a plan to scale up the enterprise. With funding from the Toronto Enterprise Fund and the Co-operators, we were able to hire a manager, take on the operations of the cafeteria at 33 Russell Street (also a CAMH building) and begin catering from the commercial kitchen on College street. The College Street Café and the Russell Street Cafeteria should generate well over \$130,000 in their first year of operation and provide employment to approximately 12 staff.

Grassroots Research

Established in 2009, Grassroots Research offers research expertise to non-profit organizations—either conducting research projects or evaluations for organizations or working with organizations to guide them through a community based research process. We offer training to organizations and/or provide trained community researchers. Over the years we have worked with a variety of community organizations including WoodGreen Community Services, Habitat, PARC, AIS and Richview Residence.



LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS



Voices from the Street

Voices from the Street was started through a joint initiative with the Gerstein Centre. Voices is an intensive 12 week leadership training program that provides training on public speaking, communication and conflict resolution, diversity issues, how government works, how to impact public policy, working with the media and facilitation skills. Pat Capponi, a well-known author and activist is the main facilitator for the group. A number of external facilitators also bring their expertise to the group.

The speaker's bureau approach is very effective because it allows people with lived experience to tell their stories, contribute their knowledge and bring public awareness to issues of mental health, homelessness, violence against women and newcomer/refugee challenges, exposing flaws in the system. Telling personal stories changes public

perceptions about poverty and it has proven to be an effective tool for engaging officials who are providing services and creating policies.

In 2009, we worked in partnership with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) to develop a speaker's bureau for tenants so that they could take up leadership positions within the TCHC community. We also collaborated with the Mennonite New Life Centre to run a leadership training group for newcomers in 2011.

In 2010, the Daily Bread Food Bank asked us to collaborate on the People's Blue Print, which brought together a group of social assistance recipients from across Ontario to generate innovative solutions for social assistance reform and participate in a dialogue with provincial policy makers. A series of recommendations were presented to provincial government officials and policy makers at the People's Blueprint Conference in 2011.

Women Speak Out

Women Speak Out, funded by Status of Women Canada, was created in 2011 to provide a leadership training program for women, exploring social justice issues through a gender lens. Graduates of WSO are active members on a range of advisory committees and community boards and they have participated in national exchanges (St John, Winnipeg) with other grassroots women's groups and attended international conferences (The World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro in 2010, the Association of Women's Rights in Development conference in Istanbul in 2012). Many graduates become members of our Speakers Bureau. In 2013, WSO won the Women Transforming Cities Best Practices Award for their work. We are currently partnering with women's organizations in Winnipeg and Saint John, to develop a best practice leadership training curriculum for women.

En Route to Employment

In 2014, we received funding from the City of Toronto to run a pilot pre-employment program that would connect people with barriers to employment to jobs in food services, horticultural and/or social services. Several of the graduates were hired by our social enterprises or the Cooling Centre project. In 2015, this program will be expanded, offering two sessions per year, one of which will prepare participants to take on relief work positions in shelters, drop-ins and supportive housing projects.

WORKING FOR Change

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the year ended March 31, 2014

	Revenues\$	Expenses before amortization\$	Amortization\$	Net surplus (deficit) for the year 2014\$
Raging Spoon Operations	106,351	103,483		2,868
Grassroots Operations	84,679	79,945		4,734
Out of This World Operations	624,724	598,831	11,000	14,893
Parkdale Green Thumb Operations	112,192	107,841		4,351
Ministry of Health Grant	631,154	625,599	5,555	
Parkdale Green Thumb United Way	79,213	79,213		
Status of Women	99,355	99,355		
Out of This World United Way Grant	105,137	105,137		
Speakers Bureau Grant	17,867	16,634		1,233
Other Grants	169,160	168,042		1,118
TOTAL	2,029,832	1,984,080	16,555	29,197

Board Members

Haris Blentic – Co-chair

Paul Cadiente

Michael Ellis – Treasurer

Acsana Fernando

Helen Hook

Liz Janzen

Danielle Olsen

Paul Quinn – Co-chair

David Reville

Jean Simpson

Full Time Staff

Andrea Balcazar – Lead Hand, The Grill

Joyce Brown – Executive Director

Pat Capponi – Director of Education, Outreach and Community Engagement

Mike Creek – Director of Strategic Initiatives

Catherine Clarke – Manager, Out of This World Café

Pat Fowler – Financial Administrator

Maggie Griffin – Manager, Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises

Dawnmarie Harriott – Co-ordinator, Voices from the Street

Warren Hawke – Director of Food Services

Lubna Khalid – Co-ordinator, Women Speak Out

Carol Kristensen – Lead Hand, Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises

Michael Lewin – Manager, the Raging Spoon Catering Company

Jake Lopez – Manager, College Street Café and Russell Street Cafeteria

Cathy Reddon – Lead Hand, The Grill

Jerry Thistle – Manager, The Grill Café and Catering

Funders

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care

Toronto Enterprise Fund

City of Toronto

Status of Women Canada

The Atkinson Foundation

The Cooperators

WORKING FOR CHANGE

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"A HOME,
A JOB,
AND A FRIEND"



Status of Women
Canada

Condition féminine
Canada

