

# 2018

ANNUAL REPORT



**Welcome, safety,  
and support for refugees.**





## LEADERSHIP REPORT

### SAM CHAISE & BRUCE CAMERON

2018 was filled with changes and new initiatives that grew our capacity to serve refugee families. Christie is well-known for our staff's high standard of care, and in 2018 we focused that care on children and parents, transitioning our Shelter to be exclusively devoted to families. Forty-five percent of our residents are children and most of them will call Christie home for over 100 days. That's a long time in a child's life and we want to make it special for them! We have strengthened and expanded our children's programming thanks to a three-year funding commitment from the United Way Greater Toronto. A CBC profile of our children's music programming can be found on our website.

We are grateful for the core funding that the City of Toronto provides for us to offer basic services. We are always actively seeking new supporters, partners and funders so that we can offer beyond-the-basics services and provide the best quality care to our refugee guests. There are several significant infrastructure projects on our horizon eg. we need to rebuild the bathrooms in one of our resident buildings and create more common space by renovating the basement in the main building. This extra care can be the difference between mere survival and genuine empowerment.

We invest heavily in staff support to help our residents find housing, which is a challenge given the unaffordability of accommodation in the Greater Toronto Area. In addition to housing, in 2018 we helped clients get into education programs, stabilize their rental arrangements, and find employment. Looking ahead, we want to strengthen our support of residents as they move into neighbourhoods by partnering with local groups who will provide physical and social support.

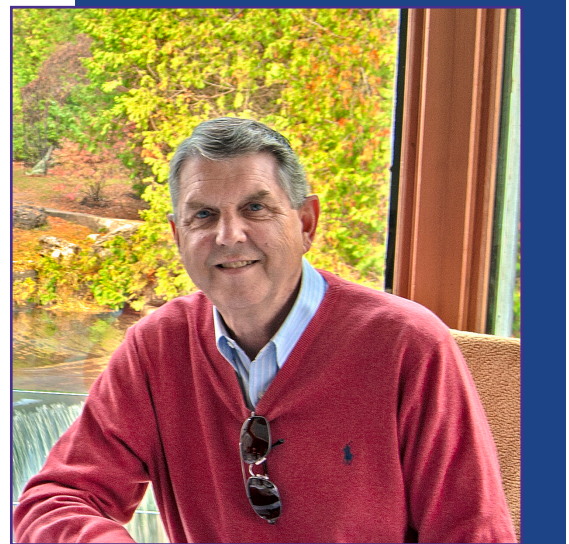
We continue to be amazed at the resilience of our clients in the face of adversity. In order to draw attention to the refugee journey and celebrate the welcome that Canada offers them, we held a Backyard BBQ & Party for our neighbourhood and friends on World Refugee Day. We made several hundred new friends as neighbours dropped by to say 'hello' and learn about what we do to help refugees get started on their life in Canada. We invite you to join us on June 20, 2019, for our next party!

We hope you enjoy this collection of stories about the welcome, safety, and support that we offered refugee families. 2019 is our 30th year of serving refugees and asylum seekers and we look forward to celebrating this milestone with you in the fall. We'll hope to see you on October 5, 2019 for our signature fundraising event, Ride for Refuge. In 2018 we had 139 old and new friends walk or ride for us, which raised \$79,000. We invite you to join us again in 2019 as we serve and support those who have been displaced.

With gratitude,  
Sam Chaise, Executive Director  
Bruce Cameron, Chair of the Board



Sam Chaise, *Executive Director*



Bruce Cameron, *Board Chair*

## SHELTER PROGRAM



**220**  
clients



**62%**  
female



**45%**  
of residents were  
children



**80%**  
single mother  
households



**110 days**  
average stay  
in shelter



**23**  
source countries

## TOP FIVE SOURCE COUNTRIES



Nigeria **39%**



Eritrea **8%**



Ethiopia **6%**



Mexico **6%**



Romania **5%**

## POST SHELTER SUPPORT



**572**  
clients



**5,856**  
consultations



**21**  
workshops



**321**  
workshop participants

## PROGRAMMING & SERVICES



### Literacy

- 71 classes provided
- 40 children in program
- 6-7 children attended each session



### Fitness

- 112 classes provided
- 40 children in program
- 6-7 children attended each session



### Music

- 112 classes provided
- 40 children in program
- 6-7 children attended each session



### Housing

- 89 families assisted in securing and moving into permanent housing
- 1 year of ongoing consultation provided to each client
- 4 dedicated staff



### Sponsorship

- 65 sponsorship applications submitted
- 78 sponsorship families received and settled



### Women's Wellness Program

- 24 workshops
- 28 women
- 13 women attended each session



# 2018 HIG

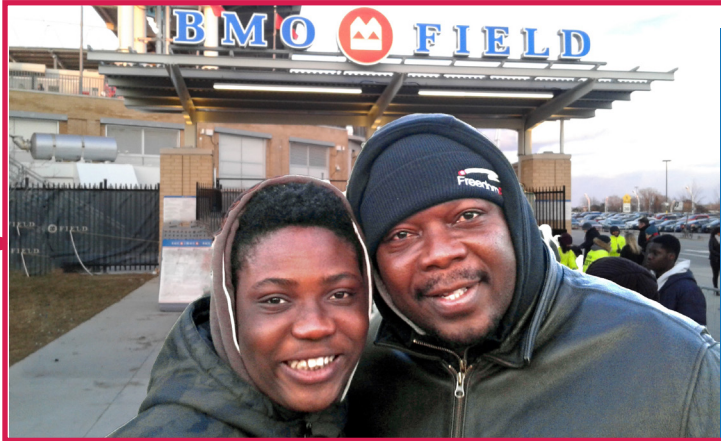


**World Refugee Day**  
Our first annual World Refugee Day party brought neighbours, friends and former clients together to celebrate the strength and resilience of refugees.

**Ride for Refuge**  
This was our biggest and most successful ride to date! We raised \$79,000 thanks to the 139 participants and 489 donors.



# HIGHLIGHTS



## **Men's Wellness**

*In response to a felt need for more holistic support, we launched a wellness program with social and educational opportunities for men.*

**Post Shelter Support**  
*We provided more intensive support post shelter to help clients navigate Canadian systems and access opportunities for employment and training.*



## **Children's Programming**

*New support from United Way Greater Toronto has allowed us to enrich our children's programming. Dedicated staff lead literacy, fitness and music programs for our smallest residents.*



## GROWING UP AT CHRISTIE

### FREE FROM FEAR

"I think I am much more grown up now than before I left Mexico. Before I left, I was so shy." A poised young woman sits before me, polished and articulate. She explains that what she enjoyed most about her recent work placement at a Mexican restaurant was being given her own chef's station in the kitchen. "I liked having my own space where there was a place to put everything and I could keep it organized" She draws a rectangle in front of herself to show me the size of her station and mimes tucking a knife to one side of a board.



Maria Victoria and Eleni

Eleni is twenty, a university student, and has agreed to share her story with Christie's Communications staff. Eleni was 15 when her parents announced their decision to move and she told her mother she would rather stay in Mexico with her aunt and grandmother. Eleni has a close relationship with her grandmother as, when she was growing up, she spent everyday after school at her grandmothers in the kitchen. Her grandmother would cook, her aunt would bake, and Eleni learned to love being in kitchens.

Her mother told her that she couldn't bear to leave her behind - she would miss her and it wasn't safe for them in their home country. On her last night in her old home, Eleni's friends took her out for tacos and then stayed up all night with her listening to music and talking. At three in the morning, her grandparents arrived to drive them all the way to the international airport in the capital city. Six hours later, they walked through Christie's doors and into a room full of dancing and familiar Spanish music. Eleni and her family happened to arrive just as Christie's kitchen managers were enjoying an evening break. Maria Victoria and Fritz would become good friends to the family and even invite Eleni into the kitchen to make cupcakes when they discovered her love of baking.

Christie was a safe place to come home to after long days at a new school or even longer appointments where Eleni acted as interpreter for her parents. Eleni is currently studying Culinary Management at George Brown and she credits the staff at Christie for making this possible. Carol, Shelter Program Coordinator at Christie, helped her choose a high school with an excellent ESL program. Settlement workers like Manuel, connected her with volunteer opportunities where she gained confidence and became conversant in English. She has discovered that she likes trying new things. And when her high school told her she could only take college level courses, Manuel encouraged her to advocate for herself, again and again, until she was moved into the university stream. Eleni says that at first she was tagging along with her parents to their meetings but, as she made decisions about university applications and applying for school loans, she found herself more and more in meetings of her own.

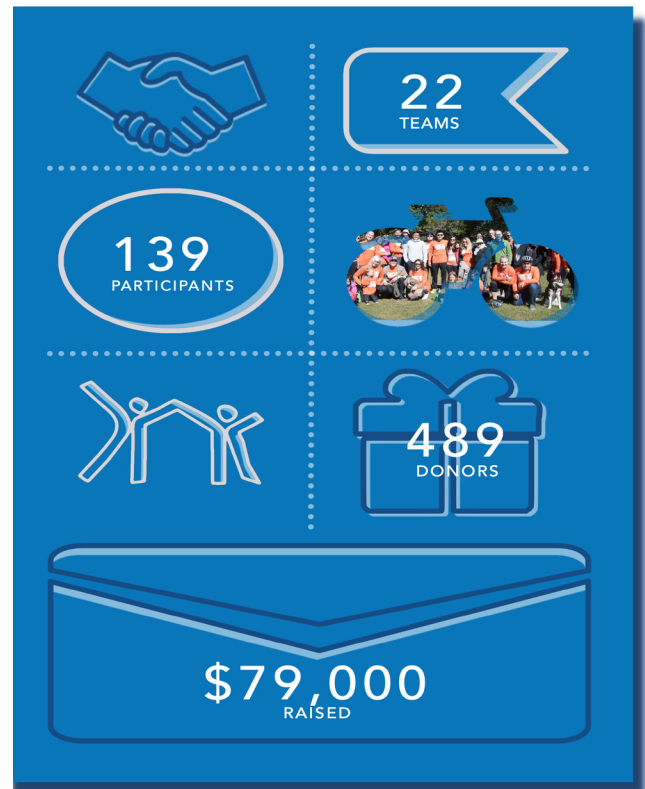
Eleni surprised me by saying that she and her mother think of their time at Christie as one of the best times of their lives. When I press she explains how much they enjoyed the community here. "Before we left Mexico, I saw my mother very little. I did not want to come to Canada and I was afraid of what it would be like here. Sharing a room with my mom, we became much closer and we became friends with people who were from everywhere. We still talk to those friends" This is our hope at Christie, that every client would experience safety, support and true welcome both to our community and to Canada.





## RIDE FOR REFUGE THE FLYNN GROUP

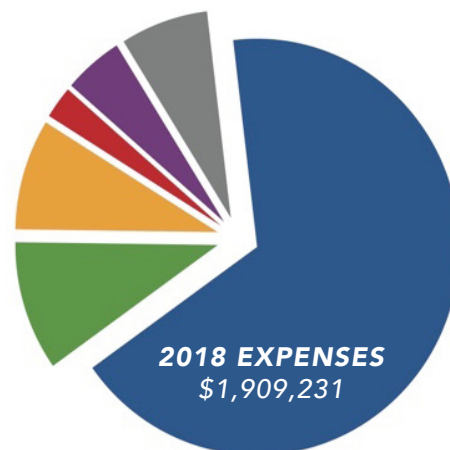
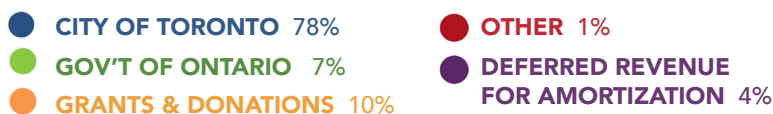
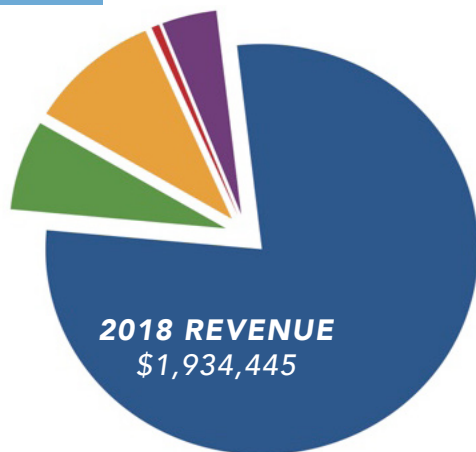
The 2018 Ride for Refuge has given us much to celebrate but one story in particular stands out. John and Tracy McManus recruited a team whose enthusiasm was rivaled only by their commitment to excellence. Tracy is a board member who was volunteering at Christie's World Refugee Day Celebration in June when she first thought of putting together a team of colleagues from the Flynn Group of Companies. Tracy and John's passion for serving refugees is contagious. The group they pulled together were not avid cyclists. Several had to buy new bikes for the ride, but everyone was excited to spend time together for a good cause. The team began casually fundraising in June and by September the Flynn group was the top fundraising team in all of Canada. Tracy credits their success to the amount of friendly competition between teammates. The morning of the Ride was clear and beautiful, and new riders were grateful that the route was a flat waterfront path. Flynn's team had a lot of fun and are looking forward to participating again this year.



*"Part of the vision at Flynn is to think global and act local. The refugee crisis is global, but we took an opportunity to act local and participate in the 2018 Ride for Refuge in support of the Christie Refugee Welcome Centre. By all accounts the Ride was a great success with the monies raised going towards much needed renovations at the Christie Welcome Centre. Tracy and I and the Flynn Group of Companies are proud to have been a part of the 2018 Ride for Refuge."*

John McManus

## FINANCES



## PARTNERS & DONORS BETTER TOGETHER

We are incredibly grateful to the following who supported us in 2018: City of Toronto (shelter services), Government of Ontario (post shelter services and men's wellness program), Ontario Trillium Foundation (workshops), United Way Greater Toronto (children's programs), Chawkers Foundation (children's literacy program), ivari (children's fitness program), Johansen-Larsen Foundation (children's music program), TJX Canada Foundation, Unifor Social Justice Fund, St. Andrew's Society of Toronto (women's wellness program), La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso, Alice and Murray Maitland Foundation, McLean Smits Family Foundation (bedding sets), ETFO Humanity Fund, S.M. Blair Family Foundation (school backpacks), Jackman Foundation, Home Depot Canada Foundation, Ontario REALTORS Care Foundation (bathroom renovations), Government of Canada (summer kitchen and camp staff), Daily Bread Food Bank, Second Harvest (food donations), Jays Care Play Ball program (baseball equipment), Diaper Bank of Toronto (diapers), Holiday Helpers, Shoebox Project, New Mom Project, Period Purses and Fix the 6ix (donation packages).



### MISSION

We are a Christian organization serving and advocating for refugee families by providing safe, temporary housing, initial settlement services, and follow-up support. We influence and engage the broader public through sponsorship, education and advocacy initiatives.

### CORE VALUES

We are *Christian*.  
We respond to refugees with *dignity and respect*.  
We are *resilient and responsive* to the changing needs of refugees.  
We are committed to *children and families*.  
We *partner* with others to serve refugees more effectively.  
We are *advocates* for refugees.

### BOARD

Bruce Cameron, *Chair*  
Jon Osmond, *Vice Chair*  
Louise deRoo, *Treasurer*  
Tracy McManus, *Secretary*  
Randy Dearlove  
Charity Kabango-Lowe  
Sue Reimer  
Jenna Yango Leonard

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