



ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 22



NEW BEGINNINGS: KEYS new home at Humbercrest United Church



KEYS mission is to facilitate learning, social, fitness, volunteer and work opportunities for people with an intellectual disability, to maximize their potential through inclusion in our community.

Volunteer Board of Directors

KEYS is extremely fortunate to have committed and talented Directors who bring their expertise and skills to govern the organization with leadership and vision for an inclusive community.

Hélène Paulyn Murray - President
Maryanne Bruni - Vice-President
Carol Layton - Secretary
Patricia Curmi- Treasurer

Greg Chellew
Colleen Nunnaro
Patricia Patterson
Gail Pennington

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Message from the Board President

New beginnings... This year brought many beautiful beginnings for KEYS – so much to celebrate as we welcomed Baby Henry McCallum Bril, new participants, new programming, new staff and a new location, all while Covid hung around us.

KEYS priorities of **S**afety, **I**nclusion, **R**espect and **R**esilience (SIRR), drove all of our decisions to keep advancing our mission during times of uncertainty and change. A special Covid Safety Team was put in place to ensure all protocols were in practice and supplies provided.

Whether online or in person, the staff together with expert facilitators focused on 2 of KEYS 3 pillars of Learning and the Arts; Social, Recreation & Fitness.; Work & Volunteer Opportunities. KEYS participants jumped right in, eager once again to share experiences with their friends...virtually or in person.

The biggest joy of course came when finally in March 2022, KEYS started cooking lunches together again. The opportunity for leadership, learning and life skills building was embraced with much enthusiasm. Everyone put on their KEYS aprons with delight as once again washing, chopping, slicing and preparing delicious and nutritious meals brought smiles to all.

We said goodbye and thank you to Alex Calder Karagianis as she left in April to start her motherhood journey...and gracias to Elena Guterriez. At the same time, after 10 years, we also said farewell and thank you to Hallelujah Church. For safety reasons (Condo construction next to the church) KEYS moved to the beautiful Humbercrest United Church where Laura Danowski and her terrific team of Assistant Coordinators, with KEYS adults are creating new positive experiences together.

Thanks to KEYS friends at High Park Nature Centre, a wonderful outdoor 10-week High Park Ranger program was introduced this spring. KEYS Rangers identify birds, plants and learn about park stewardship. KEYS also has been taught how to photograph nature and other subjects. A 4-week photography workshop led by Diana Nazareth had its finale with a Showcase at the Etobicoke Arts Gallery in late May. These are just 2 of the many initiatives at KEYS this year.

Our families, friends and Foundations generously supported our activities with financial donations to help cover our expenses, which fees alone do not. We are so grateful for these gifts to advance our mission.

The Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) was passed in October 2021 requiring a full review of By-Laws to ensure compliance by 2024. Carol Layton is leading this work with KEYS Directors.

Special shout out to Kate Manson, KEYS Program Administrator, who was a tremendous guide to KEYS families and staff this year. From helping with Covid related protocols and Vaccination appointments, with moving from one church to another, with new staff, Kate linked people's needs with solutions..and always with a smile. Smiles were many at the Volunteer Appreciation lunch when Kate and Laura organized a festive, fun and original way to show our volunteers how much they are valued and cherished!

KEYS participants continue to thrive, and it is their contagious energy and enthusiasm that inspires all of us to believe in our abilities...looking forward to seeing what this year will bring! Respectfully submitted


Helene Raulyn Murray

2021/22 Highlights



25

**Incredible KEYS
Participants**

31

**FUN birthday
Celebrations**

46

**HOURS enjoying music with
our Experts André, Caitlin &
Adam**

60

**Days Keeping fit with
Expert Facilitators**

195

**Days wearing masks to
keep everyone safe**

1140

**Nutritious
lunches made
and shared
together**

Accomplishments

SAFETY FIRST- during summer of 2021, KEYS formed a Safety committee to establish Covid protocols. KEYS prioritized mandatory vaccines and followed all government regulations to keep participants healthy.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN- KEYS participants have been chopping, slicing and creating delicious and nutritious meals for everyone to share..

MOVING ON - In April 2022, KEYS moved to our new home, Humbercrest United Church! The transition was smooth and we are loving the new open and bright space. We are very appreciative of the last 10 years sharing space with Community Living Toronto at the Community Junction and the Hallelujah Fellowship Church in the Junction.



*I like everything at KEYS since I started 6 years ago . At first I was nervous and then I loved it all!
Nick- Participant*



We all know changes can be hard, especially for our loved ones. With numerous Covid rules, new staff, and a completely new location, the KEYS participants handled all of these adjustments with perfection. We went from online to in person, from no snacks and sitting apart, to different hours, to cooking, and then to a brand-new location after almost a decade. That is not easy for anyone and I couldn't be more honest when I say that I am so proud of how everyone adjusted so quickly. That is proof that KEYS is very Resilient and adaptable to change. In early September we started back in person with Alex Calder Karagiannis as the Coordinator. After Christmas, with Omicron we reverted to online. Alex did a wonderful job of giving our adults a virtual experience. In February we returned to in person with Safety always first. When Alex left for maternity leave, everyone had to adjust yet again. I stepped in as Coordinator and we moved to a new location . All went smooth as butter. That is because of the bond we all have. It doesn't matter what's different and new, as long as we have each other. That is the beauty of KEYS and I've never experienced anything like it.

The program has been evolving seamlessly into this new world. A wonderful photography class on top of our regular experts. Participants have been courageously leading their friends on how to make a delicious lunch. Most of all, I have witnessed team work. Everyone is helping out in so many ways and it's quite the sight to see. With no guidance from staff, friends are helping others with reading and writing. They are chopping food together, setting tables, and even helping those who have balance problems join our walks so they can be included. I started doing "social time" where they pick and choose what social activity they would like. Watching them socialize with each other on their own is really beautiful to observe. We have been going on walks every day when it's nice out. A+ for everyone.

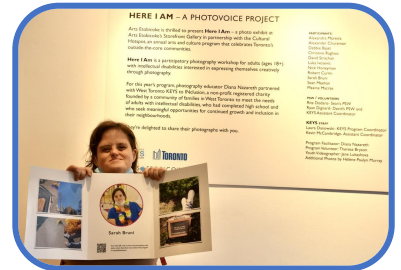
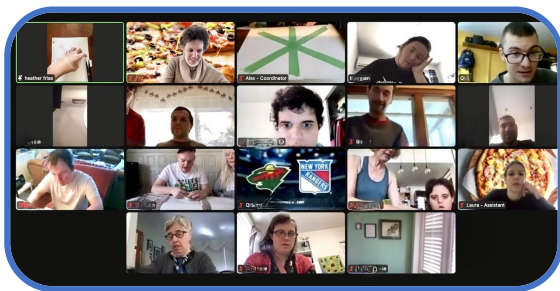
It has been a wonderful year with the greatest group of people I've ever met.
Laura Danowski, Program Coordinator



Program Updates

Ongoing Learning & The Arts

Access to online resources and in person experts to engage all has led to interesting literacy, music, arts and travel activities with new ways of interacting and learning. KEYS thanks the Rotary Club of Parkdale-High Park-Humber for donating a projector and screen. KEYS also enjoyed a 4 week photography workshop with Diana Nazareth. Their work was celebrated at a Showcase at the Etobicoke Arts Centre Gallery in May 2022.



Social Recreation & Fitness

Keeping us fit, healthy, and socially connected while online, our experts have kept us moving with fitness and many dance parties.



KEYS has enjoyed doing YOGA on our new front lawn and taking long walks along the Humber river while exploring our new neighbourhood.

Work & Volunteer Opportunities

HIGH PARK RANGERS

KEYS has been very fortunate to have a special relationship with High Park Nature Centre. In April 2022, KEYS began a Stewardship program every Wednesday where our adults learned about nature, and took an active role in the maintenance of High Park. KEYS is looking forward to more volunteer / work opportunities this year.



LUKA and SANJA

Luka: (I like) Pancake day! Cooking,(I like) Maxine, Dancing and music with André.

Sanja (mom) : It's so important for the participants to socialize and meet with peers regularly. It's great when they are learning new things at KEYS. As a volunteer at KEYS (on Monday), I like being part of the KEYS community and helping out. It's a happy and positive environment! It's important on Mondays that we keep everyone moving after the weekend to help with the transition. Movement with Morgan and Music Jam are great for that.



Engagement

Success Stories

Learning



KATHERINE and JERRY

Katherine: My favourite part of KEYS is dancing. Being with friends- being with everyone. I love dancing with André. My dad brings me on Mondays. I like art. My favourite job in the kitchen is chopping vegetables. Lasagne is my favourite food.

Jerry (dad): Katherine joined KEYS because her Mom, Hazel, who has since passed away was very taken with the KEYS program. KEYS was very supportive when Katherine's Mom died. KEYS is started by parents and has very involved parents. It has small numbers and everyone is appreciated.

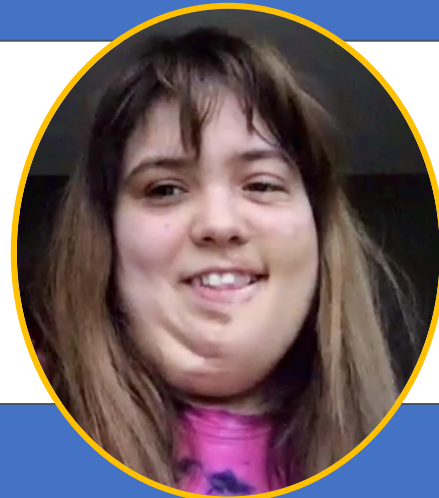
ALEXANDER and BEATA



Alexander: There are plenty of good memories at KEYS. I really liked doing the fitness online, crazy hair games and many others. KEYS is a fun place to be and I look forward to continue being with my friends and staff making new memories. I really like to do photography. I would like to garden in the summer at KEYS.

Beata (mom) I love KEYS program, where everyone is treated with respect and every participant has a voice. There is a huge effort at KEYS to constantly grow and evolve. I really appreciate how staff communicate. Alexander is thriving at KEYS. He is so motivated to go that he became confident taking TTC to and from, even though the location has changed.

Connection Success Stories Community



TIERA and SANDRA

Tiera: My favourite part of KEYS is cooking. The best meal to make is wraps. My favourite part of KEYS is laughing at Laura, when she chased Dennis the squirrel (at High Park).

Sandra (mom) : Since Tiera has joined KEYS she has gained friendships, self esteem, independence and confidence. She feels confident to try new things, for example dancing, she would never dance before! KEYS is a unique Program. The staff are very supportive and caring. KEYS gave Tiera the opportunity to organize a cooking recipe/science lesson for her friends. From Public speaking to purchasing and planning- it gave her confidence!

Financial Highlights

KEYS is extremely grateful to the many families, friends and Foundations who generously donate financial support to help cover the costs of our programs.

Total Revenue \$230,082

Total Expenditure \$102,091

Fees
39%

Donations
61%

Admin /
Rent /
Training
20%

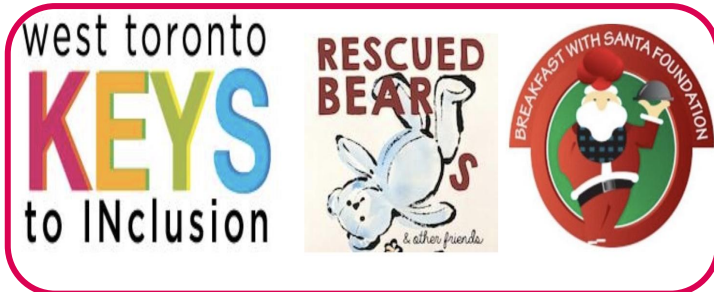
Program
Costs
80%

Net Assets, beginning of year \$203,468

Net Assets, end of year \$331,459

Full financial statements for the calendar year 2021 available upon request.

BUY A BEAR TO SHARE : FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN



In November 2021 KEYS and its long-time partner Rescued Bears launched a new fundraising program with a new partner – the Breakfast with Santa Foundation. Donations to KEYS – that totaled almost \$1200 - “bought” Rescued Bears and other animals for the Breakfast with Santa Foundation, who were able to bring smiles to the faces of 47 children in need during last year’s holiday season. KEYS is proud of its relationship with Rescued Bears and now with the Breakfast with Santa Foundation and look forward to continuing this win/win/win program. All the stuffies that were previously headed for disposal, have been “rescued” by Rescued Bears and sanitized, repaired and outfitted with hand-made clothing and creative personal stories, many of which have been written by KEYS.

Spotlight On VOLUNTEERS



Sue Gavarkovs “Mama Sue”



When did you start at KEYS? I started when there were only 5 participants in February 2015.

What makes KEYS unique? It's the participants!

Their joy for anything and ability to be up for anything is amazing. They are honest, soulful and authentic people. I get so much joy watching them care for one another. I get WAY more out of my time with them than they do from me. They are my extended family- as are their families. I also love the personalities and talent of the staff and experts. My parents, who I recently lost were so connected to KEYS. My mom was a lifelong volunteer and I feel her legacy continued through the donations that came to KEYS after they passed away.

What are you some of your favourite moments? I love the field trips. One memory is when Alexandra held my hand at the top of the CN tower! I also loved riding the SKY train with Erin at the EX. Of course KEYS birthdays are the BEST and celebrating is so much fun !

How has KEYS changed and evolved over the last 7 years? I have seen 4 coordinators, each with different personalities and it's been a joy to meet all the staff over the years. The breadth of program visitors and range of arts/ music has grown and is amazing. It is amazing to watch KEYS grow from a basic lunch program to a community organization.

What do you see as KEYS future and Sue's future with KEYS? I can't wait to see the adults have their jobs back post COVID times. I feel like I am the luckiest girl on earth getting to come to KEYS every week.

No words can describe how I feel. You are all my family.

Program Coordinators

Laura has been the KEYS Program Coordinator since April 2022. Laura is a creative and enthusiastic leader for our team. She is fun and caring and our participants love her! Before this, **Alex** Calder Karagianis helped to create a safe in person experience in September 2021, taking over for Anne McCallum, currently on Maternity leave with the newest KEYS ambassador, Baby Henry.

Program Administrator

Kate has been working behind the scenes for KEYS doing administration: acting as a liaison with the community and our new church home, as well as interacting with our families and managing special projects for KEYS. Her favourite moments, however, are spent on site having fun with the KEYS participants.

Assistant Program Coordinators

Our Assistant Program Coordinators provide consistency, support and creativity to daily life at KEYS. The 2021 / 22 staff included:

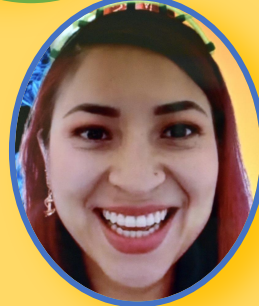
Elena helped kick off our Fall return to in-person. Her enthusiasm and joy make it easy for her to connect with participants. We said Farewell in December as Elena got a TDSB job- Thank you!

Julia came to KEYS in April 2022. With a musical theatre background now applied to KEYS, Julia's sparkle and creativity shine to make Mondays even more marvellous at KEYS.

Kevin joined KEYS in September 2021 with a depth of experience in the field as well as a passion for music and movies. He is kind and easy going and assists on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Ryan started as a volunteer and special friend to a KEYS participant. Everyone liked Ryan so much, he is now our Wednesday Assistant making him an Honorary High Park Ranger alongside our participants.

We appreciate the value of each member of our super staff team!



Community INclusion

Community engagement in 2021/ 22 remained strong for West Toronto KEYS! We would like to thank our friends for helping our adults reach their goals and create meaningful community partnerships on and offline.



Social Recreation & Fitness

MOVEMENT

Movement with Morgan

YOGA

Yoga with Alli
Yoga with Susan

RECREATION

Community Outings
Social skills

Ongoing Learning & The Arts

CREATIVE ARTS

Art with Heather
Writing with Laura
Photography with Diana

MUSIC

Adam's Jampad
André's Music Jam
Caitlin's Music Mania

LIFE SKILLS

Healthy Cooking & Eating
Kitchen Teamwork
Vegetable Gardening

Volunteer & Work Opportunities

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

High Park Nature Centre
Rangers Program
Oxford College Dental
Hygienists
The Toronto & Parkdale
Horticultural Society
U of T Medical Students

Looking forward... KEYS is excited to re-connect with our volunteer and work opportunities in our new neighbourhood.





Get Involved!

There are many ways to get involved either personally or with a financial donation.

Your commitment and support helps individuals and their families live a meaningful, INclusive life in their community!

Donate

Donations can be made easily and tax receipts issued:

1. E-transfer to: payments.keystoinclusion@gmail.com
2. Cheque to:
West Toronto KEYS to INclusion
 % Kate Manson- *Program Administrator*
 4 Olympus Avenue,
 Toronto, ON M6S1K9
3. Canada Helps <http://westtorontokeys.com/donate/>



Share your time with us!

At KEYS we count on our volunteers to provide highly valued support to KEYS participants and staff. If you are interested in bringing your skill, passion or talent to KEYS please contact Kate Manson, Program Administrator kate.keystoinclusion@gmail.com.

Become a Community Partner

At KEYS we are committed to contributing to local businesses and the community! We welcome all opportunities for our participants, as individuals or as a group, to gain work experience in our local community.

Help us Find a new HOME!

We are looking for our own dedicated space to rent in the Junction/Bloor West and or Roncesvalles area. Kitchen facilities a must! Please contact Gail Pennington (gpennington@sympatico.ca)

KEYS COOKS AGAIN



Quotes



Working with KEYS has brought more joy and happiness in my life than words can express and everything you and the team do is truly incredible and inspiring! I feel honoured and blessed to get to be a part of this awesome community Caitlin- Music Expert



I truly love KEYS and to know that you can feel the care and that they are learning things makes me happy and light. I appreciate the sense of teamwork and friendship.

Jenny- High Park Nature Centre



I like cooking and seeing people at KEYS. I love doing Art and helping my friends out. I come to KEYS Tuesday and Thursday alone on the TTC. It's important to keep busy and so I help in the kitchen a lot! Annie- Participant

How can we assist in making the participant's day fulfilled and provide the avenue for self-growth?

During my short time I have found everyone at KEYS, the Board, the staff and volunteers have that sole goal in mind. Greg C. KEYS Board Director

My favourite part of KEYS is being with everyone. I really like singing and music with André. I fold the aprons and do cooking at KEYS- Jayson- participant

This job is bringing so much joy into my life & I am honoured to work for and with amazing participants and staff. Thank you for this glorious opportunity. Julia- -KEYS Monday AC



Our Heartfelt Thanks!

*"I love KEYS. I love
all my friends"*
Maxine M.

*[At KEYS] We
are a family.*
Christine R.

