

# Happy New Year!



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# Message From Our CEO



We are writing this issue of Connections in January, the month named after the ancient Roman God, Janus. Janus is usually depicted as having two heads, one looking backwards and one forwards, and that is what we are doing as well.

2014 was an amazing year! We were privileged to meet and serve more clients than ever before; wonderful, courageous and determined people who are working hard to overcome their challenges.

The more we expand our work and reach out to fill gaps in services, the more we depend upon the support of our donors to make this possible. And we are so fortunate to have so many generous supporters willing to reach out and take a Leap of Faith with us.

From our annual Christmas Concert, to the 2014 Scotiabank Charity Challenge, to generous corporations, foundations, churches and individuals, LOFT donors stepped up over the past year as never before.

We cannot say “Thank you” often enough to show what your support means to us, and especially to the people we serve. We could not do this work without your help.

As we look ahead, we already see opportunities to do even more, to serve more people and continually improve to ensure that every client receives the best possible supports and services. We are excited about 2015, and we hope you will join us again, and share the excitement.

On behalf of all of our clients, our Board of Directors and staff, I wish you a Happy New Year and a Happy and Healthy 2015.

Terry McCullum

## E-NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE!

Would you like to receive our newsletter in electronic format instead?

Head online at [www.loftcs.org](http://www.loftcs.org), and let us know via the Newsletter Sign-up option on the front page.

## Ministers Visit LOFT



*Ministers Hoskins and MacCharles*

The residents and staff of LOFT Sherbourne High-Support House were excited to have the Hon. Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long Term-Care and the Hon. Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Children and Youth Services, pay a visit at the end of November.

The Ministers were there, along with representatives of other mental health services organizations and members of the press, for the announcement of the second phase of Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, launched in 2011.

This phase will focus on supporting the transition between youth and adult services, addressing a service gap that has been a particular concern of LOFT for some time. It will also include the creation of additional supportive housing, and the appointment of an advisory committee to help develop a funding model to improve outcomes, deliver higher quality care, and ensure that programs are better tailored to the needs of local communities.

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# A Look Back at 2014

**A**t the close of 2014, LOFT found itself looking back over a year of important changes. Here are some of the most significant developments.

## SENIORS

Back in 1999 and 2000, LOFT was looking for ways to support vulnerable seniors. With no housing available, we started taking our support services to Toronto Community Housing buildings where large numbers of at-risk seniors were already living.

In 2014, we launched Mount Dennis Supported Housing in the Jane and Westin Road area of Toronto, bringing to five the number of LOFT programs located in TCH apartment buildings and marking the first time we have been able to offer this type of service to adults as well as seniors. The result: 150 more at-risk men and women are able to receive individualized support and an additional 200 to 300 people will benefit from community outreach services.

Two of our other TCH-based seniors programs, College View and Dunn Avenue have expanded as well. In 2009, these two programs served about 95 people a year. By the end of 2014, that number had grown to more than 170.

## SUPPORTS

We made 2014 the “Year of the Peer” at LOFT. Peer Workers are individuals who, as a result of their own experience of mental health and addiction issues, are able to offer a unique type of support to clients.

***The following was written to staff at LOFT's McEwan Housing and Support Services.***

“I do not like to use the words; low, blue or in the dumps. I like to say I was in a valley and it is up to me to put one foot in front of the other. Sometimes it's a short walk, other times it's long and rocky. But there is a way out, the first step is asking for help. McEwan staff has been there every time I have asked. It has been McEwan staff that has helped me to see that there is a way out, and to see the world in a new way.

I would like to thank McEwan staff, past and present, especially Kay Roesslein for the days gone by and for all their patience and understanding.”

- E.R.D.D.2.2

The value and impact of Peer Support is widely recognized so, although it is not yet fully funded by government, we decided to just do it. Thanks to the generous support of our donors, LOFT now has between 8 and 10 Peers, ranging from trained professional Peer Support Workers to youth who mentor their fellow clients - and clients are benefitting daily.

## ADULTS

In 2014 we were able to make some changes to one of our oldest housing sites. Sherbourne House now has sufficient staffing to serve clients with very high needs. At the same time, 3 of the house's 11 rooms have been designated as “transitional” housing for people coming out of hospital and needing intensive support while they regain their confidence and stability living in the community. Both these changes are filling long-standing service gaps for at-risk adults. We expect the transitional rooms will serve as many as 12 people a year in addition to the 8 long-term residents.



## YOUTH

A major development in LOFT's youth services has been the 2014 launch of the Community Evening and Weekend Treatment Program. It is important because it fills time periods when youth are most vulnerable and no other programming has existed. And also because it is community-based so it can feel more accessible than – say - hospital-based services. This Program now has five groups a week with about 130 young people attending regularly.

It has certainly been an exciting and fulfilling year during which LOFT has been able to undertake some truly exciting projects that fill gaps. Most importantly, at the end of the year, more people with complex challenges have more access to more services. LOFT is fortunate to have a staff of individuals dedicated to providing the best possible service and eager to embrace change. But, none of this would be possible if we were not also fortunate to have the wonderful and generous support of you, our donors. You have made this possible!

# 24th Annual Concert A Success!

LOFT kicked off the Holiday Season with our 24th Annual Christmas Concert on Monday, December 1st at St. James Cathedral in downtown Toronto. This was our highest grossing concert in the past few years raising a total of almost **\$90,000!** Thank you to everyone who supported the event!

A big thank you goes out to our spectacular performers: Breanne Dietrich, Mark Dubois and The Studio Singers, Christopher Dubois, Billy Newton-Davis, Micah Barnes, Dan Stacey and The Black Swans (Graham Hargrove and Jef McLarnon), Sally Armour-Wotton, Broadway (Diane Leah, Heather Bambrick, Julie Michels), Jonathan Renaud, Thom Allison, Tim Elia, and the Canadian Men's Chorus.

Special thanks to our Artistic Director Kelly Walker and to the talented students at the Ryerson Theatre School for making this event possible. A big thank you also goes out to St. James Cathedral for providing the beautiful space for this event and to Jack A. Frost and RP Dynamics for providing the lighting and sound equipment! Last, but not least, thank you to our two brave clients, Dan and Mike, for sharing their stories.

To view more photos: [www.loftcs.org/2014-concert-photos](http://www.loftcs.org/2014-concert-photos)

**Please save the date for our big 25th Annual Christmas Concert on Monday, December 7, 2015!**

## THANK YOU OUR 2014 CONCERT SPONSORS!

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Sheridan Nurseries  
St. James Guild of Change Ringers  
St. James Cathedral  
The Hotel Victoria



*Grand Finale!*



*Dan Stacey and The Black Swans  
(On stage: Graham Hargrove, Dan Stacey and Jef McLarnon)*

# Guaranteeing the Future

Margaret Georgina Chambers

October 18, 1916 - October 13, 2013

Margaret Chambers loved and invested in her community. A University of Toronto mathematics graduate, she was one of the first six employees of the Cooperators and was an active member of the Liberal Party in Beaches-East York. She also invested her time, energy and support in numerous charities over the years.

Margaret had supported LOFT for many years when, in 2007, she entered a raffle and won a handmade quilt, donated by another supporter. When she came to pick up her prize, she was so lovely and gracious - and clearly thrilled! - that she charmed us all. She took that opportunity to find out more about LOFT and she apparently liked what she heard, because over the next few years she made several very generous gifts. LOFT considered Margaret a



LOFT CEO Terry McCullum and Margaret in 2007.

very special friend, and we know that we were not alone in this.

To ensure her investment in her community lived on, after recognizing many of the people who were important in her life, Margaret divided the remainder of her estate among the organizations she cared about most, including LOFT, Victoria College,

and a number of healthcare organizations. LOFT has honoured Margaret's memory by making her gift part of our investment fund, to help ensure future stability and provide the resources and flexibility to continue to reach out to those most in need.

We are sincerely grateful for Margaret's investment in LOFT over the years. It is a vote of confidence in our work and, more importantly, it ensures that

the most vulnerable and marginalized in our community will be able to turn to LOFT for support, services and hope, into the future.

For more information on charitable bequests, please contact Director of Development, Jane Corbett at 416-979-1994 ext. 227, [jcorbett@loftcs.org](mailto:jcorbett@loftcs.org).

***"I cried a lot that night. Someone believed in me..." - Heather***

Dear Ingles Program,

I first moved into Ingles in 2009. I was broken and had hit yet another emotional, physical, and spiritual bottom. I cried a lot that night. Someone believed in me.

Unfortunately after 5 months I left. But Ingles had left an imprint of hope and a glimpse of recovery I carried with me as I yet again, became closer and closer to another bottom.

By August 2013 I had picked up more drugs, accumulated more toxic behaviour and depleted all of my self-esteem, dignity and self-respect. I was suicidal, and consumed with anxiety, insomnia and overwhelming symptoms of PTSD, along with an overpowering obsession to use.

I was terrified and called from detox. I was determined not to give up this time although I thought I could never stay clean. A week later I moved in.

I never imagined that the incredible low I had felt sitting in detox would turn into a story of success. Ingles was there for me. They answered my call and have literally helped save my life.

I owe enormous thanks to ALL the staff, residents and the program itself. To all the donors that help keep the doors open for those of us who need it, they're saving lives by believing in us as well.

Today I have 15 months clean and counting... and even BETTER, I'm genuinely happy and far from broken.

Thank you, Thank you, THANK YOU!! From the bottom of my heart, and all the spaces in between,

**Heather**

December, 2014

## Calling all FaithWorks Donors!

LOFT is proud to be a FaithWorks Ministry Partner and we are so grateful for the financial support this provides.

We want to make sure everyone who supports LOFT through FaithWorks is kept up to date on the impact of their generosity.

Our quarterly newsletter is available by mail or in electronic format via email.

If you are reading this and you or someone you know is a FaithWorks donor who does not receive our newsletter but would like to, please sign up by calling 416-979-1994 ext. 233 or via our website at [www.loftcs.org](http://www.loftcs.org).



## • WANTED • NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS

The newsletter you are currently reading was brought to you in part by a volunteer! We rely on our awesome team of volunteers to stuff envelopes and assemble every mailing we send out. Our volunteers save us from having to pay thousands of dollars a year for mail house services.

LOFT has 8-10 mailings a year. Each mailing takes half a day on a weekday morning at our administrative office in downtown Toronto. We are just a few short blocks from the King Subway Station. You will receive a phone call for each mailing and you can volunteer for as many, or as few, as you like.

You would work alongside other volunteers and would make a huge difference in helping us keep costs low.

If you would like to help, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator Ted Krawchuk at 416-979-1994 ext. 244 or Amy Tran at ext. 233.

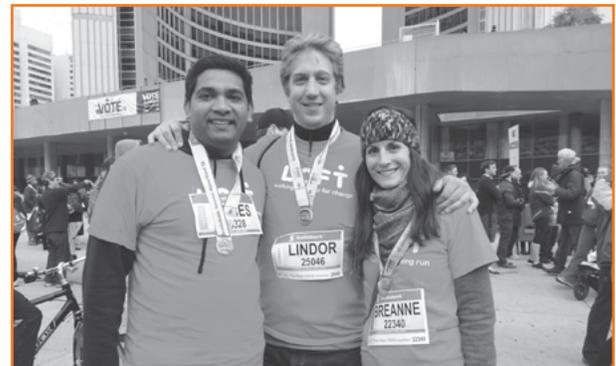
## FINAL SCOTIABANK RACE REPORT



We are so pleased to report LOFT's participation in the 2014 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge raised a final total of **\$45,978.88!**

Team LOFT has participated for 5 years and has raised a cumulative total of **\$223,479.19** with 584 participants!

Thank you for being a part of this journey with us!



## Save the Dates!

### Volunteer Appreciation Week

April 12-18, 2015

### LOFT Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

### Toronto Pride Streetfair and Pride Parade

Streetfair taking place from June 26-28 with the Parade on June 28

### Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

### LOFT 25th Annual Christmas Concert

Monday, December 7, 2015