



Lizzy Adewodu

## Home (and a Hot Meal) for the Holidays

Part of LOFT's mission is to offer our clients unwavering support and hope, no matter what challenges come our way. While we're proud of that resilience, we have to admit that COVID-19 has tested us in ways that were unimaginable just 10 months ago.

Happily, though – and just in time for the holidays – this is a great news story, one that's all about ensuring food security and human connection for our most vulnerable clients, just when they needed it most.

Crosslinks Seniors Housing & Support Services, in Northwest Toronto, is home to low-income clients with underlying health issues. It's normally a bustling place, with staff on hand 24 hours a day to make sure clients get the help they need to live with dignity.

When COVID hit, life at Crosslinks had to be completely reimagined. The residence is in the heart of Toronto's northwest, a neighbourhood long served by LOFT programming -- and one disproportionately impacted by the virus. For the most part, staying safe for this group of at-risk seniors meant staying home. And since family members could no longer lend a hand in person, our amazing staff members stepped in to fill the void, prepping meals, helping with personal care and more.

*"I do grocery runs for clients every morning and go to restaurants to get local food so they can keep it in the fridge and re-heat it,"* explains Lizzy Adewodu, Psychogeriatric Case Manager at Crosslinks. Lizzy's main role is connecting clients to health and wellness resources. Our long-standing partnership with Second Harvest also helps ensure residents access the fresh food they need.

Even a spotless home and full fridge can't reduce the loneliness brought on by the pandemic. *"Sometimes I'm the only person clients see,"* Lizzy explains. Like her colleagues, she is going above and beyond. *"I give residents my work cell phone so they can call any time if they feel like talking. The most important thing is to put a smile on their faces."*

This area has been hit hard by COVID. While the increased workload is challenging for staff, they know that building strong bonds is what Crosslinks is all about. This holiday season, we're celebrating the connections we've made in the face of COVID-19, whether they're forged by a hot meal, a friendly face, or someone who's always happy to lend an ear.



### Decades of Powerful Support from St. Clement's

LOFT got its start as Anglican Houses, an independent charity that worked to meet growing needs in the community.

Over the years, LOFT has evolved to reflect the rich diversity of the clients we serve, and we're now privileged to partner with a wide range of organizations that believe in the power of what we do.

One of these organizations is Toronto's St. Clement's Church. St. Clement's has a tireless Outreach Committee that has supported LOFT's efforts for almost 30 years – and in almost countless ways. Whether it's serving weekly hot lunches, tree planting, donating much-needed supplies like blankets and socks, or raising an astounding \$10,000 annually, St. Clement's is steadfast in its commitment to us and our clients. We couldn't be more grateful.

## Creating double the impact with our Board Match Campaign

Through the shared experience of this pandemic, we have learned to lean on and support each other in new ways. What remains constant is LOFT's responsiveness to what goes on in the larger community, and our deep commitment to meeting the needs of those with the most complex needs.

Our recent Giving Tuesday campaign was an example of how we take a leap of faith together to ensure we're there, reaching out in response to our clients' unmet needs.

Our amazing board of directors has committed to matching every dollar we receive in December, up to an incredibly generous \$45,000. Donations to this year's Giving Tuesday campaign will help to provide more than 5,600+ meals to seniors who would otherwise struggle to fill their plates.

David, one of our senior clients, lives at LOFT's St. Anne's Place residence. He believes that having a place to call his own saved his life. *"I don't know where I would be... I am so glad to be living here."*

We are all in this together. Our frontline staff continue to make personal sacrifices in order to be there for our clients. And donors, like you, continue to step up so that we can help offset the gap needed to ensure that vulnerable seniors have access to a hot meal and hope this holiday.

## 2020 Donation Deadline is Approaching

December 31 is your last chance to receive a charitable tax receipt for 2020! Visit [loftcs.org/match](http://loftcs.org/match) to donate online, or call 416-979-1994 ext. 2033. Thank you for your continued support!

David Watton



## LOFT's Client Wish List

COVID-19 has put a great strain on the communities and people we serve. Many are going without much-needed supplies.

Please consider a donation of the following items:

- Gift cards (Visa or Mastercard preferred so clients can shop for lowest prices wherever they have access);
- Personal Care Kits: Tooth brush + Toothpaste; Shampoo, conditioner, and body wash; Razors and deodorant; Hairbrush and comb;
- Move-in Housing Kits: New linens for a single bed; Pillows; Comforter; Sheets; Throws and blankets; Bath Towel sets; Shower curtains; Toilet paper; Dish and laundry soap/pods; Cleaning supplies;
- Stay Home/Winter Kits: Snack items; Apparel (socks, hats, gloves, winter wear); Board games and puzzles.

Do you have something you'd like to donate? Email [fundraising@loftcs.org](mailto:fundraising@loftcs.org) today!