
KEY NOTES



North York Women's Centre: Opening Doors for Women

Please welcome our new students!

To all the wonderful women at the North York Women's Centre: I am so very excited to introduce myself to all of you! My name is **Milena Boden**, and I am one of the three enthusiastic placement students at the Centre this year. This is my first and only practicum as part of a Bachelor of Social Work program at York University, so I am ready to experience everything! Since starting this past September, I have been given the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in many areas. Through helping out in the office with answering the phones and generally 'listening in' on the day-to-day events at the Centre, I am able to discover who the wonderful women are who come to us, as well as learn about the social service agencies that work in partnership with us throughout the Toronto region.

Furthermore, I have been given the chance to co-facilitate two support groups for this fall session (Letting Go, Moving On and Breaking Free), which has proven to be very inspirational. My co-facilitators Mary Benedetto and Roz Giller allowed me to practice my skills and were very supportive and encouraging. I had a great time interacting with the participants in both groups, and hope that we have had a positive impact on each other. I will be a part of two more groups in the winter session, which will give me even further insight into facilitation.

Throughout the next months, I am hoping to learn more about committee work by being a member of the Volunteer Committee as well as by sitting in on

other committee meetings from time to time. This will enable me to better understand how the NYWC's functions, and will allow me more experience with the many people who are sharing their time and knowledge in contributing to the Centre. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge everyone for welcoming me so sincerely, and to thank all the remarkable women who have trusted me to share in their stories.

My name is **Angela McKenzie**. I am a student at George Brown College studying in the Assaulted Women's and Children Advocate Program. I am in my last year and have been exposed to many issues concerning violence against women.

The NYWC was on our placement list at school and I came in for an interview earlier this year with Melissa Wong, the Program Manager. I was given the opportunity to do my placement at the Centre, and it has provided me with valuable experiences in working with women issues.

I am working with other women who have the same goals as myself. We want to have a safe place for women to meet, learn and share important information and experiences.

I have become close to some of the participants and feel that these women are also making a connection with me. Being at the NYWC has given me the opportunities to meet with other

organizations, which have all been great experiences.

I am looking forward to grow here at the Centre and use my knowledge at other places.

My name is **Ronit Abramov** and I am placement student here at the North York Women's Centre. I am a part-time student at Seneca College enrolled in the Social Service Worker program and this is my first field placement. I have been with the NYWC since September and since then I had the opportunity to work with many wonderful women.

My role at the NYWC varies; I provide information, referral, and support to women who call or drop into the Centre, register women to programs, and other general office support. I also had the chance to be involved with the POINT outreach program with NYWC's Volunteer Coordinator, Mulu which was a great opportunity to meet and network with other agencies that will enable me to assist others.

In addition, the NYWC gave me the opportunity to co-facilitate support groups. I am currently co-facilitating a Women's Discussion Group at the Doorsteps Neighborhood Services with Patricia Wilson, which was my first group. Due to this experience, I had the opportunity to meet a remarkable group of women. I brought the women different resources to the group, such as presenters about Chinese herbs, expressive healing, stress management, breast cancer, homecare services, and nutrition. The second group is Assertiveness with Lilian Zepeda. I am excited for this group as it gives me the opportunity to plan, design and develop an agenda with discussions, activities and role-plays.

I would like to thank the NYWC for giving me the opportunity to develop and expand my skills, and I am looking forward to running more groups in the New Year.

A Message from the Volunteer Coordinator

The past few months working as a Volunteer Coordinator at the North York Women's Centre have been a good experience for me. My prior

involvement as a legal clinic receptionist gave me the opportunity to know what the NYWC does to support and empower women. Now as a Volunteer Coordinator, I know closely how the Centre empowers women to achieve positive changes in their lives.

It is wonderful to work for an organization like the North York Women's Centre, where all women are welcomed, everyone is supported and where each person belongs and is accepted and respected. I am grateful to our Executive Director, Iris Fabbro, and the Board of Directors for giving me the chance to work at the NYWC. I am also thankful to Melissa, Maribeth, Melanie and all the volunteers for their support. I look forward to continuing working towards and contributing to the mission of the North York Women's Centre.

~ By Mulu Haddis

Introducing our Community Outreach Project

If you've been reading past newsletters, you will know that about a year and a half ago, the NYWC embarked on a strategic planning process and identified eight strategic directions for the next three years. These were presented to the general membership at our Annual General Meeting in September.

Not surprisingly, funding was one of the key strategic directions identified. In addition to our goal of achieving long-term financial sustainability, we were looking for funding to expand our work in local communities, where women need us most. Well, we're on our way! We are thrilled to report that the NYWC has received a two-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to recruit women in selected North York neighbourhoods and provide them with the training and support they need to run women's groups in their own communities. This will enable us to strengthen our work in those neighbourhoods where we already have a presence and introduce the NYWC to those neighbourhoods that we have not been actively involved in.

So, if you are a woman interested in getting a women's group started in your community, or if you already have a group but could use some support, give us a call.

Another Successful AGM

The NYWC's 16th Annual General Meeting was held on September 18th. Those in attendance were treated to great food, courtesy of Kera Catering and Takeout. After hearing about the NYWC's strategic planning results, the group was treated to a summary of the work of the Miss G Project, a project initiated by young women across the province committed to getting women's studies on the Ontario high school curriculum.

There was the business meeting, of course, where some by-law changes were approved and new directors elected. We are all sad that Anne Kutty, Treasurer and Vice-chair, is leaving the Board, having completed her second three-year term. We will miss Anne's wisdom and insight. Elske de Visch Eybergen, Board Co-chair, and Maria Luisa Elias, Fundraising Committee Chair, also completed their terms on the Board. Elske is leaving the GTA for less hectic pastures. We are sorry to see her go and wish her all the best. With respect to Maria Luisa, our loss is the YWCA's gain.

We welcome to the Board newly elected directors **Nancy Bardecki, Irene Barone, Paulett Ramsay and Tanya White**. The success of our recent board/staff team-building workshop suggests that we have a strong team that is committed to moving the NYWC forward.

The new Board met after the AGM and elected a new executive. They are:

Chair – Carmen Mancini

Vice Chair – Trisha Cipriani

Treasurer – Trish Thomas

Secretary – Aisha Heywood Delpeache

NYWC in the NY Community

Thursday November 2, 2006, was the 9th Annual North Toronto Community Fair day. The event took place at the Yonge & Eglinton Centre Court. The Community Fair was organized by POINT (People and Organizations in North Toronto). Participating agencies included Central Eglinton Community Centre, Self-Help Resource Centre, Toronto Public Health, POINT, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Health information Centre and others. All of the agencies had information displays regarding their programs and services. The information was on social, health and recreational programs.

Some of the activities that attracted people were the music played by singer, Jay Douglas and the draw prizes donated by mall merchant's in the community. It was nice to see some people dancing and enjoying the music. During the event people were testing free healthy vegetarian food prepared by volunteers from the Yorkminster Park Meals on Wheels.

We had the opportunity to exchange information and brochures with other community service providers and we had over 100 people visit our table!

Thank you to Ronit for re-organizing our display board and for volunteering at the event. Thank you also to Ada for volunteering at the event.

Bingo Volunteers URGENTLY Needed

♀ Minimum time commitment is 5 hours/session

♀ Game times vary; most sessions are Wednesday mornings with evening sessions available in April, 2007.

Interested in joining a NYWC Committee?

♀ Fundraising, Program or Volunteer Committee positions are available

♀ Minimum time commitment is 5 hours/month

Please contact us at [416-781-0479](tel:416-781-0479) or visit www.nywc.org for more info!

Thank You to our Supporters

We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their recent donations to the North York Women's Centre.

AGM Silent Auction Donations

Art Gallery of Ontario
Canada's Wonderland
Druxy's
Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre
HBC
Il Fornello
Jazz.FM91
Louis Chu & Friends
Mario Lupo Hair Design
Mulu Haddis
Mysteriously Yours Dinner Theatre
Ontario Science Centre
Second City
Shoppers Drug Mart
SoulPepper Theatre
Tarragon Theatre
The Keg
The Royal Ontario Museum
The Weather Network
Tim Horton's
Toronto Blue Jays
Toronto Maple Leafs
Toronto Raptors
Toronto Women's Bookstore
Winners

\$500 and over

The Church of St. Philip the Apostle
Sherry Nelligan

\$200 and over

METRAC

\$100 and over

Wendy Fraser

To \$99

Joan Asner
Irene Barone
Sheryl Brodey
Francine Morissette

Community News

Congratulations to **Victoria Park Collegiate Institute** on their fundraising event, which ended up raising a grand total of \$383.41 – all of which was donated to the NYWC! You may remember that Victoria Park C.I. has been active with NYWC in the past. Thank you for all your help and continued support.

We welcome the following new volunteers and facilitators to the NYWC: **Nana Boateng, Davin Brown, Julia Joseph, Blanche Klein and Pauline Mulder**. We look forward to your contributions at the Centre.

We are thrilled that long-time group facilitator, **Roslyn Giller** is on the road to recovery and welcome her back. She has been co-facilitating the "Breaking Free" group this fall.

There always seem to be new babies at the NYWC. Here are the latest:

Renee Xu, our volunteer webmaster, have birth to her second son, Greg, on September 6th.

Long-time volunteer and former board chair, **Sharissa Ellyn**, followed suit, giving birth to her second son, Jacob, on October 11th.

Congratulations and best wishes go out to them and their families.

Congratulations also go out to former staffer, **Rahel Appiagyei**, who has been nominated for a YWCA Young Woman of Distinction award.

And to former board chair and long-time NYWC supporter, **Caroline Connell**, on her appointment as editor-in-chief of Today's Parent magazine.

Finally, our thoughts are with former volunteer and long-time NYWC supporter, **Batya Hebdon**, who is currently battling the "fight of her life". Batya, your strength is an inspiration to us all.