

Youth Opportunities Unlimited: Cornerstone Update

Community and Protective Services Committee
November 11, 2013

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YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED

www.you.on.ca

Overview of Youth Opportunities Unlimited

- Created in 1982 to assist youth facing challenges entering the labour market
- Providing outreach, lifeskills, basic needs and support services to street involved youth since 1992
- A leader in social enterprise since 1993 and now training 70 – 100 youth annually through hands-on business training
- Over the past 6 months YOU has served 2,738 youth; been visited 16,691 times and placed almost 500 students into summer employment
- YOU's work has been recognized through local, provincial and national awards for our innovations and commitment to youth. In 2008 we were the only Canadian entry into a global listing by ILO for best practices in youth employment services



Our Mission
YOU supports youth to build skills, confidence and independence to reach their potential.

Our Vision
A community where youth are embraced and will thrive.

Our Values
In all we do, we remain:
Accountable
Collaborative
Compassionate
Courageous
Innovative
Persistent



Cornerstone Highlights

- Municipal investment of \$1.9million leveraged a total investment of \$5.8 million from senior government and private sector to achieve the following:
 - ✓ 30 affordable housing units for youth
 - ✓ Accessible residential and commercial space with 100% occupancy at a key downtown gateway
 - ✓ Restoration of historical façade
 - ✓ Educational programs for up to 80 students daily
 - ✓ Innovative community meeting space and publicly accessible green roof
 - ✓ Support programs for 80 youth daily
 - ✓ Training for 40 youth annually in the café
 - ✓ community partnerships with education, health, private sector, public sector and faith groups to help local at-risk youth



Youth Profile for Cornerstone

- We are seeing an increased number of young moms and expectant moms coming to the centre daily
- Healthcare has a roster of 20 families in its first 3 weeks; providing family healthcare to those youth who lack a family physician
- Students needing alternative education are referred to the centre's 2 classrooms
- Vulnerable youth with mental health and/or addictions issues will be participating in business training through Rise; partnership with Ivey Business School and MindYourMind; funded by Rotman Family
- Up to 100 vulnerable youth access YAC daily for basic needs, community referrals, lifeskills programming and guidance



Cornerstone Programs and Services

- 2 alternative education programs serving 80 students daily
- Affordable housing for 30 youth and families
- Drop in services for up to 80 youth daily
- Training for 40 youth at the café
- Healthy meals for 200 seniors daily for Meals on Wheels
- Primary healthcare for youth lacking family physician



Cornerstone Impacts

- 2012 winner of national Eva's Initiatives Award to end Homelessness
- Winner of 2012 London Heritage Award
- Model has been highlighted as a best practice through CHRA conference, OMSSA and CMHC
- Visited by delegations from UK, Australia, other Ontario and Canadian cities and being replicated by York Region
- Café has produced up to 1,200 meals daily for catering, walk in customers, youth in need at the Youth Action Centre, Meals on Wheels seniors, patients of LHSC's new eating disorders clinic; all while providing training to youth
- New partnerships with TVDSB, MLHU, Fanshawe, LIHC, Ivey Business School, Meals on Wheels, London Community Resource Centre, MindYourMind, LHSC, London Property Managers Assoc, LSTAR
- New private sector investments supporting local youth from Hayman Construction, Libro, London Life, LSTAR, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Plunkett Foundation, RBC, Sifton Family Foundation, TD.

