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Foundations

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Grants

Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation, Gosling Foundation, Government of Canada – Summer Jobs, Investing In Neighbourhoods (IIN) – City of Toronto, Mondelez International, Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada PromoScience, Ontario Multicultural Community Capacity Grants, Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Peter Gilgan Foundation, Sir Joseph Flavelle Foundation, Sustain Ontario, Toronto Parks & Trees Foundation, Whole Kids Foundation, World Wildlife Fund

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Benevity Community Impact Fund, Cabbagetown South Association, Dragonfly Meeting Solutions, Fern Avenue Public School, Grow It All Hydroponics, Honey Pot Herbals, Marcatus QED, Mark's Choice Ltd, Meridian Credit Union Ltd, Rose Avenue Public School, Shopbrain, Spruce Court Housing Co-operative

Staff & Volunteer Team:

Naomi Benoit, Ilana Guslits, Sunday Harrison, Polina Malkin, Sumaya Nakibuuka, Hilda Nouri

Summer staff: Alex Aubrey, Laura Chong, Kyle da Silva, Christina Jewell, Laika Macali, Jina Rew

Contract Staff: Christine Hayhurst, Lily Hu, Christine Luza, Natalie Meyers, Aaron Sauve, Cassie Scott, Charmyne Urquhart

Top Volunteers: Pamela Lalla, Chef Spencer Newlands, Ellen Sutherland

Placement Students: Kylee Hinde, Maseeda Majeed, Adeela Malik, Danielle Simonetta

Humber College Nursing Students: instructor Stephanie Hamilton, students Ifrah Abdi, Kyle Baisa, Priya Bharj, Kaitlyn Church, Amy Foreman, Micheal Gozen, Sarah Robbins, Ellen Waring

Top Urban Roots Youth Volunteers: Tristan Andrews, Trenton Paibomsai, Andy Yin

Board Members:

Susan Blagg, Matthew Callahan, Susan Jagger, June Komisar, Lara Mrosovsky, Jenniger Nguyen, Melana Roberts, Jeremy Runnalls, Hélène St. Jacques, Samantha Slater

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**2018
Annual Report**

Our Mission

To empower urban children, youth, adults and families to grow and prepare fresh garden foods, learn about nature and the environment, and foster a positive educational experience.



www.greenthumbsto.org

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In 2018, Green Thumbs sought ways to maintain our impact in the community while improving our efficiency and stability as an organization. We closed the year with renewed commitment to our mission, and with new and strengthened partnerships. We look back at 2018 with gratitude for the skill of our employees, the commitment of our volunteers, and the generosity of our donors.



PROGRAMS

Kids Growing

Children's exploration of nature and fresh food is at the heart of this program. Gardening and food activities on school grounds and in the classroom support curriculum objectives and provide healthy summer activities for young children. Programs take place at our partner schools, Nelson Mandela Park, Sprucecourt PS, and Winchester Junior & Senior PS, as well as in Allan Gardens Greenhouse.

Cook & Grow

In this well-received after-school project, an average of 12 elementary students in 16 sessions at Nelson Mandela Park and 19 sessions at Winchester Junior & Senior Public Schools, explored the connection between food production and food preparation/ consumption. By working together in school gardens and kitchens, students enhanced their emotional and social skills while learning about growing plants and using them to make a meal.

Urban Trees from Seed

Students participating in this project collected, saved and grew native tree seeds found in their communities. The seeds were planted in tree nurseries on school grounds and will remain there until they are ready to be replanted in the community. Through this work students help to increase the city tree canopy, improve air quality and provide habitats for pollinators. This project teaches

Guided by staff and volunteers, the children and youth of Green Thumbs prepare the soil, then plant, tend, harvest and share eating the garden bounty. It's a nurturing activity with lifelong lessons. As climate change escalates, the skills that our children are learning now could become even more essential. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your support!

Hélène St. Jacques, President

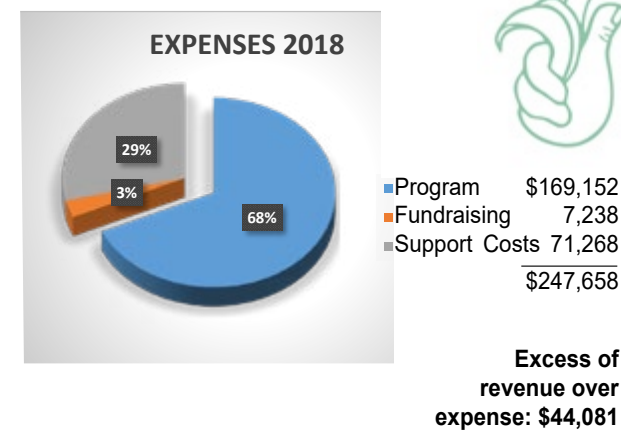
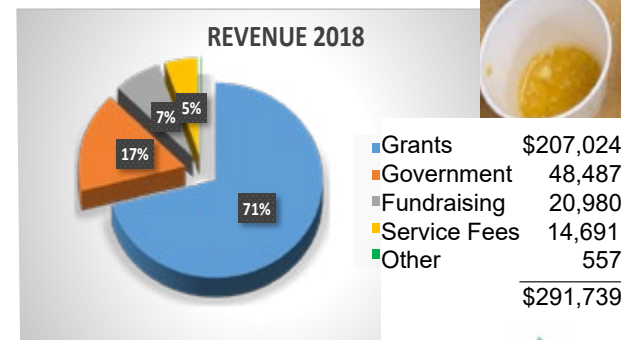
This year saw participant opportunities for 4,449 children and 327 youth. Sixty-three teachers were amazing partners! With excellent grant funding and new community partners helping with fundraising, we showed ourselves to be resilient and ready for the challenge of meeting children's and youth's needs for nature, fresh food, fun in the outdoors and even doing better in school because of our programs. I couldn't have dreamed up a better team of gardeners, and all-around great humans in our small but mighty org!

Sunday Harrison, ED



about the value of native trees to the environment and their importance in Indigenous cultures. Children learn the name of the tree in a native language. In 2018, 562 students from 12 schools took part in this project. Participating schools included, Adam Beck PS, Bruce PS, Church St Junior PS, Clairlea PS, Cresthaven PS, Hawthorne Bilingual Alternative Junior PS, Hunter's Glen Junior PS, Lord Dufferin PS, Rose Ave PS, Sprucecourt PS, Victoria Village PS, and Winchester Junior & Senior PS.

2018 in NUMBERS



TEACHERS SAY:

"Engaging, hands-on, educational and very relevant."

"Kinaesthetic learning in the garden is so vital."

"We wish it could have been a full day program!"

NEWS

Organic Certification

Two of our school gardens (Winchester Junior & Senior P.S., and Sprucecourt Public School) underwent a rigorous certification process and were Certified Organic by EcoCert in 2018.

CSI Rooftop

The green roof cultivation began in earnest in the spring of 2018, producing salad greens for sale to two local restaurants, the Show Love Cafe, and the Paintbox Bistro.

EVENTS

Spring is in the Air

Our annual event at the beautiful Allan Gardens Children's Conservatory brought families together for a spring plant sale, children's activities, refreshments and outdoor live entertainment. A celebration of community, supporters, and spring!

New Roots Dinner Series

In October, the New Roots Dinner Series, sponsored by Daniel et Daniel Catering and Events celebrated Green Thumbs, community, and the harvest season as over 100 people dined in six local Cabbagetown venues. Enticing menus were created by award-winning chefs at Daniel et Daniel and incorporated ingredients grown in our very own Green Thumbs gardens.

Urban Roots Youth

This after school program engaged an average of four youth weekly during the growing season who had an interest in food, the environment and urban agriculture.

This year, students learned and practiced agriculture techniques from early spring seed preparation in greenhouses, to readying school gardens for planting, caring for the gardens throughout the growing season, through to harvesting the fruits and vegetables.

By participating regularly in community farmers markets, youth learned about harvesting produce for sale, skills required in market vending and boosted their communication and customer service skills. The Regent Park Good Food and Cabbagetown Farmers markets were a fantastic place to meet neighbours and connect with community groups as the youth proudly displayed produce grown in local schools with the help of students, teachers, and community volunteers.

Youth were active participants in an intergenerational garden plot, where they worked with an average of 8 gardening enthusiasts from a local seniors' residence to grow a medicinal garden in Regent Park Community Garden, over four sessions.