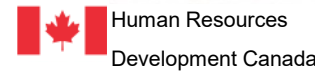


MANY THANKS!

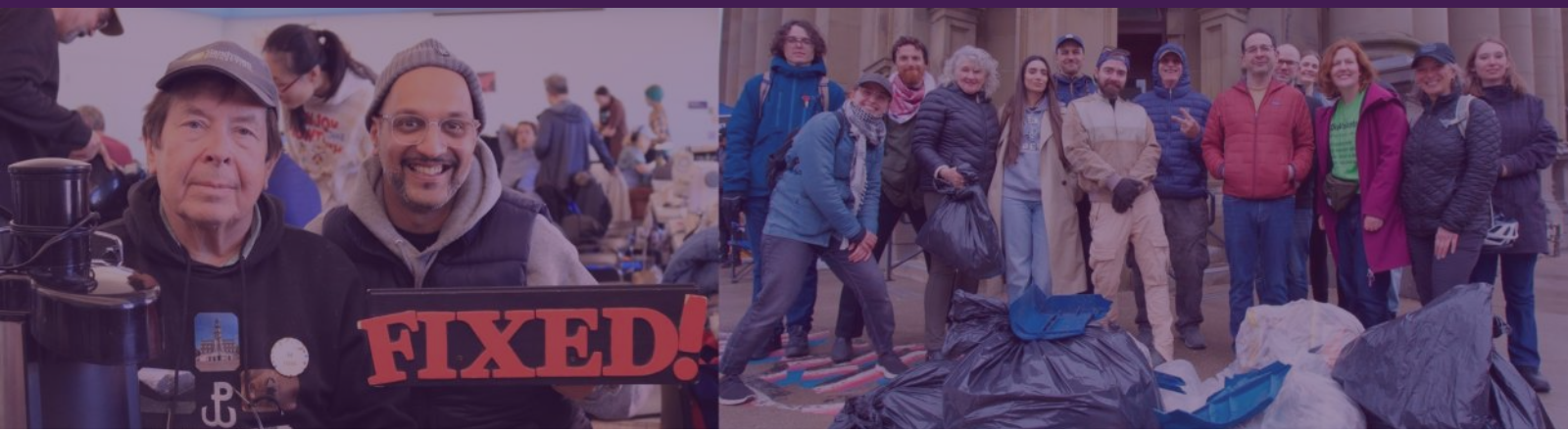
Thanks to our Board of Management, Centre staff, Funders, Partners, Volunteers and Community Members for your continued support.

The Ralph Thornton Community Centre is an agency of the [City of Toronto](#), operating under an independent community Board of Management. RTCC appreciates the over \$900,000 per year in core operating funds, along with major capital project funding, provided by the City of Toronto.

Funders and Partners: City of Toronto, Applegrove Community Complex, CUPE Local 2998, Don Valley Community Legal Services, Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre, Human Resources Development Canada, Literacy East Toronto, Mustard Seed/Fontbonne Ministries, Nellie's, New Horizons for Seniors, Ralph Thornton Community Organization, Riverside BIA, Riverdale Share, South Riverdale Community Health Centre, South Riverdale Child-Parent Centre, Toronto Foundation for Student Success, Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund, Toronto Neighbourhood Centres, Toronto Public Library Queen/Saulter Branch.



Annual Report 2023-2024



765 Queen St. East
 Toronto, ON M4M 1H3
 416-392-6810
 Fax 416-392-0025
www.ralphthornton.org

[f](#) RalphThorntonCommunityCentre [t](#) @ralphthornton

Cover Photo: For the past year, RTCC has been undergoing extensive renovations. This photo captures the state of our basement throughout 2022-2023.



VISION MISSION VALUES

OUR VISION Working to ensure a more vibrant, diverse, inclusive, liveable, participatory, healthy, and equitable Riverdale.

OUR MISSION The RTCC is a gathering place that welcomes, connects and engages the community in all its diversity.

OUR VALUES

Inclusion and Respect: The RTCC supports and adheres to the City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy. We operate in a manner which models ethical, respectful and inclusive service delivery and employment practices, encourages diverse perspectives, and ensures equitable treatment for all. The RTCC promotes social inclusivity in all its activities and programming.

Equity and Social Justice: The RTCC supports, acts and advocates for solution-focused policies and systemic changes that create long term improvement and fairness for all within our community and the larger society.

Collaboration and Partnership: The RTCC works collaboratively and in partnership with individuals, groups and organizations to achieve our mission and vision. We work in ways that engage community members, foster on-going relationships and build the strengths of the whole community.

Capacity Building: The RTCC supports community members, especially the more marginalized, to increase their ability to solve problems, define and achieve their objectives and fully participate in and contribute to community life.

Community Building: The RTCC actively promotes the building of relationships and collective action across and between our diverse communities to strengthen the whole.

RTCC Financial Report

Revenues from room rentals continued to be affected by the building renovations limiting available space for user groups. The reduction in federal grants for summer jobs in 2023 was partially offset by securing a new grant, applying one-time deferred revenue, and an increase in program user fee revenue. Increase in expenses related to additional renovation costs, including a full redesign and rebuild of the kitchen, as well as cybersecurity.

** Administration Funding: This is the funding RTCC receives from the City of Toronto to keep the building open and accessible to the community – it covers basic salary and benefits for the core staff as well as hard costs such as utilities and maintenance costs.*

	2023	2022
Administration Revenue *		
City of Toronto	925,518	842,541
Toronto Public Library	39,364	39,364
Total Administration Revenue	964,882	881,905
Program Revenue		
Grants		
City of Toronto	111,303	97,913
Government of Canada	43,603	77,614
Foundations	10,000	10,705
Other	49,649	26,562
Donations	40,565	18,921
Fundraising	2,114	16,629
Rental Income	23,850	20,148
User Fees	153,948	137,404
Other Revenue	4,354	1,991
Total Program Revenue	439,386	407,887
TOTAL REVENUE	1,404,268	1,289,792
Administration Expenses *		
Salaries and Benefits	774,911	748,650
Materials and Supplies	85,292	65,590
Purchase of Services	104,679	67,665
Total Administration Expenses	964,882	881,905
Program Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits	307,978	277,155
Materials and Supplies	6,442	11,141
Purchase of Services	95,632	71,746
Amortization of Capital Assets	4,052	1,343
Total Program Expenses	414,104	361,385
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,378,986	1,243,290
TOTAL SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	25,282	46,502

Renewing 765 Queen Street East

Maintenance staff are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the Centre's interior and exterior, planning and setup of furniture and equipment for programs, user groups, and special events.

What many visitors to the centre don't see is all of the work behind the scenes to maintain boiler/HVAC systems, disposal of hazardous waste materials/sharp objects, monitoring elevator operations and inspections, carrying out fire drills, monitoring security cameras and security building walkthroughs, and participating in the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

All of this work by the maintenance team contributes to a well-used building in good repair, safe and secure for members of the community.

With renovations now almost finished, we look forward to completely reopening the building.



Lewis Pearsall Exchange Loft and Reception

Reception is the first point of contact for most people coming to Ralph Thornton Community Centre. Reception staff look after everything from answering phone inquiries regarding hours, services provided, room rentals and location to providing support to individuals who attend the Lewis Pearsall Exchange Loft.

Today the Lewis Pearsall Exchange loft houses 7 public access computers, fax services, a free phone, free scanning and copy and printing services for a nominal cost. The Exchange Loft had to close during the 2020 pandemic and has steadily increased users yearly since its reopening. In 2023 there were a total of 3,870 users. With the recent restriction of services the Toronto Public Library was able to provide, usage increased dramatically as RTCC continues to be a vital institution in our community.

Room rentals are also an important part that RTCC plays in the community. We provide space to community groups, partner organizations and individuals needing space for meeting, forums, social gatherings, etc. As with the Exchange Loft, bookings are continuing to rebound from our shutdown during the pandemic.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Over the last year, the Board of Directors at RTCC has been focused on overseeing transition. We have seen the completion of the transition of the physical space within our building, a transition in leadership, and a transition to a new strategic plan.

Those who read the RTCC newsletters and annual reports will know that RTCC has been undergoing some extensive, seemingly never-ending renovations. These renovations are finally over, and RTCC is excited to be able to make use of the full building once again.

After almost a decade as the Executive Director at RTCC, John Campey retired earlier this year. John was a big part of RTCC. His welcoming nature meant that everyone who came through the doors of the centre found a home, and he will be greatly missed not only by all those involved at RTCC, but also by a much broader network of peers within Toronto's nonprofit and neighbourhood centre community.

The RTCC staff team stepped up to lead the organization through the transition process with staff members serving on the hiring committee for the new Executive Director. On behalf of the Board of Directors I would also like to acknowledge Colleen Grey who stepped in as Interim Executive Director, Lainey Little who served as Interim Manager of Strategic Initiatives, and Mariah Wheeler, who served as Interim Child and Youth Coordinator.

In March we welcomed Ravi Yee Joshi as the new Executive Director at RTCC. Ravi has a deep history within the RTCC Catchment area and we are looking forward to seeing his vision for the Centre emerge, as the Centre implements its new strategic plan with a focus on building internal strength as well as re-engaging and re-defining our role within the local community.

Heather Simpson

President, RTCC Board of Management

Ralph Thornton Community Centre Board of Management

Ejay Tupe, Martin Bryan, Maggi Redmonds, Lindsay Williams, Lisa Pottie, Heather Simpson (President), Ravi Yee Joshi (RTCC Executive Director), McKell Neilson, Ruby Kaliray, Hongmei Cai,



RTCC Staff

Hazeefa Arif (Children's Program), Alicia Butler (Children's Program), Elizabeth Decoste (Children's Program) Stephen Devine (Reception), Nora Dickensen (Caretaking Relief), Drew Dopwell (Maintenance Relief), Conley Downey (Maintenance), Alta Du Plooy (Reception Relief), Teri Freeman (Children's Program), Susy Glass (Volunteer Coordinator/Community Animator), Colleen Gray (Manager: Strategic Initiatives), Glenn Gustafson (Business Manager), Tony Hess (Mentor Program), Sharon Ho (Reception Relief), Nicoletta Ioannidis (Reception), Mark Johnson (Maintenance Coordinator), Ravi Yee Joshi (Executive Director), Iris Langlois-Smith (Children's Program) Lainey Little (Children's Programs Coordinator), Humayra Mukit (Reception Relief), Emily Pudupakkam (Children's Program), Naima Rahman (Mentor Program), Ming Redmonds (Fundraising/Communications Coordinator, Reception), Rose Scher (Administrative Coordinator), Ian Sieunarine (Maintenance), Mariah Wheeler (Children's Program), Janice Zhang (Settlement Programs Coordinator)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

With John's departure in December 2023, RTCC was fortunate enough to have Colleen Gray step out of her role as Manager of Strategic Initiatives, and step into the role of Interim Executive Director. She provided RTCC with the stability and leadership required to move towards welcoming a new Executive Director.

The year 2023-2024 has been a time of change at RTCC. Following a broad planning process, we adopted an ambitious new strategic plan. Large scale renovations to our historic building to bring it up to the standards of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, and funded by the City of Toronto, were largely completed on the upper floors by the end of 2023 wrapped up in the basement in spring 2024. More programs came back in person and we welcomed returning and new community groups to our space, reviving the vibrancy of the centre. We also said goodbye and happy retirement to John Campey, RTCC's Executive Director for the past 9 years, who left at the end of 2023.

John will be remembered for working to knit RTCC back into the fabric of the local community and establishing RTCC as an integral part of the community service sector in Toronto. He initiated and supported a variety of community events and partnerships and is well known in the South Riverdale neighbourhood. John was always generous in recognizing the work of staff and remains proud of establishing and maintaining a really good staff team. He also led RTCC through the difficult times of the COVID pandemic and managed to maintain the team and programming intact. As well as his accomplishments, staff and community members appreciated John's indefatigable sense of humour, often used to poke fun at himself.

In saying a fond farewell to John, we also welcome RTCC's new Executive Director, Ravi Yee Joshi.

Colleen Gray, Interim Executive Director, RTCC

Since starting as Executive Director in March of this year, I have received an overwhelmingly warm and supportive welcome from the Board, Staff, Volunteers, and community members.

The Ralph Thornton Community Centre serves a vital and irreplaceable role in our beloved East End neighbourhood. We fulfil this role through space provision, programs, services, and organizing in service of a broader vision of equity, inclusion and justice in our city.

I believe we will serve this goal by strengthening the capacity of the organization, stewarding our building and the relationships with our partners, and reaching out to meet the collective needs and aspirations of our



More "Adventures" for our Program Users

Summer RAC Camp



The Riverdale Adventure Centre (RAC) Camp is a fun summer day camp for children aged 6-12, with each of the 8 weeks having its own theme and range of activities including swimming, sports & games, arts & crafts and weekly outings. RAC Camp is offered to local residents with dedicated spaces in 4 specific streams: local low income families, residents of Toronto Community Housing, LGBTQ+ families, and a stream open to all. In 2023, a total of 403 children attended throughout the summer and 10 young people were employed at various levels from trainees to leaders. A parent commented, "[Child] has had an incredible time and told me this morning that this week has FLOWN by because she is having so much fun. The staff have all seemed conscientious, engaged, and fun, and as a parent I have felt confident that my daughter is safe and having a great time."



Senior Programs

Senior Programs are held in Mandarin for local Chinese seniors. Seniors' group meets weekly with a variety of topics for physical and mental health wellbeing; 20 seniors registered and 44 meetings held in 2023. A highlight of the program was their Garden Calendar. When asked for feedback, a member of the group said "I learned so many new things and new skills through the Senior Program and I feel happier than before. It is a must-to-do thing in my life now. Thank RTCC! Thank our community."

Wellness Line has a peer volunteer making weekly calls to isolated seniors to check in and to connect them to the communities and social services. From the feedback, seniors highly anticipated the phone calls and 100% were satisfied with the program. During 2023, 462 calls were made, totalling 6468 minutes.



After School at the **Ralph Thornton Community Centre**

RTCC After School, PD Day and March Break Camps

The After School Program supports children ages 6-12 from local public schools and provides outdoor playtime and art, sports, cooking, and science activities. PA Day and March Break Camps also include outings around the city. This year we provided 4846 healthy snacks and 244 meals.

In a 2023 survey of parents, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that their children were safe in the program and that staff are friendly and caring with the children. When asked what they liked about the program, one child said, "That they provide snacks, toys and we get to go outside." A current staff commented, "I love that this program caters to many different genres of fun activities for kids. It piques all of their interests in some way or another. I love that we offer snacks that the kids have a hand in making, keeping this new and exciting." A parent added, "This after school program is incredible. It's so thoughtful, and caring and it really nurtures our daughter. She also has a lot of fun and loves the staff working with her. It's very moving for me as a parent to see such love and kindness given to my daughter. Thank you for all that you're doing."



Mentor Program

Serving Chinese newcomer children who live in the neighborhood, the program focuses on language development and cultural adaptation through one-on-one and small group tutoring. After showing adaptability and creativity to serve fast-changing needs through the COVID pandemic, the program adapted a hybrid model in 2023, with half the sessions held in person and half remaining virtual.

In 2023, 65 children were served in the program, and another 62 on the waitlist were supported with information, referrals and connection to services. Teaming with the Toronto Star Santa Claus Fund, over 80 Christmas gift boxes were delivered to families. A total of 75 volunteers provided individual tutoring. Satisfaction surveys for children, parents, and volunteers ranged between 82% and 100% satisfied or very satisfied.

Reflecting on his experience as a tutor in the intensive summer program, one volunteer said "I had a great experience as a mentor this summer! It was rewarding to see and hear the improvements in my students' English skills, but also to see their confidence increase through the weeks. The learning activities were engaging and unique and added a fun twist to the afternoon. Lastly, I really enjoyed the morning camp portion, as it gave me an opportunity to better get to know the campers/ students, but also because it allowed me to 'relive' some of my childhood by playing on a playground again!"



Remembering Jenny

This year, we paid our respects to our beloved friend, Jenny Lowell, who passed away suddenly in October while traveling with her husband, Paul. Jenny was instrumental in the development of the RTCO, RTCC, as well as the South Riverdale Child Parent Centre over the course of three decades of service as staff, bookkeeper, and board member. Her contribution to the greater Riverdale neighbourhood and the Ralph Thornton Community will be timeless and her presence at the Centre will be missed.

Thank you, Jenny.



The Ralph Thornton Community Organization

One of RTCC's key partners is the Ralph Thornton Community Organization, a charitable foundation that supports RTCC programming as well as other important community causes. Last year, RTCO directed almost \$39,000 in charitable proceeds to RTCC and the Rivertowne Breakfast Program.



Our Building Partners:



SOUTH RIVERDALE



DON VALLEY COMMUNITY
LEGAL SERVICES



QUEEN/SAULTER
BRANCH

Community Clean-up Day

Thank you so much to everyone in the Leslieville and Riverside communities—residents, businesses, and community groups alike—who came together for our recent Community Cleanups. It was truly inspiring to see such a fantastic turnout, with so many of you dedicating your time to make our neighborhoods cleaner and greener. Your efforts set a remarkable example of what we can achieve when we work together.



Another “Taxing” Year at the Ralph Thornton Community Centre

The Ralph Thornton Tax Filer Clinic

RTCC is delighted to have just wrapped up our 7th annual free Tax Clinic for low income residents of our community. In 2024 we offered 84 in person appointments and 66 virtual appointments with 5 staff and volunteer tax preparers.

We partnered with at least 6 agencies through supporting their clients to have appointments with us. Tax filers claimed \$459,168.82 in benefits, resulting in an average of \$3144.95 total refunds directly to individuals. When asked about their experience with the tax clinic, one tax filer said, “*I am very satisfied with my service. Very professional, the service was done better than past services I have paid for.*” Another user said “*Most excellent service for seniors (who are losing touch with rapidly changing conditions). Thank You Very Much :)*”

- 46% of users were new to our Tax Clinic/Community Centre
- 90% of respondents were planning on spending their refunds on food or other households needs
- 60% of respondents would use their refunds to pay off bills
- 23% of respondents said they would use their refund for rent

Repair Café at RTCC

RTCC partnered with Repair Café Toronto and Seneca Polytechnic to organize three fantastic events this spring! We wanted to take a moment to thank the dedicated and hard working staff from each organization who helped pull together the amazing volunteers who brought a wealth of knowledge and expertise to our community, our fantastic workshop facilitators, Tim (Small Appliances) and Alvin (Laptop), and everyone who attended these events!



Winter Clothing Drive

In February and March of 2024 RTCC partnered with Toronto Drop-in Network (TDIN) for their winter clothing drive. Over the course of two weeks over 300 pieces of clean and gently used winter clothing was dropped off at our Centre by many fantastic community members.

Thanks to the help of our amazing volunteers, all the donated clothing was sorted, folded and bagged for distribution by TDIN.



More about.... Our Programs and Management

RTCC Youth Group/Leader In Training Program

Along with its partners, Applegrove and Eastview, RTCC is running a leadership in training program for youth ages 13-17 from local subsidized housing communities. The summer program includes skills training followed by supervised placements in our summer camps for 12 youth. Two youth groups for 20 youth are held throughout the school year, continuing to build leadership skills and creating a youth-led project to benefit their community. During the summer placements, youth workers observe how participants are putting their skills into action. During summer 2023, all 12 youth demonstrated communication and teamwork skills, and 5 of 12 also showed the ability to problem-solve.

One of the participants of the summer program commented, “I like this program, it’s good and helps us understand how to become leaders. It teaches us life skills like CPR, High Five training, etc. So I really enjoyed it and I look forward to coming back here next year.”

Finance and Administration

The Business Manager oversees the finances and the administration of the community centre. These responsibilities include preparing the core budget submission to the City and the global

budget (including both core functions and programs), handling payments and receivables, managing human resources and payroll, facility management, and coordinating risk management and cybersecurity. Key projects for 2023 included working with the City’s Information Security Office in creating new cybersecurity policies and procedures and ensuring all staff receive necessary cybersecurity training, transitioning to a new payroll and human resources information system which includes a time and attendance system to streamline payroll, and steering facility upgrades as part of the AODA renovations.

Regular Programming is offered by:

- Dance Circle
- Happy Gathering
- Huaxia Chorus
- ITF Tae Kwon Do
- Loraine Fleming School of Dance
- Joy of Writing
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Toronto English Country Dance Assembly
- WoodGreen Senior’s Tai Chi Group