



Community In Action

Changing lives together

FALL 2017



LEARNING LIFE LESSONS FROM HOMELESS KIDS

At our recent Donor and Volunteer Party, volunteer Arielle Loeb spoke about her experience working with children at the Red Door and the impact that they have had on her life.

"Last night, I saw Payam Akhavan, renowned UN prosecutor and human rights scholar, speak at the Massey Lecture. At the end, a child asked a question about what kids could do to help with human rights. His response: 'Everything. You have your whole life ahead of you. Help the kid who is being bullied or who is alone. And every morning, think about the end of your life and what you want to look back on and be proud of.'

I think it's a lesson we can all take to heart. And though Payam articulated that idea when he answered the child's question, it was that same idea that motivated me to do more. I got involved with the Red Door Shelter because I wanted to give back, contribute to society – really, the same reasons many of us are supporters.

I found my way to the Red Door specifically because I wanted to give back in the community where I live, which is Leslieville. Given where the need was, I ended up at the women's shelter. And I haven't looked back. Once a week, I get to hang out with about eight 6-12 year old kids while the moms have their peer-support meetings.

I feel like I'm the lucky one. I get to spend a couple of hours a week with kids who invariably teach me about what truly matters. We play games – connect 4 is a popular one. Jenga. They take much pleasure when I'm the one who makes the tower fall. Peta-Gaye, the truly incredible staff member, organizes craft activities. Slime making. Painting. We decorated gingerbread cookies in which the gingerbread became the carrier for more frosting than any of us could ever imagine eating.

So who are these kids? Kaleb and his sister Aleia who had such a love of life despite whatever harrowing situation they had come from. It was Aleia who was quick to remind us that beauty comes from within. There was Rana who saw snow for the first time, having moved here from Afghanistan last summer. We read together occasionally and I will tell you there is nothing quite like seeing her eyes light up as she powered through her



Continued from Page 1

books. And she made my eyes light up when I would walk in and she would give me a hug.

I'd be lying if I told you there weren't moments or comments that were heart breaking. There was one conversation that still stands out in my mind – somehow the topic of clothes came up and one of the kids asked why they always got used clothes. Why no new clothes. It wasn't fair.

It might be easy to say 'he should be thankful for what he has.' However, hearing these words struck me because it was a stark reminder that at the end of the day, these are just kids in a situation they didn't choose. Uprooted from whatever life they knew. If for a couple of hours a week, I can play connect 4 with them or play tag in the park, then for a couple of hours they can just be kids and hopefully for a moment, forget whatever else they might be dealing with.

These may be small gestures, but to quote Dr. Seuss from *The Lorax*, 'unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.'



CELEBRATING YOU!

Thank you to our special donors and volunteers who gathered for our annual Party on October 5th to celebrate the results of your incredible support over the past year.

Our thanks and gratitude to all of our wonderful supporters. Hope to see you at the party next year!

HELPING KIDS BE KIDS

Every day more than 80 children and youth find shelter at the Red Door with their parents.

Your donations help fund programs to support kids affected by homeless and abuse, providing enriching experiences and lasting positive memories.

"My favourite thing is the school-age program. It's the best!"
- Aaron, age 7



Learn more or help today at:
reddoorshelter.ca/programs/children



CHANGING LEADERSHIP

Our Executive Director of 14 years, Bernnitta Hawkins (left) announced her retirement at our recent donor and volunteer celebration.

Bernnitta has been a strong leader who brought excellence at all levels of the organization and was instrumental in navigating the many challenges we faced along the road to save our family shelter. She leaves the Red Door with a very strong foundation and we wish her a well deserved happy retirement.

We are very pleased to welcome our former Director of Client Services Carol Latchford (right) as our new Executive Director, and could not ask for a better person to continue Bernnitta's legacy. Carol brings with her many years of leadership experience and will continue to inspire excellence and guide the Red Door through the next stages of our journey.

TEAM RED DOOR ROCKS!

Team Red Door rocked it at our first ever B&O Yorkville 5k!

On September 10th, 83 runners and walkers laced up to run and raise funds for our children's programs.

Together they raised an amazing \$29,729 which will fund homework help and fun after-school activities for children and teens at the shelter.

We look forward to growing our team next year, and raising even more! Thank you to all of our fantastic team members and their generous supporters who have made a huge positive impact!



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING IN ACTION

Local business owners and friends Michael Kuipers, Geoffrey Moote, and Kurtis Meloche recently hosted a pop-up pub night during Leslieville Wanderlust street festival and raised over \$6,000 for Red Door.

"It was so much fun and people were very generous. Hopefully this is the first of many pop-ups," said Kuipers, adding supporters were more than happy to "buy a round for the Red Door".

OUR NEW SHELTER IS UNDERWAY

In October last year we began relocating our family shelter so we can house homeless families while a new family shelter is built back at our original location. Today we are settled at our interim location on Gerrard St. E. and construction of the new shelter is well underway and on track to be completed by December 2018.



The Community of Hope campaign continues to raise the \$3,000,000 needed for equipment, furnishings and services at the new shelter. To date \$2,400,000 has been donated. The E. & G. Odette foundation and P. & L. Odette foundation together have generously pledged to match gifts up to \$500,000, and there is \$155,000 remaining in this matching gift challenge.

We are looking forward to opening the doors to our new shelter in Leslieville where we first started sheltering homeless families in 1982. The modern, purpose-built shelter will be the healing sanctuary that homeless families need and will enable residents to build bright futures, with your support.

If you are interested in supporting the campaign knowing that your gift will go twice as far, please donate online at: reddoorshelter.ca/building-hope/donate or call 416-915-5671 ext. 225.



HAVE YOU SEEN OUR AD?

Our new text-to-give campaign launched in October and can be seen in a variety of restaurants and bars throughout the city.

Thank you to the amazing team who donated their time and talent to help us create the campaign:

WANTED! Sound + Picture, Drew Frohmann, Paul McClimond, Katie Griffin, Newad, PHD Canada, Ron Kosan, Blame Your Brother

Take the next step. Text REDDOOR to 45678 to donate \$10 today.



THANKS FOR SUMMER FUN

Thanks to your generous support, children at our shelter had the opportunity to go on some terrific trips around the city over their summer break and shared many memorable moments together.

Smiles like these are priceless. Thank you for making a difference.

reddoorshelter.ca/programs/children

UPCOMING EVENTS

Torq Ride for Red Door - November 2nd, 2017

Every first Thursday of the month join our friends at Torq Ride indoor cycling with 100% of proceeds donated to our programs.

reddoorshelter/event/upcoming



Families Building Families Holiday Portraits - November 5th, 2017

Capture happy family moments for the holidays with all proceeds going directly to Red Door.

reddoorshelter/event/upcoming



Blues for Red Door - November 5th, 2017

Annual charity Blues Revue featuring Juno award winner Harrison Kennedy and other top Canadian performers. Music fans, don't miss it!

bluesforthereddoor.ca



Gifts to Empower
Gifts that give twice

Gifts to Empower are unique and meaningful holiday gifts you can give in honour of someone that you care about. There are over 20 gifts to choose from and each one includes a beautiful personalized e-card or paper card.



To learn more visit:
reddoorshelter.ca/gifts-to-empower



See more events, or learn about hosting your own at reddoorshelter.ca/fundraise



DONATE

\$1 a day can change lives



VOLUNTEER

join our team to help



CONNECT

join our online community



SHARE

share your stories and feedback



21 Carlaw Ave. Toronto, ON, M4M 2R6
416-915-5671 | reddoorshelter.ca |
Charitable Registration 11930 3287 RR0001