



 new
circles

 glow

clothing | connections | community

ANNUAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2014 TO AUGUST 2015

A decade of **service**

Reflecting on our 10 year anniversary, New Circles is proud of the innovative programs that we deliver to help meet the needs of people living in poverty.

It is now ten years since **Cindy Blakely**, our founder, took on the challenge to support newcomers in meeting their basic needs and lay the foundation of New Circles. Cindy has worked tirelessly to engage a vast network of supporters who have made it possible to build a remarkable agency from the ground up – one that now provides thousands of families annually with free clothing, and other support services to help them build a brighter future.

The realization of our move to **161 Bartley Drive** has enabled the organization to confidently increase our capacity to meet the growing needs of communities affected by poverty. We have now expanded our catchment area to include the Taylor-Massey neighbourhood. Additionally, we have redesigned our clothing service to simulate a retail store and introduced it as **GLOW (Gently Loved Outfits to Wear)**. **GLOW** provides a unique platform

to develop employable skills in office administration and retail customer service through our certificate-based training programs.

This innovative approach to integrating skill building into our clothing service has opened doors to **new and exciting partnerships** within the retail sector and beyond.

In April, **Mayor John Tory** joined us for our Grand Opening, recognizing the importance of these services in welcoming newcomers and finding longer-term solutions to help them settle successfully.

To all of our dedicated donors, volunteers, staff and Board of Directors who sustain our efforts, we offer our sincere thanks for not only the past year, but the last **decade of service**. It is with optimism and enthusiasm that we look forward to our continued growth in the future.



Photo Credit: Stephen DiNallo

With Gratitude,

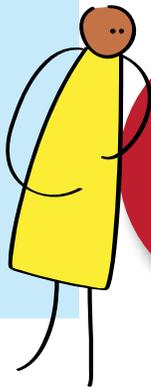
Melanie Lauber
Chair, Board of Directors

Alykhan Suleman
Executive Director



The clothing service **GLOW (Gently Loved Outfits to Wear)** is designed to resemble a retail store, serving as a training platform for clients to build employable skills and transition to the workplace.

New Circles focuses on providing service to Thorncliffe Park, Flemingdon Park, Victoria Village and Taylor-Massey (formerly Crescent Town). In addition, New Circles receives referrals from over 65 agencies to support individuals in need living outside of the focus communities.



An innovative not-for-profit agency

For 10 years, New Circles has been meeting the basic needs of vulnerable people in Toronto, with a focus on newcomers and refugees. Last year, New Circles served over 25 families a day. Our range of services includes a comprehensive clothing service, programs to support social integration, and skill-building opportunities.

Vision

Building strong and caring communities where everyone has access to the basic necessities.

Values



RESPECT



CARING



INTEGRITY



DIVERSITY

**Did You
KNOW**

New Circles runs the largest clothing bank in Toronto.

A family of four can save up to

\$5,000
a year on clothing



meeting **basic needs**

The heart of New Circles is **GLOW**, a comprehensive clothing service that serves individuals and families living on a low income.



*Since I came to Canada, I spent the little money I had on food and housing. This program helps me a lot by not having to spend money on clothes for me and my kids.
- Lila, GLOW Client*

Seniors Mobile Mall

Unique mobile malls bring **GLOW** services directly to the doors of low-income seniors residences. Delivered in partnership with Toronto Community Housing and the Flemingdon Health Centre, the monthly mall provides **basic necessities** and **social programming** to often isolated seniors, who may face barriers such as transportation, health and mobility to access **GLOW**. In addition to the specially selected racks of clothing and refreshments, seniors can participate in healthy living workshops with topics relevant to seniors.



The average person discards **65 lbs** of clothing per year, over half of which is still in good condition. **GLOW** diverts **200,000 lbs** of quality clothing from landfill annually, an amount equivalent to recovering items otherwise discarded by **7,000 people**.



700
Seniors served during monthly mobile malls

Did You KNOW over **800** clothing donors provide gently worn and new clothing, enabling **GLOW** to distribute over **1,000** items daily



530 individuals benefited from the **Holiday Angel Program**, receiving new basic necessities and gifts just in time for the winter season.



Clients served from **147 countries of origin**
Top countries of origin: **Canada, Afghanistan, Colombia, Mexico, Haiti and Nigeria**



140 individuals provided with customized food baskets to celebrate Eid



This makes us feel that although we may have different cultures and backgrounds, we are all united to a greater extent and call Canada our home.

– Ali, Helping for Eid Recipient

Investing in children & youth

Retail Training for Youth

20 Certified Retail Sales Associates

Leaders in Service Training (LIST), a 7-week retail and life skills summer program for youth, doubled the number of graduates. Now in its second year, the training program supports high school students in getting their first job.



I am working at Michaels right now, very much because of the LIST program. I got a promotion and am now a Manager. – Simona Rajani, LIST 2015 Graduate



530 students attended **Prom Boutique**



550 youth participated in **Teen Shopping Days**



6 students received **Community Service Awards** for volunteerism

106

children participated in **Spooktacular**, receiving Halloween costumes and backpacks full of school supplies and treats



**Did You
KNOW**

40% of clients at New Circles are under the age of 18. Thorncliffe Park, one of four focus neighbourhoods served by New Circles, has a child poverty rate above 50%.

Empowering **women**

200 Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of New Circles, providing over **20,000 hours** of service essential to the operations. Embedded at every level of our work, the diverse team is comprised of service users, members of the greater community, as well as groups such as corporate teams, schools, faith-based organizations and service clubs.



40 English language learners

Friendship Circle and Peer Language Training provide unique language learning opportunities to women in both group and individualized formats. Beyond language, the programs support social integration to decrease isolation through building positive, local connections.

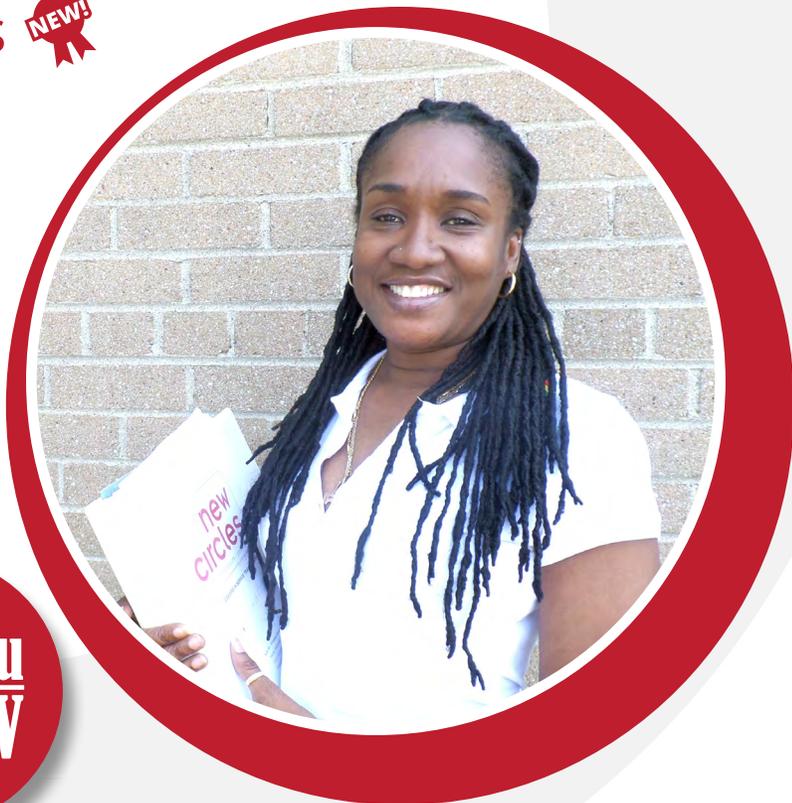


Building employable skills

Business Office Skills, a pilot project delivered in partnership with Seneca College and Skills for Change, provided 10 women with training in administration and customer service. Combining in-class learning, job search activities and a work placement, the 16-week program prepared graduates to enter the labour market in related entry-level positions. The success of the initial cohort has resulted in Business Office Skills being transitioned into a core program delivered by New Circles.



Thank you so much for this opportunity – if it wasn't for this program, I would not have gotten a job! - Cindy, Program Graduate (Employed as an Administrative Assistant)



Retail is the largest source of employment in the City of Toronto. It is projected to be the leading growth sector in the next five years.

**Did You
KNOW**

Innovative partnerships **within the retail sector**

With our clothing service now operating as **GLOW**, a simulated retail store, we have formed several partnerships to connect us to the retail sector and strengthen our employment training programs. These include **Deloitte Consulting, Retail Council of Canada, Ted Rogers School of Retail Management, Seneca College** and **Skills for Change**.

We have also strengthened relationships with retailers in the area. New Circles welcomed **Joe Fresh** this year, a major retail chain that is donating product through several local stores as well as warehouse sample sales. Additionally, they met with youth trainees in our retail skills program for informational interviews, increasing their awareness about careers in the sector. We are grateful to the many retailers across the city who support **GLOW** with product, volunteers and/or clothing drives.

Deloitte consultants provided pro bono consultancy to develop an operating model for **GLOW**, based on retail best practises, in order to increase efficiencies, develop an effective volunteer workforce and manage donated inventory.



Projects like this are a great opportunity for our consultants to learn about the unique challenges faced by non-profit organizations, and to apply their experience and expertise to solve interesting problems while having a major impact in their community.

- Ivy Luu, Deloitte Consulting

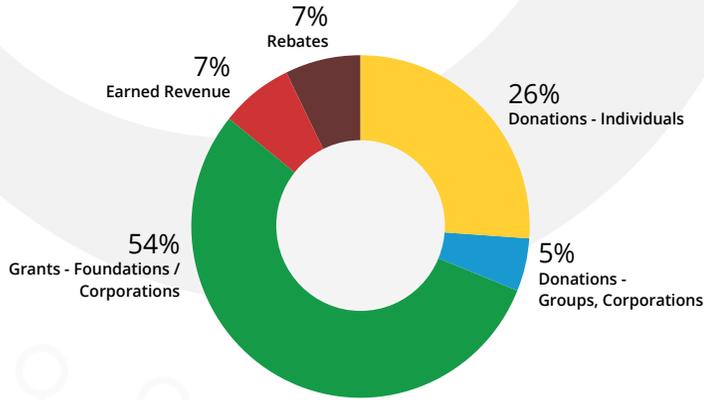


Deloitte consulting team with New Circles staff

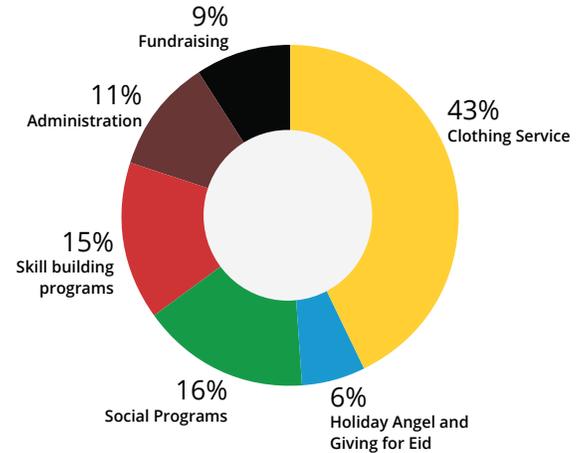
How we are funded

Audited financial statements for the year ended August 31, 2015 are available on request.

How we are funded



How we invest our funds



Our cost is only \$50 to clothe an adult for one year.

**Did You
KNOW**

Thank you

We are fortunate to have a generous, caring community that has embraced our mission to welcome and support newcomers and others in need. To all those who have donated clothing and/or products, volunteered time, contributed funds, organized clothing drives and/or hosted fundraising events, we offer our sincere thanks. Every gift makes a difference. Please visit www.newcircles.ca to learn more about our supporters.

Special thanks to the following who have generously contributed \$5,000 or more during this period:

Arrell Family Foundation
The Caring Foundation
CIBC
Foresters
Frederick & Douglas Dickson Memorial Foundation
The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation
Havergal College
J & L Rogers Family Foundation
J.P. Bickell Foundation
The Joan and Clifford Hatch Foundation
Joseph Stauffer Trust
Lennard Commercial Realty
Mackenzie Financial Charitable Foundation
The McLean Foundation
RBC Foundation
RBC Dominion Securities - The Harbour Group
The Rotary Club of Toronto
Scotiabank
The Slaughter Family Foundation
Sonor Foundation
The Spratt Foundation

TELUS Corporation
Timothy Eaton Memorial Church
Tippet Foundation
Toronto French School

Individuals

Carolyn Blakely
Cindy and Robert Blakely
Richard and Joan Boxer
Julie Cheesbrough
Julie Di Lorenzo
Lynn Francis
Katya and Mark Gardiner
Lindsay Blakely and Anthony Hammill
Kristin Blakely-Kozman and David Kozman
Melanie Lauber and Graeme MacGregor
John O'Connell & Martine Bouchard Family Trust
Rosemary Rathgeb
Alan Munn and Karen Somerville
William R. Waters



*As a school social worker on the front lines, I saw first-hand the harmful effects of poverty on daily lives. Ten years ago, I founded New Circles with the goal of offering a 'hand up' to those in need, ensuring that our services were offered in a way that respected the dignity of our clients. Today, these values remain at the heart of the agency, even as we have grown by leaps and bounds to address widespread need. We have now helped many thousands of clients and given away literally tons of clothing. I am so grateful to all of you who believed in and supported this vision. – **Cindy Blakely, Founder of New Circles***



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info@newcircles.ca
www.newcircles.ca
CRN: 83634 3673 RR0001

Board of Directors

September 2014 – August 2015

Chair of the Board

Melanie Lauber (Jan 2015 to Present)
Sally Palmateer (to Jan 2015)

Vice-Chair

Meg Salter (Jan 2015 to Present)
Melanie Lauber (to Jan 2015)

Founder and Director

Cindy Blakely

Treasurer

Sandra Chiu

Secretary

Mark Smithyes (to September 2015)

Directors

Lynn Francis (April 2015 to Present)
Suzanne Glen
Jennifer Hinder
Justin Ming Cheung (July 2015 to Present)
Sally Palmateer (Jan 2015 to Present)
Kanta Wadhwan

* For current Board of Directors membership please visit www.newcircles.ca

