



# New Circles

CLOTHING • CONNECTION • COMMUNITY



IMPACT IN MOTION

## A Word from our Team

As we reflect on the past year, we do so with deep gratitude, pride, and a renewed sense of purpose. At New Circles, every program delivered and every individual supported represents a step forward in our mission to build stronger, more inclusive communities. This work is only possible because of the collective effort of staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters who believe in the power of community care.

This year, we are proud to continue advancing our Million Circles Mission Campaign— an ambitious commitment to support and educate over one million people by 2035. This vision represents more than growth; it reflects our determination to expand access to essential services and create lasting, meaningful impact. Central to this goal is increasing the number of clients accessing our skills training programs, expanding our settlement services to reach more newcomers, and growing participation in our clothing programs so that individuals and families can access vital resources with dignity.

Achieving this milestone will require thoughtful expansion and collaboration. We are working to extend our services beyond Toronto in order to reach underserved communities across the province and, ultimately, the country. At the same time, we continue to build strong partnerships with like-minded organizations whose shared commitment to equity and inclusion strengthens our collective impact. Internally, we are restructuring and evolving New Circles to ensure we are well positioned for provincial and national growth, while remaining grounded in what matters most — our clients. Staying client-centric means continually listening, learning, and adapting so that our programs reflect the changing needs of the communities we serve.

As we look to the future, we do so with optimism and determination. Together, we are building circles of support that will continue to expand — creating opportunities, fostering belonging, and transforming lives for years to come.

With sincere appreciation,



Brenda McNeill  
Chair

Dr. Phil Groff  
Executive Director

# New Circles Updates

## WE MOVED!

Moving to 44 Mobile Drive marks an exciting new chapter for New Circles. This bigger, more accessible location allows us to continue growing and reaching a wider range of individuals and families. More than just an address, our new space offers improved accessibility, additional room for programs, and a welcoming environment. With these enhancements, we are better equipped to provide the services and support our community relies on—helping even more people on their path to stability and opportunity.

## PROGRAMS LAUNCHED AND PILOTED: IMPACT IN MOTION

At New Circles, Impact in Motion guides how we test, learn, and adapt—strengthening our core programs while exploring new ways to better serve our community.

This year, we piloted extended evening hours for our Clothing Program to improve accessibility for clients unable to attend during the day. From July 9 to August 14, 2025, the program remained open until 8:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays. During this time, 44 appointments were scheduled, and 86 clients accessed services between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. While summer engagement was lower than anticipated, the pilot provided valuable insights into access barriers. These learnings are informing a second phase of testing during the winter months to better align service hours with client needs.

We also strengthened our program planning through data-driven decision-making by collecting over 400 client needs assessments. This feedback is shaping the future direction of our training programs to better reflect sector and labour market demands. As a result, we introduced employment-focused workshops on emerging topics such as artificial intelligence and expanded our E-commerce Training Program into a five-day workshop series. Due to decreased funding, we made the difficult decision to pause the mentorship component of our Business Office Program.

In addition, we partnered with Eva's Initiatives for Homeless Youth: New Home and JVS to support a youth styling and employment readiness event. Participants received resume support, job-appropriate clothing, guidance on workplace attire, and professional headshots to strengthen their LinkedIn presence.

Through ongoing experimentation, evaluation, and collaboration, New Circles continues to refine its programs to ensure meaningful, responsive, and sustainable impact.



# Clothing Support

The families served through GLOW are predominantly young and striving to build stability in their new communities. Most households include three to four family members, and 90% of adults are between the ages of 25 and 44—a stage of life when access to basic necessities is essential for securing employment, caring for children, and establishing long-term stability.

## WHY WE PROVIDE IT

- Clothing insecurity is a critical but overlooked barrier to financial stability, education, employment, and mental well-being for low-income families.
- Clothing is a non-negotiable expense with little public support. Unlike food or housing, clothing costs are rarely subsidized, yet low-income households spend an average of **\$1,250 annually** on clothing.
- Education is directly impacted by clothing insecurity.
- Clothing insecurity is one of the top non-academic causes of school absenteeism in low-income households.

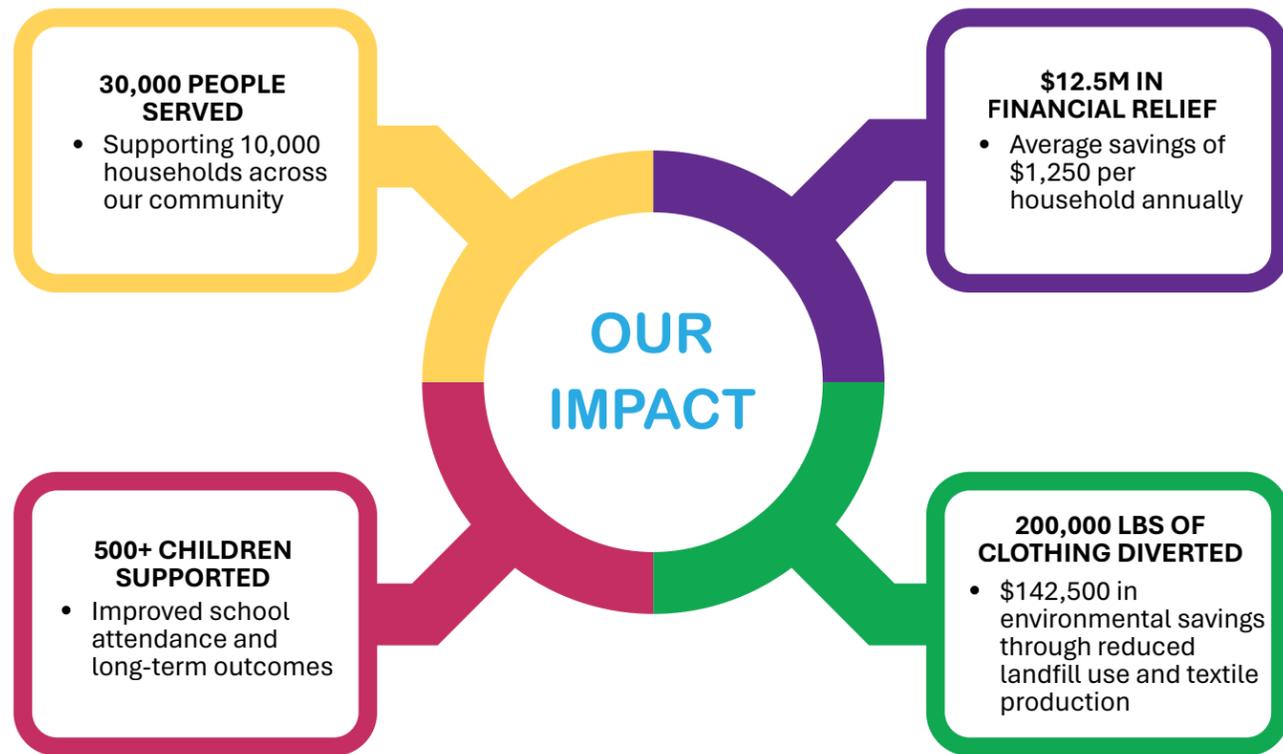
- **27% of low-income students** report missing school due to a lack of appropriate attire.
- Providing school-appropriate clothing has been shown to **increase attendance rates by up to 5%**, supporting improved long-term educational and economic outcomes.



- Employment access is limited without appropriate clothing.
  - Many individuals—particularly newcomers and women re-entering the workforce—face systemic barriers to employment due to the lack of professional and interview-appropriate clothing.
  - Access to appropriate clothing supports confidence, dignity, and workforce participation.
- The program also delivers significant environmental benefits.
  - New Circles diverts **200,000 pounds of clothing** from landfills annually.
  - Using a **\$0.71 per pound environmental cost savings multiplier**, this results in **\$142,500 in annual environmental savings**.
  - These savings reflect reduced landfill management costs, methane gas mitigation, and decreased energy use from reduced textile production.

**New Circles diverts 200,000 pounds of clothing from landfills annually.**

# Clothing Support Cont.



• In 2024-2025, New Circles' Clothing Program supported 30,000 individuals, positively affecting an estimated 10,000 households and easing the financial strain faced by families living on limited incomes. By providing free access to essential clothing, households saved an average of \$1,250 annually, resulting in \$12.5 million in direct financial relief—resources that could instead be directed toward food, housing, education, and other necessities. Beyond financial impact, the program helped create meaningful, long-term change. More than 500 children experienced improved school attendance, supporting better educational outcomes and increased lifetime earning potential. At the same time, 200,000 pounds of clothing were diverted from landfills, reducing environmental costs by an estimated \$142,000. Together, these outcomes reflect how access to clothing can strengthen families, communities, and the environment.



# Settlement Support

New Circles' Settlement Support helps newcomers, living on low incomes build pathways out of poverty and toward long-term financial independence. Many newcomers and low-income residents rely on government social assistance programs such as Ontario Works and the Canada Workers Benefit to meet basic needs, but face significant systemic barriers when trying to transition.



## WHY WE PROVIDE IT

While social assistance programs are essential for short-term stability, long-term dependency can limit financial mobility for individuals and create significant costs for public systems. The average annual social assistance benefit in Canada is **\$14,000 per recipient**, yet many beneficiaries struggle to exit these programs due to barriers such as limited job readiness, lack of work experience, and insufficient access to employment supports. Research shows that targeted employment programs can reduce long-term welfare dependency by **10–15% per cohort**, creating meaningful benefits for both individuals and taxpayers. New Circles' Settlement Support addresses these gaps by providing practical, employment-focused interventions that lead to sustainable outcomes.

## OUR IMPACT

<p><b>78 PEOPLE TRANSITIONED OFF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through workforce training and job placement supports</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$1.09M IN ANNUAL GOVERNMENT SAVINGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on \$14,000 saved per individual per year</li> </ul>
<p><b>REDUCED LONG-TERM WELFARE DEPENDENCY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting sustainable exits from social assistance programs</li> </ul>	<p><b>STRONGER WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helping individuals build financial independence and economic stability</li> </ul>



# Employment Programs



New Circles' Career and Education Support program helps racialized newcomers, particularly women, successfully enter the labour market by removing barriers to employment. Participants gain job-ready skills through hands-on work placements, professional development workshops, and targeted entrepreneurship training. Programs such as **Retail & Customer Service Skills, Business Office Skills, Home Support Worker training, MAKE IT! Entrepreneur Workshops, and E-commerce Training** provide both technical and soft skills needed for entry-level roles in administration, retail, customer service, or small business ownership. Through this integrated approach, participants are equipped for long-term career success and financial independence.

## WHY WE PROVIDE IT

New Circles addresses these obstacles through workforce training and internship programs that provide hands-on experience, skills development, and targeted support. By equipping participants with the tools they need to succeed, the program not only improves employment outcomes but also reduces reliance on government assistance. Each individual who secures employment through New Circles contributes approximately **\$38,000 per year** in wages, taxes, and economic activity.

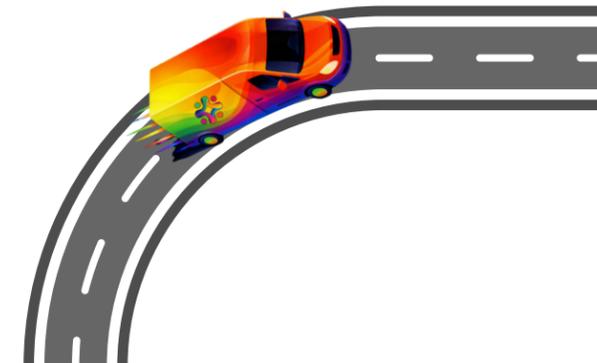
Access to stable employment is one of the most effective ways to break the cycle of poverty, yet many low-income individuals, particularly newcomers, face systemic barriers when entering the workforce. These barriers include a lack of professional clothing and interview attire, limited job readiness skills, and workforce exclusion for women, who often face additional challenges re-entering the labor market.



# Employment Programs Cont.



<b>Needs Assessment &amp; Referral</b>	214 applications were screened for the Gateway to Success Programs, with Needs Assessment & Referral completed for 150. Over 250 referrals were made to external agencies for additional client supports and services.
<b>Employment Related Workshops (RCSS)</b>	37 women completed the RCSS training program, therefore receiving essential employability skills necessary for entry to the retail job market.
<b>Employment Related Workshops (BOS)</b>	48 women completed the BOS training program, therefore receiving the essential employability skills necessary for entry to the office/administrative job market.
<b>Employment Related Workshops (Digital Fluency)</b>	74 clients participated in the Digital Fluency workshop, gaining basic digital skills to enhance employability.
<b>Information and Orientation (Job Search Workshops)</b>	In partnership with The Neighbourhood Group (TNG) and ACCES Employment, all training clients participated in a variety of job search workshops. Clients who were not already connected with an employment counsellor were also referred for ongoing support.
<b>Employment Related Services (Individual Employment Counselling and Resume Screening and Matching)</b>	In addition to support through partnerships, participants benefited from support through New Circles' Employment Services to discuss progress, develop action plans, and support development of resume and job search skills.
<b>Work Placements</b>	74 clients participated in a work placement where they were able to apply the skills and abilities gained throughout the program in a practical setting.



# Volunteering

Volunteers remain at the heart of New Circles’ work, contributing their time, skills, and energy to help advance our mission and strengthen community impact. The following data provides an overview of volunteer engagement and participation at New Circles, highlighting total volunteer numbers, year-over-year changes, and involvement from corporate, community, and school groups. It reflects both growth and transition within the volunteer program, including recruitment efforts, volunteer attrition, and the vital role of group-based support for clothes hanging and special events. Together, these figures demonstrate the ongoing commitment of volunteers and community partners in supporting New Circles’ operations and mission throughout the 2025 fiscal year.

Category	Description	Time Period	Total Volunteers
<b>Total Volunteers</b>	• Core & Casual Volunteers	End of 2025	120
<b>Volunteer Recruitment</b>	• Applicants processed (Summer & Fall intake)	June–Dec 2025	50
<b>School Groups</b>	• Clothes sorting	Sep 2024–Aug 2025	14 groups
<b>Corporate &amp; Community Groups</b>	• Clothes sorting	Sep 2024–Aug 2025	52 groups
<b>Sorting Parties</b>	• Volunteer & community sorting parties	Sep 2024–Aug 2025	5 groups
<b>Group Engagement Total</b>	• School, corporate, community & sorting parties combined	FY 2025	71 groups

## MEET SUE!

Sue McKenzie has been a dedicated member of our volunteer community since 2005, contributing her time and energy in consistent and meaningful ways. Her long-standing involvement reflects a genuine commitment to our mission and to the individuals and families we serve.



Sue first came to New Circles thanks to a bit of friendly pressure. As she puts it, she was “coerced by Jeannie von Buttler — the sister-in-law of Cindy (founder of New Circles),” who encouraged her to start volunteering on Monday afternoons while she was teaching half days. What began as a nudge quickly became something much more.

Over the years, Sue has supported many areas of our work, including ongoing involvement in the Holiday Angel Program, helping ensure individuals and families feel supported during the holiday season.

She also regularly brings groups of friends to sorting parties, creating a collaborative, welcoming environment grounded in teamwork and shared purpose. Sue is also candid about the nature of the work itself. While sorting donations may seem routine, she emphasizes what makes the experience worthwhile: the people. Connecting with “the clients, the staff and the other volunteers is a worthwhile and satisfying way to spend a few hours a week.” Sue’s passion, leadership, and unwavering dedication to volunteerism is unmistakable. Her generosity and commitment continue to leave a lasting impression on our staff, fellow volunteers, and the broader community, and her contributions play an important role in making a meaningful difference in everything we do.

# Fundraising Efforts

## 2025 NEW CIRCLES GOLF CLASSIC



Wealth Management  
Dominion Securities



The Harbour Group  
of RBC Dominion Securities

Our 2025 Golf Tournament was a tremendous success, bringing our community together at Thornhill Golf Club for a day of golf, connection, and generosity. With a sold-out tournament and an engaging silent auction, the event raised an incredible **\$120,000** in support of our programs. These funds help ensure that individuals and families facing poverty can access essential clothing, employment support, and settlement services. We are deeply grateful to our sponsors, donors, golfers, and volunteers whose support made this event—and its impact—possible.



Tacita Capital

## CAMPAIGNS

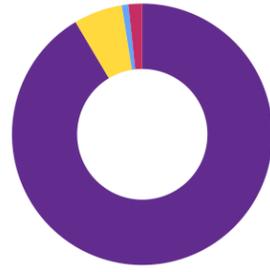
Our Holiday Appeal and Holiday Angel initiatives brought meaningful support to our community during the holiday season. Through our Holiday Appeal campaign, we raised **\$19,574.44**, directly supporting our Clothing Boutique and ensuring clients had access to essential items during a critical time of year.

In addition, our Holiday Angel program made a profound impact on 99 families (368 individuals in total), by providing gift cards just in time for the holidays. Altogether, these efforts represented **\$215,499.50** in donations, helping families experience greater stability, dignity, and relief during the festive season.



# Financials

## Revenue Breakdown 2024- 2025



**Grants and Donations:**  
\$2,538,147 → 91.44%

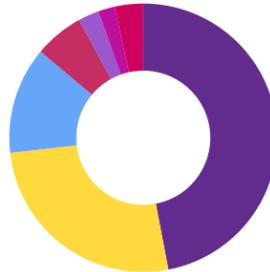
**Event Fees and Sponsorships:**  
\$167,634 → 6.04%

**Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions:**  
\$22,492 → 0.81%

**Interest Income:**  
\$47,371 → 1.71%

**Total: \$2,775,644**

## Expenses Breakdown 2024-2025



**Salaries and employee benefits:**  
\$1,422,824 → 47.00%

**Premises:**  
\$793,543 → 26.21%

**Programs and purchases of goods for disbursing:**  
\$390,089 → 12.89%

**General and administrative:**  
\$179,794 → 5.94%

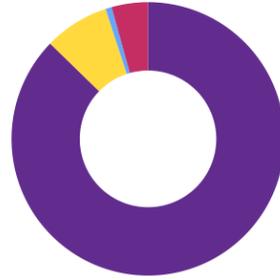
**Amortization of capital assets:**  
\$103,656 → 3.42%

**Fundraising:**  
\$76,344 → 2.52%

**Professional fees:**  
\$61,065 → 2.02%

**Total: \$3,027,315**

## Revenue Breakdown 2023- 2024



**Grants and Donations:**  
\$1,971,264 → 87.28%

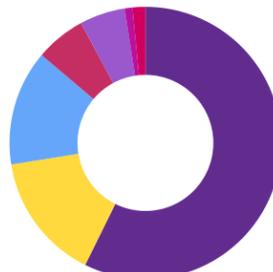
**Event Fees and Sponsorships:**  
\$173,720 → 7.69%

**Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions:**  
\$16,597 → 0.73%

**Interest Income:**  
\$97,032 → 4.30%

**Total: \$2,258,613**

## Expenses Breakdown 2023- 2024



**Salaries and employee benefits:**  
\$1,339,933 → 57.33%

**Premises:**  
\$354,232 → 15.16%

**Programs and purchases of goods for disbursing:**  
\$320,446 → 13.71%

**General and administrative:**  
\$139,541 → 5.97%

**Amortization of capital assets:**  
\$35,901 → 1.54%

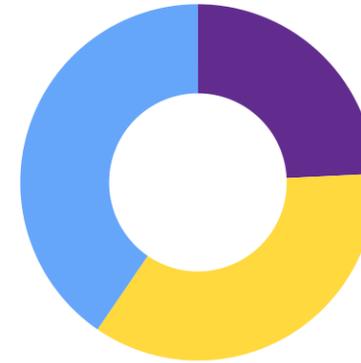
**Fundraising:**  
\$126,486 → 5.41%

**Professional fees:**  
\$21,522 → 0.92%

**Total: \$2,338,061**

# Financials Cont.

## Program Expenses 2024-2025



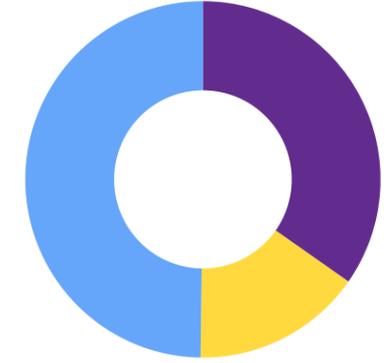
**GLOW and Volunteer Program**  
\$409,158 → 24.2%

**Education**  
\$596,608 → 35.3%

**Settlement**  
\$682,844 → 40.4%

**Total: \$1,688,610**

## Program Expenses 2023-2024



**GLOW and Volunteer Program**  
\$487,940 → 34.7%

**Education**  
\$217,698 → 15.5%

**Settlement**  
\$699,583 → 49.8%

**Total: \$1,405,221**

# Our Board of Directors

<b>Shamima Adam</b>	Secretary, Finance Committee
<b>Joan Arruda</b>	Chair of HR Committee, Fundraising Committee
<b>Cindy Blakely</b>	Founder, Fundraising Committee
<b>Robin Boys</b>	Member, Finance Committee
<b>Sandra Chiu</b>	Treasurer, Chair, Finance Committee
<b>Lynn Curry</b>	Member, Fundraising Committee
<b>Grace Greatrex</b>	Member, Finance Committee
<b>Chuck Johnston</b>	Member, Fundraising Committee
<b>Melanie Lauber</b>	Chair of Fundraising Committee
<b>Brenda McNeill</b>	Chair of Board, HR Committee
<b>David Mousavi</b>	Vice Chair, Chair of Governance Committee
<b>Sandra Winkelbauer</b>	HR Committee, Fundraising Committee

# Community Partners

- ACCES Employment
- Don Valley VW General Manager
- Parkway Honda General Manager
- Circles and Squares
- Financial Controller at OSSTF
- Latvian Centre
- Grounded Engineering Firm
- The Neighbourhood Group
- Catholic Community Services of York Region
- PVH
- Eva's Initiatives for Homeless Youth
- Northeastern University
- JVS Toronto
- Centennial College
- Baby Love
- Up With Women
- North York Community Cluster
- North East Toronto Local Immigration Partnership
- City of Toronto
- Toronto South West Local Immigration Partnership
- Toronto East Local Immigration; Catholic Cross-cultural Services
- Avison Young
- Impakt Foundation
- Mayhew Inc.
- Diaper Bank

# In-Kind Donors

- Aritzia
- Butter Studio
- Uniqlo
- Mr. Magoo Productions
- Decathlon Canada
- Little White Sneakers
- Melmira Bra & Swimsuits Inc.
- Talbots
- GGS Printing
- Ron White Shoes
- Drapes and More
- Needlework Guild of Canada
- Chubb Canada
- Warner Music
- Gertex Hosiery
- Running Free
- Gripped Publishing
- Peace Collective
- Bosley Real Estate



# Funding Partners

## Government Funding



\$100,000+



The Caring Foundation



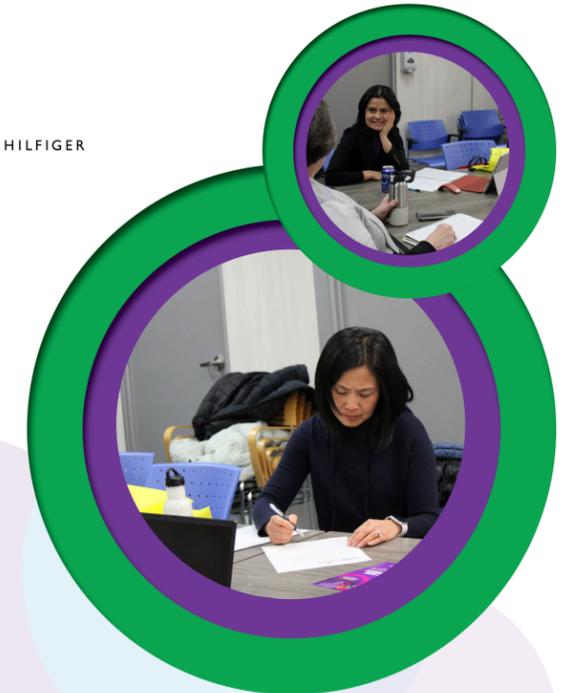
Calvin Klein  
TOMMY HILFINGER

\$25,000-\$99,999

- Frederick and Douglas Dickson Memorial Foundation
- Mark and Katya Gardiner
- Moez & Marissa Kassam Equity Fund
- RBC Foundation
- State Street - Charities Aid Foundation
- The Arrell Family Foundation
- The Catherine And Maxwell Meighen Foundation
- The Joan and Clifford Hatch Foundation
- The Sprott Foundation

\$10,000-\$24,999

- Anthony Hammill and Lindsay Blakely
- C. B. Powell Foundation
- Canado Foundation
- Carolyn Blakely & Darren Karn
- Cindy and Bob Blakely
- Havergal College
- Hodgson Family Foundation
- Jane Humphrey and Ron Lalonde
- Jeannie and Stephan von Buttlar
- Kristin Blakely & David Kozman
- Likrielyn Capital Corporation
- Love Family Foundation
- Martine Irman
- RBC Dominion Securities - The Harbour Group
- Rod Davidge and Catherine M. Waugh
- Sue McKenzie and Garth Girvan
- TELUS Friendly Future Foundation
- The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
- The Sonor Foundation
- Timothy Eaton Memorial Church



# Funding Partners Cont.

## \$1,000-\$9,999

- Abundance Canada
- Alan Munn & Karen Somerville
- Andrew Howden
- Andrew Nicholas & Grace Greatrex
- Anita Richardson
- Anne-Marie McLaughlan
- Barbara Jackson & Robert Keyes
- Brenda & Bill McNeill
- Brian & Barbara Gibbings
- Bristol Gate Capital Partners Inc.
- Burgundy Legacy Foundation
- C. Dawn Jetten
- Canada Life Reinsurance
- Caroline Helbronner
- Carolyn Carragher
- Carolyn Langill
- Cassandra Oravec
- Chestnut Park Real Estate Limited, Brokerage
- Chris & Pamela Hodgson
- Christina Sorbara
- Christine Hart
- CHUM Charitable Foundation
- Cindy Roberts
- Clench House Foundation
- Crown Property Management Inc.
- Cynthia Webb
- Dara Cowper
- David & Elizabeth Edmison
- David Mousavi
- Denny Hamilton
- Diane Mavrinac-Ross
- Diane Walker
- Doug & Gail Todgham
- Ecclesiastical Insurance
- Ekaterina Pesegova
- Elaine Roberts
- Elderberry Fund (Sarah Crawford & David Kirkwood)
- Elizabeth Lynn Saunders
- Ewing Morris Investment Partners
- Flavelle Family Foundation
- Fraser Latta
- Gail Szego
- George & Heather Dickson
- Gord Cheesbrough
- Grace Church on-the-Hill
- Graeme MacGregor & Melanie Lauber
- Doreen Haveman Foundation
- Greenrock Capital Partners Inc.
- Grete Nybraten & Leslie Miller
- Harvey & Bev Botting
- Hedieh Ghanbari
- Helen Kearns & Gary Ursell
- J. Sergei Sawchyn
- James & Danielle Macdonald
- James Bruce & Joan Pope
- Jan Con Construction
- Jane Stephenson
- Jane W. Cowan
- Janet and Bruce McKelvey
- Jean Fraser & Tom Rahilly
- Jendo Holdings Inc.
- Jenifer Burbidge
- Jennifer Dumoulin
- Jennifer Newman
- Jennifer Tory
- Jill Rowan
- Jim & Katie Stewart & The Stewart Family Foundation
- Joan & Joseph Arruda
- Joe D'Aurizio
- John Davidson
- John Wedge
- Joni A. Alexander
- Joseph & Paula Mannone
- Joy Gray-Donald
- Julia Cheesbrough
- Julia Medland
- Justin & Julia Quigg
- Karen Chung
- Karen M. Hersey
- Karim Hasham
- Katharine Schatzky
- Katherine Badeau
- Katy Sisley
- Kimberly Allen
- Krista McLeod
- Lind Family Fund
- Linda Robinson
- Lori Renzone
- Luana Di Candia
- Lynn & Zack Curry
- Lynn Usatis
- Maggie Lind Real Estate
- Marc & Sarah Giacomelli
- Margaret Deeks
- Margot Fulcher & Chuck Johnston
- Marianna Forteach
- Mark Curry
- Martha Hundert & Jeremy Fraiberg
- Martha McNeil
- Mary Ellen & Michael Horgan
- Mary Hatch
- Matthew Broadbent
- Meg Salter
- Meghan Lauber
- Michael & Donna Lauber
- Nancy Torokvei
- National Public Relations
- Nick & Lynn Ross
- Pal Insurance Services Limited
- Patricia Lee
- Patti Bunston-Gunn
- Paul & Cathy Singleton
- Paul & Janet Morrison
- Paul Russell
- PCL Constructors Canada Inc.
- Peter & Catherine Singer Foundation
- Peter Caven & Virginia Flintoft
- Philip Groff
- Richard & Donna Ivey
- Richard & Joan Boxer
- Richard Powers
- Rives Dalley Barbour
- Rob Prichard & Ann Wilson
- Robert & Joan Wright
- Robert Sommerville
- Robin Boys
- Rotary Club of East York
- Sarah Reid
- Scott Gardiner
- Shamima Adam
- Shelagh Evelyn Higgins Fund
- Steed & Evans Holdings Inc.
- Steve Boutin
- Susan & Russell Tate
- Syl & Anne Apps
- Tacita Capital Inc.
- Ted Fletcher
- The Browning Watt Foundation
- The Hebel Family Foundation
- The Henry White Kinnear Foundation
- The Mariano Elia Foundation
- The McKelvey Family Foundation
- The Midloch Foundation
- The Newall Family Foundation
- The Nixon Charitable Foundation
- The Waugh Family Foundation
- Timothy & Sheila Casgrain
- Tom & Barbara Ryder
- Tracey Lawko & Peter Blaiklock
- Wendy Chong & Andrew Edgell
- William & Cynthia Quinn
- William J. McDonald

### Mission

New Circles is a registered charity that provides free clothing, connections, and training to individuals and families in need.

### Vision

Providing basic needs; Empowering people; Building better lives.

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