

# Gerstein Crisis Centre

*Annual Report 2015*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

After celebrating our 25th anniversary last year, we have continued to build on our foundation and think toward the future. This year, a team of staff members from across all of our services has been reviewing client feedback, our achievements, experience and existing evidence-based practices available in literature to put together a Best Practices Guideline that will assist in sustaining our work going forward.

Our Board is working on developing a new Strategic Plan which will provide a road map for the organization for the next 3-5 years. This process will allow us to view our organization from beyond our doors, consulting with a broad range of informant groups, starting with the people who use our services to our funders, our partners, different levels of government and across sectors including police, courts and hospitals.



### ***Our Purpose and Mission:***

To provide a community based, alternative approach to crisis intervention by delivering individualized non-medical support to people experiencing a mental health crisis.

### ***Our Vision:***

To be an accessible source of support and recovery for individuals experiencing mental health crisis; to work collaboratively with partners to create improved access to services and to promote wellness, recovery and strong consumer survivor networks.

### ***Our Values:***

Respect, autonomy, dignity, diversity, collaboration and accountability are at the core of all we do. We value the whole person and acknowledge and respect their needs and wishes for recovery.

Gerstein Crisis Centre continues to offer high quality, accessible services to individuals dealing with mental health, concurrent or serious substance use issues who are experiencing a crisis. We have been extremely active over the last year, engaging in system based planning to improve services for people living with mental health difficulties. We are part of the council for the Mid East Health Link, participated in the Addictions Pathways planning, attended the Health Equity Symposium hosted by the TCLHIN and attended many other service collaboratives. This active engagement has us looking at service improvements we can make and how we can support other changes we need in our system to listen better and respond to the needs of the people we serve.

Susan Davis  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature of Susan Davis in black ink.

Helen Hook  
Board Chair

A handwritten signature of Helen Hook in black ink.

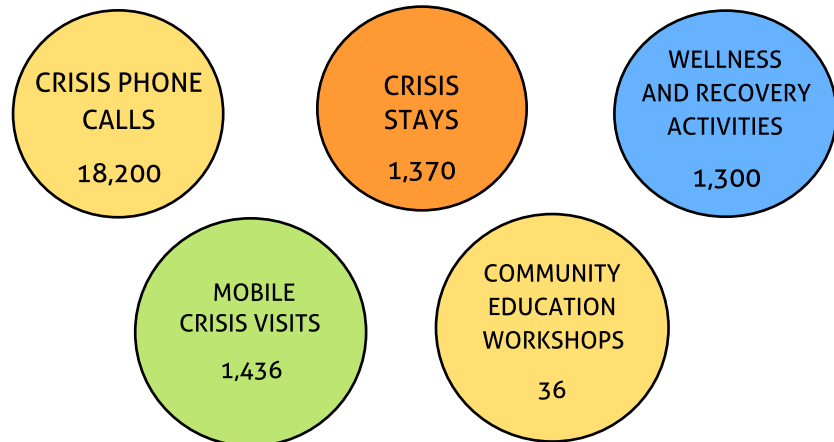
# Volunteer Spotlight



**Graham Beck** has been a community member on our Fundraising Team for the last two years. He has run twice now in the Scotiabank Waterfront Marathon and has been a 'champion' for our Wellness and Recovery and FRESH projects. Graham's ongoing commitment to assist us in our fundraising efforts is a huge boost for our team. We appreciate his efforts, advice, initiative and leg work.

**Thank you, Graham!**

## Gerstein by the Numbers

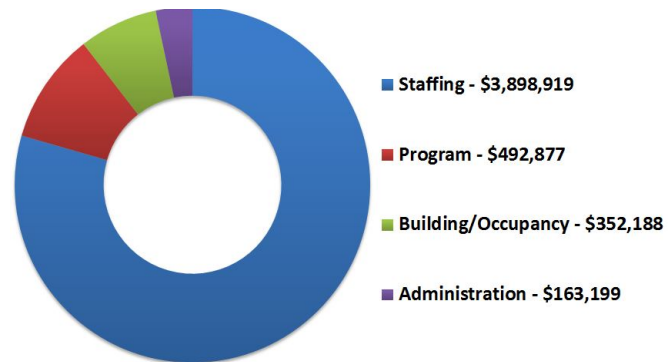


## Financial Summary

### Operating Expenses

for the year ended March 31, 2015

**\$4,719,438**



### Revenue

Toronto Central LHIN - 98.6%

Foundation grants, donations, training revenue, City of Toronto and other income - 1.4%

*If you would like a full copy of the 2014-15 Audited Financial Statements, please contact Pamela Rodgerson at [prodgerson@gersteincentre.org](mailto:prodgerson@gersteincentre.org) or 416-929-0149 x226*



# LEARNING EXCHANGE

## at Gerstein Crisis Centre

Gerstein Crisis Centre is committed to fostering a culture of 'mutual learning' in its workplace, valuing a broad range of knowledge and methods of learning. Since our inception, Gerstein Centre has valued and welcomed international experience through dedicated staff positions. A few years ago, this commitment transformed into a key partnership with Ryerson University's Internationally Educated Social Work Professionals Bridging Program.

Executive Director, Susan Davis, sat down with former Learning Exchange Participant, Rupa Vinod, to talk about her experience.

### Tell us a little bit about you and your background.

*"As an internationally educated professional in the field of social work, I have extensive experience working in India in the field of urban slums. I have had grassroots exposure to create sustainable learning centres for women residing at urban slums. I immigrated to Canada in the year 2012."*

### What was it like trying to translate your experience in India to work in Canada?"

*"As an internationally educated professional, I had to learn and gain knowledge about what the Canadian employers seek or expect from social work professionals. I completed the Certificate in Canadian Social Work Practice Overview, Bridging Program from Ryerson University. Through this program, I had an opportunity to work with CAMH as a social work intern for 200 hours during the certificate program and then I got involved with the Learning Exchange Program."*

### Tell us about the Learning Exchange Program.

*"The Learning Exchange Program is a joint initiative of Gerstein Crisis Centre and Ryerson University's Internationally Educated professionals Bridging Program. I was fortunate to get this excellent platform with the Gerstein Crisis Centre in 2013. I felt really valued as this opportunity allowed me to access employment as a newcomer. I was employed in a 6 month contract at Gerstein and I had immense exposure to work in collaboration with the staff at Gerstein to support individuals experiencing crisis. The format of the program was really helpful for me, as it allowed me to work with different programs within Gerstein. I gained knowledge and acquired skills to work as a Community Crisis Worker and as well, gained a greater understanding of the community mental health system in Toronto."*

### Tell us about your experience.

*"I was really comfortable to work at Gerstein Crisis Centre, despite being new, as the staff were really open and welcoming to support me with any queries or processes. I feel that I was able to contribute towards creating a positive work environment at the Centre, sharing my skills and knowledge. I also had an opportunity to visit and learn more about other agencies/organizations working in the field of mental health. This allowed me to share about Gerstein to these agencies. As well, during the contract I was able to participate in various trainings and capacity building initiatives which helped me with acquiring new knowledge, skills and confidence."*

### What did you value most about your experience with the Learning Exchange ?

*"The best part of this program was to have direct contact with the user groups of the services provided by Gerstein. I was engaged in providing information and assisting them to connect with the resources in the community. During my work with Gerstein, I have had the chance to understand and realize how significant the role of Gerstein Centre is in the community mental health system. Gerstein has walked with me through my initial stages of my career in Canada as a newcomer. I can say that I am proud to be part of Gerstein Crisis Centre."*

### Were you able to use this experience to further your career ?

*"The Learning Exchange program provided me with assistance to job search in my field of interest. I gained immense confidence and experience which helped me to gain employment as a full-time permanent social worker in an organization. I also continue to work with Gerstein as a relief staff."*



*"I can say that I am proud to be part of Gerstein Crisis Centre"*

**-Rupa Vinod**

Learning Exchange Participant

## Our Board of Directors 2015-2016

Dr. Reva Gerstein - Founding chair (ex officio)

Brian Davis

Lucy Drumonde

Frank Gerstein

Jun Maranan

Joanne O'Brecht

Stephen Sheepway

Monika Szopinska

Jaco Uwland

Vera Voroskolevska

**Thank you to all of our hard working Board members.**

We would like to thank outgoing Directors Yogie Ramon Manik, Kathleen Mitchell, Georgina Murphy and our Chair, Helen Hook, for their valuable contributions to Gerstein Centre.

Susan Heximer - Chair  
Christina Foisy - Vice-chair  
Eva Serhal - Secretary/Treasurer



# COMMENTS FROM OUR SERVICE USERS....

*"Staff were very friendly and welcoming. Very approachable and helpful."*

*"I'm really grateful that this place exists. If I had heard of this place before, I think I might not have gone to the hospital. Being treated with respect, dignity, friendliness and having an inviting space was healing."*

*"Very clean and the food is delicious!"*

*"My stay here was very restorative and helped me tremendously. This place is like an oasis in a desert of sadness and evil."*

## **We gratefully acknowledge, with thanks, the Foundations and key Donors supporting our work**

- \* Bertrand Gerstein Family Foundation
- \* Paloma Foundation
- \* Echo Foundation
- \* Manulife
- \* Ontario Power Generation

## **...and our Financial and Community Partners**

- \* The 519
- \* C.M.H.A. Toronto
- \* Griffin Centre
- \* Regeneration House Community Services
- \* Salvation Army Maxwell Meighen Centre
- \* T.W.H. Ossington Withdrawal Management Service and Eva's Satellite
- \* Houselink Community Homes
- \* Ryerson University
- \* Toronto Hostels Training Centre
- \* University Health Network (T.W.H.)



## **Thank you**

to all of our supporters and participants in the  
2015 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront  
Marathon. Together, we raised **over \$18,000**  
for Gerstein Centre's Wellness & Recovery  
Programs

**Gerstein-on-Bloor**  
1045 Bloor Street West  
Toronto, ON M6M 1M4  
416-604-2337

**Gerstein-on-Charles**  
100 Charles Street East  
Toronto, ON M4Y 1V3  
416-929-0149 (Admin/Referral)  
416-929-5200 (Crisis)



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