

UPDATE

URBANPROMISE.COM



Restorative Community

We often talk about our young leaders being raised up to restore community. Our vision is that they will be extraordinary despite great hardship, because they know what it means to lead by serving. They will have a restoring influence in the city of Toronto, across Canada and around the world.

The journey to seeing this vision become a reality is a long one filled with disappointments and challenges. This pandemic has made this journey even more difficult for some of our young leaders. They too need to be restored and experience inner healing as they face anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.

Recently one of my staff shared with me how he took a few youths out for lunch to talk. As the conversation went on, one youth shared the trauma he experienced after witnessing

someone in his community commit suicide. He has been holding onto this tragedy for a long time and did not realize how therapeutic it would be for him to release this burden.

The Christmas season reminds us of the hope found in Jesus amidst despair. We can point our youth to who Jesus is as stated in Isaiah 9:6, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**"

We not only want to provide youth employment and leadership

development, but we also want to be a restorative community for our young leaders where they can cling to who Jesus is in Isaiah 9:6, release their burdens and receive professional counselling and support.

Thank you for journeying with us this year; your gifts and prayers are helping to heal and transform lives.

Merry Christmas



Shawn James
Executive Director



REACH
A CHILD,
RAISE
A LEADER,
RESTORE
COMMUNITY.



We are slowly regaining a lot of the rhythms we lost during the pandemic. In our Afterschool Programs, children and youth have a safe and fun environment to grow and participate in crafts, bible studies, homework help, snack times, and sports.

CAMP VICTORY

Recently at Camp Victory the topics of self-esteem and positive body image were explored with the youth, pointing them towards their value in God's eyes. They have a young and eager group of StreetLeaders who are faithfully committed to serving the kids as they slowly uncover their unique gifts. Many of them attend our Friday Youth Group at our Community Director's home, where they are committed to eating together, learning about Jesus, and loving each other as a family would.

CAMP HOPE

After some uncertainty with meeting space, we're so grateful that Camp Hope is able to meet once again at their previous TCH space. They have a strong group of StreetLeaders that lead well together. This Fall, there's been an intentional focus on teaching literacy and math during AfterSchool Program. There's an ongoing rotation of small group trips for their discipleship time, which have been great times to speak life into each other and go deeper.

CAMP TRUTH

We're thankful that another organization in the community has allowed Camp Truth to use its space for the AfterSchool Program. We're excited to see the growth in the number of campers and the trust we're gaining in the Glamorgan community. On Monday evenings, some of the young ladies get together in the home of our Community Director for a 'Girls Dinner & Bible Study' night, where they're going through the Youth Alpha Video Series.

**RUN FOR PROMISE
2021 HIGHLIGHTS**

 **\$128,241**

**2ND PLACE FOR OVERALL FUNDS
RAISED ON THE STWM LEADERBOARD**



**65 'REGISTERED'
PARTICIPANTS**



OVER 200 'ACTUAL PARTICIPANTS

10 CHURCH TEAMS – Scarborough Chinese Baptist Church
Aurora Cornerstone Church, Markham Chinese Baptist Church, Crosspoint Church, Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church, Agincourt Church of God, Logos Baptist Church, Trinity Life Church and Metro Chinese Christian Mission





MEET THE DOBROWOLSKIS

“We are relational. We value people over property, money, structure and systems.”

—UrbanPromise Toronto Core Value

It’s why many of our staff have chosen to live in these communities, to shop where our campers and their families shop, to eat where they eat, to hang out where they hang out.

This emphasis on relational living happens at every level of our organization, within our team, at each camp, and among our board.

Peter and Laura Dobrowolski are UrbanPromise donors, and Peter also sits on our Board of Directors. Over the years, they have unreservedly welcomed our team and others, such as some moms, from the communities we serve into their space for rest and rejuvenation.

Their beautiful summer cottage becomes what Father Greg Boyle (founder and executive director of Homeboy Industries) refers to as a Hallway of Kinship. A space where differences aren’t emphasized but where, on the contrary, there’s a circle of inclusion.

We asked Laura to tell us a bit about how their generosity to UrbanPromise Toronto impacts their own lives.

UPT: What inspires you to open your space to UrbanPromise Toronto?

Laura: The beauty of nature in northern Ontario is something that restores and renews the soul. Reminders of God’s faithfulness and love abound in creation. We love to share this place with people as it

IMPACT STORY

makes our lives fuller in the doing. Opening up our space to UrbanPromise Toronto is truly a joy, and it energizes us to be able to share it with others.

UPT: How do you feel after spending time with the moms from our communities?

Laura: Being with the moms is an opportunity to share in the sheer joy of watersports and sunshine and see the wonder and thrill of the first experience on a jet ski or a tube ride! Along the way, it’s also an opportunity to listen and share some of the highs and lows of parenting and other life challenges. Life is made richer in the telling and the listening, as stories tumble out with ease over shared meals or in the hot tub. There is a mutuality to the laughter and the prayers offered on each other’s behalf. There’s the hum of joy in fellowship together that, by the day’s end, is usually expressed in contented quietness as we circle the lake together on a boat ride. A day with the moms fills me up in ways that affirm the goodness and fullness of God and the great pleasure of time well spent.

We’re grateful for the support of donors like Peter and Laura. They generously give of their time and their space as we forge deep relationships and connections.

To learn how you can get involved in our communities, email tricia@urbanpromise.com



SUPPORT A STREETLEADER

Looking for a unique way to give back this Christmas?

Our StreetLeaders are youth ages 15-19 who are in Stage 2 of our 20-year journey. We offer them employment opportunities, hands-on leadership development, tutoring, and a continued focus on mental health, social growth and discipleship.

Our ultimate goal is to journey with them and provide the necessary resources to become leaders in their communities.



GIVE A SPECIAL GIFT TO SUPPORT A STREETLEADER:

- > \$80 employment for one week of the school year
- > \$320 employment for one month of the school year
- > \$2880 employment for the school year (9 months)

www.urbanpromise.com/streetleader

Will you support a young leader from Toronto Community Housing? Give your gift today!

OUR MISSION >

To reach children in Toronto Community Housing with the love of Jesus, and raise them into leaders, who restore their community.



REACH
A CHILD.

RAISE
A LEADER.

RESTORE
COMMUNITY.

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