



REACH  
A CHILD.  
RAISE  
A LEADER.  
RESTORE  
COMMUNITY.

# STABILIZE

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” —Colossians 2:6-7

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**SHAWN JAMES**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

If you have ever played the game of Jenga, you know it's about carefully removing each block, balancing, and restructuring, to ensure the tower remains sturdy and strong. This concept of building and stabilizing resonates deeply with our journey as an organization in 2024. In 2023, we celebrated our 25th anniversary reflecting on God's faithfulness in sustaining and growing our ministry's impact within Toronto Community Housing. As we entered 2024, we recognized the need to restructure our community leadership team to support our programs expanding and enhancing the leadership development experiences for our young leaders ages 15-25.

Through prayer, community and staff consultations, we began crafting strategic plans aimed at answering a vital question: what do we hope to celebrate at our 30th anniversary, God willing?

While strategic planning was underway in the background, our core vision remained front and centre – seeing a generation of young leaders from Toronto Community Housing love Jesus

and serve their community. In alignment with this vision, we launched our first Community Intern Program. Three of our young community leaders joined our team to experience serving as missionaries for a year. They played key roles in leading children in our programs, supporting our StreetLeaders, and planning and executing community-wide events, including the March Break camp & Jr. High retreat, Summer all Camp Day, Community Night Celebration, and End of Summer BBQ.

The impact shared in this report reflects our staff, community interns, and StreetLeaders creating innovative programs and building relationships in our communities. This is only possible through God's grace and provision. I am grateful for our incredible staff, with whom I have the privilege to serve alongside, and for the unwavering support of our committed board.

On behalf of our board of Directors, staff and community members, thank you for your generosity and partnership. You are an integral part of our 20-year journey with a child and their family to help them overcome the barriers that poverty creates.

Grace & Peace

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shawn James', written over a white background.



**LOIS TULLO**, Chair, Lecturer, Schulich School of Business

**JOLINE BRADBURY**, Treasurer, CA, Norton McMullen & Co.

**JESSEY NJAU**, Secretary, Farm Manager, Zawadi Farm

**KATHERINE ISAAC**, Co-Chair, Head of Customer Success, Flare Systems

**WALTER JONG**, Financial Management Executive (retired)

**WILL JIN**, Executive, Venture Capital

**NATALIE BLAKE**, Professor, Humber College

**PETER DOBROWOLSKI**, VP, Bee-Clean Building Maintenance

# OUR COMMUNITIES

MESSAGE FROM MINISTRY DIRECTOR



CHRIS JONG  
COMMUNITY DIRECTOR

In the year of 2024, we were able to see our communities be inspired and transformed through our programs, special events, and, most importantly, relationships. This year, we were delighted to see young peoples' eyes open to new experiences and opportunities. We saw the emergence of youth going from being participants in our AfterSchool programs to StreetLeaders with hearts to know God more, and give back to their communities with the authority of Jesus. We celebrated with many

of our youth who gave their lives to Christ and were baptized into a larger church body, worshipped with our kids through dancing, and prayed with moms in doorways and living rooms. Some of our highlights include: several overnight retreats for our junior highs and highschool leaders, bringing our three sites together for fun days in the summer and Christmas celebrations, and taking our youth out of their comfort zones through new experiences like going on a missions trip, taking a road trip to Buffalo to learn about the underground railroad, and helping out behind the scenes at an Elvis Impersonator Concert. We are committed to loving our communities just as Christ would in all the big and small things, all the ups and downs, and all the victories now and hopes to come.

PARENT QUOTE:

*"Camp has been transformative for my daughter. It's a place where she's been able to grow, learn, and feel part of a supportive community. Through the activities and friendships she's formed, she's become more confident, open, and adventurous. The camp experience has provided her with a safe environment to explore new interests and talents, and I've seen her come home each day with a bright smile, eager to share what she's learned. The growth in her social skills and self-confidence is something I'm truly grateful for."*



# IMPACT NUMBERS

**14,387** hours in StreetLeaders/  
Community Intern worked

**\$236,868.95** paid out in  
StreetLeader/Community Intern wages

**2,175+** hours spent reaching children

**215+** days mentoring leaders

**12+** days leadership development retreats

**8+** days of leadership development  
workshops Raising leaders

## OUR IMPACT

A 20 Year Journey with  
Children and their Families

### REACH A CHILD

5-14 years

**Program focus:** growth in spiritual awareness, academic achievement and respect for self and others.

### RAISE A LEADER

15-19 years

**Program focus:** spiritual growth & maturity, leadership development and community service.

### RESTORE COMMUNITY

20-25 years

**Program focus:** build strong foundations in church connection, college and career path, and community leadership.



#### OUR MISSION

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

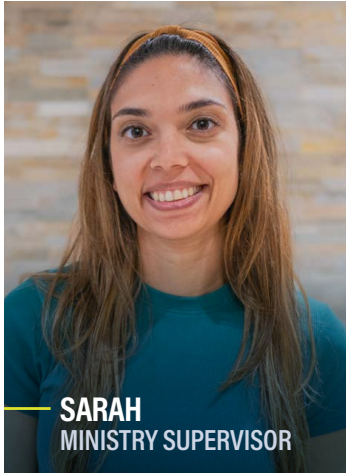
#### OUR VISION

A generation of young leaders from Toronto Community Housing who love Jesus and serve their community.

# REACH A CHILD

5-14 years

**Program focus:** growth in spiritual awareness, academic achievement and respect for self and others.



**SARAH**  
MINISTRY SUPERVISOR

## A DAY AND IN THE LIFE AT CAMP...

Here at Camp Victory, between after school program, March break and summer camp we have been able to impact about 80 children through the love of Christ throughout the past year. Currently

we are running an AfterSchool Program, for about 24 kids from kindergarten to grade 8. They often come rushing through the doors, filled with excitement and anticipation to start the program each day.

We usually start off by having snacks, and then getting right into the program. A lot of our kids struggle with reading and writing so we provide opportunities for them to grow in these areas during homework time. Our leaders have also been able to provide homework help for each child.

After homework, we get into the word of God where each child hears a Bible lesson. They hear about Jesus

## List of activities done in 2024

- Camp Widjiitiwin
- SIT (StreetLeaders In Training)
- Sail Boating
- Math & Literacy Focus
- Fun trips: Toronto Zoo, Canada's Wonderland
- Experiential Learning - Hiking
- STEM - Visions of Science

CAREGIVER  
QUOTE:

*"They are truly amazing people to have been exposed to. I trust them. The community trusts them. I love their commitment and dedication to bettering the children of the community."*

## Impact stats



*\*Based on children who responded to program survey*

and God's love for them and the impact I've seen is incredible. Children who never knew Jesus have the opportunity to hear about who He is, and the Good News of what He's done for us. As a result the amount of children have grown in accepting Jesus into their hearts, and something they love to do is at the end of each lesson say a little prayer for the group, and to Jesus.

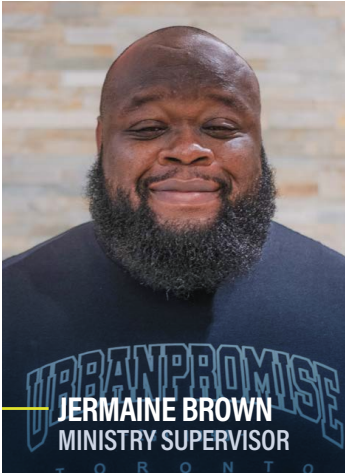
The impact we've made on the kids through our trips has been incredible! From visits to the zoo and Ripley's Aquarium to Wonderland and even Raptors 905 games, these experiences help build strong relationships and create unique memories. We're truly blessed to walk alongside these children, sharing the love of Christ and leaving a lasting impact for generations to come.



# RAISE A LEADER

15-19 years

**Program focus:** spiritual growth & maturity, leadership development and community service.



One of the simplest and most consistent ways that we lead our StreetLeaders to seek and trust God is through prayer. We believe that as simple as prayer is, in it we can teach our StreetLeaders what the Bible says about God, we can encourage them to practice talking to God, and we can help them develop their personal relationship with God. This also means that prayer is one of the ways that we witness our StreetLeaders grow spiritually, and as leaders.

This year, I had the privilege of witnessing one of our StreetLeaders, who will call Nu, grow spiritually through this area of prayer. In the beginning of her time with us as a StreetLeader, she would shy away from any opportunity to lead the group in prayer, and mentioned that she didn't know what to say. As time went on, we would see Nu begin to open up more to the idea of leading through prayer, and in this we also witnessed her growing in her understanding that prayer had more to do with her relationship with God. I am excited to continue witnessing Nu's growth through this area of prayer, and praying that God would use prayer to draw her, and our other StreetLeaders closer to him.

## List of activities done in 2024

- Summer StreetLeader training retreat
- Homework help & literacy training
- Saturday Workshops
- Bubble soccer & Gospel

## Impact stat



of StreetLeaders said they have grown in their knowledge of Jesus.

*\*Based on SLs who responded to program survey*



STREETLEADER QUOTE:

*"I have been at camp for almost 5 months now, one way I have grown in being a leader is my confrontational skills, I feel as though compared to when I first started it's easier to get the kids' attention and know how to handle many situations without having to ask a supervisor. With attaining this new skill, I can focus on what needs to be done and not have to worry about redirection so much as before."*

# RESTORE COMMUNITY

20-25 years

**Program focus:** build strong foundations in church connection, college and career path, and community leadership.

TEAM LEADERS

24



**JANELLE JONG**  
LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT  
COORDINATOR

On our most recent Winter Leadership Retreat with our senior Streetleaders and our Stage 3 Coaches, we were tasked to build towers using foam bricks, with the challenge of each team member only being able to view the tower from specific perspectives.

As they began building the foundation with confidence and moved towards building height, they quickly realized they had made errors. From their individual perspective, they had missed important details that couldn't be left unattended to. This discovery required them to stop, go back, and deconstruct layers to make the appropriate corrections.

## List of activities done in 2024

- Missions trip to UrbanPromise Wilmington
- Community Interns
- Workshops
- Leadership Retreats to Muskoka Woods

As we walk alongside young adults who have grown up through our Leadership Pathway, our conversations often feel a bit like building, deconstructing, and rebuilding. As our Streetleaders head off to post secondary and/or jobs, they navigate many topics such as faith, purpose and community and they often return back to us with questions, looking for guidance or encouragement as they tear down and rebuild again and again. As they make decisions, adjustments, or big commitments like relationships, joining a church, and being baptized, we walk alongside them as they carefully place each brick piece by piece.

This year, we have had the privilege of "seeing them through" many college acceptances, mission trip experiences, 4 commitments of faith through baptisms, relationships developments, and even welcoming a child.



STREETLEADER QUOTE:

*"I am impacting my community not only by being a great role model and leader at camp but also outside of it. I believe that UrbanPromise has given me the outlet to connect with these young kids who are in the same position I was in when I was at their age. I understand their struggles and know how to help them."*

# RESTORE: IMPACT STORY



**DARNELL**  
COMMUNITY INTERN

## How did you get involved with UrbanPromise Toronto?

I was recommended by a friend about a job opportunity where I could work with kids and share about Jesus. After my interview, I was offered the position, and I started in the summer of 2023. It was an amazing opportunity to engage in sports with the kids while making a positive impact on their lives.

## Why did you become an intern?

I saw it as a great opportunity to learn what happens behind the scenes at UrbanPromise Toronto. I wanted to be involved in camp planning and learn how to lead a team. I also gained experience in organizing large events, which was invaluable for my personal and leadership growth.

## What are some impactful experiences you had as an intern?

One of the most memorable experiences was taking a group of Grade 8s—our future StreetLeaders in training (S.I.T)—to Camp Widjiitiwin for a week. I bonded with them and saw firsthand the importance of building relationships. One shy girl wrote me a letter at the end of the trip, telling me she saw me as her big brother. Watching her come out of her shell was incredible.

Another powerful moment was my first mission trip to UrbanPromise Wilmington, where I served in the school and after-school programs. I was amazed at how quickly the kids embraced me. On my last day, a child I had bonded with opened up about often getting into trouble. Being present showed her that someone cared, and seeing her light up was unforgettable. I even teared up when one of the kids called me “Dad.” So many children lack a father figure, and it’s so important to be present and show them God’s love.





## What was challenging for you as an intern?

One of the biggest challenges was transitioning from serving at Camp Hope to Camp Truth. I had to build new relationships and adapt to a different leadership style. Stepping into a new role required me to embrace change and trust in God's plan.

## What did you learn from your challenges?

I learned to trust in God, even when I felt frustrated or uncertain. There were times I didn't understand what God was doing behind the scenes, but He was creating new opportunities for me to build relationships and be used in ways I hadn't expected. For example, a StreetLeader I mentored has now started coming to my church. This experience taught me to be willing and open to God's direction.

## What are you doing now?

As I feel called to pastoral ministry and have a passion for teaching God's word, I am currently a student at Canada Christian College, pursuing a Bachelor of Theology. I also serve as a youth leader at my church.



## What did you learn from being a community intern that you're utilizing now?

I've learned the importance of adaptability and being willing to learn from different leaders and experiences. When stepping into a new community, I've embraced the mindset that there is always something to learn from others.

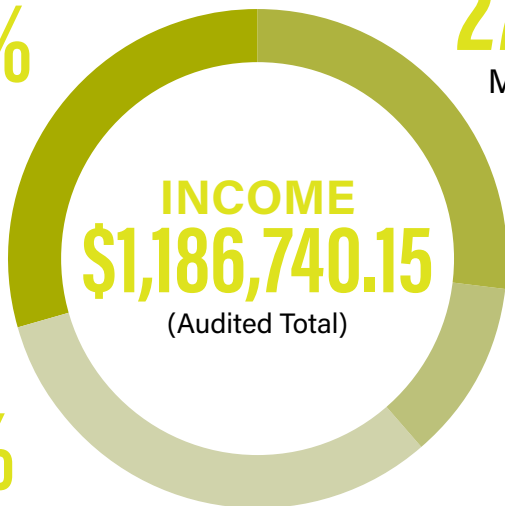
## What Bible verse are you holding onto in this season?

Psalm 46:10 – "Be still and know that I am God." I often get caught up in being busy. This verse reminds me to stop, be still, and recognize that God is in control. It's okay to pause and trust in Him.

# FINANCIALS

**29.41%**  
All Other Donations

**27.04%**  
Monthly Promise Partners



**31.93%**  
Grants

**11.62%**  
Events

**79.39%**  
Programs



**10.37%**  
Administration

**10.24%**  
Resource Development



Completed audited financial statements available on our website. UrbanPromise Toronto proudly accepts the seal of organizational integrity and accountability.



# GET INVOLVED

## Be a Part of the Promise – Transform Lives with UrbanPromise Toronto

Your support plays a vital role in creating opportunities for children and youth to thrive. Whether through giving, serving, or partnering with us, you can help build a brighter future in our communities.

### WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

#### Become a Promise Partner

Join our community of monthly donors and provide consistent support to sustain our programs year-round. Your ongoing generosity ensures children and youth receive the care, mentorship, and opportunities they deserve.

[www.urbanpromise.com/donate/promise-partner](http://www.urbanpromise.com/donate/promise-partner)

#### Bring a Missions Team

Experience firsthand the impact of UrbanPromise by serving alongside us. Your church, school, or organization can partner with us through short-term missions, assisting in camps, after-school programs, and community outreach.

[www.urbanpromise.com/missionteams](http://www.urbanpromise.com/missionteams)



#### Serve with Us

Use your time and skills to make a difference! Whether as a volunteer, mentor, or special event supporter, your involvement helps shape the future of the next generation.

Join us in making a lasting impact! Together, we can create change that matters.

[www.urbanpromise.com/get-involved](http://www.urbanpromise.com/get-involved)

SCAN  
HERE!



TO GET INVOLVED



# THANK YOU!

As we look forward to 2025, we are focusing on the theme of “Build Up” to innovatively reach our communities as missionaries, strengthen our team, and increase our Promise Partner commitments to create a sustainable future.

Your support made an incredible impact on the communities we serve. Because of your generosity with your resources and time, we were able to effectively achieve our mission to reach children in Toronto Community Housing with the love of Jesus and raise them into leaders who restore their community.



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