

# St. Jude Community Homes

Annual Report 2020 – 2021

# Small and Mighty



## Our resilient residents

In this year of isolation our tenants have taught us a lot about resilience. Here's how they stay healthy, hopeful and strong.

"I spend a lot of my time alone but I can still find hope and comfort in my spiritual life." – Mark

"I ride my stationary bike. Riding picks my mood up. I write songs on my stationary bike."

"The best thing that happened to me this year was getting vaccinated. This relieved a lot of stress about the pandemic."

– Susan

"I was diagnosed with cancer and schizophrenia in my early thirties when I came back from teaching English in Japan. The last 15 – 20 years has been an act of resilience for me." – Robin

"I have reached out to friends and other people to stay strong and connected. The community and staff here at St. Jude has helped me as well, providing social support and unfailing commitment to my well-being." – KD

# Community and caring

## Message from the President and Executive Director

We've always known St. Jude Community Homes was a special place, with a strong sense of community and caring. This year we've seen that strength like never before, as our residents and staff pulled together to support one another through the pandemic. There were so many important milestones and moments of gratitude for our wonderful residents, staff, and board – you can read about some of them in this annual report.

Throughout the pandemic, the SJCH team maintained operations, kept residents safe and housed, enhanced our meal program to restaurant status, co-ordinated major capital repairs, expanded our role and partnerships within the Downtown East Ontario Health Team, enhanced supports to City Park, and secured funds to create new supportive housing. This last item – the potential to build 12 new homes – is especially exciting. The support from the City of Toronto and the Tawse Family Charitable Foundation affirms St. Jude's reputation for excellent housing and services.

Amidst the challenges and achievements of this pandemic year, we sadly lost a beloved resident and former board member when Jeffrey Flaxman passed away. Jeffrey was an exemplary human being and is dearly missed by many. We are grateful to have known him.

We and the entire St. Jude Board of Directors thank you all for creating a caring and positive community.

**Michelle Rossi**, President

**Carol Zoulalian**, Executive Director



### Our staff

"From ongoing pivots in alignment with public health measures, while ensuring high quality operations and safety for staff and residents alike, I would like to thank and commend the entire SJCH team for their outstanding hard work, dedication, and resiliency!"

– Grace Kim, Board of Directors

# A year of growth to meet the need

The pandemic has closed down much in our city, but it has not stopped St. Jude from stepping up to meet the need. *This year we are:*

- replacing an under-used parking lot with 12 new supportive homes
- leading a collaboration with City Park and Downtown Ontario Health Team partners to promote the health and housing stability for 1400+ tenant members
- ensuring our own tenants eat well and stay well through the pandemic
- making our homes more accessible, comfortable and energy efficient.

## Twelve new supportive homes

In March, 2021 Toronto City Council voted to support St. Jude's proposal to transform a downtown underused parking lot into 12 new supportive homes. These compact self-contained apartments will be housed in a four-storey wood-frame "green" building. Tenants will be able to enjoy a green roof and the meals and other services offered at our hub site on Dundas Street East.

St. Jude is deeply grateful to **Tawse Family Charitable Foundation** for their extraordinary \$1 Million donation that made this development possible. We are also thankful to the **City of Toronto** for providing capital funds and fee waivers on these deeply affordable homes.

This year we will be fine-tuning the building's design and look forward to consulting with our neighbours as this development makes its way through the planning approvals process.

"Supportive housing is an important part of our social fabric and believe it should be owned and operated by not for profits. My donation to St. Jude Community Homes' new 12 unit affordable apartment building is an investment in people - an important contribution toward sustainable and secure supportive homes for future generations."

– **Moray Tawse**, Trustee for the Tawse Family Charitable Foundation

"St. Jude Community Homes knows that there is no health without a safe, affordable home.

With a 30+ year reputation as an excellent supportive housing provider, St. Jude Community Homes is actively working to convert their downtown Toronto parking lot into a quality apartment building with supports to match tenant needs. This building is one step toward realizing Federal, Provincial and Municipal plans to increase affordable housing supply to effect change in the lives of marginalized and vulnerable people living with mental health and addiction challenges."

– **Atom Egoyan**, Internationally acclaimed Canadian film, stage director, writer and producer, and Companion of the Order of Canada

"I didn't know where to go to get the vaccination until my resource worker called me and wanted to make an appointment... I can't wait for my second dose."

"My resource worker helped me get groceries. She's always at the ready and never refuses to help me out... I should say I'm 73 years old and that's why I need help with my groceries."

# Collaborating to support our Downtown

## Accessible, comfortable, energy-efficient homes



This year St. Jude installed a new elevator in our 431 Dundas Building, so that our long-term tenants – many of them now seniors – can retain their independence and stay out of Long-Term Care Facilities.

“St. Jude gave us masks and laundry money.”

We also replaced 37 outdated fan coil units with new energy efficient ones. Residents can enjoy optimal and reliable indoor temperatures – so important during stay-at-home orders – while reducing energy use by a projected 22 percent.

Major retrofits always create short-term pain for the greater gain. Thanks to the understanding and patience of residents and the good planning by staff inconveniences were kept to a minimum.

## City Park neighbours

In the late 1980s, City Park 1400+ tenants rescued their homes from a sell-off by converting their buildings to co-op housing. In 2020, the City Park Co-op Board invited St. Jude to bring supports to promote the continued health of the co-op community and its members. St. Jude piloted an on-site hub to survey tenants’ needs, connect tenants with health and other services, promote community safety, and work with tenants to reduce emergency room visits and prevent evictions.

**With the pandemic, efforts stepped up.** In a high density building where many residents were over 60, we knew COVID prevention could go a long way to reducing emergency room visits and keeping people with chronic health issues out of hospital.

## Good food, good health

Maintaining our high standards for quality delicious meals during a pandemic required creative thinking from St. Jude’s Head Chef and Assistant Chef. Working with the rest of the St. Jude staff, they adapted our menu to ensure meals would hold up during packing and delivery to tenants’ homes, and found containers that were just the right size and shape. We responded to resident suggestions and remained flexible to new ideas. It was an amazing team effort ensuring everything went off without a hitch.

The highlight was a special holiday meal for all staff and residents, including pies and wonderful shortbread cookies, turkey and all the fixings, plus a gift bag for each resident. We couldn’t eat together, but we took comfort in knowing we were each enjoying the same delicious meal the same evening.

“St. Jude has been incredibly supportive to staff and residents. I am proud to be a part of such a great organization.”  
– St. Jude support staff

## Downtown East Ontario Health Team

St. Jude now co-leads with Sherbourne Health a collaboration of Downtown East Ontario Health Team's 18 agencies providing access to doctors, case managers, visiting homemakers and other supports to City Park and other Downtown East tenants. Working with local community health centres, St. Jude promoted COVID-19 Testing Pop-Ups for tenants at City Park and other local buildings. We used meet-and-greets and door-to-door outreach to distribute masks, hand-sanitizers and food, and facilitated direct access to COVID vaccines through a partnership Unity Health.



### St. Jude: Just the facts

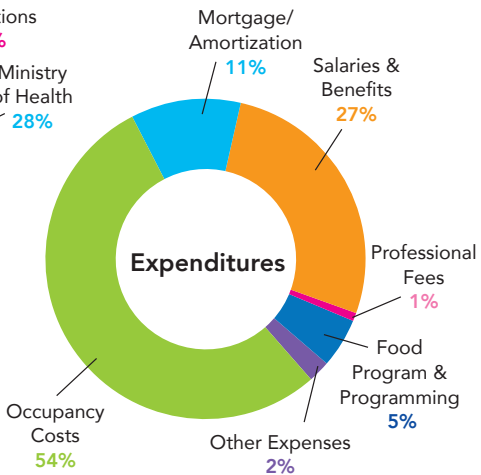
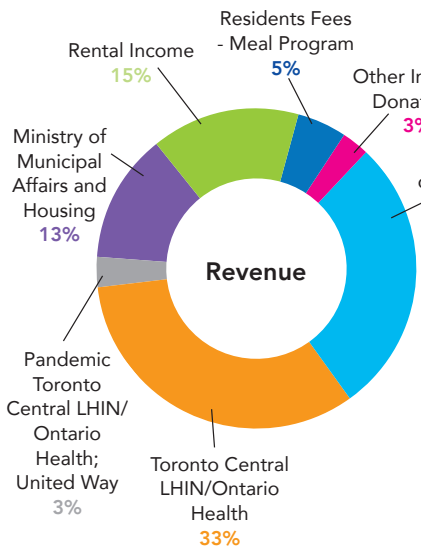
St. Jude Community Homes provides supportive housing for people living with serious mental health difficulties. We provide:

- 93 affordable self-contained apartments in three locations in Toronto's Regent Park and East Toronto neighbourhoods
- Individualized supports
- A community of peers
- Access to healthy and affordable meals
- Employment opportunities for residents
- Transfer payments to our high supportive housing partner House of Compassion
- Staff on site 7 days a week and available 24/7 after hours
- Opportunities for our residents to recover, grow and prosper.



## Revenues and Expenses

year ended March 31, 2021



## Our Board of Directors

Michelle Rossi ..... **Board Chair**  
Steve Lurie..... **Vice Chair**  
Sam Broadbent..... **Treasurer**  
Grace Kim..... **Secretary**  
Alexandra Karacsomy..... **Director**  
Ayesha Bhatti ..... **Director**

Fred Beaver..... **Director**  
Marissa Bastidas ..... **Director**  
Robin Church ..... **Director**  
Shane Smyth ..... **Director**  
Wayne March ..... **Director**  
Jenna Hitchcox ..... **Director**  
(term end June 2020)

## Thank you to our 2020-21 donors

Aging In Place  
Air Source Mechanical  
Alarm-Scan Audio &  
Security System  
Alexandra Karacsomy  
Alois Stadler  
Andy Smith  
Assel Kushkeyeva  
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Vitorhya Shields

## Thank you to our funders including all the support and Pandemic Relief:

Toronto Central LHIN/Ontario Health  
Ontario Ministry of Health  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
United Way Centraide Canada/Government of Canada  
City of Toronto

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“SJCH – still meeting complex needs of clients despite a chaotic pandemic world.”  
– Marissa Bastidas, Board of Directors

“Kudos to management, staff and residents who helped St. Jude thrive during the pandemic.”  
– Steve Lurie, Board of Directors

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## We welcome your support.

Make a secure donation at [sjch.ca](https://www.sjch.ca) or through Canada Helps

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/st-jude-community-homes/>

## Want to know more?

Visit [www.sjch.ca](http://www.sjch.ca)

email [info@sjch.ca](mailto:info@sjch.ca) or call 416-359-9241

St. Jude Community Homes

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