



Annual Report

2022 - 2023



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The Continued Evolution of Tropicana: Expanding Impact & Influence



Anthony Grey, MBA
President

In 2022 the world began to emerge from more than 3 years of unspeakable suffering from the Covid-19 virus. In Canada, the impact of the pandemic resulted in over 4.6 million cases and our communities losing nearly 52,000 of our fellow Canadians. We are grateful for the leadership and support from all levels of government and within the TCS community that resulted in Canada experiencing one of the lowest per capita impacts in the world economies. We are fortunate that in the Tropicana family, we did not experience any direct impact on our team. Although these challenges are not over, our leadership team met the moment. We made sure that our response to the risk was thoughtful, thorough, and guided by the science and in consultation with trusted professionals. We also sought feedback from our team to ensure that measures were practical and culturally sensitive. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to recognize and commend the entire TCS team for their care, resiliency, flexibility, and commitment to the mission of Tropicana and serving our communities under the most challenging of circumstances.

The 2022-23 fiscal year has been one of substantive change. The strategic and structural changes that began in the previous years were operationalized resulting in some noteworthy achievements as highlighted in our financial results.

Although we have made considerable progress throughout the year, we have a great deal of work still to do. Strategically, we have assessed that we have a number of key metrics to work on to strengthen the foundation of Tropicana for years to come.

- Cultural Transformation & Employee Engagement Operational Consistency, Standardization & Excellence
- Becoming an Employer of Choice in Community Services
- Resiliency
- Best-in-Class Performance-based Environment

As we continue to evolve as an organization, the realization that we are not completely ready to have the Board of Directors operating as only a governance body is premature. There is still work to do to strengthen the operational foundation of TCS so that this vision may be realized in the future. As a result of this revelation, we have determined that a hybrid operating model would be the appropriate model to support TCS at this time.

As I reflect on my first year as Board Chair, I am humbled by the level of commitment by all levels within the organization. The way that all the team members care about each other, how they care about the work TCS does within the community, and the compassion they have for one another is inspiring. No organization is perfect, but at TCS, the team works every day to be better than the day before.

I want to thank and express my gratitude to our entire team – employees, volunteers, members, partners, funders, allies, and advocates throughout our community. Their commitment to the mission of Tropicana is the reason we had yet another strong year and increased our impact and influence across Canada. The “Tropicana Effect” is real and growing. The best kept secret has been shared and now TCS is ready to go viral!

We have had a good year, and I am proud of our accomplishments. The future is still very uncertain, but I am confident and hopeful that TCS is well positioned to continue to meet the challenge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Grey", enclosed within a blue oval shape.

Anthony Grey
President & Board Chair

A Year in Reflection



Raymund Guiste, LL.M

Executive Director

Reflecting on the year's activities, the team at Tropicana is proud of all that we accomplished together in fiscal year 2022-23

I'm deeply grateful to our team; those on the front lines of our community work, the Management and Executive teams, and, our Board of Directors for their tireless efforts. I am continually amazed by our collective passion and community spirit, without which this organization could never have become the trusted source of support for anyone seeking to overcome barriers and improve their lives.

Although the pandemic is over, the lingering impact of Covid-19 is still being felt on the community and our organization. The experience has underscored how challenges and opportunities are inextricably linked. The pandemic both validated and reshaped our view of ourselves as an organization. Our teams rose to the challenge admirably and, as a result, Tropicana has emerged stronger although there is more work to do as we follow our values and pursue our goals.

As you'll see in this report, we made a good deal of progress in executing our five-year strategy with focus on our key strategic priorities. We achieved a 21% increase in revenue over the previous year, developed new partnerships and programs like the Tropicana Black Early Childhood Education Fast-track Stream with the City of Toronto and Centennial College, fed even more families in need through Harvest Share and expanded our national impact through the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative.

Minding the Gaps

Ours is an organization designed to work in the gaps. Gaps in social justice, gaps in physical and mental health outcomes, gaps in economic outcomes, gaps in access to technology. At Tropicana, we change lives by standing with those who live in the gaps. I invite you to continue to stand with us through your generosity of volunteerism, your donations, and your commitment.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Raymund Guiste', written in a cursive style.

Raymund Guiste, LL.M

Executive Director

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Vision

Communities in which all individuals have equal access to opportunities to reach their goals free from the impact of racial and systemic barriers.

Mission

Tropicana Community Services aims to provide: all people of Black, African, and Caribbean descent, newcomers, and individuals in need, of all ages, with solutions that lead to successful life outcomes.

We work to achieve this mission through culturally appropriate programs, including counselling, childcare, youth development, education, employment, family, seniors support, and other services.

Core Values

Integrity

To manage beyond compliance, proactively pursuing transparency, accountability, and best practices in our corporate actions to ensure alignment between activities, values, and stakeholder expectations.

Respect for the Individual

To show consideration for the individual; be respectful, fair, and sensitive in our dealings with each client, staff member, and volunteer.

Social Responsibility

To conduct organizational activities in a manner that contributes to the social good, does no individual harm and promotes trust in our brand.

Compassion and Client Focus

To ensure empathy underpins our motivation to serve those in need in ways that recognize and preserve their inherent dignity.

Guiding Principles

Culturally Appropriate Programs and Services

Designed with the Black community in mind but available to anyone in need.

Competence and Excellence

Competency and excellence in all aspects of our operations to ensure that our programs and services achieve the desired results and make efficient use of our resources.

Local Care and National Impact

Maintain local linkages and impact while expanding geographical reach.

Strategic Priorities

1. Agency Self-Sufficiency

Achieve self-sufficiency and diversification of funding sources to allow for self-direction to meet our mission.

Public-private social enterprise ventures will allow Tropicana Community Services to de-risk revenues and provide more flexibility to address current and emergent challenges, and future-proof funding for programs, services, and administration.

2. Collaboration and Partnership

Develop strategic partnerships and work with our communities and stakeholders to ensure programs meet the needs of those we serve.

3. New Innovative Programming

Develop new and innovative programs that provide root cause solutions and drive measurable impact.

4. Human Resources Optimization

Create an organizational culture that focuses on human equity, empowerment, and skills development to archive talent optimization and establish Tropicana Community Services as a preferred employment destination.

5. Enabling Technologies

Integrate technology and innovation into the foundation of Tropicana Community Services to enable and enhance program delivery through secure and reliable infrastructure.

6. Operational Excellence

Create an environment of continuous improvement.

Organizational Updates

Culturally Appropriate Counselling (CAC)

Who We Are

Through its various programs and services, the CAC department helps individuals learn about healthy relationships, increase their self-esteem and gain access to the mental health services they need.

The majority of our counselling clients are from the Black and Caribbean community and so are our counsellors. Interactions are therefore rooted in a culturally appropriate perspective. Client dialects, customs, references, and cultural norms may not be understood or comprehended elsewhere, but

Tropicana counsellors offer that awareness. Black, Caribbean, and African families are often referred to Tropicana both because of the long wait lists that are present in a mainstream setting and because of our organization's cultural expertise.

As a result of the pandemic, service became hybrid in 2022-2023. During this time, we learned that there is a clear need for in-person sessions as the enforced isolation hampered clients' ability to remain socially involved with the community.



Services aimed to educate, empower, engage and equip clients to recognize and address issues while developing resources and social connections. They included:

Individual, Couple, & Family Counselling—This program provides a safe and confidential space for children, youth, adults and seniors to work through their challenges by identifying aspects of their lives in need of change or exploring ways in which to cope with situations relating to: communication, parenting, relationships, emotional regulation, stress, grief, self-esteem, mental wellness, homelessness, trauma and gender-based violence.

Violence Against Women (and Children) Counselling—This program aims to increase the safety of women (and their dependents) by helping them to be aware of their rights and develop strategies to live free from abuse.

Transitional Housing & Support—This program assists women (age 16+) and their dependents who have experienced domestic violence to access safe and subsidized housing and connect with the community.

Enhanced Youth Outreach—This program enables youth (ages 12-25) to better navigate and connect with support services.

SNAP® BACK (Stop Now and Plan Black, African & Caribbean Kids)—This program supports Black, African and Caribbean families who are at risk of being in conflict with their school or community to develop pro-social behaviours. Children, ages 6-11, learn how to regulate their emotions, maintain self-control and resolve problems while their parents or caregivers explore strategies to support and strengthen their relationship.

Together We Can Youth Mentorship—This program is for Black, African and Caribbean children and youth, ages 9-25, interested in strengthening leadership skills. It helps them to make healthy and safe choices, increase resiliency and make progress toward identified goals through culturally relevant mentorship. Participants are encouraged to pursue outcomes related to educational achievement, employment or entrepreneurship, civic engagement and leadership, and their cultural identity. Activities included group mentoring, educational workshops, cultural projects and the establishment of a book club.

START for Life Skills Training (Success Through ART® - Aggression Replacement Training®)—

Tropicana facilitated a 10-week life-skills series that provided participants with instruction to enhance the social skills necessary for good interpersonal communication, anger control, and decision-making. Program activities included reflective discussions, role play and demonstrations.

Caribbean Lime—This program is a mixed-gender group that provides psychosocial education, recreation and social activities and food or income security services for Black, African, and Caribbean seniors (age 50+). Activities aimed to broaden participants, social network.

Who We Serve

Our CAC services are for children, youth, adults, and seniors of predominantly Black, African or Caribbean heritage. Our clients come from single- and dual-parent households, women experiencing domestic violence, high-risk youth, children identified as having anti-social or aggressive behaviour, persons involved with the justice system and/or child welfare, immigrants and newcomers, persons experiencing homelessness, individuals in conflict, and low-income earners.

“The service helped me to have a voice. I was hopeful. The safety plan was helpful for me to keep myself and kids safe. I feel much safer than before, because of the encouragement I received.”

— Adelle
Transitional Housing & Support client

What Sets Us Apart

CAC provides ethno-specific and culturally, linguistically appropriate services that are not typically available in a mainstream setting. Tropicana specializes in the delivery of culturally appropriate programming designed with the Black, African, and Caribbean community in mind. This focus helps to address the impact of anti-black racism on racialized children, youth, adults, and seniors.

Community Impact

By offering a breadth of services that meet the emotional, psychological, and social needs of clients, Tropicana has become an important part of the betterment of the community.

By the Numbers

- **1,255** individuals used Tropicana's counselling services, including **502** who participated in the **98** educational workshops.
- **135** women and **42** children were supported by the Violence Against Women Counselling.
- **63** women (**44** applications) assisted with safe housing options as a means to remove themselves from abusive relationships.
- **65** isolated youth (ages 12-25) assisted in addressing challenges and in connecting with a caring adult for ongoing guidance and support. Services included life-skills workshops at Eva's Place (youth shelter).
- **81** new children from **74** households were supported through **8** psychosocial groups as part of the SNAP BACK program.
- **53** participants attended 3 series of START for Life.
- **41** youths were paired with caring adults for individual and group sessions as part of the Together We Can Youth Mentorship program. Participants were exposed to various experiences such as theatre, art gallery, discussions about achieving political leadership, skiing, and a book club.
- **108** individuals participated in Caribbean Lime activities that included a book club, Lime Time—discussion groups, bingo and Afro-Caribbean dancing.

“It has been a journey; I learned a lot about myself and my emotions. I am not the angry person I used to be. One thing that has changed as a result of this program is that I now listen to my cues before reacting. To anyone interested in taking the program, you will learn life skills that you may not have known you would need.”

— Taylor
START for Life client

Tropicana Employment Centre

Who We Are

Tropicana Employment Centre (TEC) helps prepare youth and adults to meet the challenges of an ever-changing job market. Since 1988, TEC has been providing employment services to the people living in our community. Our services have evolved over time to meet the changing needs of our clients and the environment, including offering remote services throughout the pandemic and addressing the financial instability many of our clients have been facing in the last year. The programming at TEC includes:

Employment Services — A year-round program providing unemployed individuals access to resources, including training workshops, one-on-one pre-employment counselling, and job placements. We offer a range of resources, support, and services to respond to specific career and employment needs of individuals and the skilled labour needs of employers.

Youth Job Connection—There are two components to this program:

Year-round—A year-round program providing intensive employment support for youth (aged 15-29) who are not employed or in school, or training, and experience multiple barriers to find full-time employment. Clients go through 60 hours of pre-employment training (to promote job readiness) and then work with a job developer to place them in jobs of their choice. Part of this is taking participants through job matching, and reviewing options for paid job placements with placement support if needed. There are also hiring incentives for employers.

Summer and After School—Providing summer, part-time and after-school job opportunities to high school students facing life challenges, who may need support transitioning between school and work.

Pre-apprenticeship Program Autobody Damage Collision Repair—Preparing youth (aged 18-30) for a career in Autobody and Collision Damage Repair. Participants learn introduction to the basics of auto body collision and automotive service technician trades and complete the Level 1 pre-apprenticeship course offered by Centennial College.

Canada-Ontario Job Grant—Providing direct financial support to individual employers or employer consortia who wish to purchase training for their employees. The goal of this program is to help employers invest in their workforce by sharing the cost of training, and ultimately to support job creation, increase job quality, and provide job advancement.

Better Jobs Ontario—Skills training for laid-off unemployed workers for which skills training is the most appropriate intervention to transition them into high-skill, high-demand occupations in the local labour market.

netWORKS Program—A mentorship program funded by United Way, it allows youth (aged 16-29) to develop professional networks and connects them with different professionals in their field of interest for guidance or employment.

PARRY (Pre-Employment Anti-Racism Resiliency Youth) Initiative—In 2021, Tropicana launched a pilot program for the PARRY initiative, funded by RBC. This program was extended into the 2022/2023 year. The PARRY initiative expanded Tropicana's existing pre-employment program for youth ages 16 to 29 years of age to include anti-black racism awareness training and extended to the employers we partner with.

The PARRY Initiative is tailored to the needs of multi-barrier youth living in the seven priority neighbourhoods in Scarborough and east North York. The program provides foundational information on race and racism, identifies and addresses the lived experiences of racialized youth, and equips them with workplace navigation tools and skills to succeed in increasing their psychological well-being and self-confidence. Tropicana's employment partners who hired youth in the program also received equity leadership training to improve their diversity initiatives aiding in the betterment of their own recruitment, retention, and engagement, as well as providing equitable representation in their workplaces.

Youth Employment Pilot Project for BIPOC Communities: Ready, Willing and Able to Work Program—This project addresses the unique experiences and challenges faced by racialized youth with an intellectual disability or on the autism spectrum seeking employment in communities across Canada.

Early Childhood Education – Tropicana Black Fast-track Stream—This program is geared towards persons identified as Black African, Black Caribbean or Black Canadian and it provides funding to support the retention and recruitment of a high-quality child care and early years workforce.

Who We Serve

The pandemic and the ensuing financial instability have been a challenge for everyone but they have had a more devastating impact on the people in our community who are the furthest from the job market. The gaps in services and access to resources have become indisputable during this time of need. While Ontario is experiencing a skills gap and labour shortage, those who are furthest from the labour market are still encountering employment challenges. We have noted that while the client group that we serve are easily able to attain survival jobs, it is extremely difficult for them to secure and maintain long-term and meaningful employment.

Despite these challenges, at the end of the fiscal year, our statistics show that we have met and exceeded targets in key areas of our core measures.

TEC serves clients starting from age 15. There are both pre-employment programs, designed to serve students preparing for their first job and programs designed for adults that are shifting their career focus or reentering the job market.

What Sets Us Apart

TEC has always been able to stand out in this community because we have focused our efforts on building strategic relationships. It is these relationships that set us apart because they help us reach people in the community who otherwise may not be able to access employment services and they allow us to find resources so that we can provide the wrap-around support that meet the unique needs of all of our clients. TEC is committed to serving a diverse community and providing clients with a culturally appropriate service. Our staff speak more than fifteen different languages. In addition to the work in helping clients to find jobs, TEC provides clients with support in getting training to upgrade their skills and reach their long-term employment and career goals.



“I have been procrastinating for a long time about going back to school. Finally, last year, I decided that I am going to do it. I was checking out the schools and the ECE programs offered, as I always wanted to work with children. My son’s godmother forwarded the link for the Fast-Track ECE offered through Tropicana. I contacted Tropicana right away. Tropicana was quick to respond, and now I’m on my way to starting my learning journey in Canada. The academic upgrading was an amazing experience. Tropicana staff were also very helpful and supportive, offering breakfast and clothing.”

— Sabrina
TEC client

By the Numbers

- **3,952** clients were served by the Tropicana Employment Centre.
- **327** workshops were facilitated.
- **2,150** individuals attended our workshops.
- **432** clients obtained placement or employment (not including YJCS and pre-apprenticeship program).
- **10** pre-apprenticeship clients were aided in finding placements in the auto-body industry.
- **121** students were assisted in finding summer employment opportunities.
- **12** Canada-Ontario Job Grants applications were approved.
- **63%** of our registered Employment Services and Youth Job Connection clients found employment.
- **26%** of our registered Employment Services and Youth Job Connection clients were enrolled in education and training.



“This experience has been amazing; I love my new job. I appreciate all the help and training I got from Tropicana it really helped me get back on my feet.”

— Taki
TEC client

Youth Development & Education

Youth Development and Education (YDE) provides a variety of programming for children and youth which focuses on their academic skills, recreational interests, and life skills development. The goals of the department encompass fostering a safe and nurturing environment where participants can develop intellectually, morally, emotionally, and socially. Most notably, YDE provides culturally appropriate programming that reflects the evolving needs of youth from the Black, African, and Caribbean community.

In 2022-2023 YDE continued its partnership with three educational institutions (University of Toronto at Scarborough's Volunteer Network Program, Toronto Metropolitan University [formerly Ryerson University] and George Brown College) to secure placement students in the field of Social Work to assist with YDE life skills and academic programming.

Furthermore, in the beginning of 2022, YDE programs were still impacted by the pandemic and operated virtually for the most part. However as of September 2022, most programs started back in-person on-site at Tropicana and a few programs were offered virtually. Outlined below is the diverse range of programs we offered children and youth between the ages of 4-18 years+.

- **Youth Development**
 - » Defy Your Label
 - » Rise Above
 - » Youth Leadership Certificate Program
- **Youth Education**
 - » Increase Your Success Tutoring program
 - » S.T.E.M.
 - » Coding
 - » TRP (The Reading Program)
- **Camp Tropicana**
 - » March Break Camp
 - » Summer Camp
- **Camp Tropicana**
 - » Steelpan Classes

Who We Serve

YDE provides a variety of programs for children and youth aged 4-18. YDE is open to all youth in the community where it provides a stable environment for learning, growth, and personal development.

What Sets Us Apart

The goals of YDE are accomplished by developing ongoing partnerships with the community's schools, libraries, local entrepreneurs and organizations that share the same mission and goals. YDE's collaboration with parents, children, and youth are vital to the success of all participants and members of the wider community and ensure that the programs being provided are responsive and truly serve the needs of the community.

“My boys really enjoy going to the Defy Your Label program at Tropicana. The staff is friendly and the environment is welcoming. I have seen a positive change in how they view themselves since joining the program. They now have an increased sense of belonging because they are more connected to the Black community.”

— Johanne
Defy Your Label Participant's Parent



“The program challenges me to have patience and to overcome challenges.”

— Melia
Rise Above Participant

By the Numbers

- **6** social worker placement students assisted with programming throughout 2022-2023.
- **13** families participated in the sponsored TRP literary program for children 4-6 and their caregivers.
- **47** children participated in Tropicana’s March Break Camp in 2022 & 2023.
- **38** volunteer tutors provided online and onsite academic tutoring for students in need.
- **30** children received free academic tutoring support online and onsite in 2022 & 2023.
- **62** students attended steelpan classes, **24** in the winter term and **38** in the spring term.



Tropicana Childcare

Who We Are

Tropicana's Childcare Centres provide culturally appropriate childcare with a focus on play-based programs that help children develop an ability to self-regulate, cope with challenges, adopt a positive and healthy perspective and build confidence. From two locations, both in the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) buildings (John McCrae Public School and McCowan Road Public School), the Centres have been serving the TDSB, Toronto Community Housing, and the surrounding communities for more than 35 years.

Who We Serve

We care for children aged 3 months to 12 years, giving parents the opportunity to work or attend school. Both Childcare Centres serve newcomers from the neighbouring communities and residents from Toronto Community Housing Corporation.

Community Impact

The Tropicana Childcare Centres provide a diverse, safe, and professional environment where parents can be assured that their children are receiving the highest level of care. We are committed to promoting a friendly, secure, nurturing environment, and stimulating program.

With its location close to the Toronto Community Housing Corporation neighbourhood with young children, the program brought much-needed care as parents who worked or attended school during uncertain times. We continued to provide continuous support to families from March 2022 to March 2023 serving an additional 68 new clients. Tropicana Community Services Childcare Centres continues to remain a reliable and dependable service to the surrounding community at large.

“My son has been at the childcare centre for a little over two years now. The atmosphere that the staff provides is a nurturing, safe environment for my preschool son. He has been supported holistically in every way - physical, emotional, and psychosocial. He had learned so much from his teachers and peers. For all staff, I am truly grateful for your help and support as my kid transitions to junior kindergarten!”

— Patricia D
Childcare client



“My daughter has been in the childcare centre since August 2022, and for me, it has been a very good experience. Since we are from a Spanish-speaking country, my daughter arrived here without knowing any English, and today she is speaking and talking very clearly with her little friends and staff. The daycare staff is very friendly and very careful with the children; they take good care of them, and also they care about their families, trying to help as much as possible.”

— Maria Reinoso
Childcare client

By the Numbers

- Our childcare centres were able to **operate for the full 12 months**.
- At the end of the 2022-2023 fiscal year, we had **111 children enrolled (91% capacity/up by 29%)**.



Social Services

Harvest Share

The Tropicana Harvest Share program provides clients in need with supplemental groceries. Tropicana receives and then sorts donations from a variety of restaurants, grocery stores, and food wholesale and manufacturers and other generous donors, and redistributes them to individuals and families facing food insecurity.

According to the Canada Community Health Survey (2019), conducted by Statistics Canada, Black households are 3.56 times more likely to experience food insecurity than white households and 1.88 times more likely when adjusting for education, household makeup, income, province, and immigration.

Harvest Share Program Breakdown													
	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	YEARLY TOTAL
Families/ Household Served	83	83	76	77	82	79	85	87	88	81	90	103	1,014
Individuals Served	294	295	286	264	279	290	300	299	289	278	311	320	3,505
Boxes Distributed	431	455	486	506	492	494	473	428	474	447	435	519	5,640
New Individuals										13	9	12	34
Individuals Leaving the Service										1	0	0	1
Grab & Go Individuals										76	44	72	229

Additional Harvest Share support provided via the counselling department:

- **903** snacks, **2,668** meals, and **910** Harvest Share hampers were provided to seniors.
- **260** chickens or turkeys, **1,016** hygiene kits, and **214** toys as well as books, furniture, household goods, and school supplies were distributed to clients.



Ricochet

Ricochet is a free service that provides new and gently used clothing for work and everyday wear to help those with limited income.

Tech4Transformation

Tech4Transformation is a program that started during the pandemic in partnership with Green4Good and CompuGen that addresses the need created by the digitalization of all things including education.

Its goal was to support children whose families could not afford computers, software, and other digital tools that became must-haves during the pandemic for their education.

The partners chose to end this program in December 2022 as the pandemic moved into the new norm status. Tropicana chose to continue on their own. We accepted financial donations to support the purchase of inventory and continued to distribute the inventory that was left to clients, in addition to expanding eligibility to include those with a need for work and seniors looking for social interaction.

Community Engagement

In addition to federal and provincial funding, Tropicana Community Services relies on the generosity of individuals, institutions, foundations, and corporations to fund its programs and enable the Tropicana Effect.

Our Community Engagement team is our front line workers in seeking and vetting new opportunities available for funding, donations, and community involvement.

Funding Priority

Funding in 2022-2023 was prioritized for our Counselling and Social Services departments, to assist with the pandemic's residual impact on clients.

SBCCI (Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative)

The Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI) was created by the federal government through Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to help increase the capacity of grassroots not-for-profit organizations serving Black communities in Canada. The grants were originally administered by three intermediary organizations (Black Business Initiative, Groupe 3737, and Tropicana Community Services) with the aim to increase the organizational capacity of the grantee organizations.

On November 23, 2020, the original three intermediaries announced the launch of the SBCCI's call for proposals for capacity-building projects. Halifax's Black Business Initiative, Montréal-based Groupe 3737, and Toronto's Tropicana Community Services were commissioned to administer the SBCCI capacity-building fund in Canada. In 2021, Edmonton's Africa Centre was added as a fourth intermediary to support this initiative.

As of March 31, 2023, **191 organizations** representing **341 projects** had been funded, for a **total of \$13,014,902.54** in grants disbursed.

By the Numbers

- **181** projects funded in total as of March 31, 2023.
- **161** additional projects (new) were added in 2022-2023.
- **341** projects in total funded by March 31, 2023.
- **\$13,014,902.54** in grants distributed by March 23, 2023.



The Tropicana Effect

Food & Toy Drive

The Food & Toy Drive has become a staple in the lives of Tropicana clients. Individuals can participate in the program by adopting families or donating non-perishable food items, gift certificates, toys, clothes, age-appropriate gifts for our younger clients, or cash.

By the Numbers

- **30** families, with a total of **74** children, benefited from the Toronto Star Santa Claus Fund. (This was a considerable increase over last year's 9 families and 24 children supported.)
- **124** families (**290** children) received toys from the CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish plus a private anonymous donation of \$3,000 worth of toys and gifts. (The number of families significantly increased to 65 families, but the number of children went down, 169 were supported last year.)
- **25** families were selected to be sponsored and received gifts in time for the holidays. (This was an increase over last year's 18.)

Community Support Initiatives

United Way Annual Fundraising

Tropicana's Annual United Way Fundraising activities raised **\$3,254.65**.

Amazon Donations

Tropicana's Harvest Share Program received from Amazon a total of **20 pallets of various items** which included laundry detergent, cleaning supplies, skin care, hair products, electronics, baby wipes and more. These items helped to alleviating the hardship in many of the households supported by Tropicana. **350 families benefited from this partnership.**

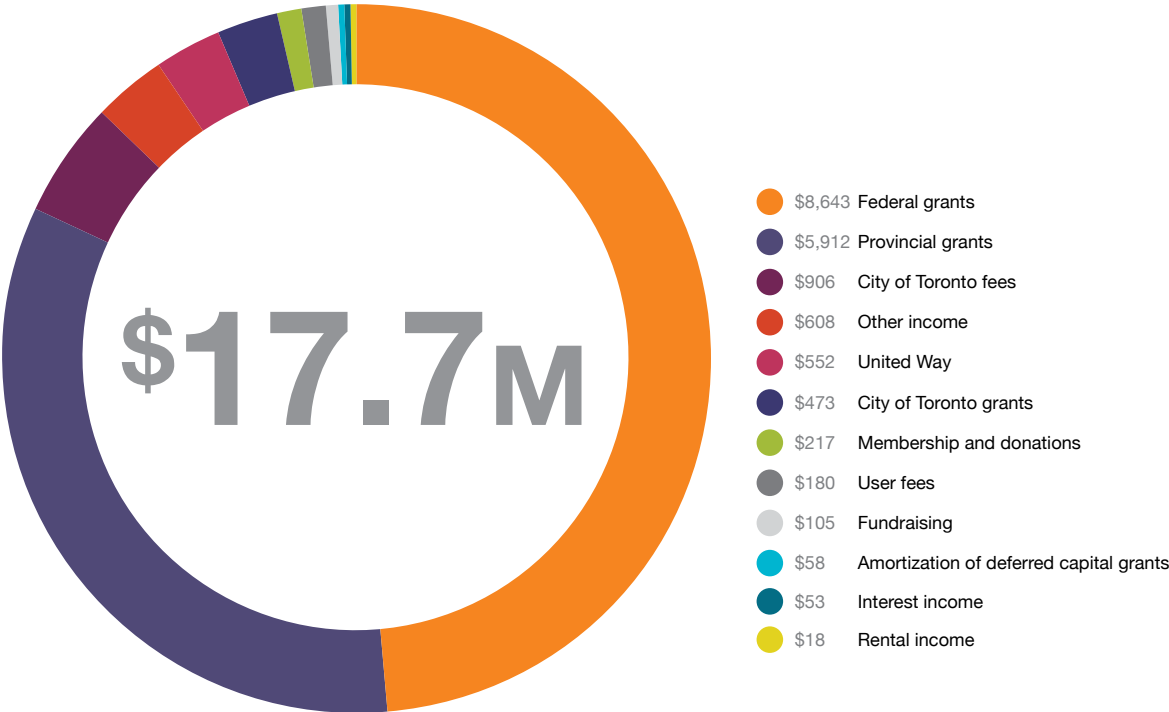
Back-to-School Backpacks

Through the support of **JP Morgan**, Tropicana distributed **100 backpacks filled with back-to-school supplies** to students in need. The backpacks included pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, crayons, exercise books, and paper.

Financial Reports

Financial Performance 2022-2023

Revenue by category in 000's.

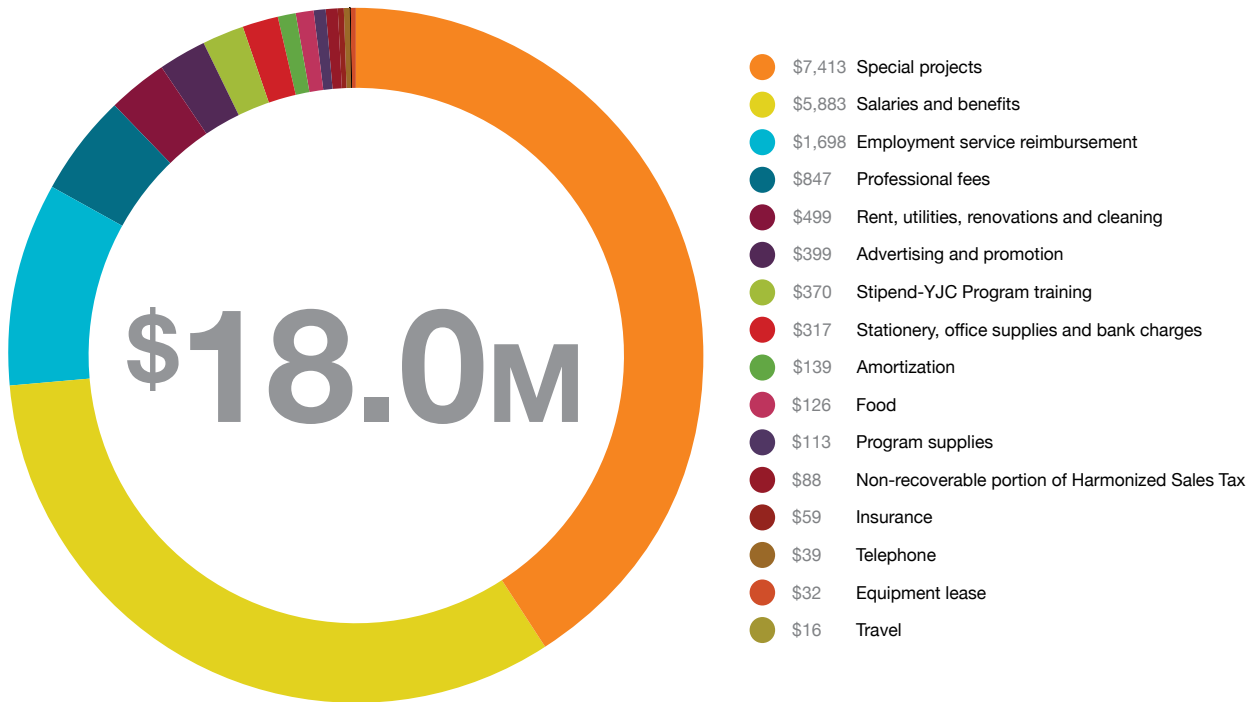


Revenue of \$17.7M

- Federal grants contributed 49% of overall revenue at 8.6M
- Provincial grants comprised 33% of overall revenue at \$5.9M
- City of Toronto fees added 5% of revenue at 906K
- United Way funding comprised 3% of revenue at 552K
- Fundraising, donations, and corporate sponsors comprised 2% of revenue

Financial Performance 2021-2022

Expenses by category in 000's.



42%
of total expenses can be attributed to special projects

33%
of total expenses are represented by salaries and benefits

10%
of the total expenses are related to employment service reimbursement

Treasurer's Report

Maurice (Mo) Lewis CPA, CA–Treasurer

Responsibility for the integrity of the financial information presented in the financial statements rests with the management of Tropicana Community Services.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in Canada.

Accountability to Members and Funders

In accordance with Tropicana's by-laws, Deloitte LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, was selected to be Tropicana's auditor with the endorsement of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Board of Directors.

Business Controls

Tropicana maintains rigorous internal controls which are supported and monitored through the oversight of the Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) Committee. The committee's role is to assist the Board by providing oversight and assurance regarding the integrity and reliability of the financial statements. The FAR committee is composed of three (3) Board members and four (4) volunteers from the community and supported by Tropicana's Executive Director and the Chief Financial Officer.

Another key role of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee is helping to identify and assess risks and other potential exposures, reviewing the organization's annual business plan and reviewing results compared to the plan on a regular basis through dialogue with senior management. Some examples include the development of a company risk register that will be subject to review and monitoring by the committee, the review of company investment policies and providing input regarding pay equity. Tropicana manages financial risk by assessing funding sources, operating expenses and capital requirements to ensure there are adequate cash reserves to support ongoing operations.

Tropicana continues to service its long-term mortgage loan in the ordinary course of operations. Tropicana ended the year with an operating deficit of \$313.4 thousand compared to last year's deficit of \$243.7 thousand.

Revenue increased in 2023 by \$3 million (\$17.7 million from \$14.7 million) driven mainly by a \$2.8 million increase in grants from the Federal Government's Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative (SBCCI) and a \$93K

increase in daycare user fees. For the year total SBCCI grants were \$8.6 million up from \$5.8 million last year. Tropicana is proud to be one of the largest administrators of SBCCI grants and we are proud of the impact it has had on the many organizations we have worked with to increase capacity and enhance services since the start of the program.

Tropicana continues to maintain a strong balance sheet, year-over-year. The increase in cash is mostly a result of the successful award in February of operating and capital capacity building grants through the SBCCI program for our own organization to be implemented in the coming year. This is also reflected in the increase in deferred revenue and deferred capital grants.

Amount due from funders reduced from \$1.5 million last year to \$192 thousand, mainly due to the timing of grant funds received in 2022 for amounts committed to SBCCI beneficiaries. This is also reflected in the change

Tropicana's past three fiscal years highlighted below in 000's

Year	2023	2022	2021
Revenue	\$17,724	\$14,698	\$10,657
Surplus	(\$313)	(\$244)	\$1,262

in accounts payable and accrued liabilities. Otherwise, the balance sheet is comparable to last year.

We continue to operate in a fiscally prudent manner while improving productivity and efficiency. Strong financial oversight and responsible stewardship continue to be priorities to ensure we are in a strong position today and achieve the sustainability, viability, continuity, and ability to react to the challenges and opportunities the future may hold.

Thanks

I would like to thank the FAR Committee for their support, guidance, and direction during the year. I also extend my gratitude to Tropicana's staff, the Executive Director, and the Chief Financial Officer for their dedication during the challenges of the last year. The team's hard work and diligence have led to another successful year in the organization's financial results.

Thank you also to our external auditors, Deloitte LLP, for the successful completion of our annual external audit.

Thank You to Our Donors

The funder, sponsor, and donor lists that follow represent supporters who contributed financially or in-kind to Tropicana Community Services Organization between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023. We thank all of our loyal supporters for aiding us aid those in need.

We have carefully reviewed the names that are listed, however, if you find an error or omission, please accept our apologies and contact us at marketing@tropicanacommunity.org so that we may correct our records.

Funders

City of Toronto—Children’s Services	Government of Canada—Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS)
City of Toronto—Community & Neighbourhood Services	Government of Ontario—Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
Employment Ontario	Government of Ontario—Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD)
Government of Canada—Employment and Social Development Canada—Federal Government of Canada	Strides Toronto
Government of Canada—Federal Government of Canada	United Way of Greater Toronto
Government of Canada—Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	

Corporate/Business Sponsors and Donors

Adhoc Works	Purolator
AllCare Maintenance Services Inc.	Purolator Central West Retail Division
CHUM Charitable Foundation	Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)
Deloitte Canada	Sony Music
Durham Promotional Products	Speakers’ Spotlight
Human Capital Benefits Inc.	SPINCO Oakville
Meridian Credit Union	Sustainable Bliss Collective
Move For Change	TD Canada Trust
NeoCortex Inc.	Toronto Foundation

Donors

Adam Vickers	Caitlin Hutcheon	Deborah Ford	Helen Defreitas
Ainka Jess	Calvin Chan	Debra Payne	Hubert Bridgewater
Alaine Pereira	Camille Mongal	Denika McPherson	Hyacinth Lee-Grant
Alexa Barlow	Carla Marie Newton-Dhu	Denzil Dias	Ifeoluwa Olurotimi
Alice Bhyat	Carlene Lyn	Desmond Pouyat	Ingrid Daniel
Alice Tseng	Catherine White	Devin Wiles	Isabel Massey
Alicia Rankine	Cecil King	Dillon Clarence-Nicholas	Jackie Ching
Allyson Marshall	Cecile Peterkin	Donna-Mae Robinson	Jane Wilson
Amber Kueneman	Cedric Kasongo	Eberechukwu Ijeh	Jay Calafiore
Andrea Wilks	Chantel Gaspard	Edmond Tumenta	Jean Brown
Angela Gray	Charles Rosenberg	Elaine Arakill	Jean Chambers
Anika Henry	Cherry Francis	Emil Boychuk	Jeff Price
Anika Holder	Chong Bang	Erica Smith-Graham	Jeffrey Flushy
Anita Anuyah	Christian Kalande Kalunga Muhiya	Estee Garfin	Joanne Gooding
Anna Majetic	Christin McArthur	Eunice Graham	Joanne Sewell
Anne Thornton	Christine Atkins	Eustace Rodrigues	Jodi Srigley
Aprille Dawn McPhee	Christine Razack	Eva Sergnese	Johnny Mavroukas
Audrey Lee	Christopher Boynton	Ewurama Acquah	Jonas Welcome
Babylin Kalalo	Christopher Shelton	Frank Salvadori	Joseph Stepaniuk
Bassam Hammoud	Cramaix Fossuo Leundjie	Gandhipan Subramaniam	Josie Sciascia
Beulah Stewart	Crystal Harrilal	Garth Darlington	Joy Senior
Beverly Penaloze	Danielle Ferguson- Shivrattan	Gemma Nicholls	Juan Ramirez
Blandine Fongué	Dave Van De Wetering	Gloria Russell	Judy Marie Pollard
Bobbette Jones-Keita	David Hill	Golda Inniss	Kareem Henry
Brady Jones	David Noel	Gregory Daly	Kashka Akeila Wyatt
Brian McNeil	Davina Reid	Gregory Gardiner	Katherine Baker
Brianne Malanka	Debbie Hughes	Hanan Noushad	Kathy Thomas
C Stubbs		Hector H. Roach	Kathy Williams

Donors

Katishe Serrette	Mary Anne Chambers	Rachelle Duncan	Shawn Stanley
Kevette Bobb	Mary Macharia	Rashaad Bhyat	Stanley Julien
Kevin Gilbert	Mary Stepaniuk	Ravinath Ramdass	Stephen Brown
Kiara Hinkson-Belone	Maurice Lewis	Raymund Guiste	Steve Hilditch
Kimberly Dawkins	Michael Bauer	Renelsa Inniss	Tara Hudson
Kimberly Prideaux	Michael Tam	Richard Zeni	Tashia Antoine
Kirlene Toussaint	Miguel Avila	Rin McDonald	Ted Macklin
Laird Laundry	Monica Taitt	Robert Fraser	Thora Espinet
Lakhbir Brar	Natasha Brainerd	Robert Kasozi	Tolulope Fakunle
Lee-Ann Stohrer	Neville Morrison	Robert Lehman	Tomika Jerrick
Leigh-Ann Ramsay	Ngoc Thai Tai Pham	Robert Pepper	Tracey Grant
Leila Bridgewater	Nguyet-San Tran	Robert Yearwood	Tyler Cassidy
Len Jones	Nicholas Gondzik	Rosamond Waithe	Tyrone Sparks
Leslie Wu	Nicole Alie	Roselyn Springer	Ulrike Pollmann-Langenberg
Liiban Hersi	Nicole Honderich	Ross Atkins	Vanessa Adams
Linda Nardi	Noreen D'Andrade	Sadian Campbell	Vanessa Watanabe
Linda Tremble	Norma Ambrose	Sam Hirst	Vaughn Malcolm
Lisa Gulli	Norman Francis	Sammy Huen	Vivian Waithe
Lisa Olay	Olayinka Akanho	Samuel Springer	Wendy Brathwaite
Lucy Zambon	Oluniyi Olasunkanmi	Sarah Garcia	Wing Hin Yip
Madeleine Magni	Pascale Armand	Sarah Jahan	Winsome Smith
Mairead Darcy	Patricia Neath	Sarbjit Dhanjal	Wrae-Quel Hylton-Graham
Mame Yacine Ka	Paul Molokpa	Sarika Rani Vadde	Yolande Edwards
Marguerite Alfred	Paula Morrison	Satchel French	Zanana Akande
Maria Hornak	Pauline Wisdom-Gilliam	Shane Lee Wo	Zaneta Misis
Mark Allen	Phillip Jarrett	Shanika Smith-McDougall	
Marva Amour	Quintin Lottering	Sharon John	

The People that Make the Tropicana Effect Happen

Board of Directors



Anthony Grey, MBA
President



Carol Comissiong, CPA, CGA, MBA
Past President



Colleen Vandeyck, MBA, CHRP, PMP
Secretary



Maurice (Mo) Lewis, CPA, CA
Treasurer



Sharifa T. Wright, PMP
Director



Sudha Datta, CPA
Director



Ayodele (Ayo) George,
Director/Internal
Committee Chair



Colin Heron,
Youth Director



Nicole Fernandes, CHRL
Director/External
Committee Chair



Chris Pryce, B.A., B.P.E.
Director



Shameika Hue
Director



Raymund Guiste, LL.M.
Executive Director

Executive Team

Raymund Guiste, Executive Director

Andrea Bryan, Head, Legacy Program Operations Enhancement

Karen Soltau, Head, People Operations

Migdalia Jones, Head, Community Engagement & Project Development

Nimo Abdulkadir, Director, Employment Programs

Olumuyiwa Oluwatayo, Head, Information Technology

Management Team

Cathy Providence, Manager, Culturally Appropriate Counselling (CAC)

Rochelle Welch, Manager Youth Development & Education

Maltee Ramkissoon, Supervisor Tropicana Daycare Centres (Infant/Toddler/Preschool)

Kaydian Plummer, Manager, Employment Programs

Nicola Greenland, Supervisor Tropicana Daycare Centres (Preschool/School age)

Committees

In July 2022, the Board of Directors voted to reform Tropicana's governance and committee structure and transition to a Policy Board governance model and the following committee framework.

Executive Committee

Mandate: Address issues that arise between board meetings.

Consists of President (Chair), VP, Treasurer and Secretary.

Ex Officio Staff: ED

Internal Affairs

Mandate: All internal strategic and policy matters related to finance, human resources, IT and facilities.

Ex officio staff: ED or designate(s): (i.e., CFO and HR Head)

External Affairs

Mandate: All external strategic and policy matters related to fundraising, public relations, and marketing and programs.

Ex officio staff: ED or designate(s): (i.e., Business Development/Marketing Head)

Governance Committee

Mandate: Health and functioning of the Board, ensuring the effectiveness of the current Board and recruiting new Board members.

Conducts orientation, produces Board materials, and evaluates the performance of the Board itself.

Ex officio staff: ED

Placement Students

Culturally Appropriate Counselling (CAC)	
Krystal Atkins-Scott	University of Toronto
Christina Onilla	Toronto Metropolitan University
Ingrid Mullings	Toronto Metropolitan University
Leslie-Ann Valley	Toronto Metropolitan University
Naroud Zaharian	Toronto Metropolitan University
Lina Seetaram	York University
Clarisse De Leon	York University
Vethusha Rajendram	York University
Anysha Reid-Henry	University of Toronto

Youth Education and Development	
Sergey Gelfgat	George Brown
Nethusan Rajagunathas	George Brown
Simran Lall	George Brown
Azariah Ragoo	Lester B. Pearson
Nevella Karen Pike	Toronto Metro
Marissa Mohammed	Toronto Metro
Nakara Smith	Toronto Metro
Sara Youssouf	Toronto Metro
Latoya Dawkins	Toronto Metro
Marzanur Rahman	Toronto Metro
Keneisha Charles	Toronto Metro
Joel Maneno	Toronto Metro
Cindy Nathalie Wynne	Toronto Metro
Joshua Quintero	Toronto Metro
Zoe Barnes	Toronto Metro
John D'Couto	Toronto Metro
Ledya Elyas	Toronto Metro

Long-Term Employee Service Awardees

Through the years, your talents and efforts have helped our success. Together, we take pride in your accomplishments and your commitment to excellence. Congratulations!

30 Years of Service

Cathy Providence

25 Years of Service

Janis Wing Yan Lam

10 Years of Service

Sanganette Jarrett

Jacqueline Pereira

Keyuri Bhatt

5 Years of Service

Karen Soltau

Asha Diblawe



Scholarship Recipients

Robert K. Brown Scholarship

The Robert K. Brown scholarship was launched on May 6, 2000, as part of Tropicana's 20th anniversary celebrations. Throughout its history, Tropicana has been a catalyst for human and social development. The scholarship supports those who have made a commitment to the betterment of the community at large.



Sidoné Grange (she)

University of Toronto

Honours Bachelor of Science at the Majoring in Biology for Health Science, and a double minor in French Studies and Sociology.

“The Tropicana Community Robert K. Brown Scholarship has been a vital source of financial support in my journey towards an Honours Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Toronto. Their generous contribution has not only contributed to fully funding my third year of university but has also significantly bolstered my confidence and determination to seek further academic funding as a Black undergraduate student. Discovering an organization that not only acknowledges but actively rewards the contributions of African and Caribbean students to the Black community has filled me with immense gratitude. The Tropicana Community’s commitment to supporting students like me is both inspiring and empowering. I am deeply thankful for their support, which has not only lightened the financial burden of my education but has also reaffirmed my belief in the importance of fostering a sense of community and recognition for Black students. This scholarship has truly been a beacon of hope and motivation on my educational journey, and I am grateful to the Tropicana Community Robert K. Brown Scholarship for their invaluable contribution to my academic pursuits.”

Dr. Gervan Fearon Graduate Studies Scholarship

The Dr. Gervan Fearon Scholarship was launched in 2017 for students pursuing a postgraduate degree. Dr. Fearon is an advocate for post-secondary education, and in particular graduate studies, because of the need for research and action plans aimed at addressing opportunities and challenges that currently face our communities. He believes that through education and research, opportunities can be created and nurtured for the betterment of individuals, communities, and society.



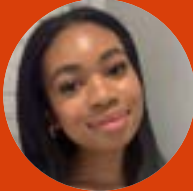
Kelease Walford-Gray (she)

York University
Studying Law and Society

“Winning the Dr. Gervan Fearon scholarship is a profound and deeply personal achievement for me. As a first-generation university student, this scholarship represents not only a dream realized but a lifeline to a brighter future. The significance of this scholarship goes far beyond its financial support. It’s a testament to the endless hours of hard work, determination, and the unwavering support of my family. It means breaking down barriers that have held my family back for generations, paving the way for a new legacy of education and achievement. My dream of becoming a family lawyer has been fuelled by a desire to help those in vulnerable situations navigate the complex legal system. This scholarship is a beacon of hope, relieving the immense financial stress associated with pursuing a legal education. It ensures that my dream remains within reach, allowing me to focus on my studies and excel academically. Furthermore, winning the Dr. Gervan Fearon scholarship is a call to action. It’s a reminder of the responsibility I now carry to make the most of this opportunity, not just for myself but for my community and those who will benefit from my future advocacy. This scholarship is a bridge to a future where I can make a meaningful impact on the lives of families in need. It signifies the power of education to transform not only individual lives but entire communities. With the weight of financial stress lifted, I can now focus on acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to be the best family lawyer I can be. In sum, winning the Dr. Gervan Fearon scholarship is a dream fulfilled, a legacy transcended, and a commitment to a future of service and impact. It’s a reminder that with determination, support, and opportunity, even the loftiest goals can be achieved. Thank you so much Tropicana and Dr. Gervan Fearon for this amazing opportunity.”

Kinross Gold Corporation Scholarship

Kinross Gold Corporation partnered with Tropicana Community Services in launching this new undergrad STEM or Business program scholarship for persons of African or Caribbean heritage. The Kinross Gold Corporation is a Canadian-based senior gold mining company founded in 1993 and headquartered in Toronto with approximately 9000 employees. Kinross currently operates eight active gold mines located in Brazil, Ghana, Mauritania, Russia and the United States.



Eva Chima (she)

Queen's University
Study in Computer Science

“As a recipient of the Kinross Gold Corporation Scholarship, I like to think back to its four core values — putting people first, outstanding corporate citizenship, high performance culture, and rigorous financial discipline. While the mining industry and healthcare industry, which I hope to make a future impact within, couldn't be more different, I find myself noticing how the care provided in our medical spaces share such similar goals with the global business conducted at Kinross. All in all, we strive to create a healthy and safe culture for all workers and adjacent communities while staying true to our ethical and professional standards. I'm excited to further my education during my undergraduate studies in the area of Health Sciences while incorporating these themes into my professional and personal life. As I am now off to Hamilton, I'm happy to have a new place to call home, and cannot wait to continue and involve myself in local community initiatives as I did in my hometown of Vaughan. I am incredibly grateful to have the support of Kinross & Tropicana Community Services as I continue onto the next chapter of my life!”



Hodan Mohamud (she)

University of Toronto
Undergraduate in the Doctor of Medicine Program

Janine Williams Memorial Scholarship

The Janine Williams Scholarship was created in 2008 to honour past Tropicana President Ashworth Williams' daughter Janine Williams who passed away in 2007. Through this scholarship, her family looks to keep her memory and spirit alive by helping others as she did. The scholarship is for students pursuing a post-secondary or postgraduate education.



Daniel McDonald (he)

Queen's University

Studying for a Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) program

“Winning the Janine Williams Memorial Scholarship is truly an honour and privilege. I hope I can honour her legacy by continuing to work within my community and help others myself. I am grateful to be one of the many lives touched by this scholarship, the work you have been doing is truly amazing and shows what can be accomplished when the community comes together. I look forward to working with my community so that one day I too can help change the life of a young university student.”

The Dr. Danyal Ishaad Bhyat Achievement Award

The Dr. Danyal Ishaad Bhyat Achievement Award was established to recognize an exceptional and ambitious young person who intends on continuing their studies and development in an area that demonstrates a desire to help support their community and the people in them.



Mayssam Fadili (she)

York University Schulich School of Business
Studying for a Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours)

“Being the recipient of the Dr. Danyal Ishaad Bhyat Achievement Award means so much to me. It means the obvious: the lightening of my financial burden as I enter my first year into university—not that this feeling can be understated. You’ll never truly understand the weight behind the words “financial burden” until you feel them press down on your shoulders from the second you look at your student account balance for the first time. However, since receiving this award, my back has been a little straighter, my shoulders a little looser, my chin a little higher.

Yet this award means so much more. It means community. It means support. It means belief in your potential. It means confidence and self-assurance. It means motivation and drive. It means fervour, tenacity and profound gratitude. But most importantly, it means a hope for the future. It means the blurry vision you have of your future self enjoying the fruits of your labour and living out your aspirations becoming clearer. Being the recipient of the Dr. Danyal Ishaad Bhyat Achievement Award is like catching a glimpse of dawn after a long dark night; it means boundless hope, urging all aspiring hearts to join in the pursuit of their dreams.”



Main Office

1385 Huntingwood Drive
Scarborough, ON M1S 3J1
Tel: 416.439.9009
Fax: 416.439.2414

Tropicana Childcare Centre - Preschool & School Age

431 McCowan Road
Scarborough, ON M1J 1J1
Tel: 416.261.9893
Fax: 416.261.6236

Tropicana Employment Centre

505 Consumers Road, Suite 102
North York, ON M2J 4V8
Tel: 416.491.7000
Fax: 416.491.4669

Tropicana Childcare Centre - Infant, Toddler & Pre-School

425 McCowan Road
Scarborough, ON M1J 1J1
Tel: 416.269.7093
Fax: 416.269.4874