

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD CHAIR

At YESS, we are making a difference through change. A quote from Socrates came to mind as we reflected on the past year at YESS: "The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new."

We encourage and support the youth at YESS to take change one step at a time, small steps to success. We love to see those small steps lead to big leaps.

We're delighted in the progress of our programs this year. We are continuously changing to adapt to those needs we see from our youth. We brought in a new Voice and Choice program, where the needs and wants of our youth dictate the types of programs we provide.

As the economic outlook in Alberta changes, so does our own fundraising model. Greater focus has been placed on securing sustainable funding as the organization moves forward. As the financial climate continues to change, we understand that we must be able to change with it.

The only constant in this world is change. Our youth face great changes in their journeys every day, our community experiences unexpected upheavals and even disaster, we navigate the ever-changing, complex needs of our youth and our organization.

All we can do is encourage and support each other to take change one step at a time.

**Deb Cautley**

Executive Director

**René Cloutier**

Chair, YESS Board of Directors

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our staff are responsible for making a difference, whether it's our front line staff, our community engagement coordinator or our accountant, the work done within the walls at YESS continues to enrich our programs and the lives of the youth that we serve.

Here are a few of our 2015 highlights:

- 2016 ROOPH Award recipient
- Voice & Choice programming for youth
- Gender neutral dorms and washrooms implemented
- Healthy snacks in all programs
- CARF Accreditation (3 years)
- LGBTQ2 Safe Space
- 2015 Gala highest-grossing YESS fundraising event

## YESS SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

Every year, it takes approximately \$6 million to keep YESS up and running. Over half of that amount comes to us through donations from companies and individuals who invest in our community's future by investing in our kids. We have so many generous supporters that we could never hope to list them all, but we would like to extend special thanks to the following for being some of our greatest contributors in the past year.

41 Service Battalion  
Don Adams  
Alberta Investment Management Corporation, AIMCo  
ATCO EPIC  
B & B Demolition Ltd.  
Cameron & Lisa Blair  
Boston Pizza Northern Alberta  
Brookfield Residential (Alberta) LP  
Dave & Gwen Burroughs  
Canadian Western Bank  
City & Dinner Television  
Jean-Louis & Vivian Cloutier  
Rene & Lisa Cloutier  
Collin Bruce Mortgage Team  
Collins Steel  
Cowan Imaging Group  
Crystal Glass  
Dacro Industries Inc.  
Don Wheaton Ltd.  
Darren & Laurel Durstling  
DynaLIFE<sub>dx</sub>  
Eddie's Men's Wear Ltd.  
Edmonton Area Council of Beta Sigma Phi  
Edmonton Community Foundation  
Edmonton (Host) Lions Club  
Edmonton International Airport  
Peter & Cathy Faiazza  
Frank J. Flaman Foundation  
Go Auto  
Edward Graham

Keith & Laura Graham  
Grasschopper Landscaping  
Homeward Trust Edmonton  
Impark  
Inland Audio Visual  
Intact Foundation  
Ja-Co Welding & Consulting Ltd.  
John Brooks Company Limited  
Elinor Klapstein  
Bill & Grace Knight  
la maison Simons  
Ledcor Group of Companies  
MacKenzie Properties Inc.  
Melton Foundation  
Lyle Neis  
Lise (Leduc) Nicholson & Family  
Nordic  
One Step Beyond Photography & Video  
Pattison Outdoor Advertising  
REALTORS® Community Foundation  
River City Events  
Rotary Club Edmonton Strathcona  
SONIC 1029  
The Blind Enthusiasm Brewing Company  
The Home Depot Canada Foundation  
The Organic Box  
The Sherlock Holmes Hospitality Group  
The Workshop Eatery  
Trailblazer RV Centre Ltd.  
United Way of the Alberta Capital Region

## A LETTER FROM A FORMER CLIENT

I wanted to write to you guys to tell you a bit about how I have been doing. It has been almost 12 years since I was a client with YESS and I am sure many if not all of the staff that used to work there have moved on, but I feel it is important to give you an update.

I had a lot of troubles when I was growing up. I stayed in the SkY program (long-term residence) for a good while. The client care workers there supported me through a lot of my issues. Helped me get my self-harm under control, come away from substance abuse. I worked hard while I was there to be a better, healthier person, but it is because of the staff that I made it as far as I did.

Over the years I have had many ups and downs. I have regressed in some areas but I always fought my way back out. After a move across the country, I started fresh. I had a beautiful baby boy at 23, and he is now almost 6. Most importantly, after I had him I knew I needed to do more. I went back to school and obtained my high school diploma and then moved on to college.

This is the important part. Thanks to all the staff and all YESS had done for me, my passion lay with helping others. I looked at many courses and none of them felt like home except for Social Services. I know in my heart and soul that this is where I am meant to be. I am meant to help others the way YESS once helped me; to advocate and fight for those who feel they can't do so for themselves, the way YESS had done for me.

I have just finished my second year, and have one left to go before I graduate, but I have recently had the opportunity to work on a placement at an emergency shelter for women and children. It is the most rewarding thing I have ever done with my education, to the point where I have applied for a casual position with them while I continue my education.

I felt it was important to write you, because as I have learned even in just the 4 weeks that I did my placement, the social services field is often a thankless one. It is draining, emotionally, physically, mentally; it is one of the hardest jobs I have ever had to do, next to motherhood (and I'm a single mom). Despite the fact that it is difficult and full of sad stories, there is always a success. Success can mean different things for different people, but for me, and for you guys, this success story ends with a strong, independent woman, with ever-lasting gratitude towards the staff at YESS for giving her a second chance, for believing she could be and do more, and for lighting the fire that gave her the passion to make a difference in the lives of others.

Thank you so much for everything you did for me and for what you continue to do for countless others. For being a parent, a friend, a light in the dark, a voice in the endless void. Thank you. Most importantly, thank you for the chance at life I would not have gotten, for the ability to know I can be more for my son, all of which I would not have without the guidance, care, and love YESS provided.

- former YESS youth