



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED

SINCE 1982

Celebrating 25 years

BUILDING POSITIVE FUTURES for YOUTH



2007/2008



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED



In the 1980's, Canada was in a recession. Of all those affected by hard times, the most disadvantaged were youth. High unemployment left many with few opportunities for work especially those who lacked education or had other barriers. Some were from homes where there was no role model of one who worked every day, who talked about their job experiences, who showed them the challenges and rewards of work.

A community feasibility study affirmed a need for services to help London and area youth. We set up shop on the second floor of what was then called the old income tax building on Dundas at Colborne Street. When I opened the office door that first day there was one desk, one chair and one phone.

As with many new organizations it was important to build awareness. We mailed information to other agencies and soon clients began to arrive from referrals. Then *The London Free Press* published an article on YOU and there was a flurry of activity. We had walk-ins and soon workshops developed. By this time there were two of us in the office. We hired three counsellors and later support workers and created programs to meet the needs of youth who learned that attendance, punctuality and attitude are essential in finding and holding a job. As the agency developed so did the insightful programs and services that are the hallmark of YOU.

It has been a pleasure for me to follow the agency's progress and observe the creativity and commitment of the Executive Director, staff, Boards and the many volunteers who give of their time, energy and goodwill.

With the changing needs in the workplace agencies such as Youth Opportunities Unlimited are crucial as they offer the services and supports young people need as they compete to find their place in the world. With the help of its many supporters YOU continues to forge the way to a better future.

Peggy Bottom
Peggy Bottom



OUR MISSION

Youth Opportunities Unlimited is dedicated to unlocking the potential of youth by providing client centred services emphasizing skills improvement leading to increased employability and empowerment, offering a referral service to agencies serving youth, and developing, participating in and supporting community alliances to maximize opportunities for youth.

OUR VISION

Youth Opportunities Unlimited is a caring and active place where all youth are engaged in learning and creating opportunities to build their future.

OUR VALUES

Client Centred - We are respectful in all of our client interactions; flexible and inclusive in providing services that meet clients' needs.

Community Focused - We are locally driven and gather input from many community sectors on an ongoing basis.

Fun - We create and support environments that are enjoyable, positive and respectful.

Integrity - We are honest, responsive, clear, and ethical in all of our communications and interactions.

Quality Driven - We set high standards for success and work hard to surpass them.

table of contents

President's Message	4
Executive Director	5
Leadership Team	
Finance & Administration Team	6
Our Many Places	7
Transition Services	8
Career Development Services.....	9
Enterprise Services	10
Our Funders and Donors.....	11
Memories.....	12-15
Youth Star Award	16
Polaris Award.....	17
Annual Fundraiser Events	18





BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007-2008

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- Shaun McGill *Director*
- Cheryl Miller *Director*
- Sheila Stevenson *Director*
- Julie P.W. Smith *Director*
- Steve Cordes (ex-officio) *Secretary*

Youth Opportunities Unlimited is proud to celebrate its 25th anniversary. That's 25 years of Building Positive Futures for Youth! We have come a long, long way since 1982.

In these 25 years YOU has served tens of thousands of young people. During the same time hundreds of staff, volunteers, donors and funders have contributed to the many successes of YOU. While they are only two small words, a simple "thank you" is in order. Our thank you is heartfelt and genuine and expressed on behalf of the entire organization.

There were notable achievements in our 25th year. The Next Wave Youth Centre succeeded in expanding partnerships and programming and strengthening its position as the youth centre in Strathroy and area. In December, with a generous donation from Farhi Holdings Corporation and with support from the City of London, we purchased the three-storey heritage building at 332-338 Richmond Street and began our innovative affordable housing for youth program in the upper two floors. The program combines public funding and social program delivery with social entrepreneurship while giving new life to an old building. It is a first for YOU and for London. In the year ahead we will see, at streetlevel, the creation of the YOU Made It Café, the relocated Youth Action Centre and alternative education programming.

As the programs YOU delivers have expanded and grown so has our Board of Directors. I welcome new members and commend them for their decision to make a difference in the lives of youth. I extend a special thank you to our long-standing board members for their dedication and commitment, in particular Cheryl Miller.

Young people today struggle with many challenges. Youth Opportunities Unlimited offers a wide range of programs to assist them on their journey. It takes real courage to say, "I need help". YOU is there whenever young people reach out for that help.

Congratulations to Steve Cordes, the leadership team, staff and all the many volunteers, funders and donors for a job well done. Here's to 25 more years of Building Positive Futures for Youth.



Dan Grantham
President

FRONT LEFT TO RIGHT: Lance Ceaser, Sheila Stevenson, Julie P.W. Smith, Brian Hughes, Steve Cordes, Shaun McGill
BACK LEFT TO RIGHT: Michael R. Mitchell, Cheryl Miller, Phil Masschelein, Dan Grantham, Grant Gladly, Andrea Cooley, Jim Graham
Missing: Jeff Duncan

A 25th anniversary is truly a milestone. It is a time to reflect on the past, celebrate achievements and look to the future. YOU has a proud tradition as advocate, trainer and friend of youth. It is a tradition which began in 1982 when the agency was formed by community leaders who came together to develop services that would focus on the unique needs of youth. In 1997 YOU became a founding partner of the Skill Centre and began a new chapter in its history, building on the partnerships upon which the agency was founded.

Throughout the years there has been a wonderful energy and enthusiasm that permeates the agency. It is reflected in the commitment of our staff, the busy and yet enjoyable atmosphere that is found in all of our locations and the tenacity with which we drive towards successful outcomes for youth. The positive community impacts are a direct result of this shared commitment. These impacts can be seen in the tremendous growth of Breakfast for YOU where, in 2008, more than 370 attended to learn more about YOU and support the youth served. They are seen in our expanded volunteer, donor and customer base and in the growing recognition of YOU through the many visits to our offices by agencies from places including Peterborough and Hearst Ontario and Paisley Scotland as well as the inclusion of YOU in a report to the International Labour Organization as one of five examples of good practice in community based youth employment initiatives from across the globe.

In 2008 we will see continued growth and innovation at YOU. We will establish a new youth café and relocate our Youth Action Centre to the landmark downtown building purchased in 2007 which now features 28 units of affordable housing for youth.

We extend our gratitude and appreciation to our devoted volunteers, board members and staff whose combined efforts guide YOU to its position as a true leader in youth services. A special thank you to our valued funders and donors whose support enables the good work to continue. Together, we are touching the lives of so many youth and helping our community along the way.

Respectfully submitted,



Steve Cordes

Executive Director



"Because of YOU I am on my way to reaching all my hopes, dreams and goals... All of this is because YOU believed in me. I wouldn't be where I am today, starting a job I've dreamed about for so long, without YOU."

Jeannie, Employment Services

leadership team

With a diverse set of backgrounds and varying perspectives, the leadership team brings a creative and innovative approach to program and organizational development. They supervise programs, liaise with funders, donors and partners and work closely with each other to support positive outcomes for youth.

"We would like to thank the YOU staff for their support throughout the year you were all very helpful in connecting our students with the services and supports that best suited their needs. We look forward to working with YOU again next year."

Staff, Thames Valley District School Board



LEFT TO RIGHT: Trevor Johnson, Kim Bewsky, Steve Cordes, Christine Dirks, Kim Mighton, Gerry Keogh

finance & administration team



LEFT TO RIGHT: Carrie Nash, Kim Mighton, Hayley Clarke, Fernanda Ariza

With more than 20 funding agreements, fee for service, earned revenues and numerous programs that touch the lives of more than 300 youth each day, this is a busy team that sustains a great deal of the work of the organization. The welcoming, positive and productive atmosphere of YOU starts with this team.



Career Services and Administration
141 Dundas Street, Second Floor



Springbank Employment and Learning Centre (SELC)
360 Springbank Drive



Next Wave Youth Centre
32 Front Street West, Strathroy



Youth Action Centre (YAC)
141 Dundas Street, Lower Level



Woodshop
96 Bessemer Court



Kitchen
568 Richmond Street
First Baptist Church



Recycling
3334 White Oaks Road



YOU Made It Kiosk
Covent Garden Market



Affordable Housing for Youth
Future home of: **YOU Made It Café**
and **Youth Action Centre**
332-338 Richmond Street

Transition Services grew exponentially in 2007, creating new opportunities for youth, expanding services and engaging partners across London and region while providing leadership toward service system reform for our most vulnerable young people.



FRONT LEFT TO RIGHT: Hilary Francis, Ryan Menezes, Karen Lavery, Judy Verboom, Grace Tombrowicz, Michelle Ball, Dana Walters

BACK LEFT TO RIGHT: Jen Dierolf, Karen Campbell, Grant Martin, Tyler Chartrand, Dennis Douglas, Trevor Johnson

Missing: Blessing Mhlanga, Jay Nagy

The highlight was the purchase of 332-338 Richmond St. made possible by a generous donation by Farhi Holdings Corporation and funding from the City of London. The heritage building will provide a dynamic continuum of services in one location. Fifteen of the 28 apartments on the upper two floors of the building now provide affordable housing for youth. The remaining 13 units will be converted to affordable housing as they become available. The ground floor premises will house the relocated Youth Action Centre from 141 Dundas Street and the relocated kitchen from its present quarters in First Baptist Church. New features include an alternative classroom and the YOU Made It Café.

- The Springbank Employment and Learning Centre team continued to deliver neighbourhood-based services in the friendly and professional manner they are known for. Springbank exceeded all program delivery targets. New clients numbered 1,332, exceeding the contracted 1,050. Client Contacts totaled 17, 770 surpassing the contracted 10,500
- The YES team had an exceptional year, developing a creative and supportive environment that allowed for brilliant work by young people. 162 youth completed the YES program with the number of successful outcomes at 120, representing a total 74%.
- The Summer Jobs for Youth program, awarded to Youth Opportunities Unlimited in 2007 through the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services made a big splash during its inaugural year. The project team secured 180 summer jobs for young people between 15 and 18 living in underserved neighbourhoods in London. 60 employers participated and 179 young people completed their first summer job, a big step in everyone's life.
- The Youth Action Centre continued to pave the way in London in providing street-level services for homeless and at-risk youth. Services include a safe and helpful drop-in centre, outreach service, community support worker, more than 50 public presentations on homelessness and youth, and the development of London's first city-wide London Youth Council. The Centre recorded 20,767 drop-in visits and registrations by 196 new youth.

Transition Services is alive with the energy of the young people that attend our programs but without the incredible talents of our staff team this energy would remain under-utilized. My thanks and heartfelt appreciation to this wonderful team for their efforts in 2007. Each is a valued member of our community. Their combined efforts pay dividends every day.

*"I am more positive these days, I believe in myself!
I appreciate the 'kindness' that some here have shown me."*

Daniel, Youth Action Centre



There was much to celebrate in 2007.

Employment Ontario – Job Connect team surpassed every provincial target for the second consecutive year.

- Over 20,000 youth accessed the Job Search Resource Centre
- 965 students registered for Summer Job Service
- 254 employers linked with full-time, part-time and summer youth placements, reporting 100% satisfaction. 77% of youth are employed in jobs that further their career path
- 500 youth benefited through employment counseling services
- 86% of all youth served are now employed, in education or in training
- 8,300 youth participated in workshops with 3,600 students, 1,100 new Canadians and 362 in apprenticeship exploration
- Ontario Works Trustee staff served 80 to 100 youth under 18 years of age every month linking them with community and educational supports and referrals
- Summer Revive program was piloted in partnership with Thames Valley District School Board. Upon completion 25 at-risk students received two high school credits and a paid co-op placement

General Educational Development program (GED) experienced exceptional growth serving 380 young people with academic assessments, individual preparation, 1:1 tutoring, literacy and numeracy planning workshops that furthered student success. New web-based educational software allowed Career Services to plan for expanded services in rural areas including Strathroy.

Next Wave Youth Centre, in partnership with Middlesex, Elgin, Kent and Lambton Community Futures Development Corporations, launched and facilitated two ‘BREAK INTO BUSINESS’

Summer Camps for grades 7 & 8 youth. The London District Catholic School moved its alternative educational program into the Centre as did the St Leonard’s Society with its justice diversion programs for rural youth. Eight youth leaders partnered with mindyourmind to create new print materials for national distribution to reduce stigmas regarding mental health issues. As well:

- 10 youth led and operated the Centre’s internet café
- 4,000 youth attended the centre during drop- in hours
- 300 youth participated in the Youth Opportunities Unlimited led Strathroy Youth Job Fair linking local employers and employment postings
- 124 youth participated in career workshops
- 10 youth council members worked collectively to address local youth issues, assist with program development and nurture a sense of ownership, commitment, and community

*Getting my GED will help me reach my goal of becoming a professional photographer and being a better parent to my son.
Thank YOU!*

*Christina,
Eternal Educational Development*



FRONT LEFT TO RIGHT: Ashley Houghton, Nancy Murphy, Mirella Bryant, Ana Maria Escovar, Kim Bewsky, Wraychel Horne

MIDDLE LEFT TO RIGHT: Andrew Johnson, Heather Maiorana, Laura Wythe, Theresa Gadd, Jessica Braimoh, Katherine Krakowski, Milf Agate, John Srigley

BACK LEFT TO RIGHT: Sheleena Forfar, Andrea von Wahl, Ryan Clark

Missing: Matt Hill, Anna Szczuka, Eric Howden, Cory McCauley, Gary Leitch





FRONT LEFT TO RIGHT: Stacey Clarke, Jessica Marlatt, Adam Paul

MIDDLE LEFT TO RIGHT: Amber Garrow, Dee Bigger Ciara Allen, Jeremy Doan

BACK LEFT TO RIGHT: Andrew Hunter, Gerry Keogh, Joel-Luc Van Wieringen, Richard Phillips

Missing: Angela Baker, Rasmey Khuon, Peter White

"I enjoy coming to work every day. When I talk with customers or sell them products it makes me feel I have done something good. I have learned how to feel confident and learned that I like retail and helping people."

*Rasmey,
YOU Made It retail kiosk*

Enterprise Services provides youth with valuable skills development and work experiences through employment in businesses owned and operated by YOU. Enterprise Services is comprised of three distinct areas each operating under the YOU Made It banner which generate revenue to support the larger organization. Each area - Market Quality Preserves (MQP), Woodworking, Recycling – are supervised by an interactive team approach ensuring youth are engaged in each facet of the business. Intake workers match youth with the area they are most interested in. Youth are trained in health, safety and customized industry skills particular to the job.

In November, 2007 youth from the YOU Made It retail kiosk secured a major order from London Life for 700 holiday gift baskets featuring MQP products. The youth arranged

production, packaging and distribution of all 700 baskets to Montreal, Regina, Toronto and London. It was an impressive example of team work and dedication. Youth working in all areas of Enterprise Services gained valuable customer service experience by participation at conferences, trade shows and local summer festivals. Strategic partnerships with a local specialty grocer and hardware store chain will continue in the year ahead.

Woodworking expanded to occupy more than 5,000 square feet of industrial space providing youth with a better organized and more engaging work environment. Strategic partnerships with funders and local suppliers enabled upgrades to equipment including saws, planers and routers.

The production of MQP products continued to be an area of high interest for youth involvement. In addition to running high quality production, youth (with a food scientist) helped research and develop compliance tasks for the new nutritional guidelines from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. MQP sales grew approximately 15 percent due largely to custom gift baskets orders by corporate clients.

Revenue from Recycling Services grew by 40 percent due to increased demand from large industrial customers. Recycling was relocated to a separate 6,000 square foot facility and a compactor/baler, shredder, granulator and fork lift truck were acquired. Youth employed with Recycling Services are trained to run several types of workstations that process recycled materials for customers in London and region. Throughout the year we continued to find ways to engage youth in all areas of Enterprise Services so as to ensure their work experiences are both positive and productive.



we proudly
acknowledge our
funders and donors

We recognize those companies, organizations and individuals whose generosity in the past year has enabled Youth Opportunities Unlimited to provide programs and services which help youth develop the experiences and skills which build their future. Through their actions our funders and donors are showing youth they care.

Our funders...

Andersen Corporate Foundation
City of London
Community Futures Development Corporation of Middlesex County
Employment Ontario
Jack & Barbara Hay Foundation
LIBRO Financial Group
Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Public Safety Canada
Service Canada
Sifton Family Foundation
Sydenham Community Credit Union
The Counselling Foundation of Canada
The Ontario Trillium Foundation
United Way of London & Middlesex

Our donors...

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The Forever Legacy Foundation
The Grand Theatre
The Great-West Life Assurance Company
The London Free Press
The Little Red Roaster
The Tasting Room
Tribal Mountain Trade
United Parcel Service Canada Ltd.
Van Simpson
Walter J. Blackburn Foundation
Wendy Toth
Western Ontario Chartered
Accountants Association
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Wolverine Tube (Canada) Inc.

The London Free Press • Wednesday, February 6, 2008

GILLESPIE: 'Young people are
our collective responsibility'





Remembering our friend Sean

Susan Bradnam The London Free Press thumbs-up on a fine...



Farhi helps youth agency set up

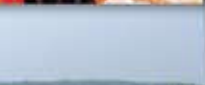


BY CHIP MARTIN
Sun Media
Youth in London will soon benefit from the latest significant act of philanthropy from downtown landowner Shmuel Farhi. The Free Press has learned.
Farhi, who owns more than 50 buildings in the core, will press than Youth lited first city b...
His mill...
abbe



FARHI: "I'm trying to help them get back on the right track. It means a lot to me."

Co...
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Youth Opportunities Unlimited makes difference



YOUTH STAR AWARD 2008 WINNER
Allison Parke-Rye

PREVIOUS WINNERS

- Genevieve Simms – 2002
- Joe Richards – 2003
- Siobhan McCarty – 2004
- Amanda Darrah – 2005
- Dylan Reilly – 2006
- Joe Maatman – 2007

The Youth Star Award recognizes a youth in London and Middlesex who has overcome significant barriers and who has demonstrated perseverance, commitment and responsibility.

ALLISON PARKE-RYE

Allison Parke-Rye is 22. She looks to the future with confidence and optimism. She smiles easily and often and is quick to laugh.

Life wasn't always so good for Allison. At nine she was living in a foster home. At 12 she was moved to a group home. At 16 she was a resident of the Cross Zone Youth Shelter while attending high school. "I was still working towards something then." But there was a pain that wouldn't quit. It was the pain of being "shuffled around", being alone, without a home and without hope. Soon she dropped out of school. Drugs and alcohol numbed the pain. Then Allison became addicted to cocaine. "I knew it would kill me. I had to change." With the help of her father, cousin and her own strength, Allison did change.

Now, four years later, Allison has graduated from the Human Services Foundation, Fanshawe College and is taking the Social Service Worker program, has a part-time job and her own apartment. She is a member of Youth Insight, a program of the Youth Action Centre wherein Allison and other youth do "speaks" to schools, group homes or wherever they can offer hope to youth who are struggling. She has addressed registrants to the London Conference on Youth Engagement, helps organize Summer Celebration for YAC and mentors young people who drop into the centre. She knows YAC from a time she needed help. "They were always so nice. Without the help of others I wouldn't be where I am. When people give so generously it is easy to give back."

Allison now surrounds herself with positive energy. She has no regrets. "Everything happens for a reason. I would not be the person I am today, if not for the experiences I went through when I was younger. To help young people with their struggles, to let them know they are not alone, to give them the hope they need - that is the greatest thing I can do."

"Many people are prepared to cast away youth on what they consider to be the fringe of society, not understanding where the youth are in their lives or how they got there, more importantly not caring. But organizations like Youth Opportunities Unlimited not only understand and care, they provide the tools to propel youth into action, to seize control of their lives and become productive members of society. Youth Opportunities Unlimited makes a difference. I am living proof of the difference they make."

Sherrí O'Brien
Director of Reader Sales, Service & Marketing, The London Free Press
Proud Graduate, Youth Opportunities Unlimited, 1988

Polaris is the true North Star that has long guided mariners. The recipient of the Youth Opportunities Unlimited Polaris Award has been a guiding light to youth in London and Middlesex through strong leadership and personal commitment. Nominees include individuals, organizations, or private companies.

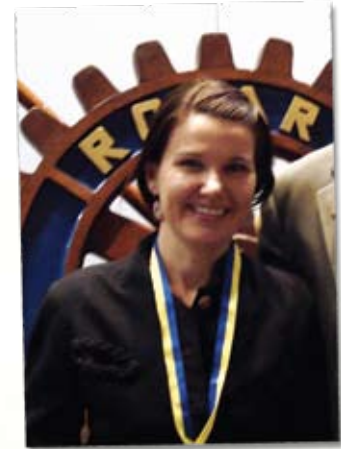
ANDRÉE CAZABON

Andrée's first film, the autobiographical *Letters to a Street Child* chronicled the impact on her family of her addiction while she was on the streets at the age of 13. First broadcast on CBC, the film was the catalyst for the opening of the Pine River Institute, a residential treatment centre near Toronto. Her inspirational message of hope has touched countless youth and has been used by educators, government agencies and community groups across the country.

Now, 34 Andrée's latest project, *Letters of Hope* – from youth to youth encourages youth to write about their lives and discover the hope that lies within. The project will result in a website and book. The first *Letters of Hope* workshop was held in partnership with the Youth Action Centre at YOU where homeless youth have remained connected with Andrée since her first visit to London in February, 2007 as keynote speaker, *Breakfast for YOU Empowering Youth*. "I have a special place in my heart for YAC, the youth and London" said Andrée. "In a very brief time a bond has formed." Other homeless youth agencies in Ontario are interested in partnering with Andrée and YOU to host their own *Letters of Hope* workshops.

The project will be launched summer, 2008 at the International Rotary Convention in Los Angeles where some 163 countries will be represented. In April, the Rotary Club of London South awarded Andrée the Paul Harris Fellow Award for her community service. Later this year Andrée's six-part documentary series on the child protection system, *Six Within* will be released.

"I am honoured to receive the Polaris Award." says Andrée. "I share the honour with the youth who inspire me with their courage, passion and hope for a better tomorrow."



POLARIS AWARD 2008 WINNER
Andrée Cazabon

PREVIOUS WINNERS

- Ormah Gibson – 2002
- London Innerscity Faith Team – 2003
- LHSC's Pepp Program – 2004
- Covent Garden Market – 2005
- West London Alliance Church – 2006
- Michael's on the Thames – 2007



By the time I joined YOU in 1985 Peggy Bottom had built a solid foundation for the agency. During my term as Executive Director we added new programs, expanded our space, and scrounged office furniture for our growing staff. I recall those as heady days, working with a young and enthusiastic team. I was 25 when I was hired, and most staff were younger. We tackled our work with the unwavering energy and optimism of youth! One of those bright young staff members was Steve Cordes who took over the helm almost 20 years ago. People are often surprised to learn there were Executive Directors before Steve. His name has become synonymous with YOU and I am constantly amazed by the growth that has taken place under his leadership. Although I wasn't present for the agency's birth, I truly enjoyed being part of those early, formative years. Congratulations to all of the board and staff that have shaped YOU in the past 25 years. I'm proud to be associated with an agency that has had such a huge and positive impact on youth in London and region.

Kym Wolfe, Program Coordinator
London Military Family Resource Centre

Kym Wolfe served as the Executive Director of Youth Opportunities Unlimited from 1986-1989.

Our two annual fundraising events are pivotal in providing revenue for programs and services for youth and in raising the profile of Youth Opportunities Unlimited as an agency that provides a caring and active place where all youth are engaged in learning and creating opportunities to build their future.

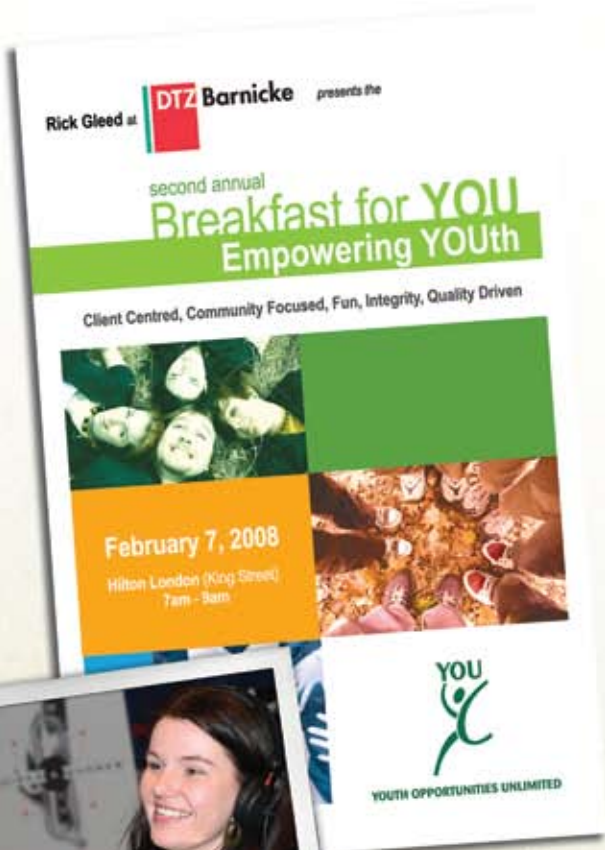
We are grateful to the many businesses, organizations and volunteers who contribute to the success of Breakfast for YOU! Empowering Youth and DIG DEEP! for YOU Beach Volleyball Tournament. Together they do the myriad tasks essential for a successful fundraiser. They are the helping hearts and hands. They make the good work possible.

Breakfast for YOU! Empowering Youth

The 2nd annual Breakfast for YOU was an outstanding success. More than 370 from the London business community attended the 7 am event at Hilton London, generating more than \$32,000 in proceeds. In a brief two years, Breakfast for YOU! Empowering Youth has developed a reputation as a 'must attend' event and has become synonymous with YOU. It is the event where the worlds of business and youth meet. Wenessa Stewart, welcomed guests on behalf of youth and spoke of the positive role YOU has played in her life for the past seven years. Keynote speaker and Gemini award-winning filmmaker Andrée Cazabon spoke of her life on the streets at the age of 13, of lessons learned and the road since taken. Special thanks to lead sponsor Rick Gleed at DTZ Barnicke and to head table sponsor, Libro Financial Group. The 3rd annual Breakfast for YOU takes place Thursday, February 12th at Hilton London.

DIG DEEP! for YOU Beach Volleyball Tournament

It was fun in the sun, warm sand and a spike in revenue when the 9th annual DIG DEEP! for YOU Beach Volleyball Tournament partnered with G.T.'s Port Stanley and SPIKE'S Indoor Beach Volleyball offering players and onlookers a lively lake-side tournament. More than 40 recreational and competitive teams participated with revenue from registrations, pledges and the silent auction contributing almost \$20,000 to programs and services for youth. The 10th annual tournament, with Rogers as lead sponsor, returns to G.T.'s Port Stanley on August 16th. Details at www.you.on.ca/digdeep



*"Just when I thought every door was closed YOU was there with a window of opportunity."
Ciara, Enterprise Services*





June, 2008

It was almost two years ago when I first walked into the YOU office. I'd heard about YOU from an alternative school. I needed work skills, some income while I learned and a job. I started with the YES program, earned my YES certificate and was hired to work at the YOU Made It Kiosk at the Market. It was my first real job. To some that may not sound like a lot but for me it was a big step. I worked at the Kiosk, did special events and was part of a team that took pride in our work. I went on to find a full-time job and now I'm a resident in YOU's affordable housing for youth. I can walk to work which saves time and money. The affordable housing really represents YOU. They see a need and they fill it.

Youth Opportunities Unlimited is special. The staff are personable. They treat you well. They are willing to give you a chance. They don't judge you by how you look. They see you for who you are. They've helped me develop confidence. Now I'm thinking of going back to high school and later even college. There are things that interest me: politics, public housing, job safety, conservation of our woodland areas. I see there is a chance for me to contribute.

Thank you YOU for everything you've given me from the early morning smiles to the confidence to succeed. I wish you success and encouragement for the next 25 years. For the good work to happen everybody has to be involved, not just the staff and the youth but everybody. It takes a kind of courage.

Dustin Kyte Boam

Since 1982, Youth Opportunities Unlimited has provided **transition, career development,** and **enterprise services** to local youth.

We provide a caring and active place where all youth are engaged in learning and creating opportunities to build their future.



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www.you.on.ca

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