

# BRUCE HOUSE



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JULY 2020

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## **Volunteer & Community Members**

Hello Dedicated Volunteers and Community Members;

The Bruce House Family hopes everyone is staying well during these very challenging and uncertain times.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Bruce House clients.

Although most of our Volunteer services have been put on hold due to COVID 19 we still have a strong committed Volunteer Family.

Within our Buddy Program Volunteers who are able to are providing wellness checks with their buddy over the phone. We do not have a date as to when we will be able to resume our Administrative, Reception, and Buddy Volunteer Program but we are hoping for more of an update by September.

Hoping you are all staying well and staying cool!

Hope you enjoy the Volunteer Newsletter and Community update.

Sending you all good energy and stay in touch!

Linda.

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## ***A Taste for Life 2020***

Thank you to all the wonderful people who kept the spirit of A Taste for Life alive this year by making a donation or grabbing delicious take-out from a Taste restaurant.

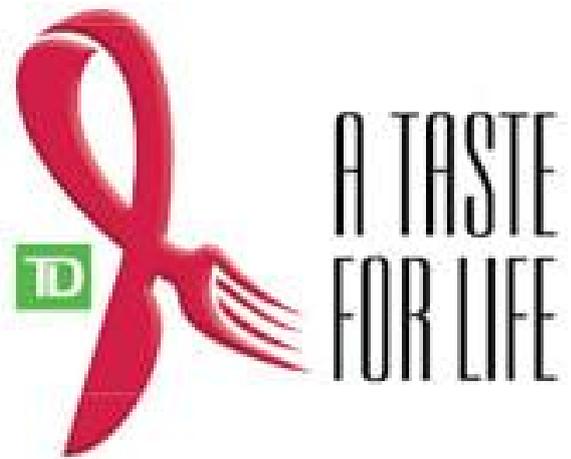
Our community rallied to the call for on-line donations in lieu of Taste this year—thank you for your generous support.

A special Thank you to our amazing Taste for Life Hosts who were quick to reach out to their networks and promote Virtual Taste for Life.

A special shout out to Heidi a new host volunteer this year who connected with East India Company and helped generate so much energy around Virtual Taste for Life.....In total we have raised over \$20,000!

Canceling Taste this year and moving to an on-line call for donations was a difficult, but necessary, decision. While many restaurants were open for take-out, we recognised the financial realities facing the industry and could not ask any restaurant owner to contribute their usual 25% of sales.

We were very touched that East India Company Restaurants, Trattoria Caffè Italia, and Flora Hall Brewing offered to donate 25%, despite their current challenges! We cannot thank their owners, management, and staff enough for this support.



*Thank you to Dave Longbottom from Flora Hall who not only participated in virtual Taste for Life and donated \$200.00 from the evening of April 22nd take out but for donating an additional \$1000.00 to Bruce House!*

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TD—our long-time title sponsor—has gone above and beyond this year.

Despite the cancellation of this year's event TD generously agreed to continue to offer their sponsorship and financial support. We cannot stress enough our gratitude to TD in maintaining their commitment to supporting people living with HIV in Ottawa.

We want to sincerely thank all our restaurant partners. We recognize the impact of the current closures on the industry, and difficulties this will cause.

We will keep the list of Taste restaurants on the web site—if you plan to order food or buy a gift card in the coming weeks and months, please consider supporting these community-minded businesses and letting them know that their support is important and recognized!

A Taste for Life is our largest annual fundraiser—proceeds from the event go entirely to direct client supports including outreach, food and nutrition, health and wellness, and practical supports.





***Taking a Stance: in solidarity with Black Lives Matter to resist anti-Black racism and anti-Black violence***

***June 5, 2020***

As a charity and service organization, Bruce House has a responsibility to advocate for our clients. That includes, of course, their needs around managing HIV. It includes health, food, shelter, and everything that impacts their well-being.

This means we cannot, and must not, ignore inequities and injustices which impact our clients. It is our responsibility to speak up, to be part of the collective voice, and to honestly examine ourselves and our practices for bias.



We know what our African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) clients are not only more likely than most Canadians to be living with HIV, they are also more likely to face poverty, food insecurity, violence, incarceration, inadequate health care, inappropriate housing, and a host of other issues. In short: racism.

We know that Black people often face abuse and violence from authorities, including police. We know this is not only an American problem, and that we need to deal with our own systemic racism. We stand in solidarity with all Black and ACB communities as friends and allies. We know that we may at times have been part of the problem—that is the nature of systemic issues—and we take responsibility for doing better.



***Black Lives Matter Statement Ontario's HIV sector stands in solidarity with Black Lives Matter to resist anti-Black racism and anti-Black violence***



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As we continue to use our collective tools and voices to dismantle HIV stigma and to challenge the status quo, we must begin to speak out louder on behalf of and with Black communities and organizations like Black Lives Matter.

We must collectively acknowledge high and persistent HIV rates in Ontario's African, Caribbean and Black communities and the ways that anti-Black racism and persistent health inequities contribute to this reality.

Our collective voices must also rise in resistance to anti-Indigenous racism, transphobia, and countless other forms of oppression in our community

How many lives are too many?

How many children must cry?

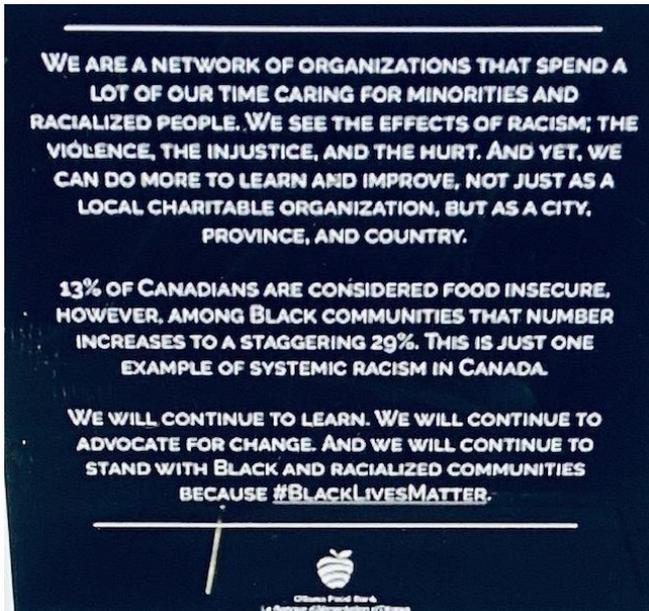
How many adults must live in fear and loss?

What will it take for this to stop?

We, as a society, must learn from our past, face or present, and decide on our future.

We must have the courage to acknowledge an uncomfortable and painful reality.





***Black Lives Matter Statement Ontario's HIV sector stands in solidarity with Black Lives Matter to resist anti-Black racism and anti-Black violence***

Racism is here in Canada. It is systemic.

Canada was built on colonialism. Our national railroad was built on racism.

The genocide of Indigenous peoples has never ended. African, Black, and Caribbean communities are at higher risk of poverty, HIV, incarceration, substance use, violence, abuse.

We have made great strides towards a just, fair, and equitable society. It is time to take another step, and to say, "no more." No more.

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## ***The 2020 Virtual National Capital Pride Run/Walk is a Go!***

With the COVID-19 pandemic, Pride Runs are looking very different this year across Canada.

However, in honour of its 5th anniversary, the 2020 National Capital Pride Run/Walk is happy to announce that it will proceed in a virtual format, and we are inviting you to take part!

Most importantly, the 2020 NCPR will continue to raise funds for Bruce House! So what does a Virtual National Capital Pride Run look like?

Registration: Participants will still be required to register online and pay a small registration fee. Upon registration, participants will also be provided with the opportunity to raise monies online for Bruce House.

If you raise \$200 or more, you will get a free registration to the 2021 National Capital Pride Run! Run/Walk and Post Your time: During the week of August 21-30, participants will need to run a 5km route, or walk a 2.5km route. When they do, they will upload their time to an online system so that it's official!

Alternatively, in honour of its 5th anniversary, running participants can also run 5 5km runs, and they can record their best time!





## ***The 2020 Virtual National Capital Pride Run/Walk is a Go!***

Making it Fun!: Participants will be asked to take a photo of themselves in their best Pride running/walking outfit, and to post that photo online.

Participants will also be sent music tracks and warm up videos, they'll each receive a virtual delegate bag, and once the pandemic has passed, they will be invited to an in person thank you reception.



Silent auction: The 2020 Pride Run/Walk will feature an online silent auction where people can bid on a range of fabulous items. "Out to Run" program: For any participant who would like a training program to help them run their first 5km, a free "Out to Run" program will be offered.

The registration link and more information will be posted on the NCPR website at [www.ncpr.ca](http://www.ncpr.ca).

This pandemic may prevent us from getting together, but it won't prevent us from having fun and supporting a great cause in our community.



We hope that you'll take part in the 2020 Virtual National Capital Pride Run/Walk - register today!

### ***Our Heroes- Thank you!***

The generosity of Bruce House supporters is heart-warming and encouraging to staff and clients as we work together to provide services while coping with these difficult and often frightening times.

Despite the personal and financial struggles many are facing, not a single monthly donor has cancelled their monthly contribution. We also continue to see one-time donations made online and mailed in.

“Thank you” seems grossly inadequate for this generosity. If you would like to support our clients please donate today.



Some shout-outs and warm thanks to: PPEAs March became April, we—like you—struggled to find supplies of gloves, hand sanitizers, and masks to keep our clients and staff safe. Masks: warm thanks with no fear of “speaking moistly” to Anne and Gabriella for their donation of home-made re-useable cloth masks!

Hand Sanitizer: Jordan and the great people and handsan.ca donated hand sanitizer. This allowed us to supply clients with small bottles at a time when you couldn’t find hand sanitizer in stores.

Thank you for helping us de-germ our hands when soap and water are not available!

Client Support Shout-out to Dave Moncur for donating a kid’s bike! Keeping children healthy and active is more important than ever.

There aren’t enough words to thank everyone at The Ottawa Food Bank, and their supporters. The Food Bank has doubled deliveries to Bruce House, enabling us to significantly increase the nutrition supports we can offer to clients. In combination with gift cards this had been instrumental in ensuring no one goes hungry. Grocery prices have gone up, and many times the cheap house brand is sold out—a difficult situation for many of our clients who are challenged to pay for groceries at the best of times.



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### ***Funding and Fundraising!***

The Canyon Foundation has given us a grant of \$50,000 to support the REST (outreach) program and direct volunteer services to clients.

We are grateful for their continued support!

Demands on our outreach services continue to grow, as we support clients with their daily needs, short and long term goals, and in the event of crisis or illness.

We are grateful to have received support from The James Robin Findlay Fund. This Fund has long been a supporter of Bruce House, and this most recent gift will allow us to supply personal-care kits and wellness kits to clients.

This will assist clients with the extra cleaning and personal protection needed to protect themselves and others during the pandemic, and assist with healing and recovery should a client become sick.

The Ontario REALTORS Care<sup>®</sup> Foundation, who are amazing supporters of our work, have given us a grant of over \$2600 to help with COVID-19 relief efforts.

We are very grateful to them, and to Anneke Cundasawmy for her continued efforts in helping us apply to the Foundation.