



Making a positive difference.

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023



163 Queen Street East, 2nd Fl.,
Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1S1



Land Acknowledgement

The Toronto PWA Foundation recognizes that the work we do within the modern-day City of Toronto, takes place on the historical and traditional territory of many Indigenous nations including the Anishinaabe, and Wendat peoples, and more recently the Mississauga's and Haudenosaunee nations, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Metis and Inuit people from across Turtle Island. By making this acknowledgment, we strive to be allies and take an active part in reconciliation by honoring the land, history and unique Indigenous heritage and culture within the City of Toronto. This fosters our commitment to the recommendations set forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.



Table Of Contents

Mission, Vision and Philosophy	002	Our Impact	008
Letter from the Board Co-Chair	003	Finance at a Glance	010
Letter from the Executive Director	004	The 2022 Bike Rally Story	012
PWA's Newcomers response	007	Thank you our supporters and Donors	015



Serving community members in the EM

MISSION

We engage people living with HIV/AIDS in enhancing their health and well-being through practical and therapeutic support services and broader social change, and we inspire them to live into their dreams and discoveries. mission to people living with HIV.

VISION

We live in affirming, sustaining communities where we find inspiration and support for our dreams, health, well-being and meaningful contributions.

PHILOSOPHY

People living with HIV/AIDS play a crucial role in the governance and operation of the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation, but, most important, are its heart and soul. Although the Foundation seeks supportive partnerships in fulfilling our mission, our response to HIV/AIDS is, more than anything else, inspired by the voices and experience of people living with HIV/AIDS.



Making a Positive Difference

Letter from the Board Co-Chair

“Community is the spirit, the guiding light of the tribe, whereby people come together in order to fulfill a specific purpose, to help others fulfill their purpose, and to take care of one another.”

--- The Spirit of Intimacy by Sobonfu Somé

Since September 2021, your PWA Board has been on journey, rooted in a desire to “emancipate the institution from our inner colonizer(s)” by transforming the operational and governance systems across PWA. We have undertaken this journey because we know that a community where there is oppression, where there is racism, cannot lead us freely.

As our past Board Chair, Gareth Henry, noted in last years’ Annual Report we know the heart of anti-Black racism and colonialization – and homophobia and sexism and other forms of oppression – is the fundamental belief that Black bodies, Indigenous bodies, queer bodies, female, and non-gender conforming bodies are inferior to white, male bodies and cannot govern themselves.

We therefore maintain that PWA’s Board’s first purpose is to re-imagine Board governance and uproot and dismantle anti-Black racism, colonialization and other forms of racism and oppression so that the PWA Board reflects and comes from the community in order to centre and serve the community.

As a Board, we commit to the following affirmations and mission:

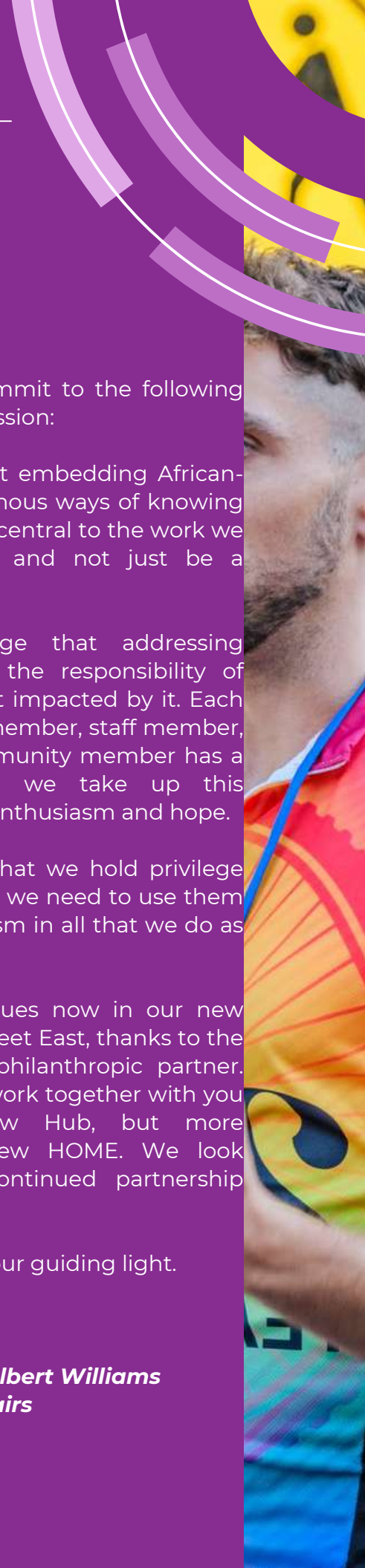
- 1.** We recognize that embedding African-centred and Indigenous ways of knowing and being must be central to the work we do as an agency, and not just be a response to crisis.
- 2.** We acknowledge that addressing racism cannot be the responsibility of those who are most impacted by it. Each of us, every Board member, staff member, volunteer and community member has a role to play and we take up this commitment with enthusiasm and hope.
- 3.** We understand that we hold privilege and power and that we need to use them to address colonialism in all that we do as an agency.

Our journey continues now in our new home on Queen Street East, thanks to the generosity of our philanthropic partner. We are blessed to work together with you to build our new Hub, but more importantly our new HOME. We look forward to this continued partnership with each of you.

Let community be our guiding light.

In Service,

David Morris and Albert Williams
PWA Board Co-Chairs



Letter from the Executive Director

The fiscal year of 2022-23 centered on our recovery from the impacts of COVID and the emergence of some incredible, new beginnings.

We saw first-hand the negative and cumulative impacts that COVID's social isolation, skyrocketing cost of living, and the closure of services and social/well-being activities had on the health and well-being of people living with HIV/AIDS, especially Black, Indigenous, Latinx, families with children and those aging with HIV/AIDS. Demand for our services in 2021-22 increased by over 50%. We had remained completely open throughout COVID, and we could not now let our communities down in this tender moment of recovery.

Yet, the lingering presence of COVID had prevented the public from jumping right back into pre-COVID life. While we planned to offer the first full 6-day Bike Rally since before the pandemic, we knew that revenue from the event would still not match pre-pandemic levels. As well the increased cost of living impacted every aspect of PWA – with vendors charging us more and products we bought (like food and other supplies) costing us more. With less revenue expected again for the second year in a row and higher all-around expenses, we faced the possibility of cutting services to balance the budget.

Thankfully, our amazing Board decided to pass a deficit budget, covered by PWA reserves, to preserve services so we could continue to be there for community. Thanks to this decision by our Board the services PWA expanded or introduced during COVID became a permanent fixture of what we now provide. Weekly access to the Essentials Market, increased access to food delivery, over-the-phone wellness checks, Peer service navigation have all now become staples of what we provide. In so many ways, COVID showed us how we needed to do better and more for our community. We are very grateful for these crucial lessons.

This year marked the return of the full 6-day Bike Rally since before COVID! 200 6-day, 3-day and 1-day riders and 70 crew journeyed, once again, from Toronto through Kingston and finally to Montreal from Aug 7th – 12th, 2022. Just shy of \$1.5million was raised – an incredible feat for the Rally's first full ride since the beginning of COVID. We continued our partnership with AIDS Community Care of Montreal and Trellis in which Bike Rally participants selected which organizations they raised funds for. Of the total amount raised, around \$100,000 was given to our partner organizations!

Around the time of the Bike Rally, PWA began to see the beginnings of what would become the newcomer crisis here in Toronto. In August of 2022, the International AIDS Conference took place in Montreal. PWA, along with Black CAP, Casey House, Fife House, MCC Toronto and others, coordinated a response for those people living with HIV/AIDS who came to the conference from countries outside of Canada and who decided to stay in Canada to live a stigma and violence free life.

Annual Report 2022- 2023

Little did we know that changes to Canada's immigration policies and international instability would result in us seeing skyrocketing number of African, Caribbean and Latinx newcomers living with HIV – the beginnings of what would become, in 2023-24, the newcomer crisis here in Toronto. All our work around dismantling anti-Black racism and colonialization would set the stage for our ongoing response to this crisis in the next fiscal year.

While all of this was happening, PWA remained focused on its strategic plan to build a hub for people living with HIV/AIDS. PWA had been engaging with all ASOs in Toronto around the possibilities of co-locating, integrating service delivery as well as back-office functions. Black CAP, Africans in Partnership Against AIDS (APAA), Asian Community AIDS Services (ACAS), Latinos Positivos, Prisoner's HIV/AIDS Support Action Network (PASAN) and the Toronto HIV/AIDS Network (THN) made the commitment to deeply explore co-location and the integration of service delivery and back-office functions. At the very end of the 2022-23 fiscal year, this dream of exploration turned into reality when a private donor of PWA's bought the building at 163 Queen St E as a permanent home for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS – the Hub! More on that in next year's exciting annual report!

I want to give my heartfelt thanks to all the people who give so much to PWA – you are the Spirit of PWA and make PWA possible!

With much love and solidarity,



Suzanne Paddock, Executive Director





Rod Michano

Spiritual Advisor leading a sacred ceremony

PWA's Newcomers response



In July 2022, PWA attended the International AIDS Conference in Montreal where we met 30 individuals from Africa who remained in Canada after the conference.

We introduced a ground-breaking community-based immigration program after recognising the unique challenges faced by these individuals. This program was aimed at providing vital support in navigating the complex immigration process.

This initiative offers a range of services tailored to the specific needs of immigrants living with HIV. One of the cornerstone services is to support with accessing legal services and other practical support services.

We further collaborated with Legal Aid Ontario to facilitate access to legal representation, ensuring that individuals receive expert guidance throughout their immigration journey.

This includes assistance with filling out forms, navigating bureaucratic processes

By offering these services free of charge, PWA ensures that financial barriers do not hinder access to critical support for immigrants living with HIV.

The program operates within a community-based framework, fostering trust and collaboration among participants.

We also engage with community members to understand their unique circumstances and tailor services to meet their specific needs. This approach ensures that individuals receive personalized support, empowering them to navigate the immigration process with confidence and dignity.

Throughout the programs implementation, the immigration program has demonstrated a profound impact on the lives of participants, providing them with the tools and resources needed to build a stable and secure future in Canada their new Home.

By addressing a critical gap in support services for immigrants living with HIV, PWA continues to uphold its commitment to promoting health equity and social justice within the community.

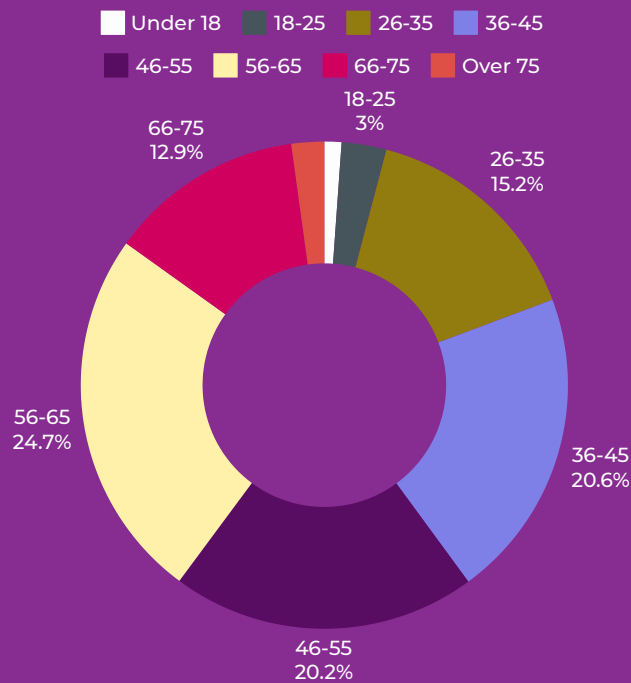
Our Impact

2,628 community members accessed services from PWA with a 10% increase from the year before

Gender

1.5 % Trans Woman 0.1 % Trans man
 20.6 % Female 77.5 % Male

Age



Enthnicity



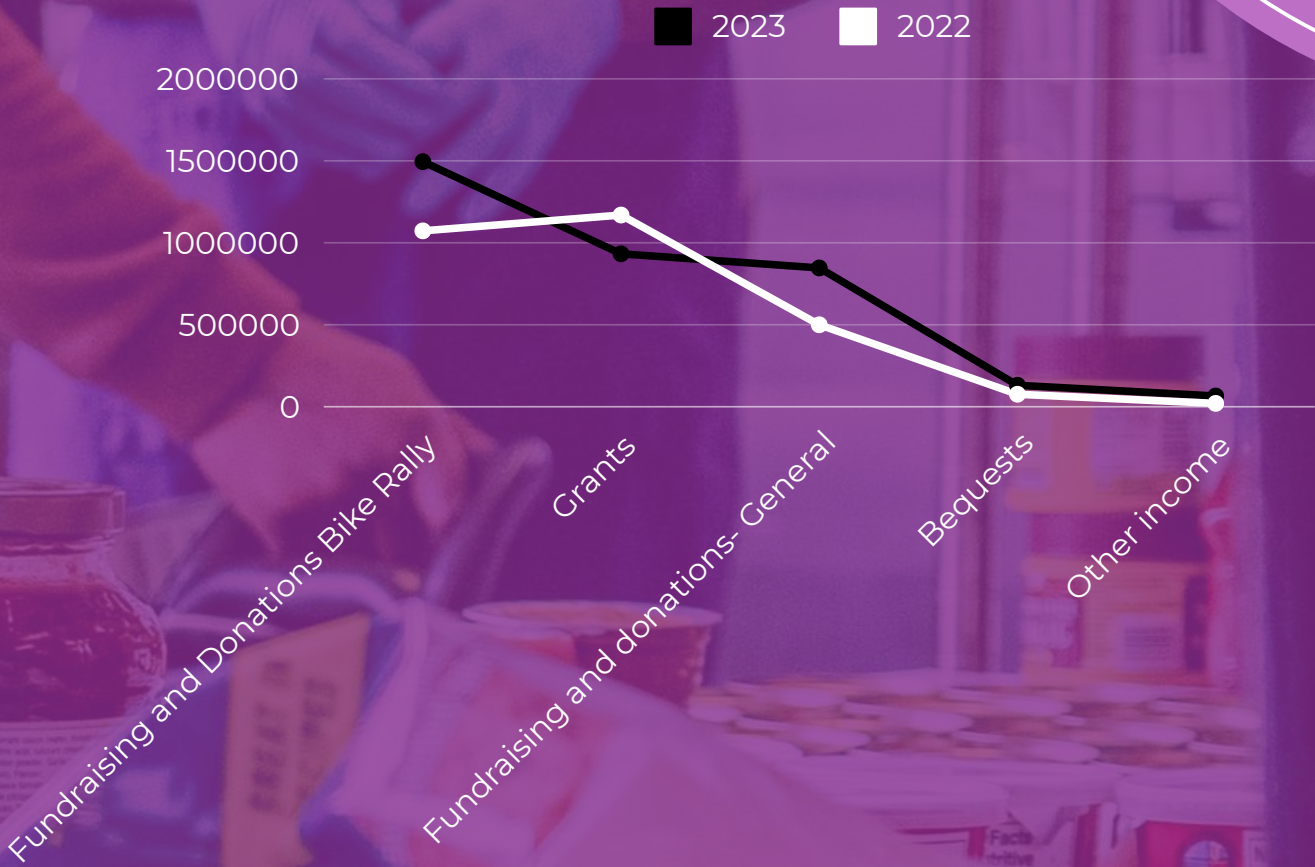


“
single use needles... feels
like a mosquito bite ...
not bad 🙌

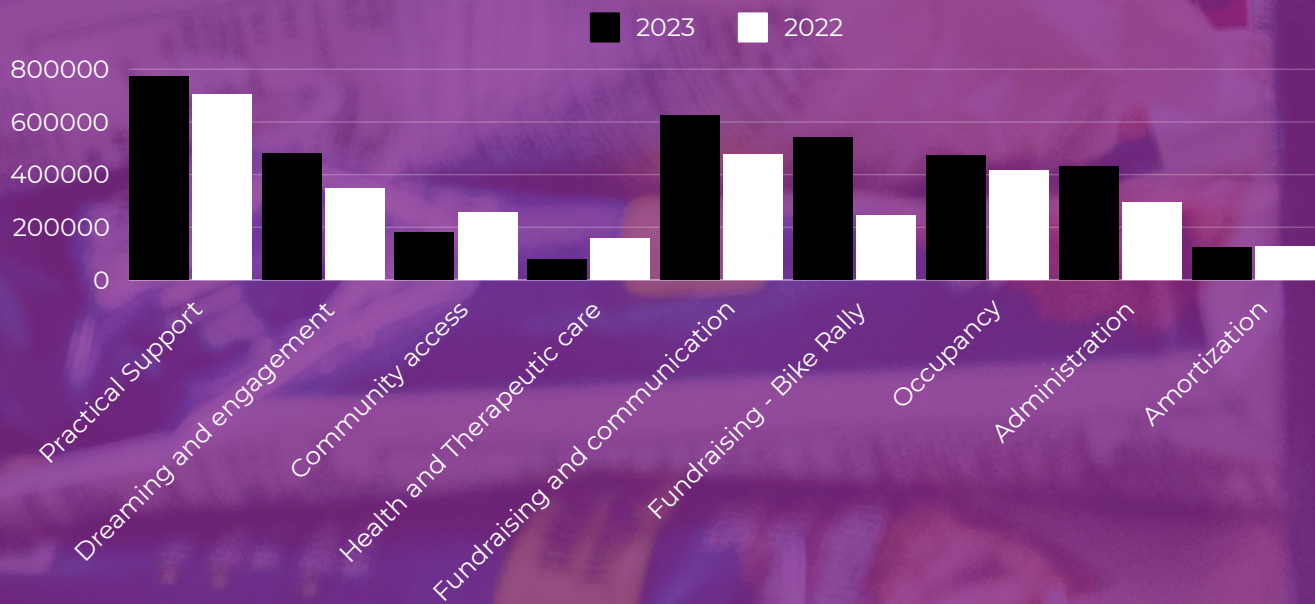
Traditional Chinese medicine is one of the therapeutic programs at PWA. This is highly effective in treating a variety of chronic conditions for Community Members.

Finance at a Glance

Revenue



Expenses





Hair Styling at the PWA salon



The 2022 Bike Rally Story

You've likely heard the saying, "It takes a village," and for the Bike Rally, it truly did. 2022 was the first full Rally back after the COVID-19 pandemic had begun, and pulling off the 6-Day, 1-Day and 3-Day Rides after two years away took 12 months of planning.

We extend our thanks to all those who got us to this point and helped us reach Montreal that August. A special thank you goes to those who were fundraising, training, and contributing to crew preparation; you were a crucial part of the village, and we couldn't have made the event a success without you.

There was palpable excitement as we marked our 24th anniversary of riding in support of PWA.

2022 was also our first full Rally that included both our partners Trellis HIV & Community Care (formerly HARS) in Kingston and AIDS Community Care Montréal (ACCM) on the road with us. Trellis and ACCM have opened the Rally to new communities and each brings their own special knowledge and skills that continue to make the Rally stronger.

During our Virtual Bike Rally (2020) and Local Bike Rally (2021), we had raised over \$2 million dollar combined, a fantastic accomplishment in what was an ever-changing public health environment. In the 24th annual Rally, as we returned to normalcy, we aimed for and achieved a strong \$1.5 million!

In 2022 we were finally able to gather as a family again and celebrate this amazing community. Thank you!

Gaby Harvey and Sam Lapidus, 2022 Co-Chairs



“ We’ve built an amazing community on wheels and are truly Friends for Life. ”



Annual Bike Rally

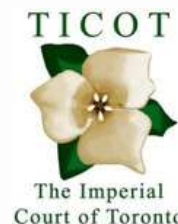




Bike Rally Launch Party

Thank you our supporters and Donors

You are the reason that PWA still opens its doors and help so many people. With your donations, make a positive impact.





Making a *positive* difference.

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 Toronto People With AIDS Foundation

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