



# HOPE & STRENGTH

West Central Women's Resource Centre  
Annual Report 2019/2020

# HOPE & STRENGTH AT WCWRC

## A Message from the Executive Director & Board Chair

Since our inception, WCWRC has been committed to providing a safe space for all women. This has meant many things over the years, including meeting basic needs, supporting women in finding and maintaining housing and addressing situations of gender-based violence (GBV). Women who have experienced gender-based violence often struggle to find safe housing, income security, and culturally appropriate healing and support.

It's been a year of important growth in the area of gender-based violence. We have always done GBV work, but have not always had dedicated program funds to do so in a robust way until now. GBV work is especially important here, given that Manitoba has the highest domestic violence homicide rates among the provinces. As you read through the pages of this annual report, you will learn more about GBV in Manitoba, about our programs - Restoring the Balance and Healing Together - and a little more about how our staff approach this work.

One of the many great tragedies associated with the COVID-19 pandemic is the increase in gender-based violence, as women, trans, Two-Spirit, and gender non-conforming

people were asked to remain at home, isolating them from many of the supports they were accessing. Safer at home has not been true for everyone and living through a pandemic has required unique and creative solutions to ensure that women have what they need to stay safe during this unprecedented time.

I want to express my deepest thanks to all the incredibly dedicated, compassionate and hard-working staff at the Centre. Every single one of you contribute to supporting women experiencing domestic violence and I am proud of the work we do as a team. I also want to commend them for the work they did in pivoting our services when the pandemic hit to keep providing invaluable supports to our community.

On behalf of all the staff at the Centre, I want to express our gratitude to our board who provide ongoing guidance to the organization, and to the funders and donors whose generosity makes our work possible. Without you, we would not be able to accomplish what we do each day and we are grateful to be in partnership with you. Be well.

**Lorie English**  
Executive Director

This year's annual report is focussed on the incredibly important gender-based violence work that takes place at 640 Ellice Avenue every day. The women who come to West Central Women's Resource Centre guide their own journeys; what we aim to provide is support to give these women hope and strength for this journey.

I'd like to thank all 2019/2020 board members for their hard work and dedication to this Centre. The Board has always been proud to support this work by working closely with the Executive Director and staff to guide the organization. Together, we have developed a well-respected organization that has been delivering crucial support in our community and is a voice for women's issues locally, provincially and nationally.

I'd also like to thank all 2019/2020 staff, mentors and volunteers whose commitment and passion for supporting women gives me hope and strength for the future. The work that you do to lift up women and their families, strengthens our community and our whole city. The caring that you put into this work is unmatched and for that we are proud to be board members.

Finally, a huge thank you also to all our generous donors - your support is so important and changes lives every day.

**Meredith Mitchell**  
Board Chair



# 2019/2020 WCWRC STAFF & BOARD

## Staff

Aisha Tahir  
Brianna Brooks  
Candace Abdilla  
Carolyn Moar  
Dale Pike  
Denise MacDonald  
Diana Jarzab-Perchak  
Eden Friesen  
Erica Charron  
Erika Frey

Furaha L. Kalimba  
Gloria Knott  
Haidee Maderal  
Halima Jelloul  
Helena Kelly  
Hilda-Karina Flores  
Jennifer Buhr  
Jill Beauchamp  
Jolene Wilson  
Katherine Turner

Kirsten Bernas  
Laura Canfield  
Laura Dahl  
Lisa Spring  
Lorie English  
Megan Carrothers  
Megan Michell  
Melissa McGregor  
Merrill Grant  
Mihret Zewude

Molly Dunbar  
Rachel Bergen  
Sarah Kramer  
Sharon James  
Tammy Leask  
Taylor Byrnes  
Victoria Malloy  
Wendy Kissick



## Board of Directors

Meredith Mitchell, Chair  
Kerry Fraser, Vice-Chair  
Cate Friesen, Vice-Chair  
Heather Mitchell, Secretary

Amy Wang, Treasurer  
Suzanne MacPherson, Member  
Kerri Irvin-Ross, Member  
Shannon Kraichy, Member

## Childminders

Adebisi Gafarr  
Amani Obied  
Birkti Solomon  
Chantel Bruce  
Crystal Richard  
Cynthia Berens  
Cynthia Meekis  
Fadumo Osman  
Faraifta Bibi  
Firehiwot Sido  
Halima Mohammed Abdi  
Hibo Ali  
Hodan Mohamed Isse

Jane Reyes  
Jehona Ajvazi  
Kahindisa Kobwa  
Kowsar Abdulahi  
Nighisti Berhe  
Ruta Bekele  
Sara Naizgi  
Sarinrat Meeyen  
Senait Gebrehanes  
Sultana Mahmood  
Tadesse Mekdelawit  
Wah Wah Moo  
Yadeni Jaleta

## Mentors

Janice Bearbull  
Janis Durcharme\*  
Faith Fontaine  
Nikki Giesbrecht  
Haidee Maderal\*  
Alex McKane

Veronica Meekis  
Michelle Paypompee  
Jennifer Strand  
Linnea Tapio\*

\*=now WCWRC staff member





## STAFF & VOLUNTEER PROFILES



### Staff Profile: Karina Flores

While Karina Flores was raised in a typical Mexican household, there was a secret in the family: her father was Indigenous. Like many who moved from rural areas to the city in Mexico, he hid the Indigenous part of himself to avoid painful discrimination. Many parts of Karina's history were lost and she has worked hard to find her identity.

Karina studied Sociology at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and found her passion for working with community while taking part in a large

student strike. She started working on building strong, sustainable women's networks. Public resources were lacking in Mexico, so women had to support one another.

Karina came to Winnipeg in 2012 to get away from the stress of living in Mexico City and give her 11-year-old daughter another kind of life. They now live in Transcona, an area she loves for its sense of community. "It's a small town in the city where people help each other a lot."

She finds Canada better at providing public supports and protection for women but community and peer supports aren't as strong: "There is opportunity for women [in Canada]. The first one is being alive! But in Mexico we have a strong sense of community. That is the strength in my country."

Karina has been at WCWRC for over 2 years. She started as a Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Worker providing a wide range of supports to newcomer families. She saw people coming to the centre with seemingly simple concerns, but deeper issues emerged once she got to know them. Karina now works exclusively with women experiencing gender-based

violence. It is more stressful, but she loves her job!

Karina takes a client-centred approach. Everyone has their own story and she takes the time to listen first. People come from different backgrounds and cultures so something that works for one may not for another.

As an immigrant woman herself, Karina encourages her participants to reflect on what it means to be a woman and an immigrant woman, and that the root causes of their challenges are not themselves, but discriminatory societies and systems.

"What needs to change is the way society sees women and how we see power. We need to consider ourselves equals. We also need strong campaigns and spaces to discuss these topics. We cannot think that because Canada is a first-world country that it doesn't happen here."

She stays grounded by focussing on her own power: the power to do something, whether big or small.

Outside of work, Karina enjoys spending time with her daughter and her dog.





### Volunteer Profile: Joanne Nimik

Joanne has been involved with WCWRC almost from the very beginning when we were in the basement of 583 Ellice Ave. She noticed the sandwich board outside the door and saw women coming in and out, which led her to first stepping foot in the Centre. The coffee and community kept her coming back.

Joanne has since watched the Centre grow into what feels like a “close-knit family.” “It’s a good community,” she says. “I enjoy coming here.” She has made many

friends and found support to meet her goals.

Joanne has also been volunteering on and off since the beginning. She started as a housekeeping volunteer and then “had a blast” helping with running the clothing room that the Centre had for several years.

After graduating from our WE WIL (Women Empowering Women Into Leadership) program, she obtained a mentorship position at the Centre helping women find housing. While this was rewarding, she found that it was hard for her to hear the stories of women which reminded her of her own difficult journey. But she still wanted to give back to the Centre that had given her so much.

Working with our Mentorship and Volunteer Coordinator Eden, Joanne made a plan to volunteer in positions that were less triggering, such as supporting the Centre’s drop-in space, community garden, and outdoor clean-up.

Joanne lives right in the core of the West End and sees people struggling with issues. Her personal philosophy is to treat everyone with dignity and respect. “We’re all doing our own thing and trying to get by,” she says.

“Just sharing each other’s experiences... it creates a more supportive place for women.” She is always telling people about the Centre resources that they can access.

Joanne contributes to creating a supportive space through her positive notes initiative, where women exchange positive notes about each other on the community message board. “It gives people a sense of worth or value, of being noticed, not invisible... I try and keep that positivity... it just puts a smile on people’s faces”

Joanne is always on board to participate. In addition to WE WIL, she has taken Red Road to Healing. She also participates in cultural events such as Full Moon ceremonies, singing and drumming, Pipe Ceremonies, medicine picking, ribbon-making and drum-making. And when media comes, she’s always willing to share her voice.

She tells us that the Centre “changed me all for the better. I feel comfortable in the community. It’s all good. I hope it keeps going.”



# PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## Drop In

- Shower, Laundry, Phone, Internet Access
- Workshops, Activities, and Information Sessions
- Access to Hygiene and Harm Reduction Supplies
- Information and Referrals to Other Services and Organizations
- Community Events, Field Trips, Celebrations, and Community Meetings
- Family Night on Tuesdays
- Community Building

## Food Security

- Meal Program and emergency food hampers
- Outreach service for people experiencing homelessness
- Cooking classes and other workshops
- Food Handler Training
- Community garden

## Mentorship Program

- WE WIL: Women Empowering Women into Leadership Program
- Honourarium-based Employment Training
- Volunteer Placements

## Housing

- HOMES – Housing and Income Security Support
- More Than 4 Walls Housing First Program
- Project Manitouwabi

## Restoring the Balance

- Family Violence Prevention: Red Road to Healing and Men's Circle
- Beading and Dancing Spirit Drum Group
- Ceremonies and Events
- Elder and Knowledge Keeper Supports
- Access to Medicines and Medicine Picking

## Newcomer Programs

- Settlement Services
- Healing Together counselling supports
- Conversation Circle and workshops
- Sewing
- Supports to LGBT2SQ+ newcomers in Partnership with Rainbow Resource Centre

## Employment & Education

- Job Readiness Support
- Employment and Skills Training Opportunities
- Taking Root Childminding Training
- Happy Sprouts Childminding Services

## Policy & Research

- Connecting the Circle: A Gender-Based Strategy to End Homelessness in Winnipeg
- Project Manitouwabi Pilot Project
- Public policy advocacy and contributing to policy reports and responses

## WCWRC AND COVID-19

Due to COVID-19, our Centre had to change and adapt programs and services quickly. Starting on March 16, 2020, we limited drop-in access to a maximum of three people at a time, cancelled all group programming and changed our meal program to offer hot meals to go. We continued our important one-on-one work in Settlement, Housing and Gender Based Violence Supports by phone or in person with social distance.

We saw that so many programs and services our community depended on were no longer available, so we quickly pivoted to offer two new services: emergency food hamper deliveries and outreach. The food hampers were crucial in allowing people who could not afford to stock up on groceries to self-isolate at home and feed their families. Every day we also went out to provide outreach services in our van to provide food and supports to people experiencing homelessness.

The loss of our community space has had a tremendous impact on our community, but we're relieved that we were able to continue to offer many basic services and supports for those in need. We hope to fully reopen our doors and become the bustling neighbourhood hub that so many depend on again soon.

We want to send an enormous and heartfelt thanks to The Winnipeg Foundation, United Way, and individual donors who recognized that we are an essential service. With their support, we were able to ensure no staff were laid off and that we could support the community creatively and safely to get through this difficult time.



# OUR 2019 PROGRAM STATS

DROP IN CENTRE

24,366  
Visits to our Drop In

 13,148  
Meals & Snacks Served

546   
Loads of Laundry

MENTORSHIP & VOLUNTEERING

9   
WEWIL Graduates

100%  
Positive Outcomes  
Defined as the percentage of mentors who found employment or education opportunities after the program.

58   
Volunteers

3,047  
Volunteer Hours


5  
Practicum Students


NEWCOMER IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT WORKERS (NISW)

 325  
Individual participants and their families supported by NISW with  
**71 home visits,**  
accompanied participants to  
**over 67 offsite visits.**

 NISW supported  
**32**  
Newcomer Women  
and their families dealing with family conflict, intimate partner violence or post-conflict state and sexual violence.

HOUSING

 169  
HOMES Program Participants

36   
More Than Four Walls Program  
participants assisted with developing Housing First case management plans that helped them achieve personal goals and access housing, income, health and other social services.

Developed case management plans for  
**125** HOMES participants that helped them achieve goals and access housing, income, health and other social services.

HOMES & More than Four Walls Programs  
**63** housed and/or rehoused participants from unstable or unsafe housing to more secure housing.



# GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE WORK AT WCWRC

Manitoba has highest domestic violence homicide rates among the provinces. This is a tragedy. We are committed to applying our women-centred, multi-sphere approach to ending gender-based violence. Most of our programs support women experiencing gender-based violence. The two that we are highlighting here are specifically focussed on this issue in innovative, compassionate, and culturally appropriate ways: our Indigenous program **Restoring the Balance** and our newcomer program **Healing Together**.

## RESTORING THE BALANCE

Restoring the Balance is a trauma-informed program founded on traditional Indigenous values, teachings, and ways of healing to provide holistic support.

Through Red Road to Healing and Men's Circle we hope to help families heal from family violence and prevent violence before it happens.

“...we hope to help families heal from family violence and prevent violence before it happens.”

These programs have been developed to educate folks to identify and deal with violent behaviours in a better and safe way. Participants learn to recognize

the signs of abuse, stress and anger management, how to make a safety plan for yourself and your loved ones, how to recognize what you're feeling and how to communicate in a good way. These things are all done with an Indigenous lens through ceremony and teachings.

Red Road to Healing was developed by WCWRC Woman of Distinction Shannon Buck and is recognized by the Federal Department of Justice as a national best practice.

Restoring the Balance also offers healing through connection to traditional Indigenous practices, such as:

- Beading
- The Dancing Spirit Drum Group
- Ceremony, teachings, and events
- Access to Elder and Knowledge Keeper supports
- Access to the four sacred medicines tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweet grass and annual medicine picking trip

Restoring the Balance stands with and supports the community women and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) families. The centre has joined the MMIWG Coalition and we do our best to be at all events to show support as well as offer education and knowledge sharing



*Jolene Wilson, Coordinator of Restoring the Balance*

to help keep each other safe and raise awareness. We are committed to implementing the Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into MMIWG as well as the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

This program will expand in the coming years to include inter-generational healing groups.

Thank you to the Province of Manitoba, Family Violence Prevention Program for this important funding.





## HEALING TOGETHER: Fostering Safe, Stronger Families

Healing Together counsels newcomer women and is part of our Settlement program. It provides a safe space where they can talk about their settlement experience, family life, healthy and unhealthy relationships, the effect of violence in relationships and other forms of violence, the challenges of



parenting in Canada, grieving and loss, and more.

Healing Together aims to create a program model that strives to enhance newcomer well-being, with an emphasis on preventing and healing from Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and experiences of post-conflict gender-based violence.

Women's Wellness Group is a 10-week program that provides opportunity for newcomer women to come together and support one another. The circle is a safe place to share your stories with other women, and talk about different ways to overcome life challenges.

"It provides a safe space..."

Healing Together also offers one-on-one counselling. This is a private conversation with our Gender-Based Violence Counsellor, where women can share some of the challenges they are experiencing and receive support in finding solutions.

The program also includes an outreach component where our counsellor teaches newcomer youth

about healthy relationships.

For many cultures, talking about personal experiences of gender-based violence can be difficult. Thus, we take many steps to build trust and make space. Our counsellor Mihret was a newcomer woman and offered supports in Amharic as well as English. Interpretation services are also offered to all women in our Settlement programs. The group integrates a variety of cultural practices and traditions and women are able to learn about the many cultures in the room.

The program also has a mission to continue working with system stakeholders to increase the understanding of the newcomer experience with the aim of improving outcomes for newcomers who need access to these services.

This program has only been running for two years and we have learned a lot in this time. We will build on its success by strengthening best practices and integrating lessons learned.

Thank you to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for funding this important program.



# GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



## STOP THE VIOLENCE



West Central  
Women's Resource Centre

Source: Canadian Women's Foundation

Gender-based violence is a multi-faceted issue that cuts across all demographics and permeates all corners of our city, province and country. It is also something that disproportionately impacts women, trans, Two-Spirit, and gender non-conforming people. This is because of misogynist, transphobic, and homophobic beliefs that result in their bodies being devalued, sexualized, commodified, and exploited.

Gender-based violence is also rooted in patriarchal and colonial power imbalances that result in gender inequality, systemic oppression and marginalization of identities, and culture-related gender norms where men are socialized based on harmful ideas of masculinity, founded in control and violence. While men can experience gender-based violence, it is almost exclusively committed by men against people of a different gender. For example, 80% of intimate partner-violence is perpetrated by men against women.

We know from our research for Connecting the Circle: A Gender-Based Strategy to End Homelessness in Winnipeg that gender-based violence is also a common pathway to homelessness. The risk of homelessness due to violence increases for women, trans, Two-Spirit, and gender non-conforming people who are also living in poverty, are Indigenous, living with a disability, and/or living in rural and remote areas.

Gender-based violence rates increased

“Gender-based violence rates are increasing during the pandemic”

dramatically during the pandemic, as women trans, Two-Spirit, and gender non-conforming people were asked to remain at home. The Federal Minister of Women and Gender Equality, Maryam Monsef noted that in some parts of the country, this increase was as high as 400%. As women were isolated at home with their abuser, with limited access to resources that they depended on for support, the risk to their safety and their lives grew exponentially.

West Central Women's Resource Centre is working on innovative ways to support women who are experiencing violence. We have always done gender-based violence work, but in the past year have had opportunity to expand and further develop this work.



## “The work starts with listening”

Our services and supports include:

- **Our drop-in:** A confidential, women-only space open six days a week where women can escape from their abusers and be referred to a gender-based violence shelter;
- **HOMES:** Housing and income supports to help women leave abusive homes;
- **Restoring the Balance:** A violence recovery program funded by the Province of Manitoba based in Indigenous traditions that promotes healing. This also includes a men's healing circle because the cycle of violence against women will not end without helping men heal. Funded by the Province of Manitoba, Family Violence Prevention Program.
- **Healing Together:** Crisis counselling for newcomer women who have experienced domestic, state, and gender-based violence. Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

- **Gender-Based Violence Case Coordinator:** a staff member funded by the Winnipeg Foundation who is dedicated to working with women experiencing violence.
- **Hotel stays:** Once the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we received generous funding from the End Homelessness Winnipeg to allow us to house women experiencing gender-based violence in hotels when they could not access shelter supports to give them a safe space to self-isolate. We then supported them to find safe housing.

The work starts with listening. We take a participant-centred approach where there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Every woman who comes to us for support has her own story, her own goals, her own priorities. We work with women to develop a way forward that works for them. That has been uniquely challenging during the pandemic. However, the supports that we have been able to provide to women we have worked with over these past months have literally saved lives.

Gender-based violence can and must end. We must work together to end gender-based violence by using an intersection gender-based analysis (IGBA) to address its root causes, creating 24-hour safe spaces for women and the 2SLGBTQ+ community, and implementing the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

If you or someone you know is being abused, call the Manitoba Association of Women's Shelter's confidential provincial toll-free crisis line at 1-877-977-0007.



# WCWRC WOMEN OF DISTINCTION

WCWRC was built and is sustained by remarkable women. As a way to honour their contributions, every year we present the Women of Distinction awards, which recognize women who have gone above and beyond expectations in their contributions and commitment to the wellbeing of our Centre, our values, and our community.

## Diane “Lady Di” Plante

Diane Plante made her way to Winnipeg in 1999 and felt “it was a very dark time in [her] life.” Before coming to the Centre: “I was dying from alcoholism and drug abuse... one of the hardest things in my life was to ask for help.” Things really started to turn around when Diane began volunteering as a cook in the kitchen and participated in many of our other programs: “coming to the West Central Women’s Resource [Centre] gave me strength to develop friendships and work on my heartaches.” Outside of volunteering as a cook, in the drop-in, and as housekeeping support, Diane was on the First Voice Advisory Committee for Connecting the Circle: A Gender-Based Strategy to End Homelessness. “I’ve always wanted to help and I wanted other people to help me... It’s an honour to receive this award. I hope that many women have experienced what I have... that through hard work and learning to love yourself and to love others all things are possible... There’s a lot of pain, there’s a lot of heartache, but when you go through that there is a bright light at the other side.”



## Chelsea King

Chelsea joined our staff team in 2012 as the Mentorship Coordinator. A graduate of the Global Political Economics Program at the University of Manitoba, Chelsea brought a fresh perspective to a national project that the centre was working on in women’s empowerment. Alongside partners in Toronto, ON and Saint John, NB, Chelsea



helped develop an empowerment program that has been nationally recognized by Status of Women Canada (now Women and Gender Equality). Women Empowering Women Into Leadership (WE-WIL) is one of our most popular programs and works to prepare women to enter or re-enter the labour market and has resulted in many women finding a pathway forward, including a number of our current staff. Chelsea’s commitment to anti-oppression and equity added strength to our management team, as she moved into the role of Director of Mentorship. She worked with compassion and caring for both her team and her community. Her quick wit and love of hot sauce kept us all laughing at the lunch table and her genuine nature made her a confidante of many. She left the centre to return home to Australia in 2015 but has remained a member of our team through the contributions she offered.





### Shelly Smith

Shelly has dedicated her career to strengthening community, lifting people up and working from a harm reduction approach in all that she does. As Executive Director of the Rainbow Resource Centre from 2004-2009, she was successful in significantly increasing funding, expanding programming and physically relocating the organization

from 222 Osborne to its current location on Scott Street. Since 2010, Shelly has been the Senior Policy Analyst for Healthy Sexuality and Harm Reduction with Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living. The focus of her role is to improve conditions to reduce negative sexual and other health outcomes experienced by populations most adversely impacted due to marginalization. Shelly approaches her work from a social justice and community-based perspective, which has allowed her unique insights on the needs of different stakeholder groups. Shelly believes in the strength of community-based participation and constantly looks for opportunities to weave the voice of the community in public policy discourse. Shelly joined the board of WCWRC in February of 2012 and served until March 2015, sitting as Chair of the Board in her final years. During this time, she oversaw the transition from our first Executive Director to our current Executive Director, as well as the grow of both programming and the staff team. She brought knowledge and experience, but also compassion, mentorship and humour to the work she did on the board of WCWRC and we are grateful her guidance and leadership.

### Beth Ulrich

Beth has been a champion for gender equality and supports for communities in both the non-profit and public sectors for over three decades. Beth's non-profit experience included working with communities on social justice issues such as mental health, family violence, learning disabilities, and reproductive health. She then moved into the Department of Justice where she worked on strategies involving sexual exploitation and community safety. We know her best from her

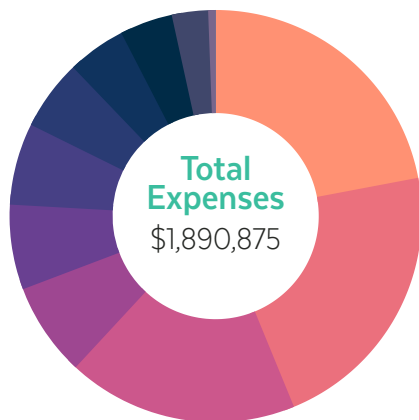
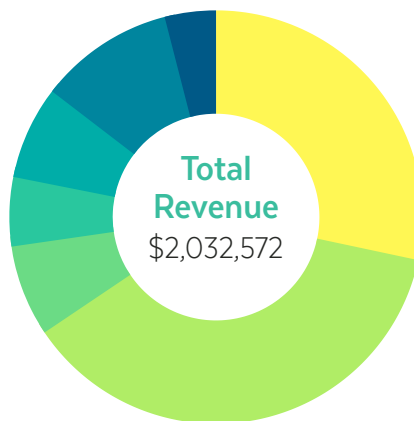
most recent role as the Executive Director of the Manitoba Status of Women Secretariat. From the start, Beth worked incredibly hard for gender equality in Manitoba. Some of her many achievements include the proclamation of Women's Equality Week, the Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention Act, signing Winnipeg on to be the first city in Canada to join UN Women's Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Initiative, and extending domestic violence leave to victims of interpersonal violence. In her time at the Manitoba Status of Women Secretariat, she fought to add WCWRC to the Family Violence Prevention Program, and in 2019 we were successful, after many years of lobbying to be included. This provincial support has ensured our ability to support women in our community experiencing gender-based violence.





## SUMMARY OF REVENUE & EXPENSES FOR 2019-2020

- Province of Manitoba - \$277,935
- Federal Government - \$1,051,866
- United Way - \$365,136
- Winnipeg Foundation - \$70,063
- Happy Sprouts Childminding - \$52,961
- Donations - \$103,779
- Amortization - \$71,537
- Other - \$39,295



- Housing - \$340,308
- Settlement Services - \$336,507
- Administration - \$345,527
- Drop In - \$279,593
- Community Engagement - \$99,123
- Social Enterprise - \$85,447
- Occupancy - \$102,954
- Mentorship - \$113,437
- Amortization - \$70,951
- Happy Sprouts Childminding - \$43,929
- Restoring the Balance - \$64,024
- Financing - \$9,075

## OUR FUNDERS IN 2019-2020

Assiniboine Credit Union  
 Bell Let's Talk  
 End Homelessness Winnipeg  
 Manitoba Building Sustainable Communities  
 Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada  
 Manitoba Housing  
 Manitoba Green Team  
 Manitoba Early Learning  
 Manitoba Family Violence Prevention  
 Jewish Foundation of Manitoba  
 Reaching Home Canada  
 Indigenous Women's Healing Centre  
 Sistering; A Women's Place  
 Spence Neighbourhood Association  
 United Way  
 Winnipeg Foundation  
 Women and Gender Equality Canada



## SPECIAL RECOGNITION: THE MARLBOROUGH HOTEL

Often in non-profit, we turn first to our peers in our sector for support when crisis happens. Over the Christmas break this year, our community suffered a devastating apartment fire that displaced over 35 people. WCWRC stepped in to support those impacted over a time when most social services (including ourselves) are closed and as usual, our community rallied around these families and ensured they had what they needed to start to rebuild. This included tremendous support from MP Leah Gazan, MLA Lisa Naylor and representatives from the City.

What also emerged was a new partnership with the Marlborough Hotel. The hotel was used to house those displaced and working alongside Manager Chris Martin, and with support of the Winnipeg Foundation and some generous donors, we were able to ensure that no family was without shelter before they were able to be permanently rehoused.

Just a few short months later, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and while it deeply affects all of us, it disproportionately impacts women. Of particular concern were women experiencing homelessness and/or gender-based violence.

The directive to stay at home put many women's

lives in more danger. Rates of gender-based violence increased after the pandemic broke. Homes that were already tense before now must cope with the stress of the virus and increased isolation, and most supports for women had to close doors or limit services. Some hesitate to go to gender-based violence shelters for fear of risk of exposure in communal living. For those who don't have a place to call home, shelter or the streets remain the only options. Many women do not feel safe in homeless shelters and are reluctant to use them. Self-isolating is virtually impossible.

But as we have been learning through this time, when we work together, we can find solutions to the most complex challenges.

With the generous support of End Homelessness Winnipeg (EHW) through Reaching Home and our continued partnership with the Marlborough Hotel, we were able safely house women and allow them to self-isolate. EHW covered the costs, the hotel provided the rooms, food, and security, while we supported the women to find permanent housing solutions.

We want to take the opportunity to recognize Chris Martin for the work he has done with us through both of these challenging scenarios. His dedication



*Chris Martin, Manager of Marlborough Hotel*

to community and ability to see what services the hotel could offer the most vulnerable people in our City has literally saved lives.

This is a true example of how the private and non-profit sectors can work together. We hope that this is just the beginning of our relationship with the Marlborough Hotel and the look forward to building new relationships with other businesses that are inspired to step up for their community as well.



## DONATE TODAY

Your support is so important. You can provide **life-changing opportunities** for many women and their families. Your help is critical in creating a thriving centre where women and families can move from where they are to where they want to be.

Please make your tax deductible donation today at [wcwrc.ca/support](https://wcwrc.ca/support) or send a cheque to:

WCWRC  
640 Ellice Ave  
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0A7.

You may want to join the **Women's Supporting Circle**, with a monthly donation. Many supporters find monthly giving an easy and cost-effective way to support women in need year-round. **Join today at [wcwrc.ca/support](https://wcwrc.ca/support).**

Together we can ensure every woman gets the help they need.



## West Central Women's Resource Centre

*"[WCWRC] has helped me a LOT...  
I have a place to run to when in need of help."*  
~ Participant

*"When I was homeless I needed this  
women's resources centre."*  
~ Participant

*"I enjoy coming here. This is my top go to place.  
I get to relax and take care of myself. I feel safe...  
It's like a world itself for women. I ♥ it."*  
~ Participant

*"I am a single parent and many tasks are time  
challenging. Here I can relax more. I can also talk  
about my concerns."*  
~ Participant

