



The URBAN EDGE

Your Exclusive Update On Your Generosity At Work | Winter 2021

YOUR COMPASSION IN ACTION

“So many of the youth in our community are feeling ready and able to step up and work towards a brighter future...”

STEP UP
CONSTRUCTION

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TOGETHER, WE'RE CREATING ONE BIG, BEAUTIFUL STORY.

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YOUR COMPASSION IN ACTION

...An exclusive update on the Work Skills Program

Back in May, you—and other incredible supporters like you—helped us purchase a 3,200 square-foot warehouse in the heart of the North End. Now, this warehouse is the home of our Work Skills program: a place where youth are taught the real, marketable skills of home construction and renovation.

Thank you for being a part of it. ❤️

We'll be honest—purchasing the building took longer than we'd hoped. There was some concern about the initial results of the environmental assessment of the property. But when the final results came back, we were good to go! The site is safe for use. We were so relieved.

But soon after we took possession of the building, we had to face a difficult reality. Two young men—on two separate occasions—were shot and killed within a few feet of the warehouse's front door. One was 26. The other, just 17. Many of our friends in the North End community knew the victims.

It was difficult to reconcile the three events. The first—a new building and a new program, set to bring hope to the youth and young adults of Winnipeg's North End. The second and third—the exact opposite.

But perhaps that's exactly why this building needs to be here. Because here, we can work alongside the realities of the North End and the kids who live there. Here, we can demonstrate a different kind of path and all the possibilities it holds. Here, we can provide healing and support. Here, we can be real.

And that's what Step Up Construction is. It's a real program for youth with real problems who need real, marketable skills to move forward in our city. So many of them are feeling ready and able to step up and work towards a brighter future. And we are feeling ready to step up and meet them where they are—no matter the situation.

But the name, "Step Up Construction" is also a reflection of you, and how you stepped up to make the Work Skills program a reality. We're all in this together. ✕

WITH YOUR *Generosity* IN HAND WE'VE...

- Cleaned up the warehouse yard, installed a new fence and a security system
- Hired 3 new workers who began attending daily skills training sessions
- Moved forward with renovations—including roof repairs and insulation/heating upgrades

Thank You

"...I WOULDN'T BE WHO I AM TODAY WITHOUT THE PEOPLE I'VE MET THROUGH ICYA"

...How your love fuels relationships that stand the test of time

As a supporter of Inner City Youth Alive, you've definitely heard us say, "When you support ICYA, you help build relationships that last."

It's true. You do.

But without proof, those are just empty words. That's why we wanted to share Kim's story with you. Because Kim is that proof.

Kim is 33 years old. She's small—only 4'10 feet tall—but her personality is big. A Shakespeare quote takes up residence on her leg: "Though she be but little, she is fierce."

Kim grew up in a house right behind ICYA headquarters. At 9 years old, she began attending The Bridge Drop-in—a program that had just begun a few years earlier. She kept attending for as long as she could.

Growing up, Kim often found it difficult to fit in. "ICYA helped me integrate," says Kim. It's a big reason why she stayed connected with the people she met at ICYA after she aged out of programs like The Drop-in and Gem Lake.

People like our Bridge Director, Lori.



Kim with Bridge Director, Lori

“Kim’s one of the few people that has my home phone number,” says Lori.

The two met almost 20 years ago when Lori began volunteering at The Drop-in, and their relationship is still flourishing today. Kim invited Lori to come along when she got a tattoo of her beloved cat, Parker.

Conversations between the two women are full of laughter. But their relationship goes deeper than that. They are true friends—the kind that talk about the good things and the bad. The kind that lean on each other when times are tough. The kind that sometimes have to agree to disagree.

But the one thing they always agree on is how much they value each other.

“Kim is like the connecting hub for the people that came with her through all of these programs... even though they’ve all moved on,” says Lori with pride in her voice.

Kim wouldn’t have it any other way. “Who you become is integral to the people that you’re around in your pivotal years,” she says. “That’s exactly what Inner City was for me. I would not be who I am without Lori, Kent, and all the other people I’ve met through my time there.”

...Now do you see what I mean?

Twenty years ago, the love and compassion of donors like you helped make it possible for Kim to attend The Drop-in. To meet Lori. To create a place that would be the foundation for a friendship that is still growing and flourishing to this day.

And they’re just one example. When you reach out in love to ICYA, you are helping us create and strengthen relationships like Lori and Kim’s every day. **Which means that when you reach out in love to ICYA, your love has the power to carry on for years after kids age out of our programs.**

Thank you for helping us make real, lasting connection possible! ✕

BEAUTIFUL COLLISIONS

...A Reflection

by John Janzen

A while back, a donor got in touch with me. He had four tickets to some of the best seats at a mid-season Jets game. Centre-ice, 11th row. Sight lines just above the glass.

Most kids in the North End have never been to a Jets game. This was a big deal.

An ICYA team member knew exactly who we should take. Two brothers—growing up in close proximity to gang and family chaos. Lewin and his brother lived in the neighbourhood and had participated in ICYA programs—like The Bridge Drop-in—since they were very young.

When the four of us got to the Bell MTS Centre and found our seats, it was obvious—this was one of those “not in Kansas anymore” moments. We were surrounded by the folks in our city who could afford the best hockey seats that money can buy.

But Lewin didn’t seem at all aware of the way in which we stuck out. His attention was fixed on the ice.

Earlier, he’d made it clear that the night wouldn’t be complete if we didn’t get to see a fight. And he was going to do whatever he could to encourage that outcome. From the moment the puck dropped, he was the loudest in our section. A few times, his jostling of the seats around us made me brace for a reaction.

But the only reactions were smiles. And a few questions. A guy behind us—dressed head to toe in the latest and greatest Jets gear—nodded at Lewin and said, “He’s making it better for all of us!”

Finally, Lewin got what he came for. That big goon Getzlaf from the Ducks decided to take a shot at Ehlers. Lewin—convinced that justice was on our side—jumped out of his seat, screaming encouragement for



our David to take down their Goliath. Most people in our section got more entertainment from Lewin’s outburst than they did from the fight!

But what was more entertaining to me was watching my co-worker—normally the one who pushes the envelope—cast in the role of responsible big brother. With a hand on Lewin’s shoulder, and lots of nervous glances over his own, he gently, but persistently, encouraged Lewin to “Take it easy man. Ok then. Chill man.”

At the end of the game, Scheifle scored the winning goal and we all went home happy. I think about that night often. There was Lewin—a kid from the Inner City—jumping, yelling and causing a scene beside some of the richest people in Winnipeg. And there were the richest people in Winnipeg—smiling at Lewin’s enthusiasm. Refreshed by his authenticity.

For me, that night was another example of what ICYA is at its core: a mish mash of unexpected, beautiful collisions. A place where people who might otherwise never meet get to know each other, become friends, and change each other for the better. ✕

JOIN US BEHIND THE SCENES

*...How your love can
meet North End needs
in the moment*

A few months ago, one of our Community Ministers spent the day at an assisted living facility. He went to visit a lady who was staying there. A lady who'd grown up in the North End. A lady who hadn't had visitors in a very long time.

When he walked into her room, her face lit up. She was so happy to see him. The two talked for hours—about old times and people they knew. Then, they prayed together, and he reminded her that she wasn't alone or forgotten... she was loved.

As a faithful supporter of Inner City Youth Alive, you know a lot about our regular programming. Programming like The Bridge Drop-in or Meals 4 Kids. Even newer ones like Work Skills.

But there's a lot that happens at ICYA that you might not know about. Because sometimes, the needs of our community members don't always fit into perfectly curated programs. Sometimes—a lot of the time—their needs are more urgent. Unexpected. Specific.

Like when a Community Minister discovers that a family is struggling with an addiction to meth and no one in the house has eaten for a week.

Like when a teenager is sick or hurt and needs someone to sit with them in the emergency room all night.

Or, like when an adult from the North End community is pushed prescription pills instead of getting help for a deeper medical issue.

Those needs need a very different kind of help. The kind of help that you are able to give.

Today, when you support ICYA, your gift will allow us to respond to the needs of our community members in the North End as they come up. That's real, immediate help for a child, teenager, adult, or senior living in our city's inner city.

That means that through ICYA, your love and compassion can truly know no bounds.

It makes all the difference—to us and to the people in need that we serve—to know that when an urgent need comes up, your love and compassion are there.

These needs aren't glamorous. In fact, they're messy. Scary. Surprising. But they offer us the chance to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the North End. To offer help, support, and love when there's no one else to do so. When others might judge, or scoff, or walk by.

And so, I ask you, will you reach out in compassion and be the hands and feet of Jesus in the North End today?

Your most generous gift of any amount will help us be there for our friends and neighbours when they need us the most.

And that? Well, that means everything.

Thank you. ❤️

Yes, I WANT TO BE THERE FOR KIDS, TEENS, ADULTS AND SENIORS IN THE NORTH END WHEN URGENT NEEDS COME UP

- Yes, showing up for people when they need me the most is an important part of who I am
- Yes, meeting people in need where they are in the moment—with love and without judgement—is something I care passionately about, and how I choose to live out my faith.

These are the reasons why I support Inner City Youth Alive. I will use the enclosed coupon and reply envelope to send in my most generous gift today!

**To donate by phone, call (204) 582-8779,
or give online at icya.ca/behindthescenes**

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