

FACS NIAGARA \*\*\*
FOUNDATION \*\*\*

2024
REPORT TO DONORS



DIGITAL ARTWORK CREATED BY VLADIMIR, a youth in care and college student studying graphic design. Vladimir's piece is a visual representation of the care and support FACS provides. He said, "I aimed for a very serene, inclusive, connecting community from various places vibe, filled with genuine connection and hints of growth through the apple tree and various activities." You can learn more about Vlad on page 6 of this report.



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### FACS Niagara Foundation 2024 Board of Directors

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# A Message from Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer



Caroline Polgrabia BOARD CHAIR



Anna Bozza
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

This past year demonstrated the powerful impact of philanthropy and how the lives of the children and youth we serve at FACS Niagara can be transformed by the generosity of our community.

One of the most inspiring examples was the success of our fundraising campaign for The Orchard, a group home in Welland. FACS urgently needed a safe, supportive residential program for children aged 8 to 14 whose behavioural and mental health needs require specialized care. While we had a suitable building, it needed major renovations to become a welcoming home for 10 children. Thanks to the overwhelming support of our community, we exceeded our \$450,000 fundraising goal, and the home is set to open in early 2025.

In May 2024, more than 300 community and business leaders came together in Thorold to celebrate our 25th Annual Gala, Springtime in Paris. This unforgettable evening gave guests the chance to meet some of the resilient youth we serve—young people who

#### LETTER FROM BOARD CHAIR AND CEO



are overcoming adversity and thriving, in large part because of donor-supported programs and services.

Last year also marked the 3rd Annual Mountainview LemonAID Day for FACS Niagara—a heartfelt, community-led fundraiser. Over 100 families and local businesses hosted lemonade stands to help give kids in our care the chance to attend summer camp. We're deeply grateful to Mountainview Homes for championing this "kids helping kids" initiative year after year that helps us send over 380 kids to camp every year.

Looking ahead, we know that the children and youth we serve will continue to rely on the vital support of our donors. We also see the extraordinary outcomes that support makes possible. More and more of our youth are attending postsecondary education—many as the first in their family to do so. In 2024 alone, 89 current and former youth in care received donor-funded bursaries.

Donor generosity also allowed us to deliver life-skills training to youth preparing for independent living, and to host five Home for the Holidays events, where current and former youth in care could celebrate with their FACS Niagara 'found family.'

At FACS Niagara, we believe that every child can thrive when given the right support at the right time. Every donor-funded camp experience, bursary, cooking class, or holiday gift builds resilience, joy, and self-confidence—laying the foundation for a successful future.

Thank you for sharing in our belief, and in the potential of every child we serve.

Anna Bozza

Anna Bozza CEO

**FACS Niagara** 

Caroline Polgrabia

Caroline Polgrabia Chair

FACS Niagara Foundation

## FACS NIAGARA \*\* FOUNDATION \*\*



Vladimir, far left, with members of FACS's Youth Advisory Committee



Vladimir speaking at the Foundation's fundraising gala

## Youth Advisory Committee Spotlight: Vladimir

Vlad is like many of the young people FACS is fortunate to work with. He is a survivor. Coming from a world of uncertainty and instability, he's had to be.

At too young an age, Vlad learned how to fend for himself. His parents, dealing with their own challenges around addiction and poverty struggled to provide the basics that people can take for granted.

"We were poor, sometimes homeless, always scrambling just to make it through the day. Life was incredibly hard," he recalled.

Family and Children's Services Niagara was a constant in Vlad's life. The agency did what it could to help the family. Workers brought gifts to help make the holidays feel more normal. They assisted by ensuring the family had food on the table.

"My family and I worked incredibly hard to hide our struggles, so the pieces never quite came together," said Vlad. He kept hoping that the next intervention would be the one that brought lasting change.

#### YOUTH SPOTLIGHT



At the age of 16, Vlad left the family home and entered into a Voluntary Youth Services Agreement with FACS. "For the first time, I encountered true compassion and patience. I felt seen. I felt like I mattered."

The agency helped Vlad find a stable living situation – an apartment of his very own! From there, Vlad received help navigating the new world of independence. He got to see a dentist, an optician, and a family doctor who developed a treatment plan to assist with his diagnoses.

"FACS stood by me every step of the way. With practical support and with a warmth and genuine care that I hadn't known before,"

"As I got older, FACS continued to offer me experiences I never dreamed of," said Vlad. He participated in the New Outlooks and Beginnings program where he learned to cook, learned to care for his home, and developed so many of the life skills that would help him become a successful young adult.

"FACS stood by me every step of the way. With practical support and with a warmth and genuine care that I hadn't known before," he said.



Vladimir and other members of the Youth Advisory Committee raising money for Mountainview LemonAID Day

Today, Vlad is completing a graphic design program in college. He is a valued member of the agency's Youth Advisory Committee that helps give recommendations and advice to help improve the experience for other youth growing up in care. Vlad has found rewarding employment and volunteers to help animals. He now looks to the future with a great deal of optimism.

"FACS has change my life in ways I never could have imagined. They didn't just help me survive; they helped me thrive. For that, I will be forever grateful."





## Sending Kids to Camp, One Cup At A Time

On Saturday, June 8, 2024 over 100 local families and businesses hosted lemonade stands for Mountainview LemonAID Day to raise funds so kids served by FACS Niagara could experience the joy of summer camp.

\$90,023
raised through LemonAID Day

388

weeklong day or overnight camps

600 weeks of camp enjoyed thanks to donor support





MOUNTAINVIEW LE AONAIL

Old Towne Squeezers and St. Michael Catholic Elementary School

\$2,555

## FACS NIAGARA \*\* FOUNDATION \*\*



SHOPPING EXCURSION



**LEARNING TO COOK** 



**LAUNDRY DAY** 

# Helping Youth Launch with Success

Donor support helps FACS Niagara provide youth in care aged 15-23 with the life-skills they need to successfully navigating adulthood once they leave care.

Some of the training sessions attended by youth in 2024:

- Cooking Lessons
- College Application Support
- Financial Literacy
- Safe Food Handling
- Healthy Relationships
- Rental and Housing Support
- Income Tax Clinic

- First Aid/CPR Certification
- Resume and Job Search Support
- Fire Safety
- Pet Care
- Online Safety Seminar
- Human Trafficking Awareness

298



Number of times youth attended lifeskills training sessions in 2024 36



life-skills training sessions held in 2024'





#### COMMUNITY





Home for the Holidays events held in 2024

average number of youth who attend each Home for the Holidays event











#### COMMUNITY



## Gift of Hope

Every year, community members and donors provide much needed funds through our Gift of Hope Campaign, as well as gifts and toys to make the season bright for children and youth served by FACS Niagara.

\$45,435



raised through Gift of Hope mail campaign to support the children and families FACS serves



children who received holiday gifts



youth who were sponsored through Sponsor-a-Youth by community members who purchased gifts and household items to ease their transition to independence.



The U10 AA Canucks Hockey Team came together to Sponsor-a-Youth in 2024



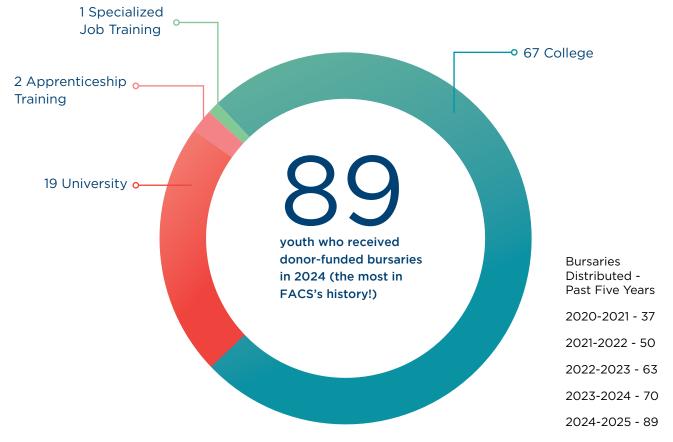
Meridian OneCap team members dropping off gifts for their sponsored youth



# Empowerment Through Education

FACS Niagara's Education Program provides donorfunded bursaries of \$2,500/year to current and former youth in care who are pursuing any form of postsecondary education. It takes tremendous

courage and tenacity for our young people to reach postsecondary, and it's donor support that makes taking that ever-important step, possible.





#### Sam's Journey To Healing And Success

When Sam entered foster care at the age of 14 he struggled heavily with anger and mental health issues which led to him leaving high school soon after. Thanks to his caring foster parents, and his dedicated worker, Barb, Sam slowly began to feel a sense of belonging and stability.

"Ever since I dropped out of high school, Barb always encouraged me to get back into school, keeping my best interest at heart," Sam says. He ended up completing his high school diploma, graduating from Niagara College in Autism and Behavioural Sciences, and he will be attending Brock University to study psychology in September 2025.

"The FACS team consistently went above and beyond, pushing me to do my best even when self-doubt clouded my mind. Their steadfast belief in me has nurtured seeds of self love and a stable sense of worth within me that has kept me going through it all. Without the support from FACS, I wouldn't be where I am today," he says.



RECIPIENT	INSTITUTION	PROGRAM OF STUDY
Aidan	Niagara College	Motive Power Technician
Ajin	Brock University	Accounting
Alexander	Niagara College	Office Administration
Alexander	Sheridan College	Technical Production for the Performing Arts Industry
Alexandra	Cambrian College	Developmental Service Worker
Alexandria	Mohawk College	Art and Design Foundations
Alexyss	Niagara College	Acting for Film and Digital Media
Alicia	Trillium College	Law Clerk
Alisha	Niagara College	Early Childhood Education
Alison	McMaster University	Sociology
Anaysha	Centennial College	Child and Youth Care
Andrew	Niagara College	Carpentry and Renovation Technician
Angelica	University of Waterloo	Social Work
Anna	Niagara College	Early Childhood Education
Ashlie	Niagara College	Paramedic
Ashlynn	McMaster University	Psychology
A.J.	Niagara College	General Arts
August	Trillium	Law and Security
Benjemen	Niagara College	Carpentry and Renovation Technician
Bianca	Niagara College	Electrician - Construction and Maintenance Apprenticeship Program
Brandon	Niagara College	Carpentry and Renovation Technician
Breanne	Niagara College	Arts and Design Foundations
Brittany	Brock University	Masters of Business Administration



RECIPIENT	INSTITUTION	PROGRAM OF STUDY
Caden	University of British Columbia	Visual Arts Major, Philosophy Minor
Cadence	Durham College	Motive Power Technician
Caitlynn	Niagara College	Art and Design Foundation
Carl	Niagara College	Electrical Techniques
Carol Rose	Niagara College	Pharmacy Technician
Caroline	Brock University	Music
Cassandra	Niagara College	Social Service Worker
Celina	Niagara College	Police Foundations
Chelsey	Niagara College	Social Service Worker
Christopher	University of Ottawa	SLT French Immersion Porgram (Second Language Teaching)
C.W.	Niagara College	General Arts and Science
Clara	University of Louisville	Physical Education
Coryn	Niagara College	Police Foundations
Coulson	Brock University	Biochemistry
Dayle	McMaster University	The Wilson College of Leadership and Civic Engagment
Emma	Niagara College	Esthestician
Eska	Niagara College	Art and Design Foundation
Felicity	Niagara College	Graphic Design
Gambino	Niagara College	Electrical Techniques
Hannah	Niagara College	Police Foundations
Hannah	Niagara College	Community and Justice Services
Immanuel	McMaster University	Biomedical Engineering



RECIPIENT	INSTITUTION	PROGRAM OF STUDY
Isaac	Mohawk College	Level 1 Apprenticeship (Plumbing)
Jada	Trillium College	Digital Marketing Specialist
Jodi	Conestoga College	Social Service Worker
John	Niagara College	Police Foundations
Joseph	Niagara College	Border Security
Joseph	Niagara College	Automotive Power Technician
Julien	Niagara College	Education Assistant and Adult Supports Program
Katherine	Niagara College	Police Foundations
Kathryn	Niagara College	Horticulture Landscape Techniques
Keegan	Niagara College	Business
Kelsey	Algoma University	Bachelor of Arts Social Development Studies
Kiara	Metal Works Institute of Sound and Music Production	Professional Sound and Business (Studio Production)
Kundaishe	Niagara College	Practical Nursing
Landon	Niagara College	Graphic Design
Larissa	Brock University	Forensic Psychology and Criminal Justice
Laura	Brock University	Tourism and Geography
Magnusson	Niagara College	Electronics Engineering and Technology
Makayla	Niagara College	Social Service Worker
Martin	Niagara College	Broadcasting - Radio, Television and Film Production
Michael	Trillium College	Business Management
Michele	Niagara College	Business
Nakeyma	Niagara College	General Arts and Science Certificate/Diploma



RECIPIENT	INSTITUTION	PROGRAM OF STUDY
Natasha	Western University	Geology
Natia	Niagara College	Photonics Engineering Technology
Nellena	Niagara College	Academic and Career Entrance Certificate
Nicole	Humber College	Personal Support Worker
Nikole	Niagara College	DSBN dual credit with Niagara College
Noah	Niagara College	Motive Power Automotive Technician
Penelope	Niagara College	Hairstyling
Peter	Niagara College	Broadcasting - Radio, Television and Film Production
Rachel	Liverpool John Moors University	Geography
Remy	Niagara College	Renewable Energies Technician
Ryland	Niagara College	Carpentry and Renovation Technician
Sam	Brock University	Psychology
Schuyler	Niagara College	Police Foundations
Shakeem	Niagara College	Child and Youth Care
Shane	Conestoga College	Electrical Engineering Techniques
Shelley	Niagara College	Education Assistant and Adult Supports Program
Taheala	Niagara College	Early Childhood Education
Taylor	Niagara College	General Arts and Science
Terresa	Niagara College	Social Service Worker
Torren	Western University	Bachelor of Social Sciences
Trinity	Niagara College	General Arts and Science
Vladimir	Niagara College	Graphic Design



# Financial Statements for the Year ending December 31, 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES		STATEMENT O	STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
REVENUE	2024	2023	CURRENT ASSETS	2024	2023
Donations	\$735,038	\$672,944	Cash & cash equivalents		
Fundraising Gala	\$104,596	\$140,164	Unrestricted	\$410,636	\$801,74
Gifts in Kind	\$18,610	\$10,228	Externally restricted	\$1,183,258	\$1,089,
Bank Interest	\$125,995	\$91,966	Other receivables	\$87,102	\$69,20
	\$984,239	\$915,302	Prepaid expenses	\$2,093	\$-
				\$1,683,089	\$1,960,
EXPENSES					
Bank Charges	\$5,150	\$4,783	Endowment Funds	\$686,575	\$681,47
Fundraising Gala	\$48,465	\$69,935		\$2,369,664	\$2,642
Promotion	\$28,682	\$15,570			
Gifts in Kind	\$18,610	\$10,228	<b>CURRENT LIABILITY</b>		
Office	\$8,090	\$18,257	Accounts payable	\$111,712	\$319,04
Professional Fees	\$10,747	\$9,771			
Rent & Administration	\$213,904	\$192,141	FUND BALANCES		
	\$333,648	\$320,685	Unrestricted	\$388,119	\$551,90
Transfers to FACS	\$715,870	\$303,867	Externally restricted	\$1,183,258	\$1,089,
Niagara	,	4000,007	Endowment	\$686,575	\$681,47
Revenue over (under) expenditures	(\$65,279)	\$290,750		\$2,257,952	\$2,323,

\$2.642.277

\$2,369,664







We are grateful to the following individuals, foundations, businesses, and community service groups who supported our work in 2023!

\$5	$\cap$	0	0	0	4
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Branscombe Family Foundation

**DASAKA** Foundation

The Joyce Family Foundation

#### \$25,000-\$49,000

John Deere Foundation of Canada

Niagara Community Foundation -David S. Howes Fund

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We also recognize and appreciate donors who contributed under \$100 in 2024.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If an error has been made, we sincerely apologize.

If you wish to update your name for the purposes of recognition, please contact the Foundation at foundation@facsniagara.on.ca.





SUPPORTING | STRENGTHENING | PROTECTING . SOUTENIR | RENFORCER | PROTÉGER

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