

ANNUAL REPORT

2022
2023



MAKING CHANGES
Advancing futures for women. TOGETHER.



"I'm so appreciative that I had the opportunity to participate in the WIT program which allowed me to learn, practice and improve my skills in Full-Stack Web Development.

After I graduated, I become an instructor for the WIT program and Fall 2023 I've become an IT instructor at Bow Valley College. I feel now it's my turn to give back and support and encourage others to pursue their goal of working in the tech sector in Calgary."

Aurora Wang

WIT Program Graduate

"I benefitted from Making Changes programs ten years ago. After completing my program and getting a great job, I came back to volunteer. It gives me great pleasure and joy to see our clients find their confident fashion style. Their smiles and appreciation gives me incredible satisfaction in what I do."

Jenny Zhang

Dress for Success Calgary Volunteer

"Employment and Life Skills program helped me realize that I have a lot to offer. I learned about new resources and gained a Canadian reference which gave me confidence in my interview skills. I am now working as an Administrative Coordinator at the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute."

Damilola Bamidele-Abegunde

ELS Program Graduate



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2022
2023

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Making Changes acknowledges the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy which includes the Siksika, Piikani, Kainai, the Tsuut'ina Nation and Stoney Nakoda Nations of Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley, and the Metis people of Alberta, Region III.

We honor the hardships that were endured by the peoples on this land to allow us to be in this space to do the work that we do in the community. We respect the culture of the peoples who walk through our doors and provide a safe and welcome space for all. We acknowledge that Indigenous peoples continue to experience hardships and our agency will be champions for change in our daily service. Our agency will strive to be the champion for change.

Making Changes is committed to inclusivity and recognition of all peoples who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

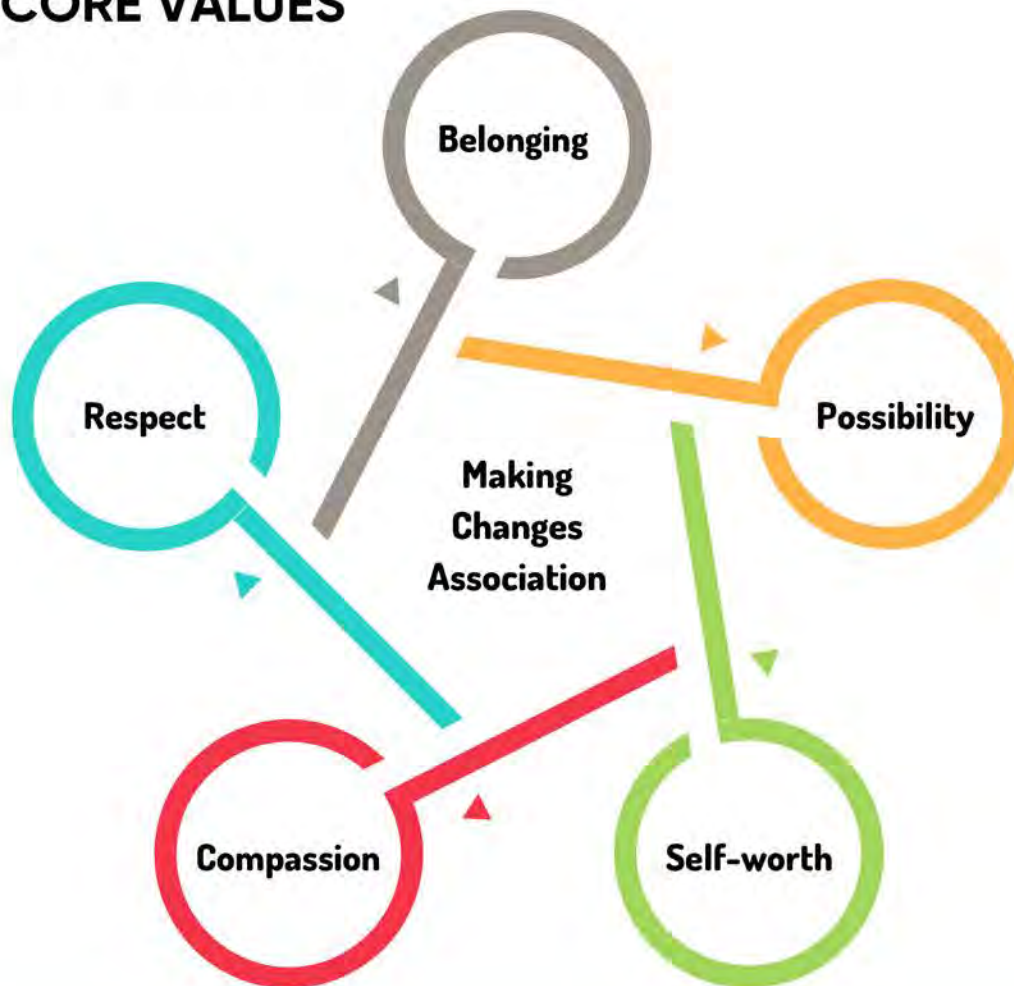
OUR VISION

Empowering women to make meaningful contributions to the community.

OUR MISSION

Making Changes is a community of women supporting women and their families through life transition by providing them with the skills and resources to support their pursuit of meaningful work and educational opportunities.

OUR CORE VALUES



Our 2022–23 fiscal year was a year of transition and growth. Cathy Coutts, who served as Executive Director, retired and we welcomed Lori James as our new Executive Director in October 2022. We are grateful to Cathy for continuing to share her expertise as a volunteer. In partnership with our exceptional team, our Board of Directors and Committee members, volunteers, funders, and community partners, over the last year, we continued to move our work forward.

In 2022–23, we navigated “post-COVID” life, returned to in-person programming and events, and kept virtual programming options available for clients to continue to ensure we remove barriers to clients accessing support. As Calgarians struggle to deal with inflation, and many immigrants and refugees are making Calgary and area their new home, the importance and impact of our programs have been reinforced for women, those who identify as women, teen girls, and their families across the city and beyond. The demand for our programs continues to grow, as does our community of supporters.

Our Women in Technology (WIT) program continues to evolve and expand with the support and direction of our WIT Advisory Committee. This year, the Employment and Life Skills (ELS) program expanded to include increased support for women with developing English language skills. Dress for Success Calgary program continues to grow its Professional Women’s Group and opportunities for clients to access computer and job search resources through Helping Women Now. The increase in demand for My Best Friend’s Closet program reflects the importance of this one-of-a-kind resource for teen girls in Calgary and continues to represent an empowering volunteer opportunity for youth, supporting girls’ education, and employment goals. Over the summer, we went through a strategic planning cycle and look forward to launching our 2023–2026 Strategic Plan. We are excited about the opportunities ahead for our organization across our programs, our partnerships, and our operational effectiveness.

We could not do our work without the amazing support of our staff, volunteers, Board of Directors and Committee members, partnering agencies and organizations, individual and corporate donors, and funders. Thank you for continuing to be part of this dynamic community helping women, those who identify as women, and teen girls through their life transitions.

Brittany Humphry

Chair, Board of
Directors



Lori James

Executive Director

Making Changes Board of Directors

Brittany Humphry (Board Chair)

Ayden Athwal (Vice Chair)

Colleen Purdy (Treasurer)

Reanna Dorscher (Secretary)

Ashley Tedham (Director)

Cindy Cameron (Director)

Gillian Barnett (Director)

Jackie Eliason (Director)

Kara Haug (Director)

Maiko Maruyama (Director)

Meg Routly (Director)

Shaira Nanji (Director)

Tanya Sharma-Moore (Director)

Terra Davidson (Director)

Lianne Sherwin (Member at Large)



MAKING CHANGES
Advancing futures for women. **TOGETHER.**

Alumni Committee

- Teri-Ann Begin (Co-Chair)
- Sarah Chiu (Co-Chair)
- Cathy Coutts
- Gail Lai
- Jaime McHardy
- Janet Burrows
- Jerilynn Daniels
- Karen Whiteman
- Lyndsay Thorlacius
- Rachel Borrelli
- Stacia Samuel
- Tanya Causgrove

Dress for Success Calgary

Advisory Board

- Eva Kanovich (Co-Chair)
- Samantha Koliass-Gunn, (Co-Chair)
- Brittany Humphry
- Emily Bruce
- Jerilynn Daniels
- Katrina Olson-Mottahed
- Rachel Borrelli
- Shaira Nanji
- Teri-Ann Begin

Finance Committee

- Colleen Purdy (Chair)
- Brittany Humphry
- Jackie Eliason
- Kara Haug
- Lianne Sherwin

Governance & Human Resources Committee

- Gillian Barnett (Chair)
- Ashley Tedham
- Ayden Athwal
- Brittany Humphry
- Maiko Maruyama
- Reanna Dorscher

Marketing/Fund Development Committee

- Terra Davidson (Chair)
- Brittany Humphry
- Cindy Cameron
- Cynthia Christison
- Kayla Pearcey
- Shaira Nanji

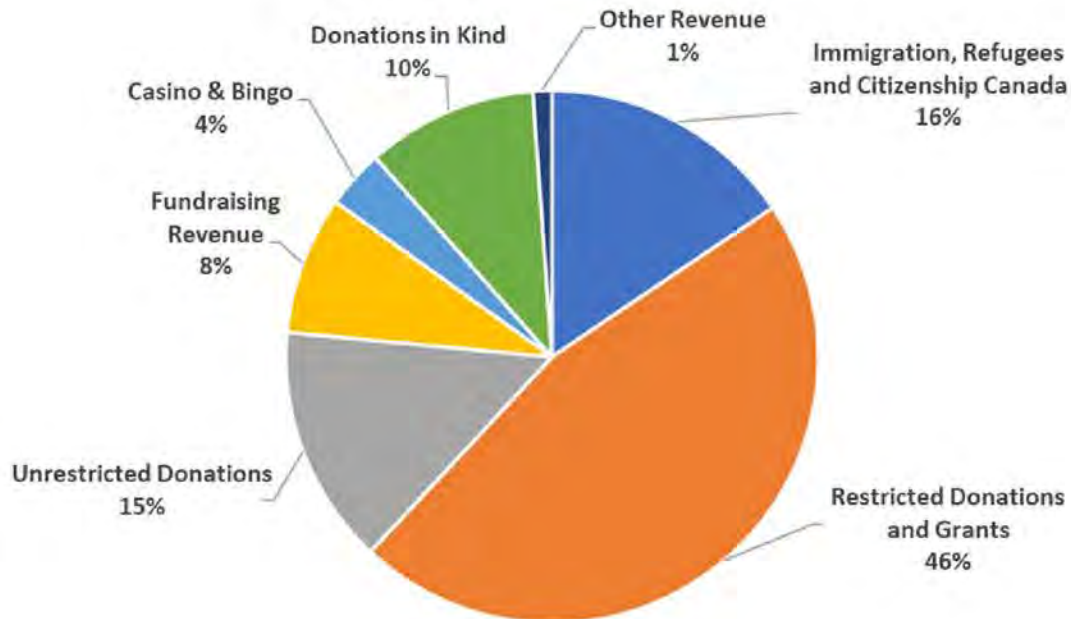
Women in Technology (WIT) Advisory Committee

- Paul Selway (Co-Chair)
- Tanya Sharma-Moore (Co-Chair)
- Brian Bench
- Brittany Humphry
- Carolyn Powell
- Cathy Coutts
- Chris Foster
- Crick Nelson
- Dave Wilkinson
- Gregory Carle
- John Hill
- Kathleen Story
- Lisa Eyamie
- Scott Walsh
- Tony Rizzuti

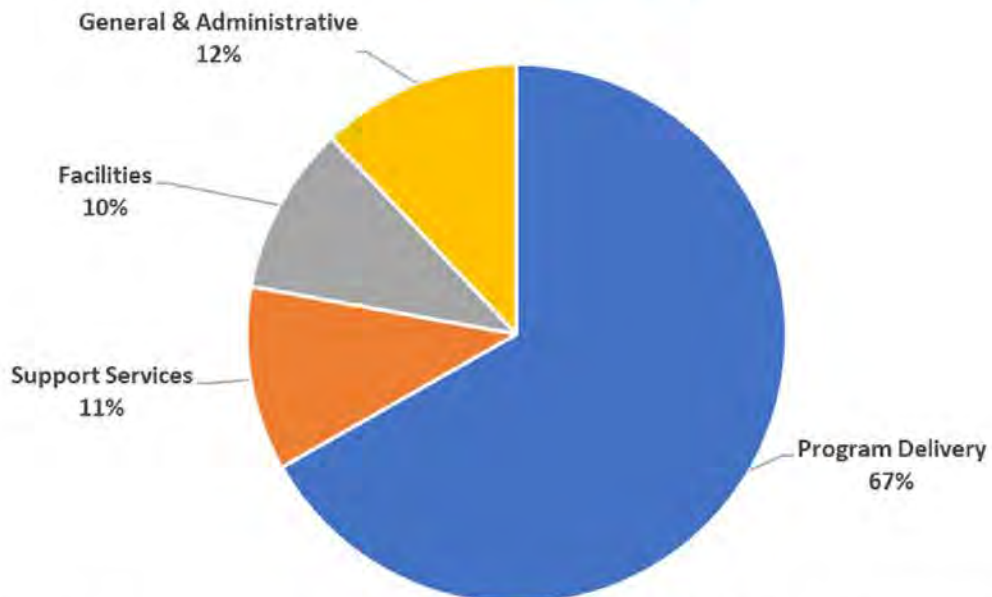
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Fiscal Year April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

REVENUE: \$1,221,357



EXPENSES: \$1,260,795







MCA's fiscal discipline and forward planning ensured the agency had the funds to support operations even when demand for services drove expenses to exceed revenue. For a more detailed look at the financial position of Making Changes, please view the full audited financial statements on our website.

OUR IMPACT

Advancing Futures of Women!

During the last fiscal year, we assisted **2,805 clients**. This was largely made possible by the support of our volunteers who gave **8,403 hours** of their time for direct client support.

 WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM	 EMPLOYMENT AND LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM	 DRESS FOR SUCCESS CALGARY	 MY BEST FRIEND'S CLOSET
33 Graduates	151 Graduates	1,617 Clients	453 Clients
2 Cohorts	8 Cohorts	36,608 Clothing & Accessory Items Provided	11,346 Clothing & Accessory Items Provided
74% gained employment within 6 months of graduation	97% of participants expressed increase in confidence	9 Workshops <u>183 clients</u> attended Professional Women's Group sessions	48 Referral Partners
19 Employer Partners	52 Community Partners	22 Corporate Partners	5 Community Partners
1,214 Volunteer Hours	159 Volunteer Hours	5,919 Volunteer Hours	1,111 Volunteer Hours

551
Participants attended 'Polishing Your Professional Style' sessions



WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

Careers for the Future!

2022
2023

The Women in Technology (WIT) program aims to empower women by providing technology training to help them launch their careers in the rapidly growing tech industry in Calgary. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that our students have the required confidence, skills, and networks to achieve their potential. The program consists of three components: Full Stack Web Development Training, Employment and Power Skills (EPS), and Practicum Job Placement.

33

Graduates

19

Employer
Partners

2

Cohorts

22

Referral
Partners

74%

Gained
Employment

1,214

Volunteer
Hours

31

Work
Placements

OUR PROGRAM PARTNERS - 2022-23 FISCAL YEAR

Practicum Partners:

- Field Safe Solutions
- LongView Systems
- Pembina Pipelines
- Rolling Insights/Rolling Wave
- Sozentech
- Suncor
- TC Energy
- WBM Technologies

Employment Power Skills Volunteers

- Accenture
- Calgary Economic Development
- Escape Velocity Services Inc.
- Field Safe Solutions
- Helen Knight Consulting
- MCG Careers
- MillerNet HR & Business Solutions
- WBM Technologies

- SI Systems
- Telus
- WestJet

Hackathon Partners:

- Alta Gas
- Microsoft
- MNP Digital

IMPACT STORY

My name is Maryam Rehmani. I moved to Calgary in 2015 when my daughter was only 5 months old. I had limited proficiency in English and little knowledge of Canadian culture. I started working at Tim Hortons and after 18 months, I became a provisional baker. In 2020, I enrolled in college to study Graphic Design. At the same time, my husband started a new job with 12-hour shifts.

Despite several challenges, I completed my diploma in Graphic Design within one year. However, the combination of the pressures I faced after graduation and the ongoing pandemic led to severe depression, making it difficult to find a job. I worked as a freelancer for a while, but it didn't bring me the satisfaction I sought. In 2022, one of my friends introduced me to the Making Changes Association. I was thrilled to enroll in the Women in Technology Program.

The program content was challenging and required a significant number of work hours. As a mother of two young children, I often felt overwhelmed, but the emotional support from the WIT team and my fellow participants helped me push through and successfully complete the program. Following graduation, I started a short-term paid internship at TC Energy.

The WIT program equipped me with valuable skills, not only in programming but also in professional networking. Utilizing these skills, I started connecting with various managers at TC Energy. Eventually, I secured a position as a Billing and Credit Analyst at the company, which allowed me to combine my prior experience in finance from my home country with my newly acquired programming skills. Initially, the position was on a four-month contract, but my manager recognized my capabilities and offered me a permanent position at TC Energy. I am very thankful to Making Changes for recognizing my skills and talent and giving me the confidence to be successful!



"Women in Technology program equipped me with valuable skills, not only in programming but also in professional networking."

EMPLOYMENT AND LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

Building Confidence and Skills!

2022
2023

The Employment and Life Skills Program empowers immigrant women to increase their personal power so that they can take action to improve their circumstances. Through a series of sessions, this program builds their confidence and skills in career planning, communication, Canadian work culture, and accessing community resources.

151
Graduates

8
Cohorts

52
Community
Partners

20
Referral
Partners

97%
Participants felt
more confident

98%
Participant
Satisfaction
Rate

159
Volunteer
Hours by
Professionals

OUR REFERRAL PARTNERS - 2022-23 FISCAL YEAR

- Access Mental Health
- Beltline Community Centre
- Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Calgary Board of Education
- Centre for Newcomers
- Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
- Community Group
- Employment Services Bulletin
- Family Matters
- Gateway
- Immigrant Services Calgary
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
- North of McKnight Community Hub
- Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA)
- Trellis
- Women's Centre
- YMCA

IMPACT STORY

My name is Maheeka Gunawardana and I'm originally from Sri Lanka. I moved to Calgary in October 2022. In my home country, I was a Human Resources Professional. When I arrived in Calgary, job hunting proved to be very challenging, and I faced uncertainties in how to navigate the job market. I needed to find a way to improve my job search skills, build a network, and be able to write effective job applications. Through an immigrant agency, I came to know about the Employment and Life Skills (ELS) program and enrolled.

I appreciated the flexible structure of the ELS program and was able to connect with other women who were experiencing the same challenges. Having access to valuable resources, a supportive network, and industry professionals to guide us on job search and interview skills, as well as Canadian work culture, enhanced my confidence and motivation!

Although I had worked as an HR manager in Sri Lanka, I was always drawn to working with children. Through the ELS program, I was informed of a 7-week course for a level 1 Early Childhood Education (ECE) certificate offered through CIWA and Bow Valley College and enrolled in the program.

After completing the ECE program, I was successful in getting a position at a local daycare and preschool. I attribute my professional success in Canada to participating in the ELS program. As I reflect on my professional journey, I have realized that there is nothing that is impossible if you have the willpower to do it! My story is one of perseverance, embracing change, and embracing new opportunities.



"Having access to valuable resources, a supportive network, and industry professionals to guide us on job search and interview skills, and Canadian work culture enhanced my confidence and motivation"

DRESS FOR SUCCESS CALGARY

A Wardrobe that Works!

2022
2023

Dress For Success Calgary operates as a division of Making Changes Association. The program offers 90-minute individual consultations on business attire to women facing financial barriers who want to join the workforce, return to school, or engage in volunteer opportunities. In addition to style guidance and support through a Professional Women's Group, clients are provided gently used clothing and accessories at no cost to help them feel confident to pursue their goals.



**DRESS FOR
SUCCESS**
CALGARY

Going Places. Going Strong.



22
Corporate
Partners

98%
Participant
Satisfaction
Rate



5,919
Volunteer
Hours

36,608
Clothing &
Accessories
Provided

1,617
Clients Served
(1,365 in person,
69 virtual)

183
Clients attended
**9 Professional
Development
Sessions**



DRESS FOR SUCCESS CALGARY

A Wardrobe that Works!

2022
2023

OUR CORPORATE CLOTHING DRIVE PARTNERS - 2022-23 FISCAL YEAR

The following organizations also refer clients to our Employment and Life Skills program.

7/11	Environmental Law Society	Oxford
Athabasca Oil Corp.	(University of Calgary)	Qualico
Banana Republic	Fortis	RBC
Boardwalk	IG Wealth Management	RGO
Canaccord Genuity Corp	Triovest Realty Advisors	Rising Edge
Cenovus	Imperial Oil	Scotiabank
Chatters	Lux Windows	Stantec
Collier Project Leaders	Nutrien	Trolley 5

IMPACT STORY

My name is Serafina Montefresco-White. I'm a second-generation Italian immigrant. I recently graduated from Olds College as a veterinary technical assistant. My dream is to become a veterinarian, but for now, I'm working part-time to support myself while I study. Finding better part-time jobs was difficult for me due to the lack of professional clothing for interviews.

I came across Dress for Success program information on a notice board at my school. Although I was unsure of the kind of support I could get, I decided to make an appointment. As soon as I stepped into the building, I received a warm welcome from the volunteers who were very helpful. Working with a stylist was a great experience beyond my expectations. I was given the freedom to express

beyond my style and preferences, and the volunteer stylist provided me with fantastic ideas on how to mix and match clothing and accessories to increase my wardrobe options. We selected clothing and other items together, which I tried on and felt amazing in!

Seeing myself in the mirror, I realized the endless possibilities of what I could achieve as a successful professional. In addition, I attended an online workshop that taught me valuable skills on how to prevent job search burnout.

I have come to the realization that dressing professionally has a significant impact on how seriously I am perceived during job interviews. Wearing appropriate attire in a professional setting, particularly for job interviews, helps boost confidence and increases chances of success.

I am immensely grateful for the support provided by Dress for Success Calgary, which has ignited a renewed sense of ambition within me. Thanks to their guidance, I am now fervently saving up to pursue my lifelong dream of becoming a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.



MY BEST FRIEND'S CLOSET

Fashion for School and Extracurricular!

My Best Friend's Closet is a youth empowerment program for teenage girls that provides high-quality and on-trend clothing, shoes, and accessories to in-need youth for their school, employment, and recreational needs. During a 90-minute appointment, volunteer stylists help clients select items that suit their unique style.

13,343

Clothing & Accessories Provided

453

Clients Served (436 in person, 17 virtual)

48

Community & Referral Partners

1,111

Volunteer Hours

MY BEST FRIEND'S CLOSET

Fashion for School and Extracurricular!

REFERRAL PARTNERS - 2022-23 FISCAL YEAR

Alberta Health Services
Awo Taan Healing Lodge Society
Big Brothers and Sisters
Bow West Community
Brenda Stratford Center
Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
Calgary Catholic School Board
Calgary Foothills Primary Care Network
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
Calgary Housing Company
Calgary John Howard Society
Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter
Carya
Calgary Board of Education
Center for Refugee Resilience
Centre for Newcomers

Children's Cottage
Christ the Redeemer School
Closer to Home
Connections for Families
Discovery House
Elements
Elizabeth House
Gateway
High Banks Society
Hull Services
Immigrant Services Calgary
Inn from the Cold
MCG Careers
McMan Youth, Family and
Community Services Association
Mosaic Learning Institute
Mustard Seed

Positive Choices Education
Primary Care Network
Siksika Family Services (White Buffalo)
Sonshine
South East Calgary Community
Resources Center
Trellis
WINS
Women's Center Calgary
Wood's Homes
YW Calgary

IMPACT STORY

My name is Jochelle Buena. I moved to Canada from the Philippines in 2018 when I was 14 years old. The transition was challenging as everything was different from what I was used to. In the Philippines, school uniforms were mandatory, which made fitting in easier as everyone wore the same outfits. However, Canadian schools don't have uniforms, and this worried me as I feared my clothes weren't trendy enough, and I'd be picked on. The possibility of being bullied was a significant stress for me, and I felt guilty about buying new clothes as my parents were struggling to find work and settle down in Canada.



This fear of not being accepted dissipated after my appointment at My Best Friend's Closet. At first, I felt shy but also incredibly happy to be in a place full of trendy clothes I could pick from. The volunteer stylists were great, they made me feel at ease and listened to what I wanted. Wearing good-quality clothes made me feel like a regular teenager and gave me confidence for my first day of school.

I am extremely grateful for the program's support, which made me feel like I belonged among my peers. It was one of the most memorable experiences of my first year in Canada, and it made me appreciate how the program instills confidence and brings joy to young girls. Even after five years, I still wear some of the clothes I received, and the program inspired me to volunteer and help others. As a volunteer, I'm now helping other girls have the same uplifting experience that I had, and it brings me great happiness to see them thriving and enjoying school life.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Providing Support, Impacting Lives

Volunteers are integral to our work. Their support is critical in meeting our objectives. Each volunteer brings a different range of knowledge, skills, experience, and empathy to enhance our efforts to help clients and improve our programs' impact. By volunteering, they put into action their passion for giving back to the community. Our core values of respect, compassion, self-worth, belonging, and possibility are reflected in our volunteers.

250

Volunteers
Agency Wide

11,412

Total
Volunteer
Hours



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Providing Support, Impacting Lives

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

We feel fortunate to have you as our allies, supporters, and ambassadors. Thank you for your ongoing belief in Making Changes and your commitment to advancing the futures for women and teen girls in Calgary!

IMPACT STORY

My name is Devyanshi Devyanshi. A few years ago, I was a client of Making Changes Association's My Best Friend's Closet program and received invaluable support. Before starting high school, I decided to volunteer for this valuable initiative and provide support to other girls.

Moving to a new country can be a challenging experience, with a mix of emotions ranging from nervousness, and loneliness, to excitement. Cultural and language differences can make communication difficult and lead to a decline in confidence.



During these times, individuals need motivation and empowerment. Making Changes has been a source of motivation for many, including myself. As a volunteer stylist, I have witnessed young girls arrive at their appointments with low confidence, only to leave radiating with newfound confidence and a smile.

As a volunteer stylist, I have the opportunity to assist and inspire young girls. I strongly believe that clothing plays a crucial role in boosting confidence and self-esteem, particularly during the transition from adolescence to adulthood. My role involves not only helping them find up-to-date outfits but also empowering them to be more confident in their skin and have a positive self-image. I firmly believe that for young girls appearance can significantly impact their mental well-being.

At Making Changes, I have found a positive and supportive environment that allows me not only to pursue my interests through volunteering but also to build connections, make friends, gain experience, and feel a strong sense of community. I have also had many opportunities to step outside of my comfort zone and try new things. I am grateful for the opportunities that are helping me thrive and grow personally while making a positive impact on others!

Volunteer Opportunities

Join our Volunteer Team and make a difference!

We are looking for: Stylists, Sorters, Special Events, Bingos, Mentors, and Resume & Interview Support.

www.makingchangesassociation.ca/volunteer-application-form

OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Thank you to the many incredible local businesses, corporations, organizations and individuals who have supported and contributed to our programs this year! We are truly grateful for your relationship and generosity.

Funded by:

Financé par :



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



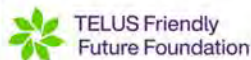
OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



Wealth Management
Dominion Securities



RBC Foundation



"I love the fact that there is a program like Dress for Success Calgary that helps women who need support, feel positive and confident! The staff and volunteers are so helpful and pleasant. Thank you for giving me my confidence back!"

Client

Dress for Success Calgary

"What I love most about volunteering at My Best Friend's Closet is that I find happiness every time by helping teen girls who walk in shy and nervous but leave with the biggest smile on their faces. My time volunteering gives me a lifetime of happiness"

Emily Takahashi

Volunteer, My Best Friend's Closet

"I found the Women in Technology course outline to be practical and impressive. During the program, it was very hectic and a bit challenging for me as I was in an intensive study program after many years, but the result is totally awesome! I immediately got a one-year contract to work as an Analyst at Pembina Pipeline Ltd. A big 'Thank you' to Making Changes Association and the WIT team for giving me the opportunity that has resulted in my transitioning to a fulfilling career."

Bhumi Makwana

Graduate, Women in Technology Program



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