

# Pacewood Pride

Toronto's first 2SLGBTQ+ Adult Shelter Space



*Everyone needs a home*

# Elton McDuffus

(he/him)

Site Manager, Pacewood  
Homes First Society

# Martha Singh Jennings

(they/she)

Director, Housing Advocacy and Support Services  
The 519





# Repurposing Savards

# 2022 Consultation



121

Individuals participated  
in focus groups



15

Key informant interviews



9+

Community partner  
agencies involved in the  
progress



# Main themes

## Queer Strength

Building home and community in the space

## Queer Vulnerability

Lack of safe access for trans women

## Physical Design

No identifying signage/decoration outside, plenty inside. As much privacy as possible

## Thoughtful Protocols

Warm and welcoming intake, community agreements and restorative justice

## Staffing

Staff should reflect residents and be trauma-informed and aware of harm reduction best practice

## Programming

Health supports, food programming, skills training and employment support

# Key areas of disagreement

Safe consumption and harm reduction

Curfew

Use of common spaces

# Guiding Principles

Diligence

Care

Kindness

Dignity

Conscientiousness

Listening

Respect

Compassion

Understanding



# Recommendations

- Dedicate the shelter to LGBTQ+ newcomers, with a priority focus on the needs of trans women
- Direct referral arrangements through community partnership
- Enhance privacy and secure storage of belongings
- Representative and well trained staff
- Develop partnerships for onsite programming and engage local community
- Sector Capacity Building



# Opening the site



# Resident Supports

## HFS Housing Help

Assists with housing access and housing applications

## HFS Intensive Case Manager

Supports with general issues that relate to resident well-being and housing readiness

## 519 Housing Team

Facilitates community connections. Advocates and mediates in communications with site staff. Delivers programming.

## 519 Follow Up Supports

Supports with the transition to longer term preferred housing option



# Shelter referrals & residents

32 out of 50+  
Referrals accommodated

75% exit shelter  
to preferred  
housing option

25% discharged to  
alternative shelter bed

50% beds  
reserved for  
TNBGD folks

Currently 9 residents  
identify as TNBGD

13 countries of  
origin

19 including former  
residents

# Responding to recommendations

- Site is dedicated to LGBTQ+ newcomers, with 50% beds reserved for trans, non-binary, gender diverse persons
- The 519 acts are referral agencies - secure information transfer mechanisms have been established
- Privacy screens have been installed in dorm spaces, residents have access to three lockable storage areas
- 2SLGBTQ+ and newcomer staff make up high percentage and staff receive regular training and access to trainer "office hours"
- Programming includes visits to local facilities/programs, internal and external partner programming onsite





# Programming

ROM VISIT JAN '23



# Program Highlights

**36**

Total Programmatic Engagements  
(December 2022-April 2023)

**128+**

Total Programmatic Attendance  
(December 2022-April 2023)



Gift Giving &  
Holiday Dinner



# Program Timeline

## December/January

- Bingo Evening
- **Volunteer Opportunities @ The 519**
- Movie Night
- Transforming Style
- Gift Giving
- Holiday Dinner
- **Gladstone Library Visit**
- ROM Visit
- Shelter Naming Dinner 1
- Skills Workshop: Living Together, Building and Exploring Boundaries

## February

- Community Guidelines Workshop
- Shelter Naming Dinner 2
- Cinema Night: The Whale
- AGO Trip
- Movie Night
- **Movie and Trivia Night for Black History Month**
- High Park Hike

## March

- Artists in Conversation: Enacting Identities – Screening
- Cooking Classes (Scale Program/ Frontlines)
- **Humber River Hike**
- Cooking class at Front Lines
- Movie Night
- **MPOX Vaccination Clinic**
- **Hart House Membership Registration**

## April

- Cinema Night : You Can Live Forever
- Board Game Night
- Concert Franz<sup>2</sup>: Poetry, Drama and the 19th Century Piano
- **High Park Hike 2**



# Pride Programming



- Trip to Hanlan's
- Barbecue
- Outfit preparation
- Marching contingent
- No curfew Pride weekend



# Sector Capacity Building

**SUPPORTING HOUSING WORKERS  
AND RESIDENTS**



# Supporting Residents

**SKILLS BUILDING**

**COMMUNAL UNDERSTANDING AND GROWTH OF SPACE**

**NAMING THE SHELTER**



# Educating and Supporting Workers

**SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING  
LIVE TRAINING EXERCISES  
PEER TO PEER SUPPORT  
IMPACT GROUPS**

Thank you!



#5119