

# HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development

## 2012-2013 Annual Report





Introduction	3
Professional Development Workshops	3
Leading Innovative & Engaging Summer Youth Programs	5
All In! Effective Tools for Positive Youth Group Development	6
Mentoring in the Outdoors	6
Youth Leadership Programs	7
March Break Leadership Camp	7
Skills2Action Summer Leadership Program	7
Taking the Lead - Girls Leadership Program	8
Lets Make It Happen - Phoenix Outreach in Mulgrave Park	8
Partnership Initiatives	8
Health and Wellness Youth Corps	9
Leaders of Today (LOT)	10
Capacity Building Outreach	11
Conferences and Presentations	13
HeartWood Development Initiatives: Innoweave	15
Meet our Staff, Board, and Associates	16
Meet our Other Supporters	17
Finances 2012 - 2013	18
Get Involved with HeartWood	19
Contact Us	20





### HeartWood's Vision



All youth are active and valued members in their community and, together with adults, take action to create vibrant and caring communities.

### HeartWood's Mission



Youth engagement for positive community change. We work with youth to develop their skills and confidence as community leaders. We also train and coach adults to meaningfully engage youth.

This past year was a year of growth and change. New programs started and others expanded including:

- The expansion of Leaders of Today (an initiative of the Child and Youth Strategy that is hosted by HeartWood) to more directly support activities across the province,
- The expansion of the Health and Wellness Youth Corps (an initiative of the Department of Health and Wellness that is hosted by HeartWood) to support youth interns and organizations in more areas of the province,
- An additional Leaders of Today (LOT) Summit in the spring with a focus on healthy living as LOT and Youth Corps more formally supported each other,
- The continued growth of the systems change work in Lunenburg District Office that included a report called *Changing Systems through Youth Engagement: Sharing the Story of the NS Department of Community Services* as well as a new service learning employability project with youth who were recipients of Income Assistance,
- An eight-week leadership program, *Youth in Community*, with Phoenix in Mulgrave Park, that used a community service learning model, and
- The start of a two-year girls leadership program, called *Taking the Lead*, to address the challenges and barriers facing girls and young women.

To support this growth, there were a number of new staff who joined the HeartWood family including:

- Steven Gordon, Leaders of Today Coordinator,
- Andrew Jantzen, Health and Wellness Youth Corps Coordinator,
- Rena Kulczykcki, Senior Programs Facilitator,
- Nicole Landry, Taking the Lead Coordinator, and
- Eva George, Taking the Lead Facilitator.

(continued...)

HeartWood was also chosen as one of 14 organizations from across Canada to participate in the McConnell Foundation's *Innoweave: Impact and Strategic Clarity Module*, a five-month consultation process "to equip Canada's community sector leaders with new tools and processes to effect large-scale change." The end result fed into our new strategic plan as well as helped us to evaluate and improve our programs' impacts by going deeper with skills development and more strongly supporting participants to take action in their communities.



As we head into the 2013-2014 fiscal year, which is HeartWood's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we have much to celebrate. Join us in supporting youth to take action in their communities, and celebrate with us in September for our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event.

## HEARTWOOD 25TH ANNIVERSARY & AUCTION





# Public Professional Development Workshops

## LEADING INNOVATIVE AND ENGAGING YOUTH PROGRAMS

Participants were taken through an experiential education process where they learned a combination of theory and activities to create positive experiences for youth. Participants learned and practiced using the Tatamagouche Centre's ASPIRE model for program design and HeartWood's Framework for Community Youth Development.

**Group Information:** 21 participants  
**Duration:** 4 days  
**Location:** Tatamagouche Centre  
**Date:** May 31 - June 3  
**Funder:** Dept. of Health and Wellness

One of the innovative aspects of this program module is the use of an organizational partnership to deliver the program and its key learning tools. This year HeartWood, in partnership with the Tatamagouche Centre and South Shore Region of the Department of Health and Wellness, were able to offer a diverse cross-section of tools and learning experiences to create a strong program for diverse learners. This partnership is an excellent model for the participants to see in practice.



The program continually gave participants more opportunities to lead activities and participate in open space conversations and activities. This allowed participants opportunities to work within their community groups if applicable as well as share experiences and explore challenges and barriers. There were lots of opportunities to take leadership roles through games, activities and small group discussion.

*"I feel that I learned how to provide a stronger foundation for the summer using tools provided and knowing that our ideas for the summer can be well executed with a proper program."*

## ALL IN! EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR POSITIVE YOUTH GROUP DEVELOPMENT

**Group Information:** 20 participants  
**Duration:** 2 days  
**Location:** Halifax  
**Date:** Oct 2013  
**Funder:** Dept. Community Services

The All In workshop focused on increasing participants' effectiveness and practical skills to build and maintain positive youth groups. With participants coming from a diversity of experiences, learning styles and work environments, the program was designed to be participatory and include a sharing of expertise amongst learners and

facilitators. Facilitators introduced various tools by leading participants through exercises proven to be useful in guiding youth groups through the phases of group development. Participants learned the methods, theory and tools through a combination of large and small group discussions, presentations on theory and concepts, and experiential activities followed by clear debriefs that led to a deeper understanding of the theory.

*"Excellent philosophies and framework on how to understand, value and communicate with youth on different levels."*

## MENTORING IN THE OUTDOORS

Mentoring in the Outdoors (MO) provides support to adults and older youth to build their skills and experience for working with young people in the outdoors. This year HeartWood was asked to do a needs assessment of Mentoring in the Outdoors. Thus, we are in the process of gathering input from key stakeholders identified by HeartWood and the Department of Health and Wellness, including past participants, potential participants, others providing NSOLD programs, Health and Wellness staff, past Mentoring facilitators, and more. This evaluation will direct future programming changes to ensure that MO continues to best serve the needs of participants.





# Youth Leadership Programs

## MARCH BREAK LEADERSHIP CAMP

The camp was based in our well-tested approach to community engagement and leadership development, and had a high level of direct contact with, and contribution to, the community in which it was set. All of the youth learned to value their skills and teach these to their peers and work as a team to accomplish goals related to positive community change. Participants made connections to local leaders from Lighthouse Publishing, the Community Christmas Dinner, Helping Nature Heal Landscaping, DesBrisay Museum and a local youth-led 'benches' place-making project that was also led by HeartWood. Four participants returned from the program in 2012, and four more have since been involved with HeartWood in some capacity. This continued engagement speaks to the success of the program.

**Group Information:** 18 participants

**Duration:** 2 days

**Location:** Bridgewater

**Date:** March Break 2013

**Funder:** Dept. Community Services



*"I could feel myself shine...it was a fantastic feeling."*

*"I plan to continue working with HeartWood in my community – I like it a lot because I really feel like I'm doing something good."*

## SKILLS2ACTION

In 2012 we re-designed our Atlantic Youth Leadership Camp to serve a smaller group of 15 and 17 years old who were already demonstrating leadership qualities within their own communities. The re-design prompted a re-branding of the program, including the name change to Skills2Action (S2A) and an intention to shift our recruitment strategy.

**Group Information:** 12 participants

**Duration:** 6 days

**Location:** Amherst

**Date:** August, 2013

**Funder:** Dept. Community Services

We delivered a program based on experiential and appreciative approaches to learning, and although there were challenges that inevitably come with the first year of changing a program, youth in the S2A program demonstrated deep learning and leadership skills development. The initial remote camping experience helped youth participants intensify their learning about what it takes to build a community as well as begin to share their individual strengths and challenges. Once we moved to our in-town location, participants met a range of individuals from in and around the town of Amherst, which introduced them to a variety of examples of leadership within community. Later in the week, S2A campers were able to participate in service learning opportunities specifically selected to connect with their experiences and interests.

## TAKING THE LEAD - GIRLS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

I'm Kassandra, I am 16 and I'm a participant in Heartwood's Girls Leadership Program in Spryfield. This program was put together for girls my age, who were interested in working and helping in our community. Myself and nine other girls, along with our program coordinators Eva, Nicole, and Cate, are working on a 'Big Project' for the end of the program. This group started in the middle of March. Our first meeting was an overnight retreat, where we got to know each other, built trust and teamwork skills. We also talked about what we'd be doing leading up to the final project. Since then, we have met every Thursday and most weekends. During that time, we've conversed about what it means to be a girl/women, female empowerment, giving consent and posed questions we had around our bodies. We also discussed what makes up our community, the people in it, the image our community has and what we can do to change it. We have pondered what the community needs and what we could provide to improve our community. In the coming weeks, we will be deciding what contribution we will make to Spryfield and implement it in July.

**Group Information:** 11 participants

**Location:** Spryfield

**Date:** Ongoing

**Funder:** Status of Women, Labour and Advanced Education and the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women



One major highlight within the program for me was when we were all at Windhorse Farm for our weekend retreat, all of us decided to play a game of cards and ended up talking about our problems and asking each other for advice on different matters. We really bonded as a group that night. Another highlight was when one of the adult leaders introduced Hands. This is a tradition where we all join hands around the table before we are about to eat to reflect and appreciate each other and the food. Another highlight was when we did a team building activity

where some of us were blind folded and had to listen for directions from others to pick up objects around the room. Throughout these activities, we learned a lot about ourselves and what it takes to be a strong team. We all look forward to the upcoming weeks together and the end result of our Big Project. We hope it makes an impact and inspires others' lives, as it did ours.

## LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN - PHOENIX OUTREACH: MULGRAVE PARK SUMMER LEADERSHIP & EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAM

In the summer of 2012, Phoenix Prevention/Outreach Programs contracted HeartWood to design and facilitate an 8-week program for youth struggling with employment barriers and considered 'at risk.' The aim of the project was to address these issues by actively engaging the participants in a community service learning project while developing their life skills as well as essential skills for employability. The success of the program was illustrated during Mulgrave Park Days, when the youth team helped run a basketball tournament on a freshly youth-painted, weeded and repaired community basketball court.



# Partnership Initiatives

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS YOUTH CORPS 2012-13

The Health and Wellness Youth Corps (HWYC) provides young Nova Scotians with opportunities for hands-on experience in health promotion projects and initiatives. The focus is to build awareness and interest in health related issues amongst youth and support meaningful youth engagement in health promotion. The HWYC does this through supporting youth employment opportunities at community organizations and coordinating additional health-related projects when possible.



In 2012-13, the HWYC funded and supported six youth at four community organizations in Halifax for 9 weeks of full-time employment (or 18 weeks part-time) on six different health-related projects. These projects included:

- Reviewing and redesigning a series of resources on teens dealing with parents coping with mental health issues, hosted by the Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health/ IWK Centre,
- Facilitating the development and publication of a video by high school students on healthy sexuality, hosted at the Halifax Sexual Health Centre,
- Organizing and coordinating outreach, training and community building with volunteers at Common Roots Urban Farm,
- Coordinating a community plot program and providing support and activities for community gardeners at Common Roots Urban Farm,
- Conducting a youth-centered research project on how to improve policies for LGBTQ youth in residential or foster care, hosted at The Youth Project in cooperation with the Department of Community Services, and
- Conducting a youth-centered research project on the experience of transgender/non-binary/gender variant students in post-secondary education, hosted at The Youth Project.

Both youth and community organizations shared stories of ‘magical moments’ and powerful insights into youth engagement gained from involvement in these projects. The following quote highlights some of the impact of this program.

*“Given the tools, youth can make an amazing impact”* – Community partner organization staff

In addition to supporting these projects, in March 2013, the HWYC and Leaders of Today hosted a Leaders of Today Spring Summit with the theme 'Healthy Living' at Bayside Camp. This weekend-long gathering brought together about 55 youth and 35 adults who work with youth, both from community organizations and government, to discuss and strategize around youth issues connected to health across Nova Scotia. The issues and strategies identified at this event will feed into the HWYC projects for 2013-14.

## **LEADERS OF TODAY**

Leaders Of Today (LOT) is a network of youth and youth serving organizations who engage with the provincial Government at every level to better serve the needs of all. We create spaces that are safe for both youth and adults to have meaningful conversations about what they need and how they can work together.

We believe that listening to the voice of youth who have experienced programs and services is the best way to improve them, and listening to the needs of service providers will help youth better inform their work.

The aims of the network are to:

1. Amplify youth voice,
2. Inform the Child & Youth Strategy to improve practice and policy, and
3. Create a place of intercultural learning between youth and government, developing relationships of trust, for collaboration on shared outcomes.

Some of our successes over the past year have included:

- Fall and Spring Summits each bringing together almost 100 youth, youth organizations, and government staff to discuss issues of importance to all and ways of taking action together,
- A one day event for over 100 African Nova Scotian youth to discuss issues such as: out migration from the province, career choices, and drugs & alcohol,
- A one day event in the Annapolis Valley bringing together 40 youth, community members, and government staff to discuss how youth and adults could work together in their community,
- A consultation with youth across rural HRM to find out how the Department of Health could increase the number of youth taking part in after-school physical activity, and
- LOT Youth participation in the Child & Youth Strategy's annual symposium, as part of a fishbowl discussion on youth culture and government programs & services.



# Capacity Building Outreach Fund

*Partially supported by the Department of Health and Wellness*

## COLE HARBOUR BOYS & GIRLS CLUB - GLOBAL TOURS STUDENT TRAINING

**Group Information:** 16 Participants

**Duration:** 3 hour program

**Location:** Dartmouth

**Date:** April 2012

HeartWood facilitated a leadership development training for the youth facilitators of the Cole Harbour Global Tour initiative. The Global Tour Initiative supports high school students to help facilitate activities and games for grade 9 junior high students (from all the feeder schools) to get to know each other and build their confidence to enter high school. Part of their role is also to demystify many of the fears junior high students have of going to high school. All of this is done as part of community tours that take place in all the feeder communities including, the Prestons, Eastern Passage, Lawrencetown and Cole Harbour.



## UNITED WAY OF PICTOU - HOW TO ENGAGE YOUTH INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP

**Group Information:** 40 participants

**Duration:** 3-day overnight program

**Location:** Pictou County

**Date:** May 2012

Participants from the Pictou County Partners for Children and Youth explored HeartWood's Framework for Community Youth Development and HeartWood's Youth Engagement Spectrum while having time to discuss how to use asset based approaches when working with youth. In addition to these pieces participants had an opportunity to

network and plan for youth engagement opportunities in their local community. At the end of the session a small group of youth joined the workshop to share their experiences of being engaged in their community and what helped to get and keep them involved.

**Group Information:** 30 Students  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Location:** Digby Regional High School  
**Date:** May 2012

## SCHOOLS PLUS AND STUDENT COUNCIL LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

HeartWood's goal for the day was to quickly engage two groups of students in a relaxed atmosphere by giving them some quick team building challenges,

and then drawing the group into substantive conversations. We explored how they wanted to carry themselves as a group, and what expectations they should have of themselves as students. Then we pushed further, using HeartWood's Framework for Community Youth Development, and explored how they could influence their own groups to increase their ability to have an impact at their school. Having talked about expectations they had for each other and different tools they could use to impact their groups, we ended the day asking for real concrete ways to apply what they had learned. It was a wonderfully positive day with a great group of engaged and motivated students who are going to have a significant impact in their school and their communities.

## OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL MINISTRY LEADERSHIP CAMP DIRECTOR TRAINING

**Group Information:** 20 Participants  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Location:** Sackville, N.B.  
**Date:** June 2012

The objectives of the Outdoor Camp Director Training program were the following:

- Experience a flow of team-building activities for the group's development over the course of a half day, and use this experience as a context to their role as Camp Directors,
- Understand different leadership styles and adaptive methods to best meet a group's needs,
- Explore the nature of building positive group dynamics with youth and staff, including tools, common challenges and creative solutions,
- Explore the role of camp staff to act as mentors to one another and to children and youth,
- Utilize inclusive, participatory, and experiential methods to maximize participants' learning experience and networking, with a particular focus on the outdoors,
- Build on existing participant assets and resources, and
- Connect this learning to their role as Camp Directors and Camp staff.





## ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUMS

**Group Information:** 50 Attendees

**Duration:** 1 day

**Location:** Outside Bridgewater

**Date:** September 2012

The Association of Nova Scotia Museums approached HeartWood to share our expertise in youth engagement at their annual conference titled "ReGeneration - engaging youth". In our session we introduced HeartWood's Framework for Community Youth Development, connecting its theoretical basis to the potential of providing more engaging work experiences for the summer students employed by ANSM members. We were noted as particularly strong presenters in the written evaluation, and the organizers said that several conference delegates commented our presentation had inspired a review of their youth employment practices.

## STEWIACKE LIBRARY TEAM-BUILDING AND VIDEO WORKSHOP

**Group Information:** 10 - 12 Youth

**Duration:** 1.5 days

**Location:** Stewiacke Branch Library

**Date:** March 2012

The Stewiacke Branch Library asked HeartWood to provide a half-day workshop at the end of March, and a full-day follow-up workshop in May, as a part of National Youth Arts Week. These workshops focused on team building activities, personal asset & identity mapping, community asset-mapping, videography and professional development skills.

Through discussion, activities and digital story-telling, we drew the connection between personal development of self identity, skills for self expression, opportunities to practice those skills (through the development of PSAs for the library), and the positive result this can have on self image, self-confidence and other indicators of mental health.



## Conferences and Presentations

### DO YOUR PART CONFERENCE

HeartWood hosted a national *Do Your Part Conference on Positive Youth Development* in May of 2012 in Halifax. The conference highlighted success stories of youth and provided strategies and resources for meaningfully engaging youth. The conference was organized by Lions Quest Canada in response to the on-going focus on the shortcomings of youth, such as bullying, substance abuse and other destructive behaviours. As Linda Atkinson, Director of the Nova Scotia Child and Youth Strategy, a sponsor of the conference, said “Young people are making wise decisions, leading by example and making a difference in their communities, in our province and around the world every day. This Conference is a great place for people to stand up and recognize the things that our youth are doing right.” Lions Quest Canada ([www.lionsquest.ca](http://www.lionsquest.ca)) provides products, workshops, services and curriculum resources to support adults in helping young people deal with the complex issues they face every day.

### INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FACILITATORS CONFERENCE

HeartWood conducted a workshop on “Servant Leadership Approach to Facilitating Youth” in May 2012 at the International Association of Facilitators Conference in Halifax.

### TURNING TIDES CONFERENCE HOSTED BY BRIDGEWAY ACADEMY

HeartWood conducted a workshop called “Connecting youth to their Passions” at Bridgeway Academy’s conference in April 2012. Bridgeway Academy ([www.bridgeway-academy.com](http://www.bridgeway-academy.com)) is a Designated Special Education Private School (DSEPS) that provides individualized programming for students who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities (LD) and/or Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).





# HeartWood Development Initiatives

## INNOWEAVE : IMPACT AND STRATEGIC CLARITY MODULE

HeartWood was chosen as one of 14 organizations from across Canada to participate in the McConnell Foundation's *Innoweave: Impact and Strategic Clarity Module*, a five-month consultation process "to equip Canada's community sector leaders with new tools and processes to effect large-scale change." This intensive experience required weekly meetings, lots of discussion and research, bi-weekly meetings with Bridgespan (the consultants hired by McConnell to lead this process) as well as two workshops in Toronto.

By the end of this process, HeartWood had created an Intended Impact Statement and a Theory of Change that then fed into our new Strategic Plan. Based on this work, we also initiated some short-term improvements to our programs including re-design of our:

- March Break Leadership Camp and its evaluation to ensure a priority focus of taking action in the community during and after the program, and
- Skills2Action from a six-day overnight summer camp to a two weekend program to help better support youth to take action in their own communities and connect to adult supporters.

Our improvements will continue as we implement our new strategic plan and focus on our priority to create more meaningful engagement of diverse Nova Scotian youth, aged 12 – 24, in the systems that affect them (whether organizational, geographical community, or institutional) by:

- Directly training and supporting youth,
- Building the youth engagement capacity of youth-supporters who work directly with youth, and
- Developing and supporting intervention strategies for systems to use a more youth-centred approach using participatory action research.



## Meet our Staff, Board, and Associates

### Staff:

- Maria Cain, Executive Director
- Lori-Ann Nunn, Accounting and Office Administrator
- Isabelle LeVert-Chiasson, Senior Programs Facilitator
- Adrianna MacKenzie, Senior Programs Facilitator
- Ryan Veltmeyer, Senior Programs Facilitator
- Rena Kulczycki, Senior Programs Facilitator
- Steven Gordon, Leaders of Today Coordinator
- Sam Kent, Leaders of Today Promotion and Administration Assistant
- Andrew Jantzen, Health and Wellness Youth Corps Coordinator
- Nicole Landry, Taking the Lead Coordinator
- Eva George, Taking the Lead Facilitator
- Caitlin Heimpel, Taking the Lead Project Assistant

Unfortunately this past year we said good-bye to Isabelle and Adrianna as they moved on to other jobs – we celebrate their achievements and wish them all the best in their new endeavors.



A special thank you to all those who contributed in so many ways to HeartWood. Your contribution is invaluable. In addition, a special thank you to all the volunteers not listed who provided their time, assistance and expertise.



### Staff Associates:

Brian Braganza,  
Michael Coolican  
Libby Moss  
Adrianna MacKenzie  
Caitlin Heimpel  
Kendra Burdett  
Amber Kilbourn  
Camille Dumond

### Board of Directors

Christopher Hayes, Co-Chair  
Michael Bowdridge, Co-Chair  
Kerry Jennex, Treasurer  
Emily Reid, Secretary  
Maureen B. Langbo  
Margaret R. MacDonald  
Robin McAdam  
Sarah Coley  
Jamie Aaron  
Kyle DeYoung

### Student Staff and Interns:

Martha Mutale, Summer Student  
Molly Diamond, Summer Student



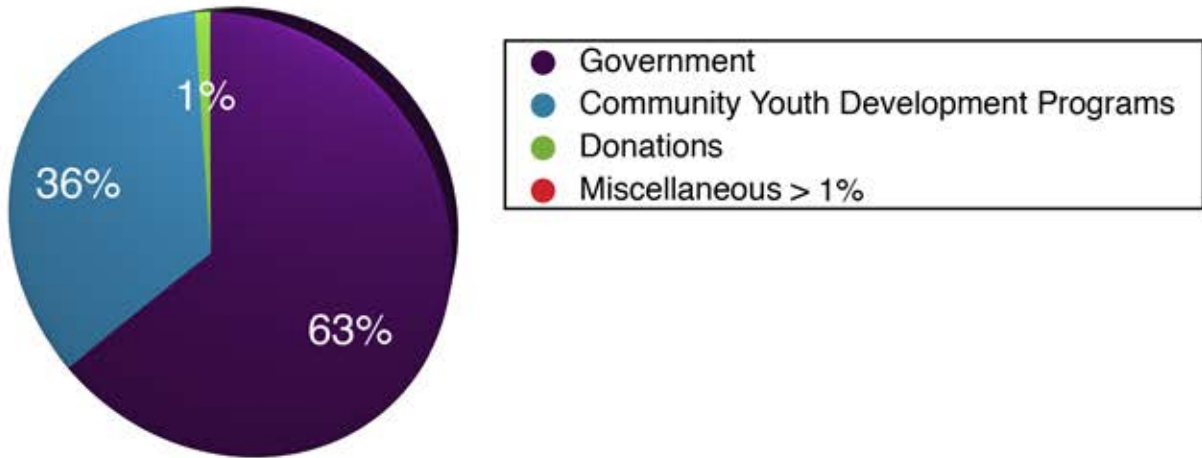
# Meet our Other Supporters

## Contract Support and Volunteers:

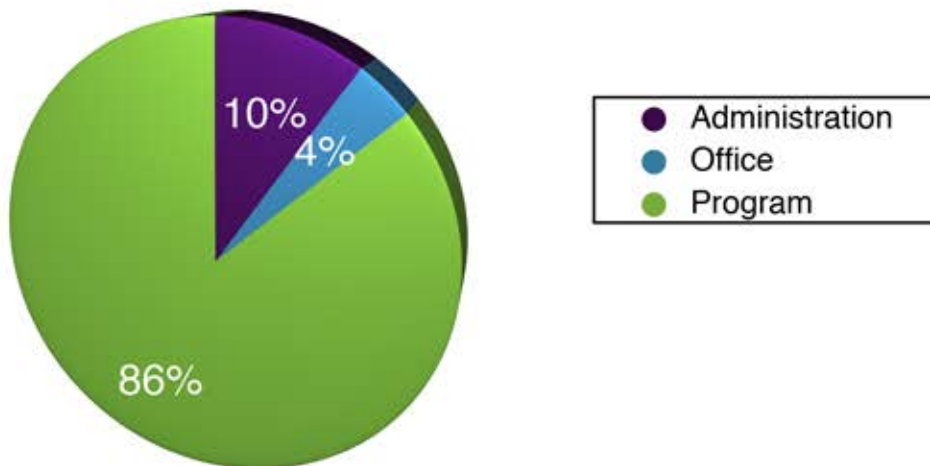
Danielle McCarthy: Graphic design  
 Misty Thibeault: Program cook  
 Jake Damberg: IT support (Launchpad Tech Support)  
 Tim Horton: Video production (Lighthouse Publishing)  
 Lukas Cardona: Splash of Colour video editing support  
 Krysten Collyer: National Youth Arts Week  
 Merdie Ross: National Youth Arts Week  
 Andy Cunningham: National Youth Arts Week  
 Ann Denny: National Youth Arts Week  
 Konyon Jallah: National Youth Arts Week  
 Alex Hickey: National Youth Arts Week  
 Jason Skinner: Place-making project  
 Ben Rodgers: Place-making project  
 Paige Cameron: Nova Scotia Youth Stories video, Stewiacke video workshop  
 Alana Levy: Child and Youth Strategy symposium video  
 Simon Mandari: Multiple HeartWood projects and Leaders of Today  
 Sarah Maclaren: Leaders of Today  
 Brianna Miller: Leaders of Today, Health and Wellness Youth Corps  
 Parker Jackson: Leaders of Today, Health and Wellness Youth Corps  
 Jade Brooks: Leaders of Today  
 Ryan Gannon: Leaders of Today  
 Taylor Bezanson: Leaders of Today  
 Travis Malay: Leaders of Today  
 Otis Daye: Leaders of Today  
 DeRico Symonds: Leaders of Today  
 Rebekah Skeete: Leaders of Today  
 LeMeia Reddick: Leaders of Today  
 Robin Badger: Leaders of Today and Health and Wellness Youth Corps video creation  
 (Creative Badger Studios)  
 James Kelly-Wolfe: Health and Wellness Youth Corps media team  
 Joey Cook: Health and Wellness Youth Corps media team  
 Kristen Sweeney: Health and Wellness Youth Corps & Taking the Lead  
 Laura Burke: Health and Wellness Youth Corps  
 Murron Grady: Health and Wellness Youth Corps  
 Skye Cross: Health and Wellness Youth Corps  
 Sarah Roach: Health and Wellness Youth Corps  
 Pat MacLean: Taking the Lead  
 Carolyn Langlands: Taking the Lead  
 Kate MacLennan: Taking the Lead

# Finances 2012 - 2013

## Revenue: \$ 544,714



## Expenses: \$ 526,955





# Get Involved with HeartWood

**There are many ways to can get involved with HeartWood!  
Contact our office to find out more about these these opportunities.**

1. **Join our Board** - HeartWood seeks volunteers to become active members of our Board of Directors. HeartWood is at its best when all board members feel valued and that their talents are being effectively utilized. Thus we value diversity and an inclusive approach. Please contact our office if you are interested in becoming involved with a leading organization in youth engagement.
2. **Donate** - All donations, no matter the amount, are extremely helpful and appreciated. Every donation received has an impact on the work we do. Donations can be made by cheque to HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development or by clicking the Donate Now button on our website. Donations over \$10 will receive a charitable tax receipt.
3. **Volunteer** - HeartWood often looks for individuals to contribute their skills to our programs and work. If you have a passion for community youth development and an open mind, HeartWood would love to see you involved. For up-to-date information on volunteer opportunities please contact our office.



Contact us...

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