

May 29, 2020

Dear Friends,

While the news is full of difficult information on COVID-19, this is far from the whole story. Many positive things are also happening. So many have stepped up to help.

Numerous diverse and 'unusual' partnerships and collaborative activities have happened involving public, private and non-profit agencies. Under the leadership of the City of Toronto and United Way Greater Toronto, ESS has heard about the various challenges facing different communities. Together, combining our strengths, resources and capacities, ways have been found to help people like never imagined before. It would never have occurred to me that ESS would be delivering life essentials to Community Health Centre clients and Toronto Community Housing residents.

Significant and important support has also come from our funders. Dollars received from government and granting agencies are based on ESS' achievement in adapting and expanding its services and programming to address the most pressing needs of our community, clients and caregivers in our current environment. We must be accountable and transparent in the use of such funding. Because of COVID-19, and the changes we have made in our program delivery to continue to meet client needs in different ways, new measures that ensure accountability have had to be created. For example, where funds were provided to offer group programs, like Adult Day Services, ESS has continued to support these clients differently. Instead of in-person support, virtual programming has been put in place.

Working through the challenge of tracking and reporting these activities in ways that will ensure our ongoing accountability to meet client needs in non-traditional ways has involved hard thinking and creativity. Every one of our funders, all three levels of government and the United Way Greater Toronto, have played key roles. Their leadership deserves thanks and recognition.

The community has also stepped-up.

The St. James's Gate Irish Pub fundraiser last Thursday resulted a \$710 donation to ESS. All of you who supported this and this wonderful community business need to be thanked.

Last week we were advised that ESS will receive a \$30,854 grant, through the Ontario Community Support Program (Community Enhancement Fund) by the Government of Ontario and administered in partnership with the Ontario Community Support Association, to support our food security activities over the next little while. Wonderful support for the work being done.

If this wasn't enough good news, ESS has been selected to receive a \$200,000 donation from The Toronto Foundation under its Better Toronto Coalition Fund initiative. This funding was made possible through the generosity of the Scheinberg Relief Fund. The founder of Mohari Hospitality, Mark Scheinberg and his family, established the fund to support organisations and initiatives that are tackling the direct impact of the virus on vulnerable individuals and the societies they live in.

So while everyone has been going through truly difficult times, it is important to remember that some very positive things have happened as well. ESS is extremely grateful for these. They will ensure we can continue to serve the community because of the kind of support we had from so many friends.

As always, I urge you to let your friends and neighbours know we are here if we can help and you can reach us at (416) 243-0127, through our website at www.esssupportservices.ca or by email at agency@esssupportservices.ca.

Regards,



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