



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION 2025: VOLUNTEERS MAKE WAVES



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WELCOME TO THIS YEAR'S VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NEWSLETTER

At London InterCommunity Health Centre, our volunteers are the force behind positive change. With every act of service, you create waves of kindness, connection, and care that ripple through our community. This year, we celebrate the profound impact you make. Thank you for making waves.

A Collective Thank You

A Message from our Executive Director

Your dedication, generosity, and compassion make a meaningful difference in the lives of the people we serve. The support you offer reaches across our community in ways that are both visible and deeply felt.

Volunteers are a vital part of our Health Centre. The work we do would not be possible without you. On behalf of our entire team, thank you for everything you give.

Scott Courtice
Executive Director



Isma

As the Engagement and Planning Specialist at the Health Centre, part of my role includes managing our volunteer program, something I take great pride in. I want to give a special thank you to the Administrative Volunteers and Volunteer Ambassadors I directly supervise. Your support with client experience surveys, health centre events, and day-to-day tasks makes a real difference in how we serve clients and support our staff.

To all of our volunteers: Whether you've helped once or many times, your time, care, and commitment have a lasting impact on our organization and the community we serve. Thank you for all that you do.



Selma

I consider myself very lucky to be able to supervise many wonderful programs and volunteers. I oversee both the WOW and NELCE volunteers who contribute so much to the Health Centre and the community at large. Both NELCE and WOW are instrumental in creating safe community spaces that break social isolation and build a sense of belonging. Without the dedication and commitment of our volunteers, we could not provide far reaching support to so many people.



Sarah

I have had the honor of being the Coordinator for the Tai Chi Program for over 15 years. Our volunteers inspire me each week with their commitment to the program and their care and support for our group members. Our volunteers Carol, Laura, and Misa provide a safe and comforting space and support our clients in reaching their potential with their Tai Chi practice. I feel so grateful they are part of the Health Centre Family!

A Collective Thank You



Milly

Hello, my name is Milly and I'm the Community Program Assistant at the Health Centre. I support the Women of the World program and have the privilege of working with an incredible group of women who give their time, energy, and hearts to support and uplift their communities. The WOW program could not run without you! Your generosity and commitment make every gathering meaningful. I'm so grateful to work alongside you.



Richard

My name is Richard MacDonagh, I am a Program Manager for Chronic Disease Programs (HIV, Hepatitis C and Diabetes) as well as our Gender Affirming Care program at London InterCommunity Health Centre. I can't speak with more appreciation regarding the positive impact of volunteers. I am so grateful to you all for devoting your free time, which is a precious resource, to supporting the mission, vision, and values of the Health Centre. Thank you all for your passion, your compassion, and for your commitment to working alongside us to bring care, support, and kindness to those we serve. We could not do what we do without you.



Yasmin

My name is Yasmin and I work as a Community Development Worker at the Health Centre. In my role I am fortunate to connect and collaborate with many wonderful individuals passionate about contributing to their communities and lending their talents and expertise to serve others. Volunteers support LIHC in being able to carry out important services and make an impact in community. The work of community development would not hold the same meaning or weight without the many contributions of volunteers. Thank you for all you do.



Jess

I couldn't do my role as a Community Registered Dietitian without the dedication and support of our amazing Good Food Box and London Food Coalition volunteers – Ian Bailey and Kate Braniff. Access to food is a major barrier for our clients and community, so having fresh bags of produce available to provide those in need is so important. I am very grateful to Ian and Kate for all the work they do to make this happen every week and month!

Meet the Volunteers



Women Of the World (WOW)

Dana El Saleh
Grace Estrada
Shashi Sharma
Zarina Sahak
Saifora Khan
Maricel Garro
Mabel Morales
Shivani Brown
Liliana Rozo
Eman Arnout
Naam Assi
Sandra Aldakhi
Pilar Giron Gomez
Ivon Nino
Maiyada Silo
Sara Perez Nino
Ingred Perez Nino
Salwa Sediq
Mariana Durque Zavala
Luis Miguel Valaquez Garcia
Rodrigo Ricardo Perez Silva
Mercado
Angel Montiel
Ana Ligia Ulloa

Food Coalition Volunteers

Katelyn Brantiff
Ian Bailey

North East London Community Engagement

Ian Bailey
Leah Marie Blenkhorn
Margaret Boos
Pat Broome
Dena Cook
Bernardine Crasto
Jerome Crasto
Pat Deleary
Jo Anne DeWilde
Nancy Froman
Karen Hoffman
Teresa Johnston
Henry Kooy
Jerry Sollazzo
Lucie Sollazzo
Shawn Evans
Helen Dwinnell
Heidy Pavajeau
Noemi Perzia

Volunteer Ambassadors

MinGi Cho
Khadijah Meshrif
Katherine Reimer
Sandra Howlett



Meet the Volunteers



Old East Village Engagement

Shirley Picot
Karen McLaughlin
Linda Skinner
Donna Carroll
Cathy Stecko
Edna Hamilton

Tai Chi

Carol Coulter
Laura Weaver
Misa Tanaka

Outreach Programs

Debbie Austin
Earl Austin
Fred Austin
Jessica Ellis
Jayson Littleton
Amy McKay
Bee Haehnel
Necole Douglas

Options Clinic

Norm LeNeve

Income Tax Clinic

Bonnie Gibson

Board of Directors

Jeanne Webber
Paul Levac
Heather Lokko
Helen Connell
Jennifer Proulx
Andrew Shepherd
Ahmed Shaalan
Sibylle Ugirase

Happy Anniversary!

Five year Milestones

- Grace Estrada (WOW)
- Pat Broome (NELCE)
- Dena Cook (NELCE)
- Pat Deleary (NELCE)
- Jo Anne DeWilde (NELCE)
- Heidy Pavajeau (NELCE)



What are our Volunteers Doing?

Our Various Programs:

- Women of the World (WOW)
- Food Security
- North East London Community Engagement Group (NELCE)
- Client Survey Support
- Volunteer Newsletter
- Community Event Support
- OEV Engagement
- Seniors' Tai Chi
- HIV Testing
- Income Tax Clinic
- Board of Directors



Seniors' Tai Chi

- 45 Tai Chi groups were held over the past year
- Each group had an average of 10 senior participants

Good Food Box

- 529 produce bags were delivered over the past year
- 49 individual community members were served

OEV Seniors' Engagement

- 5 different types of programs were offered for seniors, including Coffee Talk sessions, a speaker series, pottery, computer, and exercise classes

Community Income Tax Clinic

- Over 600 tax returns were completed for clients by volunteers

Anonymous HIV Testing

- Approximately 35 individuals at risk for HIV/AIDS were supported through anonymous testing

Volunteering by the Numbers

2024/2025

Our Volunteers Make It Possible

Each hour volunteered represents a moment of connection, support, and change. Whether distributing food, facilitating community programs, or offering a listening ear, our volunteers help meet people where they are. Their time and care have directly supported over 790 community members this year, ensuring that essential services remain accessible, inclusive, and aligned with Health Centre values.

65 Volunteers in the program.

2229 Collective hours volunteering.

10+ Different programs supported.

796 Community members served.

North East London Community Engagement:

- 80 weekly community groups were held, resulting in over 1,000 total encounters with clients and community members
- Movie Night in the Park welcomed 150–200 attendees annually

Women of the World:

- 48 group sessions were held across the three cultural programs
- 945 total encounters were recorded
- Seasonal Summer and Winter parties were hosted, with over 100 women and children in attendance



Behind the Program: A Day in the Life

What does it really look like to volunteer at our Health Centre? Whether you're chatting with clients, organizing surveys, or sorting apples into produce bags, every task makes a difference. We sat down with a few of our volunteers to learn what a day in their role looks like, and what it means to them.



Katherine – A Sense of Responsibility

Katherine, a Volunteer Ambassador, spends her time helping with community events and administrative tasks. But for her, it's more than checking off a to-do list - it's about connection. "I'm able to see how the Health Services and Programs directly impact the clients," she says. Whether handing out smoothies or gathering feedback, Katherine sees how small interactions ripple outward to improve wellbeing. Her word to sum up the experience? Responsibility. "We all have a social responsibility to help others out."

Norm – The Spirit of Giving

Norm, who volunteers at the Options Clinic, brings decades of experience in community health. For him, the motivation is simple: Giving. "It's something you can do without expecting any reward in the end," he reflects. From his early work with the AIDS Committee in the 90s to supporting the HIV community today, Norm sees volunteering as a way to stand by those who need a hand, no matter how long it takes.

Khadijah – Seeing the Bigger Picture

Khadijah, also a Volunteer Ambassador, says her experience has changed the way she sees the world around her. "I used to view the community at face value," she shares. "Now I have a better idea of what people are going through." As a student, she notes that giving time can sometimes mean more than giving money, and it's opened her eyes to both struggle and strength in the city. Her word: Fulfilling.

Kaitlyn – Feeding the Community

Kaitlyn works behind the scenes, picking up donated produce and building nutritious food bags for the Centre. As a student in Food and Dietetics, the work speaks to both her academic background and her heart. "It's rewarding to know I'm the one packing food that someone will turn into a healthy meal," she says. Her word is Community; the driving force that brought her to volunteer, and the feeling that keeps her rooted in the work.

No matter the role, one thing is clear: volunteering makes an impact, on others and on ourselves.





London's social landscape is diverse and constantly changing. To ensure Health Centre programming best meets the needs of our many client communities, we continue to listen, learn and adapt. This requires paying close attention to emerging trends, identifying underserved groups, and finding creative action plans to fill gaps of care. Thanks to the dedication of our many volunteers, we offer a wide range of services and programs to help with these growing and evolving community needs.

Wellness and Social Isolation

In the communities we serve, there is increasing demand for age-friendly programming for older adults that support independent, happy and healthy lives. Seniors represent a growing population, many of whom face challenges like isolation or limited access to transportation or family support.

Our committed volunteers play a key role in delivering Health Centre programs that provide enriching social opportunities for connection and healthy living. Our Tai Chi program is run by volunteers who share their time, skills and care with participants to offer group opportunities for physical activity, mindfulness practice, and a chance for seniors to connect with others.

We are also proud to support our North East London Community Engagement group (NELCE), a vibrant grassroots initiative that focuses on inclusion and strengthening community connections in North East London. Through a variety of volunteer-led programs such as crafting, card games, walking clubs, and gardening, NELCE fosters meaningful social engagement and spaces where people can thrive, reducing isolation and improving the overall quality of life for local residents.



Health Equity and Social Justice Corner

Food Provision

Food insecurity is a growing concern in London, with an increasing number of individuals and families struggling to access fresh, nutritious food. To help address this challenge, the Health Centre works in partnership with the London Food Coalition (LFC), a local alliance that rescues surplus fresh food from farms and other organizations, and redistributes it to community organizations across the city.

Through this collaboration, the Health Centre supports individuals experiencing poverty while also helping to reduce food waste. Our dedicated volunteers play an essential role in this effort. Kaitlyn, a Food and Dietetics student at Western University, picks up donated produce and sorts the food into produce bags ready for distribution to the Health Centre clients in need. Kaitlyn says that it is “rewarding to know I’m the one that’s picking what fruit and vegetables go into the bags and making items go together that people can use to make a nutritious meal.”

Community events hosted by the Health Centre help meet immediate nutritional needs of our clients while also supporting broader goals of community health and social equity. Community Health and Wellness Fairs hosted at our Health Centre locations offer free barbecues, games and raffle prizes, as well as educational information on sun safety, nutrition, and caregiver support. Produce bags were donated, collected and distributed to clients. At our Community Health Fairs, volunteers prepared fresh smoothies that were welcome to all. Through their efforts, our volunteers ensure that Health Centre clients not only receive essential support, but also establish connection and strong community ties to enhance their overall health and well-being.



At the London Intercommunity Health Centre, volunteers do more than support programs, they help create a foundation of trust, dignity, and accessibility across everything we offer. Whether they're welcoming clients, translating key information, or offering calm guidance during stressful moments, volunteers make our services feel human and responsive. Their presence bridges gaps in care that go beyond resources; bringing warmth, familiarity, and cultural awareness to spaces that might otherwise feel intimidating or inaccessible. In doing so, they make equity real on a day-to-day level.

Volunteers also help us grow in thoughtful, community-rooted ways. Their feedback, observations, and willingness to adapt keep our work grounded in lived experience. They notice emerging needs, suggest new approaches, and offer on-the-ground insight that shapes how we serve. Their commitment doesn't just strengthen our capacity - it sharpens our vision. Thanks to them, the Health Centre remains connected, compassionate, and ready to meet the evolving needs of the people we serve.

Health Equity and Social Justice Corner

Newcomer Belonging

With a growing population of newcomers in the London area, individuals – particularly women – face isolation from others who may not share their language and cultural background. Health Centre programs support newcomers and immigrants in building inclusive, connected lives that foster belonging, independence, and well-being. Central to this effort is WOW, Women of the World, a program designed to reduce the unique barriers immigrant and newcomer women face.

This initiative is made possible thanks to the dedication of volunteer Peer Leaders – bilingual women who draw from their own lived experiences to guide and support others. These volunteers lead support groups offered in multiple languages, creating safe and welcoming spaces for women to connect, share, and grow. Through education, peer discussions, and community engagement, these groups help participants build confidence, develop employable skills, and access valuable resources, all while strengthening their social networks and autonomy.



Thank you!



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