

# JohnHoward

SOCIETY OF THUNDER BAY & DISTRICT

## Annual Report 2014/2015



*Change Happens  
Here*



The John Howard Society is a community based organization that supports people who are at risk or involved in the criminal justice system through service, reform, education and advocacy.

# Message from the President & Executive Director

The mandate of the John Howard Society of Thunder Bay to support people who are at risk or involved in the criminal justice system, continues to effectively guide the work of the organization. The people we serve are at the centre of that mandate.

Our ability to deliver effective service is built on a strong organizational structure which includes a committed and engaged Board of Directors. This year 6 new members joined the Board and brought a renewed sense of enthusiasm and expertise to the work we do. Through the development of a strong committee structure, the Board provided input and oversight to fundraising activities, the development of a 2 year strategic plan and public relations and educational materials.

We were successful in acquiring funding to make substantial capital repairs to the building which greatly enhanced our ability to deliver effective services. We also were successful in accessing increased operational support for our residential clients and we begin the 2015/16 year with two additional staff positions to provide direct case management support.

Another milestone this year was the Landlord Tenant Board ruling which supported our work in providing transitional housing. The ruling confirmed that helping individuals become law-abiding citizens through a supportive living environment is rehabilitative. We move forward confidently, knowing that the type of residential housing we provide complies with the Residential Tenancies Act.

The work to support youth through the Remote Aboriginal Intervention Program and the On Track Program remained steady and strong. Diverting youth away from the criminal justice system and providing opportunities to address risk factors continues to be the focus. The excellent work done with youth is a credit to the long standing, committed and skilled staff who give their best to the youth they serve every day.

Our court programs continue to provide support for individuals who find themselves in conflict with the law. Delivering programs such as anger management and substance abuse addresses risk factors while the supervision of bail conditions, allows us to provide much needed support in helping individuals make necessary changes. Cassandra Martin, who has been at the helm of the Bail Program for 6 years, received the Provincial Dykstra Award this year, a testament to her exceptional and dedicated service.

This year marked our first signature fundraising event, The Howard Ball. We were extremely pleased with the event, not only in raising much needed funds for the organization, but raising the profile of the John Howard Society to the broader community. Planning is well underway for the Ball which will take place in October.

We would like to thank the board and staff team for their dedication and commitment. Each and every day staff gives their best. They support, they empathize, they challenge, but most of all they truly care. Finally we would like to thank our funders and supporters who partner with us and believe in the work of the John Howard Society. Together we ensure that "Change Happens Here".

Liisa Leskowski,  
Executive Director

Sandy Lychowyd,  
President

# Provincial Dykstra Award

In 1995, the Executive Directors of the Affiliates of the John Howard Society of Ontario established the Tom Dykstra Award in recognition of Tom's work during his thirty-three years with the Society. The Directors agreed to award this honour annually to one person from the entire staff of the organization across the province who demonstrated the values and qualities of "Integrity, Commitment and Humanity" as were exemplified by Tom.

This year, we are proud to announce that the recipient of the Tom Dykstra Award is our very own Cassandra Martin. Cassandra has worked as the Coordinator for the Bail Verification and Supervision program (BVSP) at the John Howard Society of Thunder Bay and District for the past six years. Cassandra started with the agency following her completion of a Masters of Justice Administration degree from Norwich University in Vermont. In her six years with the agency, Cassandra has been a driving force behind the success of the BVSP in Thunder Bay. Her passion for helping individuals involved with the Criminal Justice System, especially those at the pre-sentence stage, has been integral in the advancement of the BVSP in our community.

Cassandra's unbridled interest and vast knowledge of the Criminal Justice system have enabled her to make an incredible impact on the local processes through her ability to build strong relationships with community partners. She is recognized as a person that will always speak for the need of compassion and humanity within the system, specifically the courts. As our agency provides services to clients in a uniquely large catchment area, Cassandra has been an outspoken advocate for First Nation clients from remote communities that would otherwise be at a disadvantage when dealing with criminal justice matters in the city of Thunder Bay. Through her work, more clients have fair access to bail and are provided with an opportunity to make positive life changes in times of adversity.

It is truly remarkable how the efforts of one person, one particular person, can truly make a difference in the lives of community members facing these challenges. Cassandra Martin has taken every opportunity to shape the BVSP in a way that provides appropriate responses to the unique needs of community members. She has established connections in the region that enable clients to access referrals to necessary services such as treatment for addictions, interim housing, counselling and mental health support.

Cassandra is always eager to share her knowledge and experiences with her peers. She strives to utilize every available opportunity to raise awareness of her program and the John Howard Society of Thunder Bay. Cassandra has developed and delivered presentations throughout the community that not only promote her work, but also the core values and principles of the John Howard Society. Congratulations Cassandra and thank you for all that you do!



# Change Happens Here

***This section is dedicated to our clients success. The following is a collection of testimonials from JHS clients and staff from different program areas. Each story speaks to the positive impact JHS has had on the lives of people and how change became a reality. Client names have been changed for confidentiality purposes.***

## ***These stories are a reflection of how Change Happens Here!***

I first met Steven when he arrived at JHS for his bail orientation. As we were completing the required paperwork, he became quite emotional as the full enormity of his situation sank in. Steven's charges were quite serious and there was a chance he could receive a lengthy prison sentence. He admitted to being intoxicated when he got in trouble, and made an observation that has stayed with me. He said that he does not always get into trouble when he drinks, but he is always drinking when he gets into trouble. He said he no longer wanted to repeat the cycle and wanted to take control of his life again. At the time, I commended him for coming to this realization, as many clients never make that connection.

His legal matters took ten months to wind their way through the legal system, and during his time with the bail program, he managed to do just that. We had many conversations about his responsibilities as a father and as a member of society. He said his drinking took him away from his children, much like his own father was taken from him, and he wanted to be the father that he had always wanted for himself.

Steven actively sought out counseling to deal with the root causes for his addiction and did not touch another drop again. He often said that he did not struggle with abstention, because the desire to drink was simply not in him any longer. He focused his energies on being a good father, and gained employment with a large, local retailer. His work ethic was noticed and he worked his way into a supervisory position.



During his sentencing, the judge wisely recognized that Steven was not just giving lip-service to having changed. The trial had given the judge a chance to see Steven speak on the transformation that he had undergone during the previous months and the judge saw that it was profoundly real. The sentence imposed was such that Steven's employment or advancement would not be negatively affected, and it would not take him away from his family. Following his trial, Steven contacted the BVSP to update us on his progress and said that he has never been happier. He is a doting father who will be around to watch his children grow up, and he will be able to positively influence his children's development.

# Change Happens Here

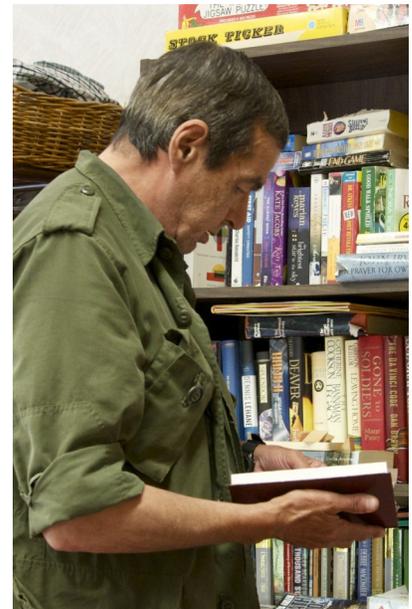
The Direct Accountability Program is an alternative to prosecution for adults 18 years and older who have been charged with minor criminal offences. The program involves accused persons being held accountable through relevant and meaningful community based sanctions.

The Direct Accountability Program has assisted many who are first time offenders, who simply made a mistake. They present themselves at court for their first appearances, evidently nervous and afraid of what may happen. This program allows them to experience the consequences of getting charged and going to court without have to carry the burden of a criminal record. It gives them an opportunity to right their wrong without negatively impacting their career and travel options.

One case specifically stands out; Christopher was a male individual who was charged with mischief. He had become very angry and kicked a car, causing significant damage. He was referred and accepted into the Direct Accountability Program and through this program he attended an Anger Management Program. Christopher also completed community service hours at a local recreation centre and paid restitution for the damage that he caused.

After successfully completing the program, his charges were withdrawn. Not only did this individual take full responsibility for his actions, but through the Anger Management Program offered through Direct Accountability, he adopted a healthy way of managing past and future struggles.

Today, Christopher is a young individual, with no criminal record who found a new role as a voice for those who have been victims of sexual abuse. Christopher was finally able to admit that abuse he suffered as a child fueled his anger, and he now reaches out to those who have suffered through a similar trauma. He is now open and honest, and is making great strides to better himself and encourages those who have suffered sexual abuse to come forward and not be ashamed.



# Change Happens Here

The Remote Aboriginal Intervention Program works in partnership with First Nation Communities to assist Aboriginal youth in conflict with the law and their families. The program is currently being delivered in Eabemetoong First Nation, Weagamow Lake First Nation, Webequie First Nation and Long Lake #58 First Nation.

Each community has a Remote Intervention Support Worker that works closely with youth to support them through their completion of court ordered sanctions. The Support Workers facilitate culturally appropriate programming and activities that engage youth in addition to promoting positive responses to the challenges faced by the youth in the community. Clinical counseling is also provided to youth from these communities.

The Remote Intervention Workers are the reason the youth are given the opportunity to live a stable life, without having to be involved in the criminal justice system. They work together and maintain working relationships with other agencies that support the youth. Together, these workers provide the youth with a chance at life.

The Community Intervention Workers face many challenges with their line of work, from difficult youth to difficult living conditions within the communities. They work hard and advocate for the youth and their families. The RCIWs have a strong working relationship with probation officers and together they develop case management plans for the youth so the youth can succeed. The RCIWS are committed to attending all programming, ceremonies and events that take place in the communities. They have received positive feedback, not only from the probation officers and other organizations, but from the youth themselves.

Another important part of the Remote Aboriginal Intervention Program is the vast communities that are connected through this program. The distance between the communities presents one of the biggest challenges, one that the RCIWS have been able to overcome with great stride. Through networking and regular communication, the youth are supported by their workers, the programs provided and the correctional centers in the area.

This program and its workers put forth great efforts to build and maintain a strong relationship with neighboring programs and communities in order to provide the best support and resources for the youth. As we move ahead we will continue to work hard to advocate for the youth, whether it means travelling for long hours, participating in presentations and ceremonies or simply working closely with others to support the youth.



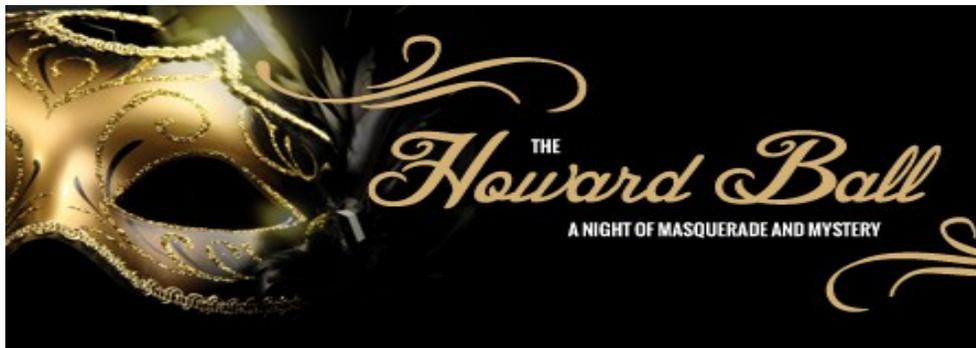
# The Howard Ball

October 18th, 2014 marked an exciting new experience for the John Howard Society of Thunder Bay and District. This date marked the inaugural Howard Ball; A Night of Masquerade and Mystery.

The goal of the Howard Ball was to raise much needed funds for our community transitional housing facilities. Howard Ball guests were treated to whimsical live entertainment, a four course dining experience, entertainment and showcased some of Thunder Bay's finest, masked in their elegant suits and gowns.

The proceeds were used to provide essential services and supports to men and women in our rehabilitative residential programs. Individuals utilize our housing to re-build their lives and address factors that have put them at risk. Over 200 individuals transition through the our residential programs each year. In addition to helping individuals succeed, providing housing services is a key factor in promoting community safety.

This event was a great success and the John Howard Society of Thunder Bay and District along with the United Way are looking forward to another successful Howard Ball coming up on October 24th, 2015.



## Board of Directors 2014/2015

Sandy Lychowyd .....	President
Scott Gale .....	Vice President
Marnie Kayhko .....	Secretary/Treasurer
Shirley DeWilde .....	Director
Afton Brown .....	Director
Narcise Kakegabon .....	Director
John Allen (AJ) Johnson .....	Director
Jennifer Duncan .....	Director
John A (Sandy) Isfeld .....	Director

## Staff 2014/2015

Liisa Leskowski .....	Executive Director
Maryann Bilenki .....	Office Manager
Kevin Haynen .....	Program Manager/CSO Coordinator
Colleen Peters .....	Residential Services Manager/MHFA Facilitator
Chris Knorr .....	Office Administration
Beth Harris .....	Fundraising Administrator
Kevin Lemieux .....	Facility Support Worker
Ozzie Rummerfield .....	Office/Residential Custodian
Brianne Vescio .....	Direct Accountability Program Coordinator
Erin Lovis .....	Community Justice Worker

# Staff 2014/2015 Continued

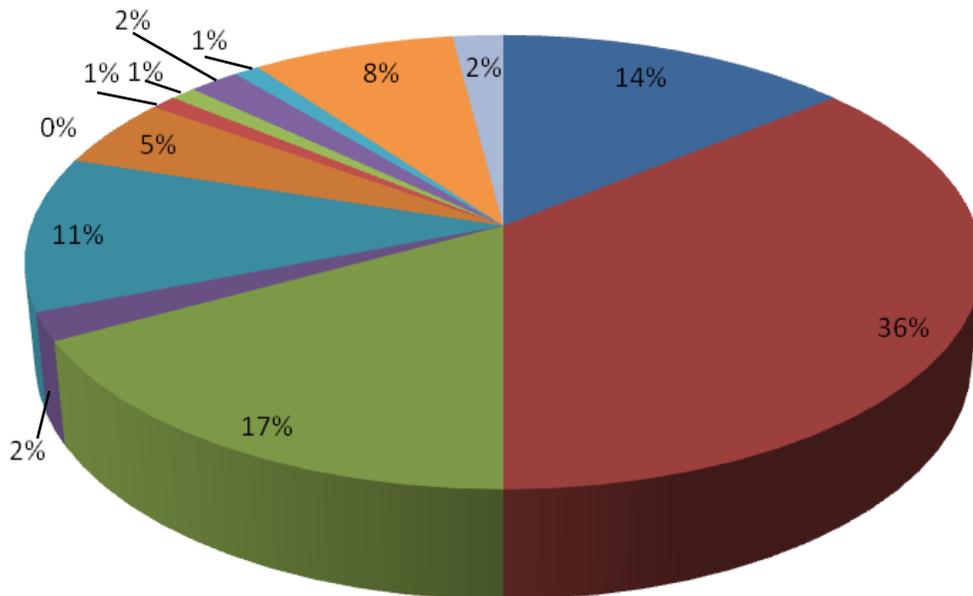


- Cassandra Martin .....Bail Verification & Supervision Program Coordinator
- Rory Bellin ..... BVSP Case Manager
- Sean Tresierra ..... Remote Aboriginal Intervention Program Coordinator
- Delores Cyrette ..... Youth Counsellor-Remote Aboriginal Intervention Program Coordinator
- Angela Sofea ..... Remote Aboriginal Intervention Support Worker
- Olive Harper ..... Remote Aboriginal Intervention Support Worker
- Bessie Ooshag ..... Remote Aboriginal Intervention Support Worker
- Dominic Achneepenskum ..... Remote Aboriginal Intervention Support Worker
- Renee Wesley ..... Remote Aboriginal Intervention Support Worker
- Tyson Matawapit ..... Remote Aboriginal Intervention Support Worker
- Daniel Letourneau ..... On-Track Student Support Program Coordinator
- Klara Kerschner-Hutchins ..... Residential Cook
- Candice Froome ..... Summer Student
- Shelkh Harun ..... Residential Services; Night Staff
- Rashid Michael Smith ..... Residential Services; Night Staff
- Alan Fischuk ..... Residential Services; Night Staff
- Bradley Derek Hymers ..... Residential Services; Night Staff
- Debbie Vold ..... Residential Services; Night Staff
- Jason Porichuk ..... Residential Services; Night Staff

# Thank You To Our Funders

## Revenue Summary

- Correctional Services Canada
- Ministry of Children & Youth Services
- Ministry of Attorney General
- Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services
- Rental Income
- United Way of Thunder Bay
- Metis Nation of Ontario
- Northern Ontario Heritage Fund
- Donations
- Fundraising Campaign
- Grant Revenue
- Trillium Foundation
- Other (Miscellaneous)



# Thank You To Our Funders



Canada



Ministry of Attorney General

Ministry of Children & Youth Services

Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services

Métis Nation  
of Ontario 

The logo for the Métis Nation of Ontario, featuring the text "Métis Nation of Ontario" in a serif font, with a blue square containing a white infinity symbol to the right.

Human Resources and  
Skills Development Canada

Ressources humaines et  
Développement des compétences Canada

# JohnHoward

SOCIETY OF THUNDER BAY & DISTRICT

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