



Journey Home Community Newsletter

FALL 2023 EDITION



Journey Home
Community

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Thank you to our donors, sponsors and volunteers.

Your partnership allows us to realize our vision of a society where all refugees experience hope and belonging as they engage in meaningful participation in their community and flourish in all aspects of life.

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy.



Journey Home Community is a proud member of:



We acknowledge that Journey Home Community works on and welcomes arriving refugee claimants onto the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the ɔ́jícəy (Katzie), Kwantlen, kʷikʷəʔləm (Kwikwetlem), Matsqui, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Semiahmoo, Sumas, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Tsawwassen, səliłwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh), and QayQayt First Nation.

Legacy Gifts

The sad reality is that refugee claimant families will continue to arrive on our shores having fled from danger and persecution. The need to support these vulnerable families is not going away. Journey Home plans to be there for arriving refugees, providing housing, support and community for years to come.

You can create a legacy of hope for arriving refugee claimants with a legacy gift through your will, or through a gift of publicly-traded securities, such as stocks, bonds or mutual funds. Such gifts are also an effective way to give, as they are not subject to costly capital gains taxes, and donors can receive a tax credit for their generous gifts.

Contact our office for more information.

Limitations on the spending of Journey Home Community funds

Spending of funds is confined to board approved programs, projects, and services. Each restricted designated contribution will be used as designated until the purpose has been met, or it cannot be completed for any reason determined by the Board. In this instance, any remaining restricted contributions will be used where needed most.

It's All For This...

—Brad Kinnie

Often, in various settings, I'm asked to share about Journey Home. It's one of my favourite things to do. When thinking about what to share, people usually ask two things: "what do you do?" and "why do you do it?"

So, what is it that we do?

Many refugee claimants arrive in BC with very little. For example, recently we welcomed the Yousafzai family from a Central-Asian country. When we met them (dad, mom, and four children), they were homeless. Mom and the kids were in a women's shelter, and Dad was in a men's shelter in the Downtown Eastside. They arrived with a few clothes and a little bit of money – beyond these few items, there was little else. At least on the surface, it appeared there was little else.

So, staff and volunteers came alongside and helped the Yousafzai's navigate this new beginning in Canada. What little they arrived with was the starting point. Our team connected the family to legal supports for the refugee claim. We assisted with setting up income assistance. Kids were registered for school. And we invited the family into a safe, warm, welcoming transitional housing space.

But if we look a little deeper at the Yousafzai's, you see so much more than homelessness and scarce resources. Yes, these challenges certainly had to be overcome, but the Yousafzai's arrived with a vast toolkit of resilience and capability.

Within this family, multiple languages are spoken, and they are equipped with post-secondary degrees, vocational skills, and an entrepreneurial spirit. There is a faith in God they lean into. What they lack in tangible resources, they more than make up in intangible assets.

So, what is it we do?

We provide a practical boost that allows refugee newcomers, like the Yousafzai's, to deploy their assets to achieve success, to heal from the trauma and loss that forced them to flee in the first place, and to begin the process of reestablishing themselves. It doesn't take long before we are celebrating a move into their first Canadian home, the landing of their first Canadian employment position, and eventually the receipt of a Permanent Residence Card.

With the Yousafzai's, it's still early, but we are celebrating already. They lived in emergency transitional housing for only two months before they located their first Canadian home. The home is set up with donated furniture. They are actively applying for jobs and are preparing their refugee claim. In their new neighbourhood, they are connecting with community organizations and a local church.

And why do we do what we do? This is my favourite part. You see, it's all for this...

It's because if we were in their shoes, we would want someone to do the same for us.

It's because we want to be part of a caring community that practically supports newcomers with housing, support, and invitation to new friendships.

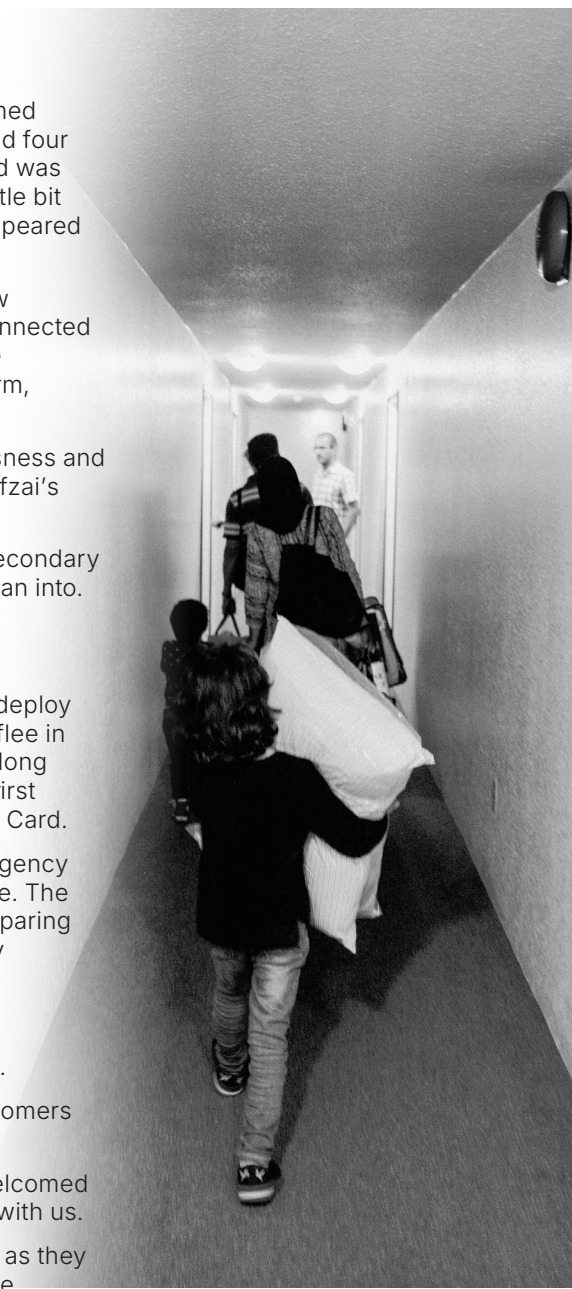
It's because we have experienced the deep love of God and the privilege of being welcomed into His family. It's a way of expressing gratitude to God for His inspiring love shared with us.

It's because we want our refugee claimant friends to experience hope and belonging as they engage in meaningful participation in their community and flourish in all aspects of life.

It's because when they begin to flourish, so do we all begin to flourish.

So, it's all for this! And we thank you!

Your involvement by donating, volunteering, or praying helps more than you know. You are part of a movement of welcoming newcomers by providing a practical boost that empowers refugee claimants to deploy their own resilience and strength. And this is making all of us a little bit stronger!



Journey Home Community's New Look!

—Kim Tran

In the annals of history, certain symbols and visuals are forever linked to a specific era or movement. Bell-bottoms, tie-dye, and long, flowing hair instantly transport us to the counterculture of the 1960s – the age of the hippies. Similarly, the sight of a drink being poured from a red can over a glass of ice conjures up one iconic image: a refreshing Coca-Cola. These are symbols of an organization or an era, their visual identity.

An 18-Year Legacy: The Strength of A Logo

In 2005, Journey Home Community began our journey, and it was in 2008 that we found our visual identity through the creation of a logo, designed to encapsulate the essence of who we are as an organization: to welcome, support, and care for refugee claimants by inviting them into community. For almost two decades, the Journey Home Community logo has served as a beacon of hope, welcoming refugees and Canadians alike into a harmonious community. It has symbolized our core values and our mission to provide short-term emergency housing, case management, and vital support for vulnerable refugee claimants in the Lower Mainland.

However, as any organization evolves and grows, it is imperative to embrace change. The momentum Journey Home Community has been experiencing in recent years is a testament to our dedication to our mission and values: Inspired by God's love, Journey Home Community is creating caring communities that offer refugee claimants housing, settlement support, and opportunities for connection.

A Fresh Look: Journey Home Community's New Visual Identity

The new logo is a symbol of our commitment to positive change. The tone of the design is approachable and warm and the essence is progress and growth, symbolized by the arrows pointing inwards.

Arrows represent forward momentum and intentionality, as well as wholeness and the diverse community of Journey Home coming together, with the circle representing strength and reliability.

Each color carries deep meaning, reflecting specific values upheld by Journey Home Community. Blue signifies trustworthiness and reliability, reflecting our commitment to integrity. Green represents growth and harmony, reflecting our dedication to fostering positive

change. Yellow embodies optimism and friendliness, reflecting our welcoming approach to everyone. Coral exudes warmth and hospitality, making sure all who come feel at home. Lastly, brown symbolizes dependability and stability, highlighting our enduring support for the community. Together, these colors form a vibrant tapestry that tells the story of Journey Home Community's dedication and our values.

As part of this transformation, Journey Home Community is also enhancing our communication strategies, updating our website, and refreshing our communications materials. These changes will be rolled out gradually over the coming weeks and months, marking a visual shift towards a promising future while preserving the organization's core values.

The Unchanged Heart of Journey Home Community

While the look is changing, one thing remains constant: We remain inspired by God's love for us, for our world, and for refugee claimants. This motivates our unwavering commitment to refugee claimants. We continue to provide crucial support to vulnerable refugee claimants, offering them not only short-term emergency housing but also case management and the invaluable support of a compassionate and caring community.

As refugee claimants embark on their new life in Canada, Journey Home Community stands as a symbol of hope, belonging, friendship, and mutual transformation. We remain steadfast in our goal of helping refugee claimants rebuild their lives in a new country and city.

This is not just a visual transformation; it's a reflection of the evolving landscape of community support, a promise to adapt, innovate, and continue serving those who need it most. As we embark on this new path, our commitment to making a difference in the lives of refugees and Canadians remains as resolute as ever.



From Resilience to Success: A Colombian Chef's Journey to Entrepreneurship in Canada

—Viviana & Vanessa Roth

Hi, my name is Viviana, I moved to Canada suddenly in the middle of the pandemic because my family and my business back in Colombia were threatened. Not long after I arrived in Canada, my mother, daughter and I were referred by a social worker to Journey Home Community. I am so grateful to Journey Home because they helped me understand the steps I needed to take to claim refugee status, they helped me connect to resources, including income assistance, and they supported me and my family to find a home.

I have always enjoyed cooking, I was given this passion from my mother in Colombia, my mother was always cooking different kinds of food. Now that I live in Canada, I see the need for more Colombian food. There are some Colombian restaurants here, but it's not homemade food. My goal is to fill this need, to have homemade Colombian food and I will do it with my own personal touch. My first Colombian dish I made here was chizo. 100% handmade.

When my family and I were living in Journey Home housing, there was another woman living next door. Journey Home was supporting both of us and we became good friends. We often took breakfast together in the backyard and chatted a lot. We talked about the businesses we each had in our home countries. She encouraged me to consider starting a business here in Canada. Eventually we joined a program called, Women in Motion.

Several months into the program I started to really struggle with my health and was in severe pain. I had to take a break from the program to have surgery. I couldn't wait to start things back up again as soon as I was able. My family was trying to support me and tell me that I do not need to start a business now, and encouraged me to do something easier. Around this time, my Journey Home neighbour told me about this opportunity called, Flavours of Hope, a social enterprise that walks with newcomer women, equipping and empowering them to start their own business. She had just completed it herself and was able to start her business. So I decided to do this.

As I was finishing this program, again, my health got really bad, so I had to go in for another surgery. Unfortunately, there were complications and I was in and out of the hospital for a while, but by this time my business had started. There were days when I was in the hospital and I was getting calls to make food orders. My mother and sister had to help me. It felt weird to me that I was not able to eat for days because of my health, but we were making food for others to keep my business open.

During this season I began to understand the exact meaning of the word "resilience". To me this means, stay strong and keep fighting against adversity. I do this because I put all my heart into my business, my last breath even. I don't want people to not trust me, so I must keep



Viviana, her mother and sister catering at the Journey Home Community Willingdon House launch event.

working, but it was my faith and the love from my family that kept me going.

I would say that my dream for my business is to have a local Colombian coffee shop and where my family and I are both cooking and serving. It is important to me that I do both, so I can share personally about the food I've made, my roots and my Colombian culture. I want to serve everyone, not just Latin Americans, that's why I am at the farmers markets with my food, where there are lots of people from different countries that come to buy my products.

When I look back on starting this business, I couldn't have done it without my family, and friends. My mother is the example to follow, she gave me the love of cooking. And my Journey Home neighbour, I believe that God gave us both a gift in each other. We were there to encourage each other in life and in business so many times. Now she and I are both being nominated for awards in business.

Some advice I leave you with is this, first and foremost – trust in yourself. If you have discipline and you are focused on your dreams, it can come true. I tell my story to inspire other women, if I can do it you can do it. I am doing this because I have had women who have gone before me and helped me. When you start a business you have a lot of doubts, especially in the beginning, and it's good to know someone who has already gone through that. I hope that I can be a mentor to other women who want to start their own business in Canada.



Viviana at a local farmers market.

Volunteer Work Day.

—Seth Anderson

Three grown men stood close, teeth clenched and brows furrowed. Sweat poured down the forehead of one of them as he breathed heavily. Occasional words were exchanged in Spanish and English as they squared off uneasily and shifted their weight from side to side. All that stood between them was... the triple bunk bed they were assembling together for new refugee claimants in a spacious house in Coquitlam! But this was not the first triple bunk bed, it was the third and final one – the result of a full Saturday morning of bolts and allen wrenches, screws and ratcheting screwdrivers, teamwork and cups of lukewarm coffee.

All together, eight JHC volunteers assembled three triple bunk beds (along with a regular one), a queen bed, four couches, eight living room armchairs, and twelve kitchen chairs. All of these served to provide temporary furniture in three separate suites in a large vacant house and laneway. This property, acquired through a vital partnership with Quantum Properties and Journey Home Community's Meanwhile Spaces Program, was handed over in rough shape while waiting to be developed. Thanks to a volunteer crew of cleaners and assemblers, a bleak and uninviting space is now serving as a transitional home to three families.

Waking up on a Saturday morning to go to work is never easy, but whenever I arrive and see a group of volunteers giving up their free time on the weekend I am both humbled and inspired. There's a camaraderie that gives a bit of hope amidst all of the challenging circumstances refugee families

encounter on a daily basis. It's a joy to see former program participants volunteering alongside settled Canadians, Spanish conversing with English, adults mentoring youth...

Work parties like this are so critical to the ongoing maintenance of all of our properties. Without volunteers, staff would be overworked and overwhelmed! We are so grateful for every floorboard scrubbed, every toilet bowl disinfected, and every mattress carried up a narrow flight of stairs.

"I can't do much, but I helped my daughter assemble some IKEA furniture once," says a volunteer over pizza as we look over the long row of kitchen chairs she has meticulously pieced together with accuracy and speed. "Don't mention it!" shrugs another in Spanish, even though he has also recently assembled every single new office desk and chair for JHC. "I broke up and gathered all of the cardboard boxes from the houses and stuffed it into my truck. I'll drop it at the recycling depot on my way home," states one of our most reliable long-term volunteers. He drives off before I have the chance to properly thank him. He's not looking for recognition – just one of many anonymous volunteers who allow us to do what we do together for incoming families. Thank you!

Are you looking for a way to get involved? Join our volunteer team where you will encounter a fun, supportive, and exciting experience helping us create caring communities.

What Moves You?

—Kim Tran



On a rainy Saturday, 239 people walked or biked to support refugee claimants. Refugee claimants are individuals who, after experiencing displacement from their home country, arrive in Canada seeking protection. Upon arrival, many face homelessness. This is not the way it should be. We believe refugees should have a dignified and warm welcome, and the Ride for Refuge is helping create a better story.

The Ride for Refuge is Journey Home Community's largest annual fundraiser. This year we had an audacious goal of \$160,000. At the time of writing this we have raised 92% of our goal, and we expect to see donations continue to come in right until the end of October.

Inspired by God's love, we are creating caring communities that offer refugee claimants housing, settlement support, and opportunities for connection.

There is no doubt that the funds raised are vital to the work of creating caring communities. Money raised in this year's Ride is going towards a range of vital supports for newly arriving refugee claimants:

- Providing transitional housing and emergency food security
- Case-managed support including direct settlement services
- Referrals to existing community resources
- A caring community that shares welcome, love, and belonging

In a heartwarming display of resilience and unity, refugees and refugee claimants participated in the Ride this year. Some walked 5km and some volunteered. These courageous individuals, who have overcome incredible hardships and adversity in their pursuit of safety and a better life, demonstrated generosity and love. To witness past program participants form a team, raise money and joyfully walk alongside staff and volunteers, who have now become friends and family to each other, is an example of the caring community we are creating at Journey Home Community.

To host an event of this size requires more than just teams of walkers and cyclists. It takes a community of volunteers working together. This year, a wonderful team of Journey Home volunteers served alongside students from John Knox Christian School, Trinity Western University, and a group from Tenth Church's community of newcomers. To all our volunteers this year, we say, Thank You!

Events like Ride for Refuge are important to us on so many levels. As a fundraiser, it brings in much needed resources allowing us to offer housing and support. And as an event, it provides opportunities for people to make meaningful connections as we rally around a common goal. By participating in the Ride, we're standing in solidarity with people who have little or no voice and who often get left behind or ignored.

Mark your calendars for September 28, 2024 because we hope to see you as either a participant or a volunteer at next year's Ride for Refuge!

3 Ways to Get Involved.

Volunteer.

For most positions, we look for volunteers who can commit for a period of time. We begin by having a conversation so we can get to know you or your group and together, determine your fit within the Journey Home Community.

Go to journeyhomecommunity.ca/volunteer to learn more ways you can get involved.

Donate.

It's not enough to provide housing and support. When refugees know people care and are there for them, this leads to HOPE. This is at the very core of Journey Home Community.

Donate online—no gift is too small. The easiest way to donate is to give online at journeyhomecommunity.ca/give-today

Pray.

Join us as a prayer partner for Journey Home Community, the team and volunteers, the refugees we welcome to Metro Vancouver, and for the general needs of refugees worldwide.

Subscribe to our monthly Praise & Prayer Report—To join our list, email prayer@journeyhomecommunity.ca



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