



MEDIA RELEASE

JUNE 23, 2021

Toronto, ON – Late last year, L'Arche Toronto Homes Inc. (L'Arche Toronto) received a \$33,300 Resilient Communities Fund grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) to help offer programming in its homes, and enhanced programming for its two community inclusion programs. The Resilient Communities Fund grant program was developed to help non-profit organizations rebound and recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

"I am very pleased that the OTF made a grant to L'Arche Toronto for programming in its homes and the broader community," said Peter Tabuns, MPP for Toronto-Danforth. "L'Arche does excellent work and investing in them and the people they serve helps all of Ontario."

Thanks to the OTF grant, L'Arche Toronto Sol Express was able to create the Card Kit Project and sent out 50 kits to present and recent Sol Express participants, as well as its volunteers and supporters. The 50 kits, which included 10 cards, postage and other supplies, had the possibility to reach 500 people in the broader community. Through this outreach, a number of previous in-person participants took part because of additional support that was provided, and then went on to joining other on-line programs. Participants remained connected and had a positive effect on those with and without intellectual disabilities in the community who were also negatively affected by the pandemic. To read more visit <https://www.larchetoronto.org/card-kit-project>

The OTF Resilient Communities Fund grant has also allowed L'Arche Toronto to offer high quality in-person and on-line programming to appeal to a variety of interests. For on-line sessions and workshops, artists/professionals enhanced the programs and gave a clear message to participants that they are valued and not forgotten, that COVID-19 does not have to stop them from growing, learning and engaging. Through programs and supplies, participants were engaged in different activities that could increase their skills, their sense of connectedness, sense of worth, thereby alleviating the sense of loss and loneliness they had feeling before and helping them to maintain good mental health.

"Virtual programming in many realms has fallen short but the Sol Express team has creatively succeeded in engaging people with intellectual disabilities and delighted them in the process and for this deserves enormous credit. Agnes talks about it all weekend and would not miss a session. Agnes particularly enjoyed taking part in the Card Kit Project," said Valerie Kenny, a Sol Express participant's parent.

L'Arche Toronto Homes Inc. (L'Arche Toronto) is a not-for-profit charity that helps persons with intellectual disabilities to discover their gifts and abilities and supports them to achieve their goals for a meaningful life. L'Arche Toronto provides homes and offers supports for daily living, employment and community participation. www.larchetoronto.org

L'Arche Toronto's community inclusion programs are Sol Express and TIFS. L'Arche Toronto Sol Express is an innovative creative and performance arts program that focuses on developing the talents and skills of artists with intellectual disabilities. L'Arche Toronto TIFS is a one-year life skills program that helps individuals to be more independent as they become more integrated into their local community. www.larchetoronto.org/sol-express and www.larchetoronto.org/tifs

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations. OTF awarded \$115 million to 644 projects last year to build healthy and vibrant communities in Ontario.

-30-

Media Contact:

Caroline Hughey 647 444 3788 or 416 406 2869 x 35

L'Arche Toronto Homes Inc., 186 Floyd Avenue, Toronto M4Y 2J1

www.larchetoronto.org