



## Pillar Community Innovation Award Finalists 2010

### Boys & Girls Club of London

“My Action Plan to Education” (M.A.P.), a breakthrough, innovative and unique approach to supercharging hope for youth was launched in 2008 by the Boys & Girls Club of London. M.A.P. is designed to assist our young Boys & Girls Club of London members who are at high risk of dropping out of school, and whose financial considerations make the realization of higher education difficult. A student’s M.A.P. is developed to meet their unique needs, providing support and guidance every step of the way along their educational journey and involves their commitment and that of their parents(s), community agencies and their school.

### Jeremy Jeresky

Jeremy, a current Master of Fine Art student at the University of Western Ontario, has demonstrated superlative qualities of dedication, creative problem solving, resourcefulness and collaboration. His vision is to create a space of sociability that allows the participants to express themselves artistically - beyond fulfilling their basic needs. With his grassroots approach, he established an open art studio creating a space for people accessing social services to find and develop their own unique visual expression. He works tirelessly to gain support from community partners, businesses and other agencies in the area.

“This is a great way to start a dialogue. It may be a small gesture, but it’s a beginning. It’s a way to say we can all participate in this community; we can all be a part of the cultural production of the community”.

### Tampon Tuesday /A\ Television

This event gathers women together on the second Tuesday of each month for casual networking and to bring donations of feminine hygiene products for the London Food Bank. A local restaurant (Jack Astor’s) provides the finger foods and the location and /A\ provides logistical support through their community relations department. Although the donated products are gender specific, the monthly requirement by most women of reproductive age crosses racial, ethnic and socio-economic divides. It draws us together and helps to define us as women. Approximately 2300 women of reproductive age come to the food bank monthly and 300 are helped each month with hygienic products.

Simple ideas built on a courageous foundation can and do work.



## Pillar Community Leadership Finalists 2010

### Rhonda Bernardi

Rhonda, the owner of Nova Vita Salon, has always held true to the fact that in order to be part of the community, one must support the community. Her drive to not only recognize a need, but to get out and do something about it is an inspiration. Rhonda has exemplified leadership and collaboration between the business and non-profit sectors with multiple charity events supporting My Sister's Place, Parkinson's, Wellspring, Locks of Love, Juvenile Diabetes and many others. Rhonda regularly gives her time, and resources to raise funds and awareness for worthy causes. She is passionate about her community, leads by example and is a true volunteer advocate on all levels. Rhonda is an inspiration to all who know her and encourages us to step forward, become involved and take action to improve the human condition.

### Brian Salt

Brian identified the need for a wildlife advocate and caretaker and opened the Salthaven Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education Centre. As a community leader, Brian acts on behalf of wildlife every day through his patient rehabilitation and release, volunteer training, delivery of educational presentations and wildlife liaison role. Brian retains, trains and provides opportunities for skill enhancement for close to 100 diverse volunteers, representing native communities, retirees and students alike. He inspires members of the community to be conscious of their impact upon local wildlife and proactive in preserving their environment and shared habitats. His passion and knowledge for wildlife rehabilitation ensures that every conversation conveys the power and empathy within each person to make a difference every day.

### Joe Swe Hantha

Joe is a member of the Karen ethnic minority of Myanmar who came to Canada in the mid 90's to make this country his new home. Joe uses his leadership skills and experience with both the Karen and Canadian cultures to help newcomers adapt to living in their new country. He has helped many Karens obtain employment and has focused on Karen teens to help them understand their new culture while maintaining their Karen heritage.

Joe is a man of peace, integrity, intelligence, compassion, patience and dedication who uses all of these abilities and character traits in the service of the Karen community and in the service of his new country, Canada. Joe challenges Karens to maintain the best of their heritage while making necessary adaptations to Canadian values. Our multicultural community can only benefit from leaders like Joe.



## Pillar Community Impact Finalists 2010

### Itsy

Itsy, a charitable organization that supports the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at St. Joseph's Hospital, lends a hand to families who find themselves in a nightmare situation, struggling to manage when faced with the unexpected cost of having a child in NICU. Itsy was created by Mat and Laurel Lunnen after the birth of their daughter, Story who was born 15 weeks premature, weighing a mere 1lb 12 oz. Experiencing firsthand the many challenges of having an infant in the NICU, Itsy helps families that are going through such a difficult experience at such a momentous time in their lives.

### mindyourmind

**mindyourmind** is a youth engagement, mental health intervention program focused on providing accurate information, resources and interactive coping tools for youth who are at risk with varying degrees of mental health disorders. Representing a new model of citizenship, youth direct and inform all aspects of program development from policy to evaluation. **mindyourmind** engages youth by going where they are- online, setting a new standard in the area of service for youth with mental health issues. By harnessing information technology they respond to unique and accessible youth-positive programming. **mindyourmind** enables youth to reach out, get help and to give help to their friends. Stepping out of our traditional modes of thinking can lead to phenomenal results.

### Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital Auxiliary

For over 95 years, the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital (SMGH) Auxiliary volunteers have demonstrated a strong commitment to the lives of over 80,000 residents living in Middlesex County. Through their fundraising activities they have significantly enhanced patient care services by funding the purchase of hospital equipment. In its first year, over \$28,500 was raised to buy a new blood analyzer unit. With approximately 100,000 patients visiting SMGH annually, the availability of this equipment has facilitated the diagnosis of disease and has made an impact on a significant number of lives. The Auxiliary expanded its membership base from fewer than 100 to 250 people to open the Java Hut Coffee Kiosk with all profits supporting the purchases. The diverse group of volunteers is a mix of people including retired professionals, working parents & students.



### London Clinical Psychology Residency Consortium

The LCPRC is a collaborative community effort that has brought together four major mental health service providers in the London community: London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC), St. Joseph's Health Care (SJHC), Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI), and Vanier Children's Services.

The LCPRC emphasizes clinical service, teaching and research. The aim of the program is to prepare residents for post-doctoral supervised practice in psychology, particularly within the health care system. By joining forces, the consortium partners are able to provide residents training for careers in psychology with an enriched and innovative training experience. There is an emphasis on increasing awareness and sensitivity of individual differences including multicultural issues, inter-professional health care service provisions and knowledge transfer/sharing.

### The London HBT (Homophobia, Biphobia, Transphobia) Working Group

The HBT working group is a collaborative effort bringing together 15 community-based service agencies and groups. (e.g. Aids Committee of London, Cross Cultural Learners Centre, unions (CAW local 27), Student Groups, Religious Groups, the London Police, Middlesex London Health Unit and other community members. This collective came together after realizing the need to encourage diversity, inclusiveness and community safety by proactively addressing homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in the Forest City. The level of creativity and innovation this group has shown in addressing issues of hate and violence within the community is unique to London and can serve as a model for other communities.

### London Police Department & London International Airport

The LPS and LIA put forth a tremendous collaborative effort and in their support and assistance of the Sunshine Foundation for the DreamLift project. With the help of these organizations, DreamLift transported over 220 passengers (including: parents, volunteers and 80 children with severe physical disabilities and /or life threatening illnesses) to Disney World in Florida for a one-day whirlwind adventure. The LPS recruited 55 officers and civilian staff to participate as "buddies", providing everything the children needed. Many used vacation time and personal resources, reaffirming that local police truly are heroes. The LIA took care of the details specifically keeping everyone comfortable during the check-in and boarding process. As well, the LIA waived all typical airport fees so that Sunshine could spend their donated dollars directly on the children, rather than taxes and improvement fees.