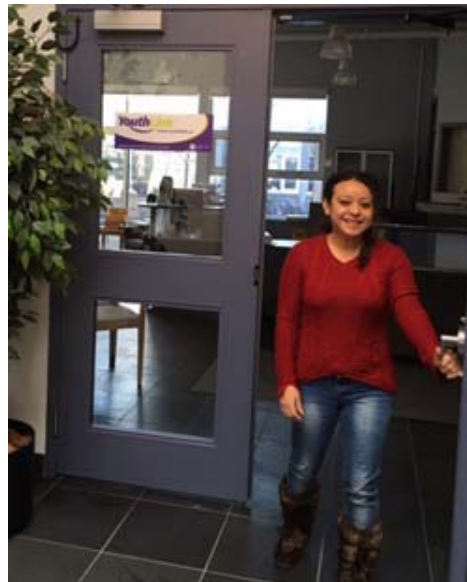


## Introducing:

# “A Stronger Scarborough Where All Youth and Families Thrive”

This new YouthLink vision statement is already driving decisions, actions and renewed dedication among our Board of Directors, staff and volunteers. Under this rallying cry, YouthLink is spearheading wide-ranging initiatives, and working with many local groups, businesses and residents on proven ways for improving the health and well-being of everyone who lives, studies, works and plays in our community. Read on for early examples of this statement in action, and ideas on how you can join in!



Opening the door on a new workday at YouthLink's 747 Warden Avenue office is Accounts Payable Assistant Irene Ramirez Colorado

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Thursday, May 4

Learn more about mental health and well-being for Scarborough youth and their families. (P. 6)

Purchase your BluesLink tickets by May 15

And qualify for the early bird prize of a wine fridge fully stocked with, what else, wine! (P. 6)

## Expanding the Sounds of Scarborough

Strike up the band for TD Bank's MusiCounts \$22,800 donation to YouthLink's Beat Goes On Project! These dollars will help build a recording studio at our new Kennedy Road facility, purchase musical instruments, and help us recruit volunteer music instructors. The



Beat Goes On builds on the success of our Tyler McGill My First Guitar Program to expand the sounds of Scarborough for more to enjoy. If you know a young person with a love of music and no outlet for it, urge them to call 416-967-1773 and ask about this program!

# Family Support Program Lives up to Its Name

What did YouthLink do for the parents who wanted to attend our Family Support Program but couldn't, since they didn't have someone at home to watch over their child who has a developmental disability? Hold a separate event for those youth at the same time as the parenting meeting, that's what!

YouthLink counsellors modified an art therapy session to accommodate the unique needs and developmental challenges of the younger participants. The young people sculpted clay into animals they liked then constructed environments for their animals using collage materials. Finally, they shared their art creations with the group.

At the same time, with help from the Family Support team, the youths' parents convened in another part of YouthLink's main office. The adults got the chance to relax and network with others who shared some of the ongoing challenges and joys of supporting someone who has an intellectual disability.

The youth participants expressed their thoughts, emotions and artistry through new skills. The parents experienced peace of mind while sharing information, experiences and resources. The counsellors discovered newfound motivation for exploring different social activities for this group, and a greater



(Seated, L to R) YouthLink Counsellors Angie Lau and Anie Najarian, and Family Support Workers Blair Coombs and Roger Smith with some of the tools of their trade

sense of satisfaction for more people served well. Now that's a win-win-win!

Refer a youth up to age 24 with a developmental disability, or their parent, to YouthLink for information on the range of community services available for them, including those offered by YouthLink. Call 416-967-1773.

## Summer Parenting with Class

In addition to the Family Support Program, YouthLink runs a seasonal initiative for parents of children aged 12 to 21 of all abilities. Triple P is short for Positive Parenting Program. Over 8 weekly sessions, parents receive



tools and strategies for creating safe, loving and predictable environments for their children. For more information, and to register for the summer sessions, call our Intake Worker at 416-967-1773 ext. 222.



Tzu Jung Chen and Angie Lau, YouthLink Counsellors, wait to serve up a feast for parents graduating from the winter session of YouthLink's Triple P Parenting Program



# One to One: Youth's Success is Pathways' Success

Five years ago, 19-year-old Inshal Ali couldn't have guessed that, today, he would have his summer job locked up as a camp counsellor with the Toronto District School Board. That's what's happened though, and he credits YouthLink's Pathways to Education Program for contributing to his achievement.

In 2012, Inshal heard about opportunities to volunteer as a student counsellor with the school board's Focus on Youth Program. An enterprising young man, he approached Mark Raghu, a Pathways career mentor, for help with his resume and with interview preparation. His natural talents shone through at every stage, and he got the volunteer opportunity. He has since spent December to May for the past five years helping younger students with their homework ("including science experiments!" he says, keenly), team-building and physical activities. His Pathways career mentor advised him on the importance of networking and communicating effectively with his employer. Inshal followed through and, *voilà*, he now has his summer job sewn up.

What else might be in store for him? Who knows, as he is preparing to enter college this fall. As he says: "I thought I wanted to do business and knew I had a passion for it when I was in school. Through this experience I learned I really enjoy working with the kids. I was able to discover a new passion and a

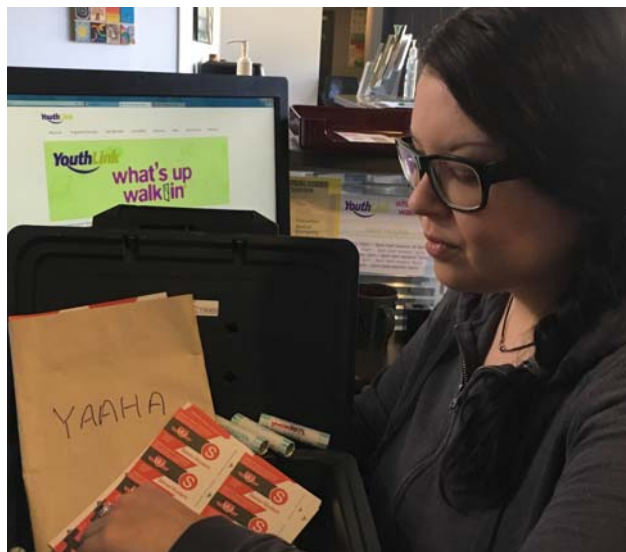


(L to R) Inshal Ali and YouthLink/Pathways to Education's Mark Raghu

possible career path." Good on you Inshal. Keep up your good work!

## YouthLink Funds Scarborough Transit (commuters, that is!)

Public transit plans have been in the news a lot lately. Did you know that, each year, YouthLink spends more than \$275,000 in donated and granted funds on TTC tickets and tokens? These are given to youth in our programs for whom financial hardship would otherwise keep them from travelling to school, or to our services and those of our community partners. Food for thought the next time you're asked to donate to YouthLink.



Receptionist Tegan Boyce minds YouthLink's stash of TTC tokens and tickets

## On the Move

In 2005, the United Way of Greater Toronto found Scarborough lacking many needed services for youth. At its urging, our Board of Directors decided then to relocate all YouthLink services to this community within 10 years. That promise will be fulfilled in the coming months now that we have sold all of our real estate holdings elsewhere and bought new properties here. Soon we will move our treatment house from mid-town Toronto to East Scarborough, and our administrative office from Warden Avenue down the road to Kennedy (pictured right). These moves make YouthLink a leading provider of services to the health and well-being of youth and their families in our community. Spread the word!



## How Far We've Come! How Far We Have Yet to Go!

\$54.65: that's how much was in our agency's bank account 100 years ago. Today, YouthLink operates with an annual budget of \$6.2 million. Many thanks go out to our financial supporters: to the caring individuals and businesses in our community who make direct donations and bequests, and purchase BluesLink tickets; to the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and Ministry of Community and Social Services; to the United Way, Pathways to Education and other program funders; and to the City of Toronto.

Despite this generosity there are youth and their families who still need our services. More funds are needed to expand our reach, deepen our programs and advance our effectiveness. Every little bit helps!

Donate online at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/search/app/?models=charity.charityprofile&q=YouthLink>



*From opening day in 1965 at our mid-Toronto treatment house  
(Photo courtesy The Globe and Mail)*

## YouthLink's Roots Project Needs Helping Hands

If you enjoy treasure hunts, local history and information management, we need you! Come into the YouthLink office and help cull, catalogue and digitize photos and other memorabilia from our 102-year history. Contact Dianne LeBreton at 416-967-1773 ext. 278, or [dianne.lebreton@youthlink.ca](mailto:dianne.lebreton@youthlink.ca) to learn more about this ongoing volunteer project.



# Straight from the Heart

Meet Stephen Drielsma, President, YouthLink Board of Directors

## Q. Why did you join the YouthLink Board?

Many years ago, my employer transferred me from Sarnia to Toronto. My family and I moved to a nice home in Scarborough. On the first day of school, my wife and I were told that our children were not to play in the sandboxes on school grounds as needles related to drug use were regularly found there. Within a year of that we moved to a place where children were safe from these kinds of threats. Remembering that, on my retirement, I decided to volunteer in Scarborough to help out wherever I could. I connected with YouthLink Executive Director Janice Hayes through the Maytree Foundation's BoardMatch program.

## Q. What qualifications do you bring to the Board of Directors?

I am a Chartered Professional Accountant, a member of the Institute of Corporate Directors, a member of that organization's Ontario Chapter Executive and, for many years, a volunteer in the not-for-profit setting.

## Q. What has been your major surprise as a Board member?

The inadequacy of funding for the delivery of programs which address the serious challenges faced by many youth, challenges that if addressed properly would improve their lives and our community, and save a lot of money over the long-term.

To learn more about volunteering at YouthLink, go to <http://youthlink.ca/get-involved/>

## What does the YouthLink Board of Directors do?

The YouthLink Board of Directors is made up of community volunteers. They collaborate as a team: to determine YouthLink's vision, mission and goals; to plan and direct policy in line with the vision and mission; to make decisions in the organization's best long-term interests; and to represent the community to the management team, and the organization to external stakeholders.



Board President Stephen Drielsma and Executive Director Janice Hayes at the recent Board Orientation session



Board President Stephen Drielsma (far right) welcomes new Board members (L to R): Jason Balgopal, Deborah Nurse, Jun Bu and Sharon McBrien

## Join Us on These Dates!

**Know What's Out There, Thursday, May 4, 5:00 p.m., Scarboro Golf and Country Club, 321 Scarborough Golf Club Road.** What do you say to a young person who is anxious, depressed, self-harming or suicidal? Know how to help any youth promptly get the mental health services they need at this open, no-cost, public information session hosted by YouthLink. Learn about the city's youth mental health walk-in clinics (YouthLink operates one!) and have your questions answered by David O'Brien, Clinic Services Supervisor at East Metro Youth Services. Bring a friend along. Better yet, invite two!

**BluesLink Returns for its 10th Year! Thursday, June 8, 5:30 p.m., Scarboro Golf and Country Club, 321 Scarborough Golf Club Road.** YouthLink's major fundraiser is back for its 10th anniversary and it promises to be the best one yet! Bring your appetite to sample the many food stations created for this event by Chef Chris. Don your dancing shoes to boogie down to the awesome tunes of Jarvis Church and the ONQ Big Band. Bring your wallet to bid on the many great silent auction items, and fire up your party spirit for all the fun to be shared with old and new friends from across our community. All proceeds go to YouthLink programs across Scarborough. Buy your tickets now at 416-967-1773 or online at <http://youthlink.ca/special-events/blueslink/buy-tickets/>.



*Back by popular demand, Juno-award winner Jarvis Church will headline at BluesLink*

**YouthLink Annual General Meeting, Wednesday, September 27, 5:00 p.m.**

Progress on our Strategic Plan will be the major focus. Check [www.youthlink.ca](http://www.youthlink.ca) for the Scarborough venue as the date approaches.

**Fundraising Golf Tournament, Thursday, September 28, 12:30 p.m., Cedar Brae Golf Club, 55 Mac Frost Way.**

Another great way to contribute to YouthLink: by golfing and dining with other duffers in the autumn air. The ticket price covers the greens fee, riding cart, lunch, dinner and a prize table. Why not put together a foursome for four times the fun? Call 416-967-1773 to book your tee time!



Stay connected. Follow us on



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Toronto & York Region

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