



2021-22

ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION

Reena is a non-profit organization that promotes dignity, individuality, independence, personal growth, and community inclusion for people with diverse abilities within a framework of Jewish culture and values.

VALUES

Reena's values are based on Judaic principles. They govern all decisions made and encompass interactions with all of our stakeholders.

Our values are CLEAR: **CARE**

Chesed VeTzedek
Compassion and Justice

LEADERSHIP

Tikun Olam
Repair the World

EMPOWERMENT

V'ahavta L'reacha Kamocha
Value Others as You Value Yourself

ACCESSIBILITY

Lifnei Iver Lo Teeten Michshol
Remove Barriers

RESPECT

Kvod Habriyot
Honour Our Humanity



Jacob and Kyle at the 10th annual Striking for Reena bowling event

LOU FRUITMAN REENA RESIDENCE

A Year of Independence

The Lou Fruitman Reena Residence (LFRR) officially opened in the summer of 2021. The building was designed as an intentional community where residents and staff are committed to creating a community of support.

Located in Thornhill, the LFRR provides housing to over 130 adults of diverse needs, including those with developmental disabilities, mental health challenges and physical disabilities. It includes units for complex healthcare, independent or shared living arrangements and respite. The LFRR also offers many amenities and programming spaces.

Twenty-three-year-old JB has lived at the LFRR for about a year, and the move from his parents' home into his one-bedroom suite went better than expected.

"I live in a building with other individuals who are similar to me, with staff who always check in on me," JB says. "I really love the location of the building because it is close to a lot of places like the grocery store and the mall. I like doing my own laundry and taking out the garbage and recycling, as it makes me feel independent. I enjoy having my own mailbox too, and picking up my packages from the front desk or from Security."

While he loves being independent, JB likes knowing support is just around the corner should he need it. He says Reena staff take time out of their schedules to stop and chat with individuals in the halls or in the lobby. This goes a long way in making him feel at home.

Collaborating with a variety of community agencies, Reena offers many programs for the LFRR residents. JB says he is most looking forward to using the gymnasium located in the Azrieli Hub, as well as signing up for cooking and movie nights with his friends, once COVID-19 restrictions are revised.

According to JB, the best advice to give an individual moving into the LFRR is: "Stay calm, because you will have your support team along the way."

"During the COVID-19 lockdowns, I couldn't see my family, but the staff always checked in on me, which was good. It was a hard time, but I was able to get through it with their help; they're amazing." – JB



130+

capacity for adults
and seniors



79

units



6

storeys



1

intentional and
supportive community

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

Shaping Our Future



L-R: Sandy Stemp, Bryan Keshen, Viji Hariharan and Sheila Lampert

Reena would like to acknowledge the following governments and granting agencies for their direct funding support of Reena in 2021-22.



Canada



Dear Reena Friends and Family,

As we reflect upon the challenges and achievements of the last year, we would like to express our tremendous gratitude. We are immensely proud of the resilience, flexibility and professionalism of our direct support staff, supervisors and managers who collectively stayed focused on delivering care during this time. We are equally appreciative of the support of our stakeholders and generous donors who stepped up to enable our efforts and assist us in sustaining our success.

While many of us struggled to stay safe at home, maintain positive attitudes and manage day-to-day challenges, at Reena we continued our efforts to grow. From the completion of the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence to the announcement of two new housing projects; the seven-unit Tansley development and the Frankfort Family Reena Residence, which will house 160 individuals, we continue to build in response to the housing and services crisis. At a time where resources were scarce, we created new enterprises and supported others in doing the same. Whether it was the growth of our Chai Tikvah mental health housing, the start of GReena – our new sustainability platform, or the expansion of online and onsite programming, we are grateful to each and every one of you for your valuable contributions. We are proud of the tremendous progress we've made together.

We are often reminded by our colleagues how fortunate we are at Reena to have a culture of interdependence and trust. It enables us to take bold steps and provides us with the security that even with missed steps, we will not fall, as someone is always there to support us. That level of confidence and respect for each other is part of our culture and has allowed us to be sector leaders, both during times of crisis and strategic growth.

As we continue to look ahead at the key needs and changing environment, we are prioritizing health, in particular mental health and well-being; expanding job opportunities in developmental services and investing in housing. We are addressing barriers to access; helping more individuals within the community-at-large to find work and social engagement. We are working to shape a future that is more equal, accessible and inclusive. In 2023, Reena will be celebrating 50 years since our founding. We invite you to share your stories, special memories and experiences. Our goals for our 50th celebrations include increased advocacy, engagement and participation to strategically position Reena to thrive for the next 50 years and beyond.

We would like to thank the families for their patience and understanding during the last two years. Your support allowed us to maintain a calm and nurturing environment while keeping everyone safe.

While the challenges created by COVID-19 continue to impact upon our sector, Reena will continue to look ahead and work to expand and innovate to meet changing needs.

Sincerely,

Sandy Stemp
REENA, COO

Bryan Keshen
REENA, CEO

Viji Hariharan
REENA, CFO

Sheila Lampert
REENA FOUNDATION,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BOARD MESSAGE

How Our Legacy Guides Our Growth

Dear Reena Community,

In all our years of involvement as volunteers with Reena, we have never seen so much cooperation and progress through our collective efforts. As the Chairs of Reena, Batay Reena and Reena Foundation, we each have separate Boards and responsibilities, yet together we have one mission.

In a year where volatility, changes in marketplace, supply constraints, and significant health risks occurred, we have seen our services sustained and our finances well managed, with all of our entities having unqualified financial statements, a rare occurrence in the charitable non-profit sector. As you will read in this report, we have seen growth, innovation and community support enabling us to achieve new sector-leading services.

We commend the entire team for implementing and fulfilling Reena's mission every single day. We also want to thank our fellow Board members and committee volunteers who continued to be active and engaged during a very difficult time.

As Reena continues to evolve with a focus on new needs and changing support requirements, we have and will continue to work together to maximize the value of each of our organizations' strengths, creating a more effective and aligned team. Over the last two years, we have thoroughly reviewed our governance structure and have incorporated major policy and process improvements, including an ongoing risk review, updated investment policies, Board evaluation tools and an ongoing recruitment process. We recognize the importance of evaluating our internal systems, processes and operational frameworks, to ensure we have the proper structures in place to sustain continued growth.

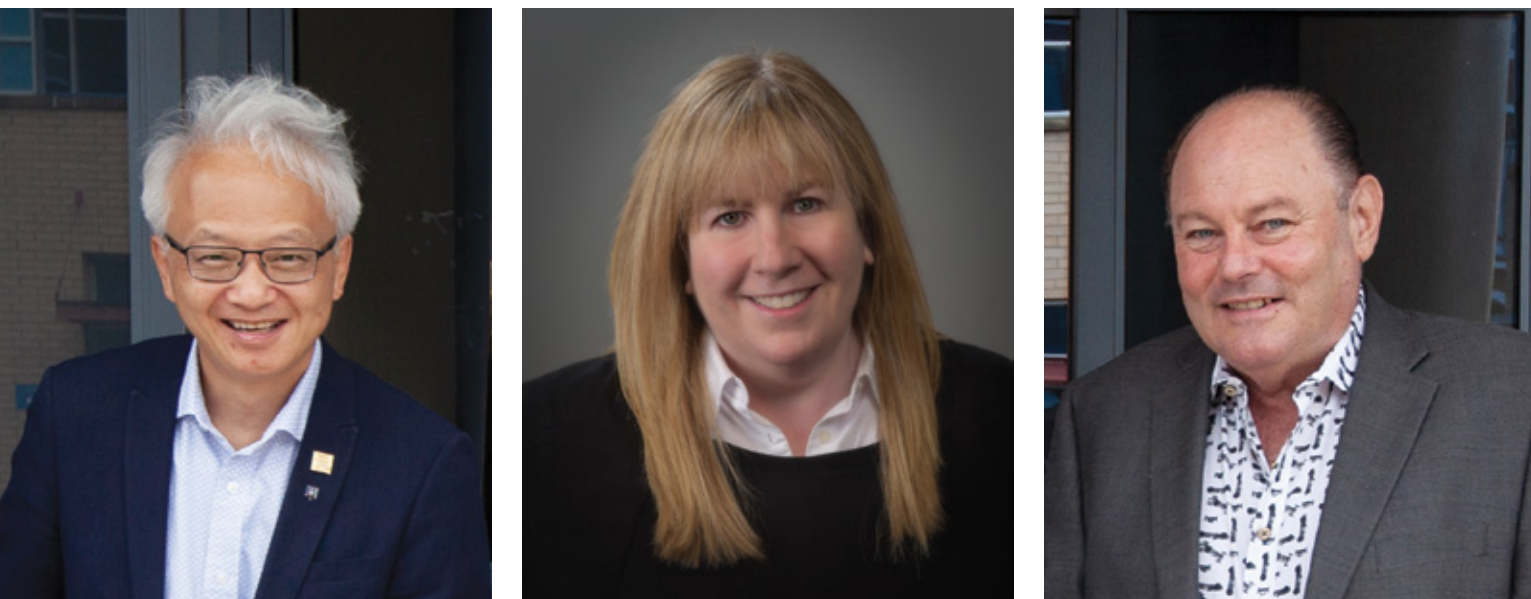
We thank the individuals and families who entrust us with this sacred mission. We look forward to the days ahead when we can once again gather and celebrate with joy – the English translation of *Reena*.

Sincerely,

Charles Chee
REENA

Marnie Silver Nelson
REENA FOUNDATION

Harold Seidel
BATAY REENA



L-R: Charles Chee, Marnie Silver Nelson, Harold Seidel

Our goals for Reena, Reena Foundation and Batay Reena are to continue to build on its strengths, leverage opportunities and prepare for future challenges that may arise. We will focus on maintaining our core values as we grow, managing change effectively, while remaining accountable to our stakeholders. By investing in our people, our systems and our relationships, we can continue to build on Reena's legacy of success.

JUBILEE (YOVEL) CELEBRATION

Reena is Turning 50!

Join us as we celebrate our past with an eye to the future



From the humble beginnings of a few parents recognizing a need 50 years ago, to one of the largest and most influential support service agencies in the developmental and mental health sector, the history of care, support, innovation, leadership and compassion shown by everyone involved in Reena is certainly worth celebrating.

Our incredible 50-year story is one of family, love, belonging, resilience and tenacity. Reena's story is about a group of families that knew that their children had value and needed a place in the community, and the many people who helped make it a reality.

Reena@50 (2023) will be a year-long celebration, highlighting our past and building for the future. We are hoping to take this opportunity to celebrate and engage past leaders and recruit new ones, to help meet the growing needs of our community. We would like to profile the history of innovation and growth to inspire others as we look to tackle some of the challenges ahead:

- Up to a 40-year waitlist for supports due to lack of appropriate housing
- A growing mental health crisis with acute needs impacting 1 in 10 families
- Poorer health outcomes for those with developmental disabilities
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Continued social isolation



Sandy Keshen, Reena's Executive Director, 1973-2014 and Rabbi Joseph Kelman ^{zt"l}, Reena's founder and the driving force behind Reena in its early years

For more details or to get involved in Reena's 50th celebrations, contact:

Gary Gladstone

e: ggladstone@reena.org



From our humble beginning, here at camp Reena (1974-1992), to our intentional communities



EVENTS AND PROGRAMS PLANNED FOR LAUNCH IN 2023 INCLUDE:

- **50th Anniversary Gala**
- **50th Anniversary Bash/Reena Fun Day** with games, prizes, food and entertainment for individuals and families
- **Israel Accessibility Mission** with Reena individuals
- **The One Word Campaign** – which will encapsulate what Reena means to our valued staff, Board members, individuals and their families – executed through social media and stories that will be shared to the community and beyond
- **Reena Staff Recognition Events**, including dedicating the Reena Community Residence in honour of Sandy Keshen
- **Painting Program** with a 50th flair, allowing our individuals to communicate their love for Reena through artwork that will be proudly displayed in the Reena buildings and offices
- **A Mental Health-focused Event** to highlight the invaluable Reena/Chai Tikvah partnership
- **Stories, Features and Interviews** highlighting Reena's 50 years and the staff, families, individuals and volunteers who make Reena the special place it is
- **Giveaways, Contests and Special Features** celebrating Reena@50, with corporate and personal gifts/donations to make the greatest impact to engage the community at large

HOUSING

The Frankfort Family Reena Residence

Reena continues to work on innovative housing solutions for the Developmental Services Sector

"We are proud to support Reena's newest residential project that will help address the urgent need for specialized housing in our community. This project will be life-changing for people with disabilities and their families, and we are honoured to be involved."

THE FRANKFORT FAMILY



To explore funding opportunities, please contact:

Sheila Lampert

Executive Director

t: 416.723.1369

e: slampert@reenafoundation.org

The Frankfort Family Reena Residence will be the largest residential project in Reena's 50-year history. This new building will be modelled on the success of the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence (opened in 2021) and Reena Community Residence (opened in 2012).

On June 1st, 2022, the Baruch and Weisz families hosted an intimate reception at the Paradise Developments Design Studio to honour the Frankfort family for their \$6M leadership gift, and officially launch the \$15M capital campaign. On July 22nd, 2022, Reena received municipal approval from the City of Toronto and our goal is to break ground in the Fall of 2023.

THE FRANKFORT FAMILY REENA RESIDENCE WILL:

- Be located on Elm Ridge Drive in Toronto's upper Forest Hill neighbourhood
- Become home to an estimated 160 individuals
- Include units designed for independent or shared living accommodations and specialized units for complex care
- Have floors designed to serve people with mental health issues
- Feature many amenities including respite suites, programming spaces, gymnasium, garden and underground parking



The Frankfort family, L-R: Brandon, Jennifer, George, Judy, Jodi, Sean and Derek



L-R: Eddie Weisz, Orly Fruchter, Monty S. Robbins, Bryan Keshen, Lisa Fruitman-Belzowski, Sheila Lampert



L-R: Sheila Lampert, Jonathan, Ron Baruch, Elyse, Jason



L-R: Jack Eisenberger, Steven Weisz, Derek Frankfort, Amnon Baruch



L-R: Adam Kronick, Dana Zosky



L-R: Jenifer Koffman, Rob Segal

ADVOCACY

The Push for Affordable Housing

How Reena champions the fundamental right to independence and better quality of life



Reena residents in front of the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence

Housing has been at the core of Reena advocacy since the early 2000s, when it became evident that solving the housing crisis was fundamental to increasing independence and improving life outcomes for individuals we support with developmental disabilities.

With that in mind, Reena created the Intentional Community Consortium (ICC) with six agencies in 2016, to advocate at all levels of government. Today, the consortium represents over 25 agencies in Ontario and Quebec, and our impact is being felt

nationally as we collaborate with a variety of stakeholders across Canada.

Federal and provincial ministers work with Reena and the ICC on a regular basis, and Reena is often called upon for expert advice at the local, provincial and national levels. Most recently, Reena was a lead agency, with assistance from Safehaven and the ICC, in a Solutions Lab funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The first phase has just resulted in a 'how to' guidebook on ensuring Mutual Inclusion in new housing developments. Working with

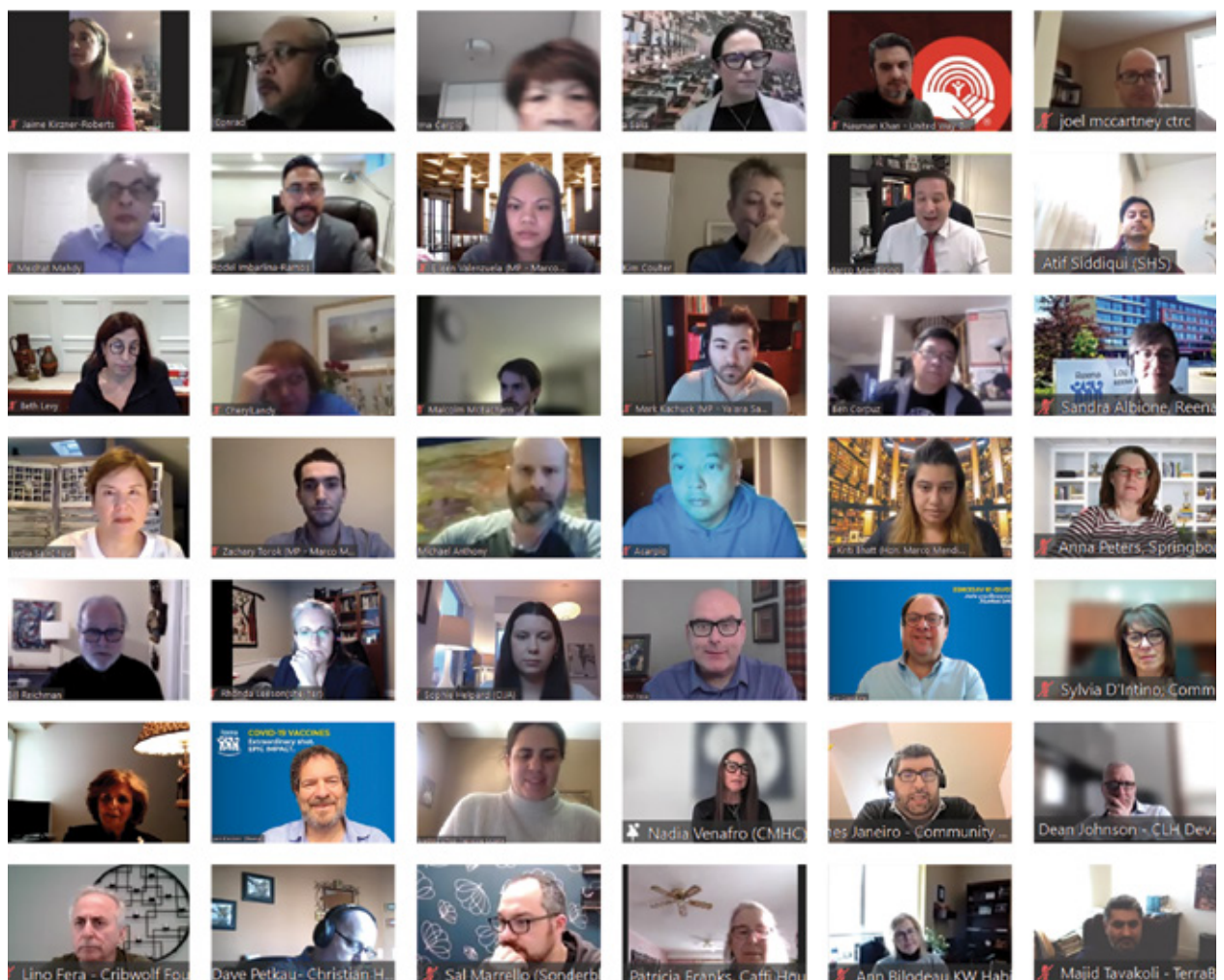
community agencies in the Eglinton–Marlee area, particularly the Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization (OVCO), Reena secured the local community's support for the Frankfort Family Reena Residence, which received unanimous zoning approval from the City of Toronto with anticipated groundbreaking in 2023.

Building on the success and progress of last year, Reena and Community Living Toronto (CLT) are in collaboration, supported by the Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs (OASIS), on advocacy work to provide municipalities with additional funds for affordable supportive housing in the sector.

During COVID-19, the Ministries of Health and Children, Community and Social

Services have been working very closely, but there is more that can be done. To that end, Reena, CLT and OASIS have brought the idea of creating a Developmental Services/Health Secretariat to the forefront and will continue promoting the initiative this year.

As we look to celebrate 50 years of service excellence, we have a lot to be thankful for and proud of. Working with all levels of government, current and former lay leadership, staff, volunteers and supported individuals, we will celebrate our past achievements, while positioning us for even greater heights, promoting dignity, individuality, independence, personal growth and community inclusion for people with diverse abilities within a framework of Jewish culture and values.



Multi-stakeholders virtual meeting

PROGRAMS

Evolution and Innovation

Striving to provide meaningful programming in the face of a global pandemic

These past two years have presented incredible challenges for social interactions for so many in Canada and around the world – Reena was no exception. Nonetheless, despite these experienced hardships, Reena has proven its resilience and our ability to step up, to adapt, and to be innovative in our programming.

Providing individuals with quality programming and enabling them to make decisions that impact their lives and livelihoods have been the driving forces for change to meet growing needs.

Our programming has evolved from a traditional day program serving large numbers of individuals, in a single location, to programming that offers a variety of à la carte options that fulfill the various needs and desires of our individuals.

Over the last 15 years, the demand for services has continued to grow and we know we must look at how to better serve the people who depend on us for developmental services.

Reena always aims to provide meaningful activities and programs that encourage community inclusion and a sense of belonging.

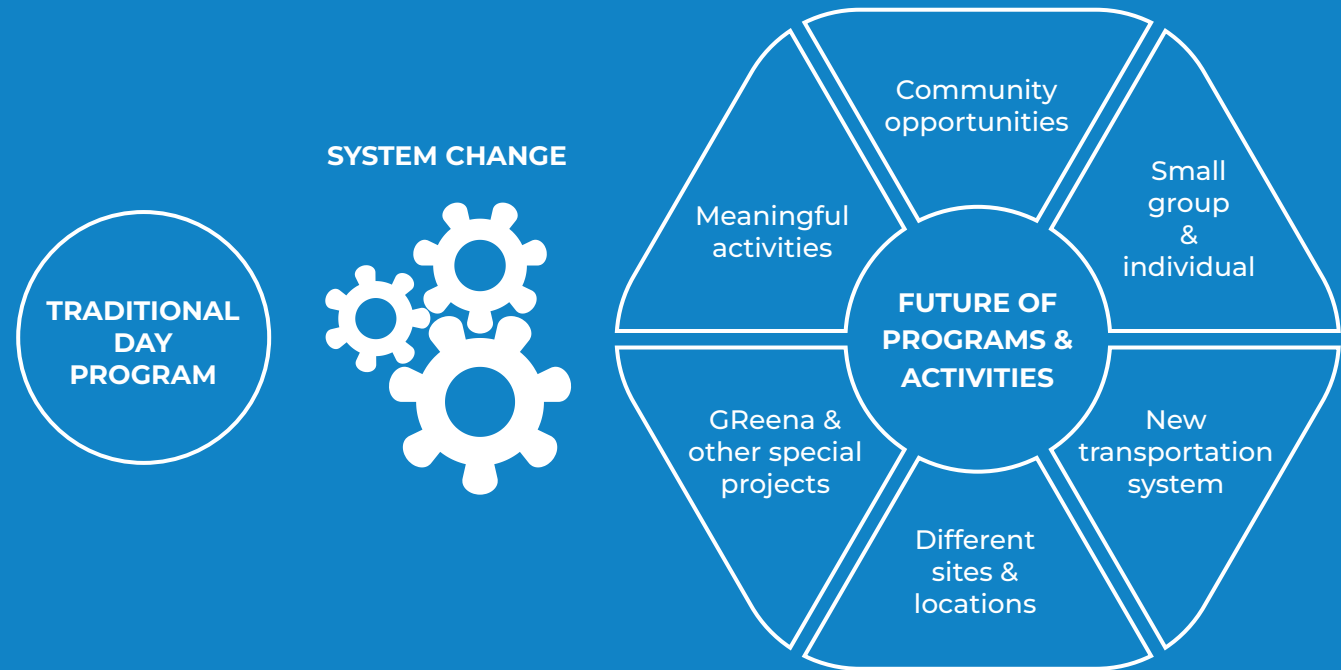
Working alongside community partners such as Reform Jewish Community of Canada (RJCC), Reena's Community

Participation Committee has been busy revamping programming to deliver more of what individuals and their families want. These include:

- Continuation of the current hybrid model of programming (in-person and virtual)
- More options for individuals and their families to choose from:
 - » Individuals pick and attend programs they desire on the days and at the locations of their choice; in-person, virtual or opting for a mix of both
 - » Group programming, in-house programming, community programming
- Traditional day programs will remain available to individuals who require strict routines
- Smaller in-person activities in locations like Reena's Azrieli Hub in the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence (LFRR), which also offers a gymnasium
- Hiring for specific roles like Program Facilitators to ensure the flow of various programming, like therapeutic recreation
- Bringing back volunteers to help with new programming and transportation

It is our hope that these steps will empower individuals to make their own choices about how they want to spend their days, thus encouraging a sense of independence and individuality.

Programs at Reena: The New Model



SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

8+

individuals

4+

employers

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION

35

registrants

14+

employers

SUMMER CAMP

31+

registrants

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM FAMILY HOME

68

programs

30

virtual

38

in-person

42

>

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM REENA RESIDENTIAL

180

individuals

in-person

+

virtual

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION LOCATIONS

Beth Sholom Synagogue

Schwartz Reisman Centre

Reena Community Residence

Lou Fruitman Reena Residence

Hillel Ontario

Toby & Henry Battle Developmental Centre

The Lodzer Centre Congregation

Prosserman JCC

HEALTH SERVICES

Partnering for Change

Reena pushes forward in its multi-faceted campaign for equitable healthcare

A PATH TO HEALTH EQUITY

The second year in our battle with a global pandemic revealed many truths about our health system. We saw the disproportionate impact on people whose lives are invisible because of practice and policy.

Last year, Reena and our sector colleagues shared with decision-makers that developmental disabilities were a significant risk factor for contracting COVID-19 and the strongest factor other than age for COVID-19 mortality. Together we initiated a campaign to engage political leaders, public health officials and care partners to prioritize vaccination for those with developmental disabilities.

We knew there was a need to challenge the status quo to motivate response. While very successful in York Region, we were not able to replicate our efforts across the province. That is why we are committed to continuing the course and to partnering, influencing and educating those in care delivery to ensure everyone deserves to be seen.

A PATH TO CHANGE Ontario Health Teams

Our membership in Western York Region and North York Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) continues to be foundational to our ability to influence the delivery of healthcare and outcomes. We polled our colleagues in developmental services across the province and found that almost 40% are members of their local OHT and another 10% participate in various working groups. Many more want to provide a voice for developmental services, collaborate on

solutions, improve healthcare navigation and ensure fairness.

Our own success at the OHT table includes the launch of the Youth Mental Health and Addiction Navigation and Transition program. This collaboration of youth mental health and addiction service partners, across three York Region OHTs, intends to improve care experiences by designing seamless transitional care for youth aged 16-28. Funded by the OHTs and Ontario Health, this program supported more than 80 individuals in their care journey in its first year.

Infection Prevention and Control

Rightly, vaccines continue to garner significant attention, but the importance of preventative work cannot be overstated. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services identified Reena as an Infection Protection and Control (IPAC) champion responsible for providing access to evidence-based resources, education and networking opportunities. In partnership with Safehaven Project for Community Living, we continue to provide subject matter experts on pandemic preparedness, IPAC education modules to more than 6,500 people, and 80-plus onsite visits for outbreak management and reviews. Reena also contributed to the development of a Rapid Antigen Testing Guidebook to help improve workplace safety and reduce transmission.

Education

A unique opportunity presented itself to collaborate with the University of Toronto's Translational Research Program. This



Reena-facilitated, accessible COVID-19 vaccination clinic

masters-level degree offers early careerists the opportunity to find innovation gaps and develop novel approaches and interventions that can impact innovation, quality improvement, and research projects that improve health, medicine and care for people and communities.

Our participation saw more than 30 students respond to three business cases, developed by Reena, that addressed healthcare challenges with dual diagnosis, alternate level of care, and senior programs within our sector. The success of this participation saw student Samuel Neumark present, with Reena's Sandy Stemp, at the AGE-WELL EPIC Conference as part of a focus to increase access to quality and equitable healthcare for older adults.

Ageing

Ageing of individuals with a developmental disability may occur at a younger age than the general population and be affected by factors related to their specific disability. Reena believes it is important that exploring the needs of our sector be examined through this lens. That is why we have submitted proposals for a project specifically focused on guidance to support adults with developmental disabilities affected by dementia, living in the community. As well, Reena is seeking funding for a

collaborative initiative with the University of Illinois at Chicago. This collaboration will recruit and train 160 trainers from 80 community-based organizations across Canada, who will complete the virtual train-the-trainer HealthMatters™ Program. This program aims to improve the health of people with developmental disabilities.

This year saw Reena sponsoring and participating at the Canadian Health and Wellbeing in Developmental Disabilities Conference and the National Institute of Care of the Elderly Knowledge Exchange. Our continued success resulted in an invitation for Reena to join the NTG International Committee.

A PATH TO BETTER OUTCOMES

Throughout the pandemic, Reena has stepped up to drive the necessary supports to protect and support individuals, their families and our staff. This year, we have successfully established a working group with the Provincial Network on Development Services to voice items of interest and concern related to healthcare delivery, health policy, specialized clinical services, infection prevention and control, research and education.

As we move forward and start to rebuild, at this phase, we cannot forget the lessons we have learned. Most importantly, we must remain committed to advancing health equity on our path to ensuring improved healthcare outcomes for those with developmental disabilities.

REENA COMMUNITY FARM

Way to Grow!

GReena celebrates a successful year of sustainable and innovative farming

The GReena initiative provides leadership and guidance to Reena, and focuses on environmental sustainability, which improves the lives of the individuals we support and the community they live in.

GREENA IS

Culturally aligned: guided by Jewish values and cognizant of our land stewardship as passed down by First Nations

Fiscally responsible: ensuring, where possible, that any initiative undertaken should result in positive income flow, reduced operational cost, and at a minimum have no financial impact on Reena's ongoing operations

Inclusive: involving a diverse community, including but not limited to Reena supported individuals

PARTNERSHIP WITH BERNARD BETEL CENTRE'S KOSHER MEALS ON WHEELS

- Produce grown and harvested locally
- Kosher Meals prepared at Bernard Betel Centre
- Increase in quality of produce
- Reduced affiliated costs
- Environmentally friendly

ACCESSIBLE DESIGN

- Designed to be accessible to all Reena clients, including those using wheelchairs and other mobility-assist devices
- Create inclusive employment opportunities

In 2021, with funding from Government of Canada's Local Food Infrastructure Fund, Reena launched a sub-irrigated container-based farming operation.

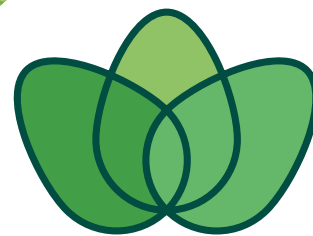
The Vertically Integrated Local Food Infrastructure streamlines and improves the process in which locally grown produce is harvested, transported, prepared and packaged for consumption.

IN THE 2021 GROWING SEASON, THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SUCCEEDED IN:

- Procuring 400 above-ground sub-irrigated containers, soil, fertilizer, seeds, plants and equipment which resulted in a harvest of tomatoes, zucchini, squash, peppers, eggplants, parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
- Employing eight high school students as part of the Summer Employment Transition (SET) program, with funding assistance from the Reena Foundation. These students, supported by job coaches, helped manage the two gardens and assisted in packaging the produce with GReena branding for distribution.
- Distributing crops through three channels:
 - Bernard Betel Centre:** for use in their Kosher Meals on Wheels Program, which generated about \$500 in revenue
 - Reena Group Homes:** homes were provided with over 1,000 packages of produce that wouldn't have otherwise been consumed
 - York Region Food Network (YRFN):** Reena sent over 600 pounds of excess produce to YRFN in Aurora and received 1,300 pounds of York Region-grown crops in exchange, which in turn were distributed to Reena Residences, the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence (LFRR), and the Reena Community Residence (RCR)
- As part of a Chanukah cooking program, 250 pounds of eggplants were bartered for 550 pounds of potatoes for latkes



Summer Employment Transition program students at GReena's Crestwood Megafarm with Sandy Stemp, Reena's COO (second from left)



GReena

REENA COMMUNITY FARM



Temple Emanu-El volunteers setting up the second RCF Neighbourhood Model at their synagogue.
L-R: Joanna Samuels, Rabbi Landsberg, Fred Winegust

REENA COMMUNITY FARM



Summer students at the Crestwood Megafarm with Job Coach Hayley Greenberg (far right), Farm Coordinator Aki Shimizu (second from right), and Job Coach Amanda Langleben (far left)

REENA COMMUNITY FARM EXPANSION

In 2022, with the help of the Azrieli Foundation and the Miriam and Larry Robbins Foundation, Reena was able to make capital investments in farming and packaging equipment, which will enable the Reena Community Farm (RCF) to be financially self-sufficient once the government funding ends in March 2023.

SOME OF THE RCF INNOVATIONS IN 2022

The **Eat What You Grow Model** was deployed at 20 Reena Group Homes and both the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence and the Reena Community Residence. Video and online education was made available across Reena to help support staff and the individuals they support become directly involved in the growing of food they would later eat. The containers were repositioned from the 2021 Rockview and RCR farms.

The **Neighbourhood Model** was rolled out working with two local synagogues, Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto (BAYT) in Thornhill, and Temple Emanu-El in North York. The synagogues either received grants or invested their own funds to engage their

members in a post-COVID-19, cross-generational, farming effort. The synagogues also benefitted from the buying power Reena established in 2021, and leveraged the education developed in 2022. We have seen the emergence of a “Grow to Give” philosophy as these synagogues begin to donate their produce to those in need.

The **Sell What You Grow Model** emerged from the Crestwood Megafarm. Fifteen thousand square feet were cleared behind two Reena group homes, enabling 400 new containers to be deployed, and employing eight SET students, this time funded by the Canada Summer Jobs Programs. There is room to expand to 1,000 containers.

The **Reena Packaging Centre** is emerging from the renovation of the 25-year-old greenhouse at the Reena Battle Centre. An early pilot programme with Kosher Food Warehouse, now operating out of a portion of the Battle Centre kitchen, has already provided employment to two Reena supported individuals. We are looking at the opportunity to reduce food costs through bulk buying, re-packaging, and distribution through our PPE centre combined with our



NCSY Torah High students helping assemble the BAYT west side garden as the first instance of the RCF Neighbourhood Model. BAYT participation was funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Program grant



Reena Community Farm – Residential Model in action

Reena Transportation system. The centre is expected to be ready in early Winter 2023.

The **Hydroponic Intermodal Container** is expected to arrive late this Fall and will enable Reena and trained individuals to grow vegetables and herbs year-round. We have secured one Kosher caterer and one Kosher restaurant as our first paying clients. Working with both the Rick Hansen Foundation and the COR Kosher Certification Authority, we have redesigned the container to be the first in Canada to enable individuals in wheelchairs to work in the container, and redesigned the door system to prevent bugs from entering and affecting the crops. Reena's PPE protocols are also being brought into play to ensure the "Clean Room" environment. Produce grown in the containers will be washed and examined in the new **Packaging Centre** to ensure they pass the strict COR Kosher Leafy Green guidelines.

The **Education Program** developed with Centennial College, York Region Food Network, and Niagara Region's Small Scale Farms is a six-part series on Reena's Learning Management System. It has been set up so



Group home staff at LFRR's Betsy Fruitman Garden (Apartment Model)

that Reena staff and supported individuals, and other Reena partners, can register and benefit. We have also deployed over [40 short YouTube videos](#) in support of the ongoing education network. The first in-person training course for growing took place at the BAYT in late August. Eight Reena Direct Support Professionals, six Reena supported individuals, six members of BAYT and Temple Emanu-El, and staff from the Hydroponic container team participated.

The **Culinary Arts Program**, developed pre-pandemic with Centennial College, will be redeployed in 2023, once COVID-19 restrictions allow for in-person education to resume in the Azrieli Hub of the LFRR.

The RCF is one of three initiatives in the Greena portfolio, which also focuses on Renewable Energy, as well as Reduction of Waste, Recycling and Reuse. We would like to thank the Reena Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Carolyn Morrison and Leon Kieselstein, and the lay leadership of the committee for their guidance.

EMPLOYMENT

Joining the Workforce

How supported employment programs help job seekers from diverse backgrounds, ages and learning styles

According to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the employment rate for people with developmental/intellectual disabilities in Ontario is below 25%, less than a third of the rate for people without disabilities, with an average income that sits below the poverty line. Among people with disabilities, people with developmental disabilities are among the most marginalised and have the lowest rate of participation in the labour force as compared to other impairment groups. Employment is an essential part of life. It links community members into a common bond, and encourages productivity and responsibility in order to make valuable contributions to society.

For individuals supported by Reena, like Sarah (pseudonym), a 21-year-old high school graduate, a first job means so much more than a paycheck. It is an opportunity to be included, like any other member of the community, in the workforce; garners a sense of independence and self-confidence, and breaks stereotypes, improving community and employer attitudes.

Additionally, there is a strong business case (a win-win) when employers hire talent with diverse abilities: it is better for businesses when companies and organizations are

more accessible to people of diverse disabilities.

Hiring individuals with developmental disabilities provides the opportunity to see employment and company operation through a different lens; it encourages employers to realize the importance of a more positive work environment and how this contributes to better, more productive employees.

Reena continues to respond to these statistics by offering a wide range of community participation programs, including supported employment, Channels North and Channels South, Pathways North and Pathways South, Summer and Summer Employment Transitions (SET) program.

Specifically, Reena's supported employment services and programs assists job seekers from diverse backgrounds, ages and learning styles who have identified with a developmental/intellectual disability, such as dual diagnosis and autism, to achieve their career, employment or job goals. Highlights include vocational/job readiness skills training, job development, job matching and on-site job coaching. Celebrating its 10th year, the SET program is customized for high school students from

Research shows employers who hire people with disabilities report happier, more productive workplaces overall. Employee retention of workers with disabilities is also 72% higher than workers without disabilities. Workers with disabilities are more dependable, loyal and have better attendance than non-disabled employees.



View a video from the farm and the end results of her work

Sarah watering the eggplants at the Crestwood Megafarm

the special education stream with York Region District School Board and York Catholic District School Board. The goal is to help the students and new graduates transition from school into the competitive labour market.

Reena's supported employment programs also help employers with their diversity recruitment and workforce inclusion initiatives at no cost. An example of a success story at SET is Sarah, who participated in the program over the past couple of years. When Sarah expressed an interest in applying for the Farm Assistant position that was presented to her by the SET job coaches with the Reena Community Farm social enterprise business, the job coaches moved quickly.

The dedicated job coaches assisted Sarah with the application process from beginning to end. They worked tirelessly to help Sarah prepare her resume and cover letter, and to apply. To her excitement, Sarah was invited for a job interview at the farm – her first one ever, which her job coaches helped her prepare for. Sarah was hired last Summer as a part-time Farm Assistant with on-site job coaching.

If you are an employer interested in learning more about Reena's Supported Employment Services, please contact:

Joanna Samuels
Employment Resource Supervisor
e: jsamuels@reena.org

Sarah found her dream job. In fact, she continued working at the farm till the end of the season while still going to school! Sarah has returned to working at the Reena Community Farm this Summer with SET, but this time she is working full time and is completely self-sufficient. She has taken a leadership role as Direct Assistant to the Farm Coordinator!

"I enjoy my work at the farm. I like working with other people and learning new tasks and getting more responsibilities. I really like being appreciated by my job coach and Farm Coordinator. That means a lot to me. I have more confidence this year too, and feel comfortable to speak up more this time. I also like making money to buy things. It's the first time I have ever had my own money and the first time I am taking the bus by myself! It makes me feel good," says Sarah.

In addition to a monthly Employment Advice column (www.reena.org/employmentadvice), Reena offers employer services to help businesses with sourcing pre-screened and qualified candidates from the program's talent pool to fill their staffing needs. Further, Reena job coaches partner with employers to assist them with building a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace through different initiatives. All of these employer services are offered at no cost.

Employment is important for all people as it provides a sense of purpose and meaningful contribution to society – people with developmental disabilities are no exception, because they too deserve financial autonomy, to play a key role in society, and to enjoy a fulfilling quality of life.

FOUNDATION EVENTS

Fry It Up for Reena

Reena Foundation and Bernard Betel Centre turn up the heat at community latke fry

On November 24th, 2021, the traditional sights, sounds and smells of Chanukah filled the newly renovated kitchen at Reena's Toby & Henry Battle Centre in Thornhill, as Reena Foundation and the Bernard Betel Centre partnered on a delicious latke frying demonstration.

This kitchen, made possible through a generous grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and proceeds from the Joel Schwartz Memorial Hockey Tournament, had been open for just two months before having to cease operations due to COVID-19. When operations "reopen", the kitchen will also serve as an exciting, educational and social hub, where individuals with developmental disabilities, often isolated from their communities, will come together to train for career opportunities in the food service industry, allowing them to live with the respect and dignity they so richly deserve.

The latke frying event was facilitated by Bernard Betel's Chef Kfir Benayon, hosted by Reena Foundation's Events Manager, Shira Lev and Co-Chaired by Cheryl Obront-Cohen, whose Facebook Group "Creative Cooking – Sharing is Caring" was the inspiration for the day.

An incredible 475 Reena supported individuals from 170 Reena residences (32 group homes, 60 apartments at the Reena Community Residence, 20 apartments at the Lou Fruitman Reena

Residence, and 58 Supported Independent Living (SIL) apartments), Zoomed into the tasty demo where they participated along with many members of the community-at-large.

Each participating residence received their own package of potatoes, onions, oil and beets; the perfect recipe to participate in the demo from their own homes, allowing them to celebrate a hands-on Chanukah, and welcome its luminous and glorious light into their homes. To bring even more light into their lives, the students at Bialik Hebrew Day School made Chanukah cards for each residence, along with their own Happy Chanukah message.

Of course a latke is literally nothing without a potato, and through Reena's GReena Initiative (where residents grew eggplants, tomatoes and zucchini), Reena bartered with the York Region Food Network for the spuds, which were also distributed to all residential locations.

For oil, beets and onions, Reena teamed up with FreschCo at Bathurst & Steeles. They specially ordered the ingredients, and even helped the volunteers pack their van with the produce.

Thanks to the generous sponsors, donors, guests, volunteers, family and friends, who made this event a tremendous success and who proved that we can do more when we work together.



Reena residents cooking up latkes

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generous donors,
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FOUNDATION EVENTS

Skate for Reena

Community comes together (against the odds!) for weekend of fun on the ice

With temperatures well above the freezing mark and only a few hours until its scheduled start, Skate for Reena – held on February 20th, 2022 – was at risk of being cancelled.

With many natural rinks being closed indefinitely because of the inconsistent weather and temperatures, Reena was notified at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday that the ice rink they were originally scheduled to use was no longer operational. So, in true Reena fashion, they put their heads together, and found an alternative site where the community could come together to skate as planned.

Pivoting quickly, Reena confirmed the Dufferin Clark Community Centre as the new location, obtained permission to park their food truck in the parking lot and contacted all guests with the new information.

Over 100 members of the community made their way to the new location, where they strapped on their blades to show their best skating moves and had a great time on the ice – and off.

Many politicians were in attendance, including Robin Martin, MPP for Eglinton Lawrence and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health, who presented a scroll in recognition of Reena's efforts in the Developmental Services sector. Other dignitaries included Gila Martow, former MPP Thornhill, City of Toronto York Centre Councillor James Pasternak and Thornhill

MPP candidate Laura Smith and Laura Mirabella.

Presented by Walt Orthodontics, the ice held up beautifully. The Kosher Pickle Food Truck served delicious, hot food including hotdogs, French fries and soup.

Special thanks go out to our generous sponsors for making this event possible, including Allan and Tova (Kelman) Gutenberg and Lampert Plumbing.

The very personification of the Jewish value of L'dor V'ador (Generation to Generation), Tova and her husband Allan co-sponsored the Food Truck in memory of her late parents, Rabbi Joseph and Mrs. Ruth Kelman. Rabbi Kelman ^{zt"l} was Reena's Founder.

"He never could have imagined this," said Tova in reference to this show of community support and joy, 50 years later.

Truly a community celebration, the event was promoted by community organizations including Jewish Youth Network (JYN), Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto, JF&CS Family Resource Centre and more.

It was a perfect combination of fun, healthy exercise and great food, and a wonderful opportunity to introduce many new families to Reena.



Allan and Tova (Kelman) Gutenberg and family



Esther Tencer and her son, Jacob

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FOUNDATION EVENTS

Step Up for Reena 2

Virtual event lifts spirits; boosts mental and physical health



High school students assembling fitness packs



Celebrity trainer Haley Borden

Since the onset of COVID-19, Reena's Day Programs closed many times. Reena responded by creating a wide selection of virtual programs like yoga, cooking and music.

To ensure that Reena supported individuals could access these programs and stay connected with friends and family, we invested significantly in iPads and other technology.

Although COVID-19 restrictions are slowly lifting, we're still feeling the "COVID blahs", and understand that **exercise is one way to improve mental health.**

On **Tuesday, March 1st**, we invited **Haley Borden**, trainer to the **Rolling Stones**, the **Toronto Blue Jays** and other **pro athletes** to lead our second annual **Step Up for Reena** event.

The event attracted more than 100 participants, and was a healthy way to connect and raise funds for Reena Foundation. Many supporters purchased "fitness packs" that included fabulous Reena yoga mats. The packs were assembled by high school students, some of whom are the grandchildren of Reena's earliest supporters.

A virtual wheel was used to pick the lucky winners of our fitness-themed door prizes including a Hush weighted blanket, pilates equipment and pamper packages.

Proceeds from the event will help fund our virtual programs, including the purchase of iPads for individuals coming into service at our newest residential location – the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence.

In appreciation, Haley was presented with a painting created by a Reena individual. "Flowers That Brighten the Day" now hangs proudly at Haley's Studio, a perfect finish to an event that brightened our moods and lifted our spirits.

Thank you to our generous sponsors.

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FOUNDATION EVENTS

Striking for Reena

Celebrating a decade of bowling fun and community spirit



Reena MVP Bowlers



Reena residents holding team flag



L-R: Howard Kruger, David Cohen, Wendy Bellack-Viner, Jeff Bernstein



L-R: Risa Kurtz Whitnall, Kyle Whitnall, Ted Kurtz



\$2M+

raised over
10 years

After a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic, Striking for Reena, our signature bowling event, returned to Splitsville, Richmond Hill, on June 12th.

It was the event's 10th anniversary and even though quieter than years gone by, those who attended spared no time catching up with each other.

The in-person crowd of 100 was joined virtually by another 400 guests, all of whom incredibly raised a **striking \$258,908 for Reena Foundation**.

That brings the **10-year total of funds raised to \$2,033,871**. The \$2M has gone and goes towards so many Reena initiatives, including housing, employment programs, summer and winter camps, sports teams and vans to transport individuals supported by Reena.

Reena residents who were not able to bowl in person were able to participate in a week of events that included making team flags and enjoying pizza parties.

But it was the Justein family, who founded the event in honour of their sister Shari, an avid bowler, that reminded us what Striking is really about.

"Our sister Shari moved into a Reena home over 35 years ago and has never looked back. Reena's bowlers show off their skills and take pride in being the stars of the day," said Elaine Justein and Steven Justein, event Co-chairs.

A special shout-out goes to the top fundraising team, Rebecca's Guttersnipes and to top individual fundraiser, Rachel Libfeld, whose tally reached an incredible \$40,126.00.

Continued on page 34 >

FOUNDATION EVENTS

Striking for Reena, continued from page 33



L-R: Sam Neumark, Sheila Lampert, Zack Marks



L-R: Sue-Ann Levy, Elaine Justein, Ron Justein, Shari Justein

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**Photos by Elliot Sylman*



Reena COO Sandy Stemp with students from UofT, Translational Research Program



L-R: Reena Foundation Board members Howard Kruger and Mona Sherkin



L-R: Top individual fundraiser Rachel Libfeld and Suzanne Neumark

FOUNDATION EVENTS

Swinging for Reena



L-R: Steven, Rachel and Al Libfeld

Chipping in *fore* charity

On July 12th, 2022, **Tribute Communities** hosted the 11th annual **Swinging for Reena** golf tournament at Angus Glen Golf Club in Markham.

Swinging has cumulatively raised **over \$2.4M** in support of Reena Foundation. Proceeds have helped pay for many of Reena's important initiatives, including the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence, renovations to the Toby & Henry Battle Developmental

Centre, a wheelchair-accessible van, and many programs including respite, summer camp and technology.

Funds from the 2022 tournament will be directed towards Reena's upcoming residential project, the Frankfort Family Reena Residence. We thank the Libfeld family and everyone at Tribute Communities for their continued support and extraordinary generosity.

Thank you to our generous donors, sponsors and players!

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Continued on page 38 >



L-R: Grace Shankman, Jeff Shankman, Boaz Feiner, David Elfan

Swinging for Reena, continued from page 37

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FOUNDATION EVENTS

Golf at the Briars

A day on the green in support of Reena Foundation

On August 23rd, 2022, Dr. Alan Berger organized a wonderful day of golf in support of Reena Foundation. The tournament took place at the Briars Golf Club, located in Jackson's Point.

This is the third annual golf event, sponsored by Dr. Berger, and has **cumulatively raised over \$75,000** in support of Reena Foundation.

Funds from last year's event were directed to the capital campaign for the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence. In appreciation,

several golfers were recognized with mezuzahs on the Sydney & Florence Cooper Foundation Mezuzah Wall, and the Medical Room has been dedicated in honour of Alan and Wendy Berger.

Proceeds from this year's tournament will be directed towards a new van, dedicated in memory of Reena Foundation's Founding Chair, Hy Eiley ^{z"l}.

We thank Dr. Berger and his guests *fore* their continued and generous support.



L-R: Dr. Alan Berger, Bob Berger, Sheila Lampert, Steven Justein

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Talia, a Reena supported individual, hits the lanes at Striking for Reena

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In Memory

This year, three long-time dedicated Board members passed away.

Mezuzahs have been dedicated to their memory on the **Sydney & Florence Cooper Foundation Mezuzah Wall** at the Lou Fruitman Reena Residence.



Hy Eiley ^{z"l}

Hy Eiley was an incredibly compassionate supporter of people with disabilities. He was also a man of tremendous vision; he was instrumental in securing the lead gift for the Toby & Henry Battle Developmental Centre. Hy had foresight and a keen understanding of the resources that Reena would require in order to meet the needs of the future. He was the driving force behind the establishment of Reena's Fundraising arm, Reena Foundation. In fact, he was honoured to be the Founding Chair. He was a generous supporter of numerous Reena initiatives, and was always available to provide guidance and advice. His passionate voice has left an indelible mark on the fabric and lives of everyone at Reena.



Alex Eisen ^{z"l}

A Holocaust survivor, a fixture in Toronto's Jewish Community, and an important member of the Reena Family, Alex was always willing to step up and support in any way he could. Alex would say, "If they say no, say 'that's OK I'll see you next time.'" Alex was involved in numerous Reena campaigns and fundraisers, most notably the Alex Eisen Society, which he created to raise funds for respite and enrichment programs. Alex never refused a call to action that involved Reena, from fundraising to political contacts, he was the go-to person. He gave sage advice and opened doors to access. Alex's legacy and immutable care for each person will continue to be felt for generations.



Tom Ungar ^{z"l}

Tom was, according to his own words, "a proud and passionate volunteer" for Reena for 40-plus years. He gravitated to doing good work with Reena because of his brother-in-law, Herbie, a Reena supported individual. As a member of the Foundation Board of Directors, Tom devoted many hours to fundraising for various capital campaigns, and was a member of countless committees, including finance and investment. One of his favourite events was Striking for Reena, where he proudly bowled with his family. Tom was an enabler and a connector, who would often pull from his long lists of contacts and friends to help Reena.

REENA SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Summary statement of financial position

As at March 31, 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
ASSETS		
Cash	538,820	8,324,779
Due from Batay Reena	39,214	338,492
Due from Reena Foundation	50,426	22,180
Other current assets	8,127,733	5,229,226
Prepaid lease	693,807	683,908
Capital assets	57,353,950	53,555,340
	66,803,950	68,153,925
LIABILITIES		
Other current liabilities	12,953,118	14,361,520
Deferred capital contributions	32,090,808	29,205,495
Mortgages and construction loans payable and replacement reserve	17,952,487	20,534,369
	62,996,413	64,101,384
FUND BALANCES		
	3,807,537	4,052,541
	66,803,950	68,153,925

Summary statement of operations and changes in net assets

Year ended March 31, 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
REVENUE		
Government grants	54,395,871	60,699,969
Rental revenue and user fees	6,319,094	5,699,719
Grant from Reena Foundation	229,648	170,756
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	1,300,080	1,105,456
Other income	1,006,638	524,718
	63,251,331	68,200,618
EXPENSES		
Salaries, contract wages and related costs	45,172,324	45,050,133
Food and supplies, accommodation and support for individuals' personal needs	9,994,027	14,613,424
Interest on mortgages	134,605	110,985
Purchased services and professional fees	5,394,066	4,600,783
Amortization of capital assets	1,819,991	1,400,033
Other	820,696	564,938
	63,335,709	66,340,296

Summary statement of operations and changes in net assets – *continued*

Year ended March 31, 2022

(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses before the undernoted item	(84,378)	1,860,322
Pay equity expense	(160,626)	(157,784)
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses for the year	(245,004)	1,702,538
Fund balances, beginning of year	4,052,541	2,350,003
Fund balances, end of year	3,807,537	4,052,541

Summary statement of cash flows

Year ended March 31, 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Cash (used) provided by operating activities	(549,460)	3,741,045
Cash used in investing activities	(4,547,824)	(7,864,249)
Cash (used) provided by financing activities	(2,688,675)	11,620,567
Net (decrease) increase in cash during the year	(7,785,959)	7,497,363
Cash, beginning of year	8,324,779	827,416
Cash, end of year	538,820	8,324,779

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the summary financial statements

Notes to the summary of financial statements

1. Summary financial statements

Reena has prepared these summary financial statements to be included as part of its annual report. These summary financial statements present the same information as the audited financial statements, except for the notes to the audited financial statements.

For complete audited financial statements, please call (905) 763-8254 x 3027.

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DIRECTORS

Rochelle Goldman-Brown
Jodi Kaiman
Carolyn Morrison
Dr. Earl Silverman



Reena resident enjoys community activities during Reena's end-of-summer carnival.

**Reena**

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Chai Tikvah

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To make a gift please contact:

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