



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



The Ripple Effect

"Trails is like a pebble dropped in the lake, making a big impact on the lives of our participants and alumni, which in turn makes ripples of hope throughout their families and communities."

- Mel Millward

MISSION

To challenge and equip vulnerable youth from at-risk areas of Toronto to become contributing members of the community.

VISION

To break the cycle of poverty and systemic racism.

GOALS

To instill practical skills, relevant knowledge, and the self-confidence to use them.

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

150

Youth participants in 2021-22

77%

Participants who attended summer program in person

99%

Participant high school graduation rate

71%

Staff retention and 32% alumni staff, with a total of 28 Program Facilitators

38

Post-secondary bursaries paid in 2021

100%

Connection with our participants throughout COVID-19

A Letter from our President

Mel Millward

I found it difficult to write my annual message this year. Typically I aim to share inspiring and exciting stories. But staying 'true to Trails' in 2021 means not focusing solely on our wins but also sharing some of our hardships.

These struggles included:

- How can we make camp the safest place for our youth to be?
- How do we shift programming to meet the ever-changing covid protocols and the declining mental and physical health of our kids? What do our kids really need?
- What does the Trails family look like when we cohort?
- How do we maintain contact with those who don't attend?
- Can we recruit 40 new participants when we can't go into schools and we don't know what we can offer them in the year ahead?
- How can we raise funds in this unpredictable climate?

Throughout all of this, we remained steadfast in delivering Trails. I realized more than ever how much Trails means to me, to our youth, to our staff, donors and community. With their own lives uprooted, they continued to put Trails first. The vast majority of our donors not only stayed with us, but increased their gift. This movement to trust-based philanthropic giving meant that we could make decisions and take action quickly. I have seen such strong acts of kindness and generosity. Thank you.

Our kids are used to people giving up on them, but 2021 gave us the opportunity to reinforce the message that Trails will always be there.

Highlights of 2021 included:

- Six weeks of in-person summer programs, including camping, canoeing, hiking, swimming, and most importantly, reconnecting.
- Four in-person weekends between January and June and for the rest, virtual programming, phone call check-ins and online course work.



- Development, improvement and streamlining of internal documents, databases, policies and procedures.
- Planning for the Alumni 'For Life' program and supporting our alumni like never before through bursaries (38 recipients), AIM mentorship (40 partnerships), Career Connections (1 job secured) and FORward Resources (piloted a successful resume and networking workshop and was able to offer temporary housing to a handful of alumni at Trails Lakeside).

One of my highlights of 2021 stems from our struggles. For the first time in history, we had 100% of our youth RSVP for a weekend. What we lost in 2021, we will make up for in 2022. Those ripples started in 1992 are being felt as tidal waves.

Hugs,

TRAILS STAFF

Mel Millward

President

Anum Khan

Community & Recruitment Coordinator

Brandon Bansingh

Facilities Assistant

Brandon McKinley

Youth Development Director

Erin McLean

Director of Alumni & Volunteer Engagement

Janelle Dayman

Director of Development

Jess Taylor

Program Director

Josh Harney

Director of Education

Leslie McGill

Office Manager/Donations

Lisa Evans

Program Director

Luke Morrison

Facilities Assistant

Stephanie Wright

Program Director

Whitney Lorentz

Donor Engagement Coordinator



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Greig Clark

THANK YOU to all those who helped us “make a ripple” in 2021. With our programs and your help we continued to live our mission and help transform lives, right here, close to home. You are helping us to “level the playing field” just a little for our kids. Thank you to those who donated their Time, Talent and Treasure to help us do that.

Would you like to help us create an “even bigger ripple” in 2022—our 30th anniversary? Give me a call. We will find a way.

J. G.

Greig Clark
Chair
416.455.7106

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: *Dr. Warren Clarke*

"My time as a young person was not easy, and there have been moments in my life where I did not see the value in education, nor did I understand my potential. Instead, I believed the opinions of those who perceived me as a failure."

It's a good thing Warren did not listen to the high school teacher that told him he would not be successful and that university was not for him. Just the opposite, in fact. Dr. Warren Clarke is currently an assistant professor at the University of Manitoba in the anthropology department, having recently completed his Doctor of Sociology degree with a specialization in political economy at Carleton University.

Warren grew up in central Toronto, residing in a single-parent household in an underserved community. He faced countless barriers from educators who thought he was undeserving of an education because of where he lived and the colour of his skin.

Warren joined the Trails Youth Initiatives program when it was founded in 1992. During Warren's time with Trails, he learned the importance of setting personal goals and believing in himself to reach those goals. Mentored by Trails Founders Jim 'Hurst' Hayhurst Sr. and Jim Hayhurst Jr., Warren began his journey that focused on philanthropy and paying it forward to marginalized community members in Canada.

"Seek a mentor, if you don't already have one. My advocacy work was encouraged by my close relationship with my mentor, Hurst. His approach and willingness to work with many marginalized community members of Toronto inspired me and encouraged me to see my potential."

Warren is also the founder of The Afro-Caribbean Mentorship Program (ACMP) at Carleton University, a program which he established in 2018 to support the success of Afro-Caribbean Black and other racialized undergraduate and graduate students on campus. He is paying forward the support he received at Trails to foster academic success and encourage students to become confident and empowered citizens after they graduate.

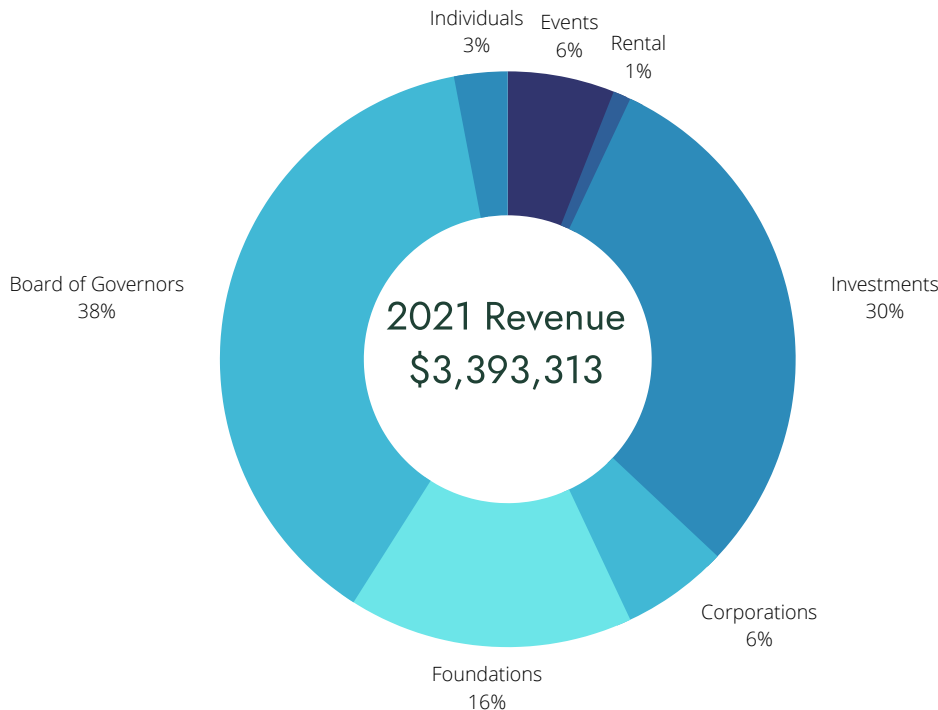
Warren's dissertation, supervised by Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly, focuses on how first- and second-generation young Canadian African and Caribbean Black (ACB) men experience youth employment training programs in Ontario and Quebec. Theoretically, Warren focuses on how Canadian social norms—emerging from Canada's existence as a settler-colonial nation-state and its long history of racial discrimination—continue to affect the social development of young ACB men. The study sets out to understand the social experiences of ACB male youth and their use of employment training programs while considering the intersubjective ideologies from other people (youth workers, employers, etc.) and how they impact young Black men. Warren's important research allows for an understanding of how better to support young ACB men and their socio-economic development while challenging the misconceptions of Black masculinity.

Warren dedicates his academic and professional career to empowering and educating Black Canadians to overcome social, political and economic barriers in Canada. Trails inspired Warren's work and research, creating a ripple effect that is being felt across the country. He builds and sustains strong ties to many Canadian communities, specifically youth-centred organizations. Visit www.warrenclarke.ca to learn more.

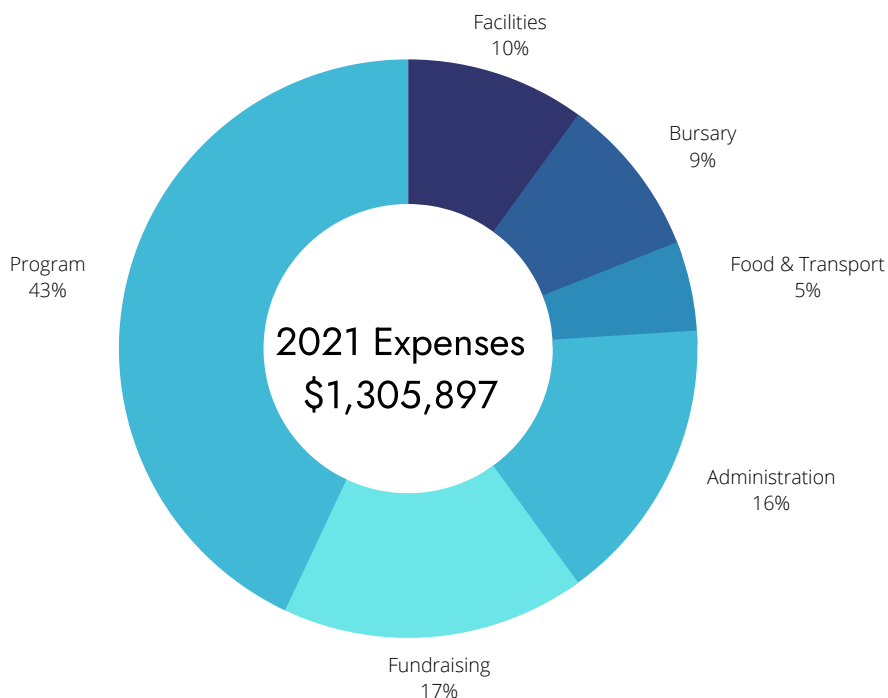
FINANCIAL UPDATE

Fiscal Year: October 1, 2020–September 30, 2021

Trails is a registered charity and raises funds through events and donations from corporations, foundations and individuals. Trails has never sought nor accepted government funding.



The revenue surplus over expenses reflects dramatically increased fundraising efforts. The trust-based philanthropic giving throughout the pandemic meant Trails could best support Toronto's vulnerable communities with immediate and much-needed programming. It is a strong indication of Trails' ongoing ability to finance the doubling number of participants (from 88 in 2017 to 176 by 2026), site infrastructure enhancements, and the growth of the alumni For Life program.



2021 Events

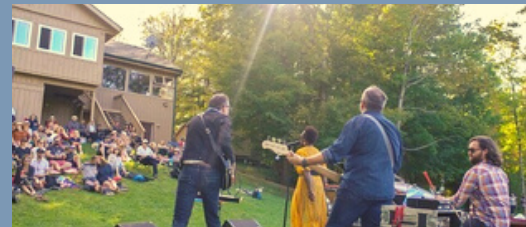
Get Outside Challenge

In our inaugural virtual event, 84 participants spent over 1500 hours outdoors and we successfully raised \$80,000 for our youth.



Vancestock X

Back for its 10th year, 150 attendees gathered at Trails Lakeside for an afternoon of incredible music, raising almost \$30,000.



Sunil Thomas Charity Golf Tournament

Returning to Angus Glen Golf Club for our fourth year, this late-September event in support of Trails sold out in 2021!



THANK YOU

for being part of the ripple effect

\$50,000+

All One Fund
Anonymous
Brookfield Partners Foundation
Fraser & Frances Deacon Legacy Foundation*
Jack Cockwell

\$25,000+

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CIBC
Paul Brink
Royal Bank of Canada
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Scotiabank
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Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund
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\$1,000+

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Mackenzie Investments

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Event Committees
Event Volunteers
Mentors
Salesforce Administration



Double Graduation

2021 saw our first-ever double graduation since expansion began in 2017. 42 participants graduated in September from both the Year 4 groups: Flying Fox Nation and Flaming 6ix City, as well as the LIT Night Wolves.



Four Seasons

Trails Sugar Shack

Pancake breakfasts got a whole lot sweeter in 2021! With the help of Trails volunteer and maple syrup guru, John Romaniuk, our youth tapped maple trees, collected sap and learned how to make syrup.

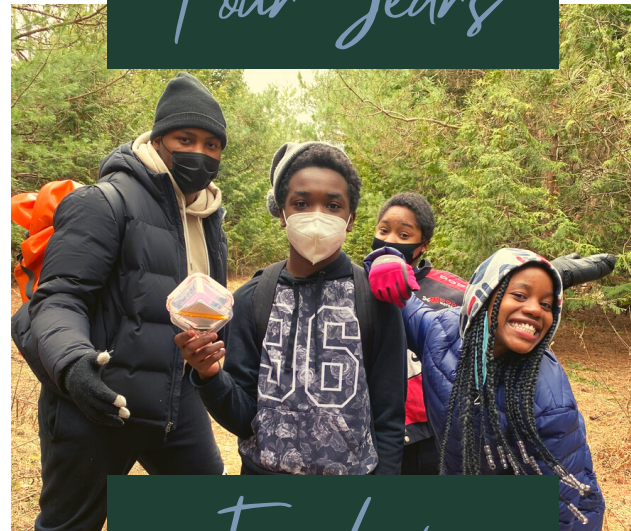


Four Years



Safety First

Our staff worked diligently to ensure the health and safety of our participants and facilitators. COVID-19 safety protocols included: screening, rapid tests, mask-wearing, cabin HEPA filters, and cohorting of groups.



For Life



TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT TRAILS:

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