

IMPACT REPORT

2024



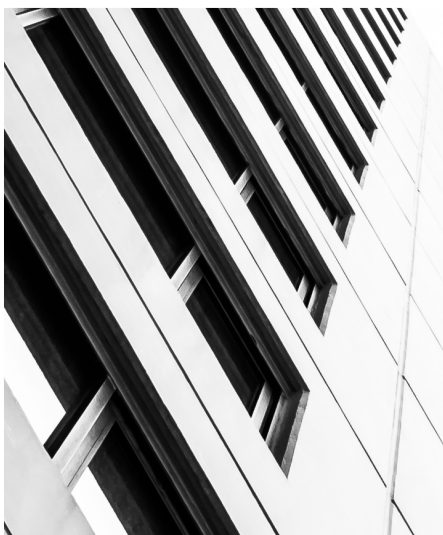
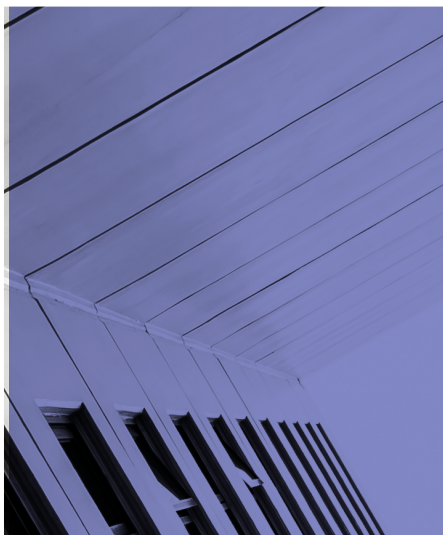
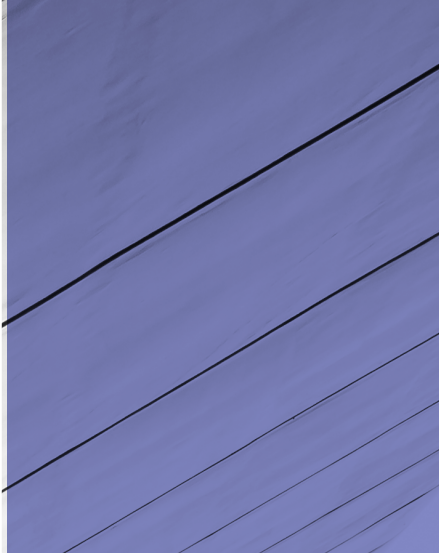


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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

This impact report was prepared by Master of Business Administration students at Toronto Metropolitan University - Ted Rogers School of Management, as part of their Consulting Capstone project.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the FOCUS Media Arts Centre (FOCUS), I am pleased to be bringing this impact report to you. This report is intended to provide the reader with a snapshot of the work of the FOCUS Media Arts Center – including its past, its present and where would we like to go in the future. I hope you find the contents of this report insightful.

FOCUS has a long history of using community participatory media practices to serve the Regent Park Community. That history began in 1990's by challenging negative mainstream media portrayals of Regent Park. We invited ordinary residents to share their stories, perspectives, and experiences of Regent Park through advocacy and letter writing campaigns and then later through creating media in the form of a newspaper, radio shows and videos that celebrated the richness of the neighbourhood. Today, even though the Regent Park community is going through huge transformative changes, this legacy of engaging residents in participatory media practices continues.

Today, FOCUS Media Arts Centre serves as the bedrock of civic engagement, by offering hyper-localized media coverage that resonates deeply with the community of Regent Park. The added value is that these media resources are produced through the involvement of community members, students and volunteers working alongside our staff. Participants and learners involved with FOCUS are active creators and collaborators in this process of media making. By engaging and mentoring young to tell their own stories, document the transformation of the neighbourhood, report on grassroots initiatives and agency programs, interview community champions and political representatives, film town hall meetings, showcase neighbourhood resources and profile events and cultural celebrations, FOCUS not only provides youth with valuable employment skills, but it also provides them and their audiences with invaluable insights into the pulse of the neighbourhood. In doing so, these productions serve both as a lifeline for residents seeking information, and help foster a deeper sense of community and belonging.

It is clear from everything stated above, that FOCUS is more than just a platform for information dissemination. Committed fully to the notion of civic journalism, the media produced by FOCUS and its learners, serve to explore complex issues, build bridges of understanding, enhance transparency, hold authorities accountable, and empower citizens with information that directly impacts their daily lives. This information is critical in inspiring action and driving positive change. It would not be an understatement to say FOCUS is a catalyst for empowerment, democracy, and social change.

After a legacy of three decades of serving the Regent Park Community, FOCUS Media Arts Centre is now exploring ways to expand and share its learnings and best practices with the other nearby communities of Moss Park, St. James Town and other Toronto neighbourhoods. To this end FOCUS has partnered with the St. James Town Community Corner to expand its coverage in St. James Town. FOCUS has also assigned journalists to work with volunteers to cover the Moss Park community. In addition, FOCUS is in the process of building a network of community media producers across the City of Toronto interested in creating and sharing media resources about their neighbourhoods.

In looking ahead, we are excited about the possibility of expanding our reach. We have submitted a proposal to construct a new 24-hour media production facility dedicated to the best participatory community media. This continues the work of Regent Park TV, Radio Regent and our Catch da Flava monthly newspaper. Our plans also include opening a new studio space dedicated to youth gaming design and music recording.

MISSION STATEMENT

FOCUS Media Arts Centre is a dynamic not-for-profit organization and a registered charitable organization with a clearly defined mission: to challenge injurious media portrayals of Regent Park and provide essential, relevant, and critical information to community residents on issues and matters that impact them most.

Through participatory media practices and personalized mentorship, FOCUS Media Arts Centre equips individuals with the tools to amplify their voices and authentically share their narratives. Our goal is simple yet profound: to cultivate a culture where marginalized voices are heard, respected, and valued. At FOCUS Media Arts Centre, we strive to ignite a revolution of storytelling, where every individual has the power to shape their own narrative and contribute meaningfully to the discourse on pertinent community issues.

Our dedication lies in empowering marginalized individuals and underrepresented communities by creating a platform that allows for expression and advocacy with an emphasis on integrity and impact.





PROGRAM OBJECTIVES



1. Broadcast Media for Community Empowerment

- ◉ Produce and broadcast multimedia content, including fictional films, documentaries, PSA's, and community news segments, that address and highlight the pressing issues, concerns, and interests of the Regent Park community and beyond.
- ◉ Utilize various media platforms, such as local television, radio, social media, and online streaming services, to amplify the voices of community members and raise awareness on important social and cultural issues.

2. Advocacy for Community Members:

- ◉ Advocate for policy changes, resource allocation, and social justice initiatives that address the systemic barriers, discrimination, and inequalities faced by residents of Regent Park and other marginalized communities.
- ◉ Mobilize community members, stakeholders, and decision-makers to support grassroots initiatives and campaigns aimed at creating positive change and improving the well-being of all residents.

3. Empowerment of Marginalized Community Members:

- ◉ Create opportunities for marginalized individuals, including immigrants, refugees, low-income families, and persons with disabilities, to actively participate in media production and storytelling processes.
- ◉ Provide support, resources, and mentorship to marginalized community members to help them share their narratives, express their concerns, and advocate for their rights and needs effectively.

4. Economic Development within the Community:

- ◉ Support local businesses, social enterprises, and economic development initiatives that prioritize community wealth-building, job creation, and equitable access to resources and opportunities for all residents.

5. Community Engagement and Social Cohesion:

- ◉ Organize community events, screenings, forums, and discussions to foster dialogue, collaboration, and solidarity among diverse community members.
- ◉ Facilitate partnerships and collaborations with local organizations, schools, businesses, and government agencies to address shared challenges, promote social cohesion, and build a stronger sense of community belonging.

6. Youth Skill Development:

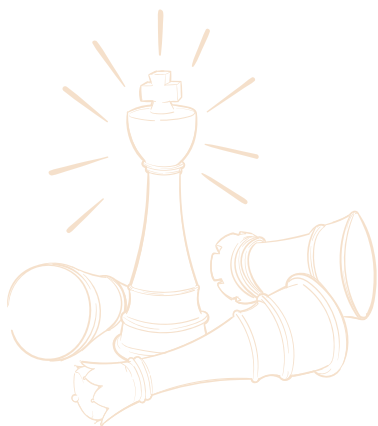
- ◉ Provide comprehensive training programs in media arts, including but not limited to filmmaking, journalism, and digital storytelling, aimed at empowering youth with practical skills and knowledge.
- ◉ Foster creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration among youth participants through hands-on workshops, mentorship, and access to state-of-the-art media equipment and facilities.

7. Cultural Representation:

- ◉ Celebrate and promote the rich cultural diversity, heritage, and traditions of the Regent Park community and beyond through culturally relevant and inclusive media content and programming.
- ◉ Provide a platform for artists, performers, storytellers, and cultural practitioners from diverse backgrounds to showcase their talents, stories, and perspectives, thus fostering greater appreciation and understanding of cultural differences.

8. Mental Health and Well-being:

- ◉ Address the mental health needs and challenges faced by individuals and families in the community through culturally sensitive programming, storytelling, and awareness-raising campaigns.
- ◉ Provide platforms for open dialogue, peer support, and mental health education to reduce stigma, increase access to resources and services, and promote overall well-being and resilience among community members.



HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

D1

(1990 - 2024)

For over three decades, FOCUS Media Arts Centre (formerly Regent Park FOCUS) has been the heartbeat of the Regent Park community. FOCUS has celebrated countless milestones and delivered a diverse array of programs and services. Its journey is filled with inspiring stories and transformative impacts.

1990

Regent Park Focus is established

Regent Park Focus was established with funding from Ontario government's Focus Communities Program Fund, with the mission to counter negative media stereotypes of low-income communities and provide interventions to low-income youth in the area. Based in offices located in the former Regent Park Community Centre, advocacy and community letter writing campaigns are the primary strategies used to confront negative media.

1993

Using Media Arts

Regent Park Focus receives charitable status and starts using media arts both as a youth intervention activity and as a way of creating and promoting healthy media images of the neighborhood.

1993

First permanent home

Regent Park Focus landed its first permanent home at 600 Dundas St. E, which further enabled the pursuit of a new strategy for developing a better image of the community.

1994

RPTV is born

RPTV started through after-school video programs throughout the community in which young people were inspired to write scripts and produce videos that challenged media stereotypes and/or promoted the diversity and richness of the neighborhood. The videos produced won multiple awards in 1994, 1995, were distributed to Toronto schools and on Rogers Cable TV. From 2006 to 2008, RPTV videos were screened at Toronto cinemas festivals, receiving multiple awards.

1996

Civic Print Journalism

Regent Park Focus started writing workshops for youth, who also helped create a new community newspaper: *Catch da Flava*. Reflecting the neighborhood's diversity, it was published four to six times a year and distributed door-to-door in Regent Park and to downtown Toronto libraries, agencies, and community centers.

1998

Radio Broadcasting

Catch da Flava youth talk show is regionally broadcasted weekly in partnership with University of Toronto (CIUT) and Ryerson University (CKLN).

1999

Radio studio setup

Regent Park Focus decided to build and equip a radio studio at its Dundas Street facility, which would connect the studio to the CKLN broadcast studio.

2000

CAMH Merger

In order to continue receiving annual operating funds through the Focus Communities Program, Regent Park Focus is directed by the Ontario government to rescind its charitable status and be administered as a community-based program of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). A community advisory committee is set up to assist CAMH to carry out its role.

2005

New Name

Given its multiple ventures into media arts, including an annual summer media camp, Regent Park Focus with support from CAMH changes its name to Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre.

2005

Underground Music Studio and Music Programs available

Coordinated by two professional sound recording artists, the building of a music studio provided youth in the community with free mentorship and training in desktop music recording and lyrical development. The studio enabled new programs such as DJ workshops, an instrumental drumming program, and the development of an in-house band (Youngstas).

● 2005

Photography Program begins

The Zapparoli Photography Arts program, named after former resident and professional photographer, David Zapparoli. The program featured an on-site photo darkroom, an exhibition gallery and a projection wall, all dedicated to displaying the work of participants.

● 2003–2005

Recognition and awards

Regent Park Focus is recognized as an “exemplary Canadian Program” by Health Canada, wins the City of Toronto Mayor’s Community Safety Award for Violence Prevention, and welcomes Governor General Adrienne Clarkson to open its Art Gallery. It is also selected as a Best Practice Case Study for providing social infrastructure to racialized youth.

● 2006–2013

Regent Park redevelopment

Regent Park Focus journalism activities in video, radio, print and photography, chronicled the revitalization process and the concerns of residents, creating multiple videos and films about the area.

● 2010

Ministry ends funding

The Ontario government ends the FOCUS Communities Program, and as a result of the loss of annual funding, Regent Park Focus establishes a board of directors, seeks incorporation and begins transitioning from CAMH.

● 2011

Ends Association with CAMH and Relocates

Regent Park Focus formally dissolves its partnership with CAMH and due to the revitalization took up tenancy in the basement of a City of Toronto owned building on 38 Regent Street. Despite the significant reduction in space, all studios were rebuilt at the new location to continue servicing the community.

● 2011

Catch da Flava modernization

Catch da Flava ended its magazine format to be modernized into an online blog called Catch da Flava Online including articles written by young people involved in the Regent Park Focus journalism program.

2013 – 2020

Development and launch of a Closed Circuit Television Station

In 2013, RPTV became a 24-hour closed-circuit community television station that is linked to the newly constructed buildings. One of the primary goals of the RPTV channel is to keep residents informed of the revitalization process. The channel position's RPTV as Canada's first neighborhood-run Television Channel!

2015

National Community Award

Agency wins national community award for best programming strategy to reach underserved or marginalized populations (Convergence Conference at Carleton University).

2017– 2018

Gaming & 3D Design Program begins

Regent Park Focus starts offering a Gaming Design Program to teach the community C# language and the use of Unity Engine. Youth learn how to use advanced 3D modeling software such as Autodesk Maya and Mudbox. They gain skills in creating 3D objects for video games, rigging characters for animation and even how to produce an animated short film.

2020

Pandemic Closures

On March 17, 2020, Regent Park Focus closed 38 Regent facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and moved all programming online.

2021

Name Change and Charitable Status

In 2021, the agency changed its name to the FOCUS Media Arts Centre (FOCUS) and receives charitable status as an arts education centre.

2022

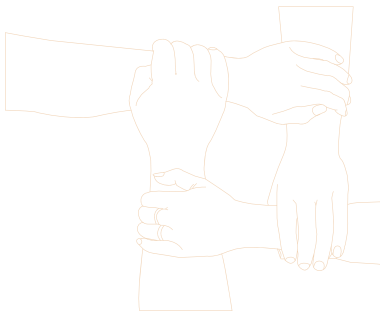
Relocation and expansion activities

FOCUS ends the closed circuit tv station and moves its facility to the 3rd floor of the Spectrum Arts Centre and expands programming activities to St. James Town and Moss Park.

2024

FOCUS Toronto Community Media Portal

FOCUS launches a city-wide media portal and network with the aim of engaging other neighborhoods in media production.



ABOUT THE CATCHMENT COMMUNITIES 12

The primary catchment areas that FOCUS Media Arts Centre serves are Regent Park, St. James Town and Moss Park.

Regent Park

Regent Park is an approximately 70-acre housing complex located in the Downtown East area of Toronto, bordered by the Don River to the east, Shuter Street to the south, Gerrard Street to the north, and Parliament Street to the west. It is undergoing one of the largest urban revitalizations of its kind through a five-phase redevelopment project that is transforming the community into a mixed-income, mixed-use neighbourhood.

Upon completion, the project will include a combination of rent-geared-to-income (RGI) units, affordable housing rentals, and market condominiums. Designed to create a vibrant community, these high-quality homes will be within walking distance of retail and commercial spaces, community facilities, active parks, and open spaces.

In addition to the physical redevelopment, the Regent Park revitalization project focuses on revitalising the economic and social fabric of the community. The Regent Park Social Development Plan (SDP) was developed through community consultations to support social inclusion and cohesion among residents during the revitalization. The project continues to offer employment, economic development, social development, training, and scholarship opportunities to neighbourhood residents.

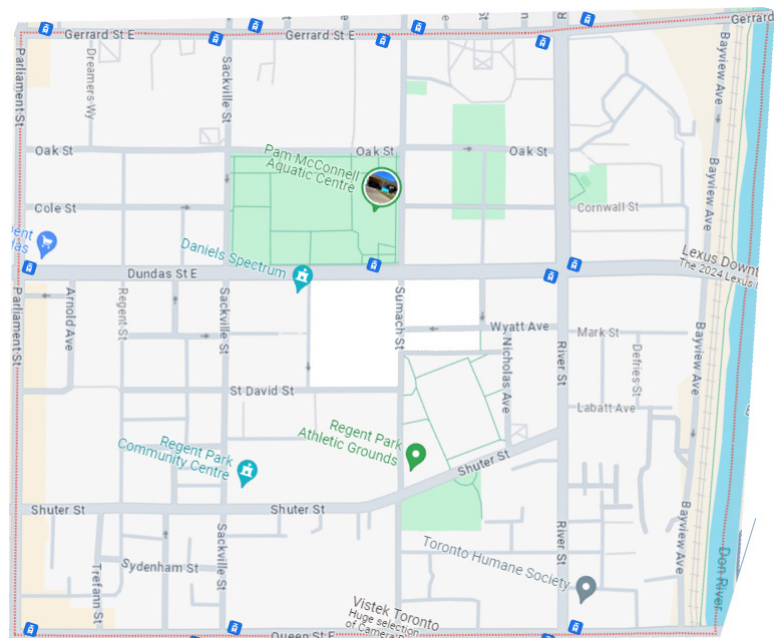


Fig. 1

The diverse voices of the Regent Park community have been and continue to be instrumental in shaping the vision of a revitalised Regent Park.

Moss Park

Moss Park is an L-shaped residential neighbourhood in Downtown Toronto. It is bounded on the north by Carlton Street to Parliament Street, on the east by Parliament Street to Queen Street East and the Don River, on the south by Eastern Avenue and Front Street, and on the west by Jarvis Street.

The area is undergoing several improvements to support vulnerable and equity-deserving populations in the local area and growing numbers of community residents by offering improved park amenities and recreational facilities. The new facilities at the John Innes Community Recreation Centre (CRC) and in the park will serve local communities by responding to the experiences and goals of the diverse array of community members who enjoy the park and CRC today.

The proposed Ontario Line station at Moss Park will connect a dense and fast-growing area of the city to the subway network. An estimated 7,300 people are expected to use Moss Park Station during the busiest travel hour.

A new Ontario Line connection in this community will help relieve congestion on popular surface routes, like the 75 Sherbourne bus and 501 Queen streetcar, with almost 1,500 customers transferring to and from the Ontario Line every day during the busiest travel hour.

The station will be within a short 10-minute walk for more than 23,600 residents, in an area of the city where 4,100 households don't currently own a car.

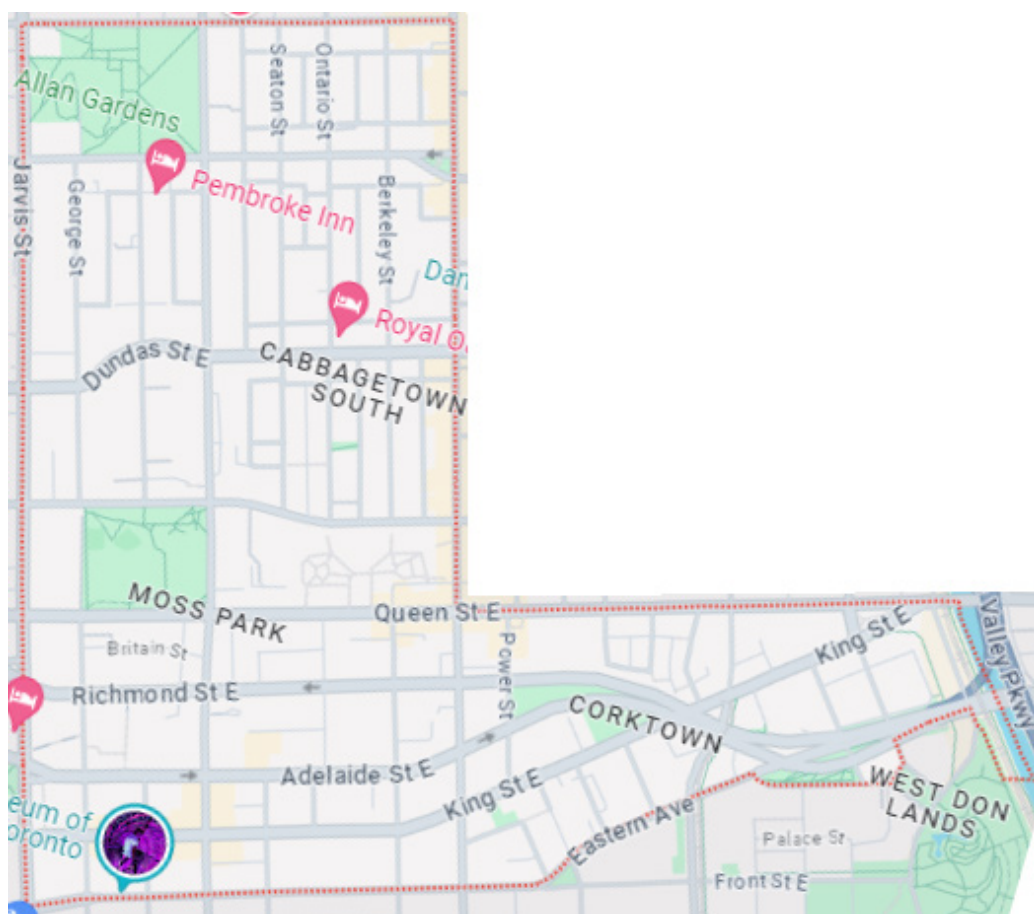


Fig. 2

St James Town

St. James Town is another neighbourhood of Downtown Toronto. The neighbourhood covers the area bounded by Jarvis Street to the west, Bloor Street East to the north, Parliament Street to the east, and Wellesley Street East to the south.

St. James Town is the largest high-rise community in Canada. It has been identified as one of 13 economically deprived neighbourhoods within the city. It consists of 19 high-rise buildings (14 to 32 stories). These residential towers were built in the 1960s. Officially, approximately 17,000 people live in the neighbourhood's 19 apartment towers and 4 low rise buildings, making it one of Canada's most densely populated communities.

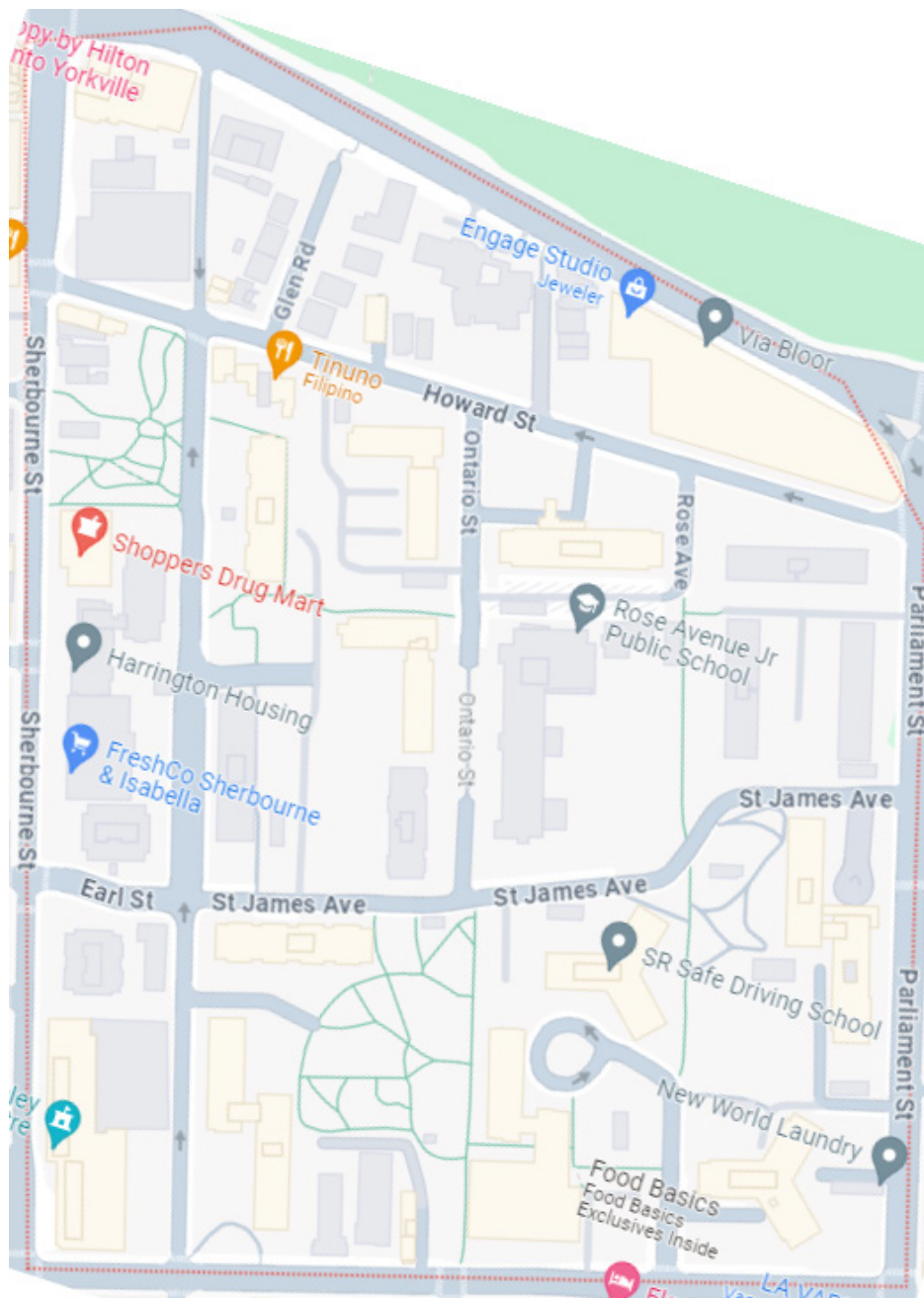


Fig. 3

Demographic Composition

The following section includes an in-depth analysis of the demographic composition of the three areas the FOCUS Media Arts Centre serves: Regent Park, St. James Town and Moss Park located in Toronto. The web-based mapping and analytics software application, SimplyAnalytics, was used to accurately capture the demographics for each area. SimplyAnalytics offers valuable insights on census data (historical and present), as well, effectively anticipates future population trends.

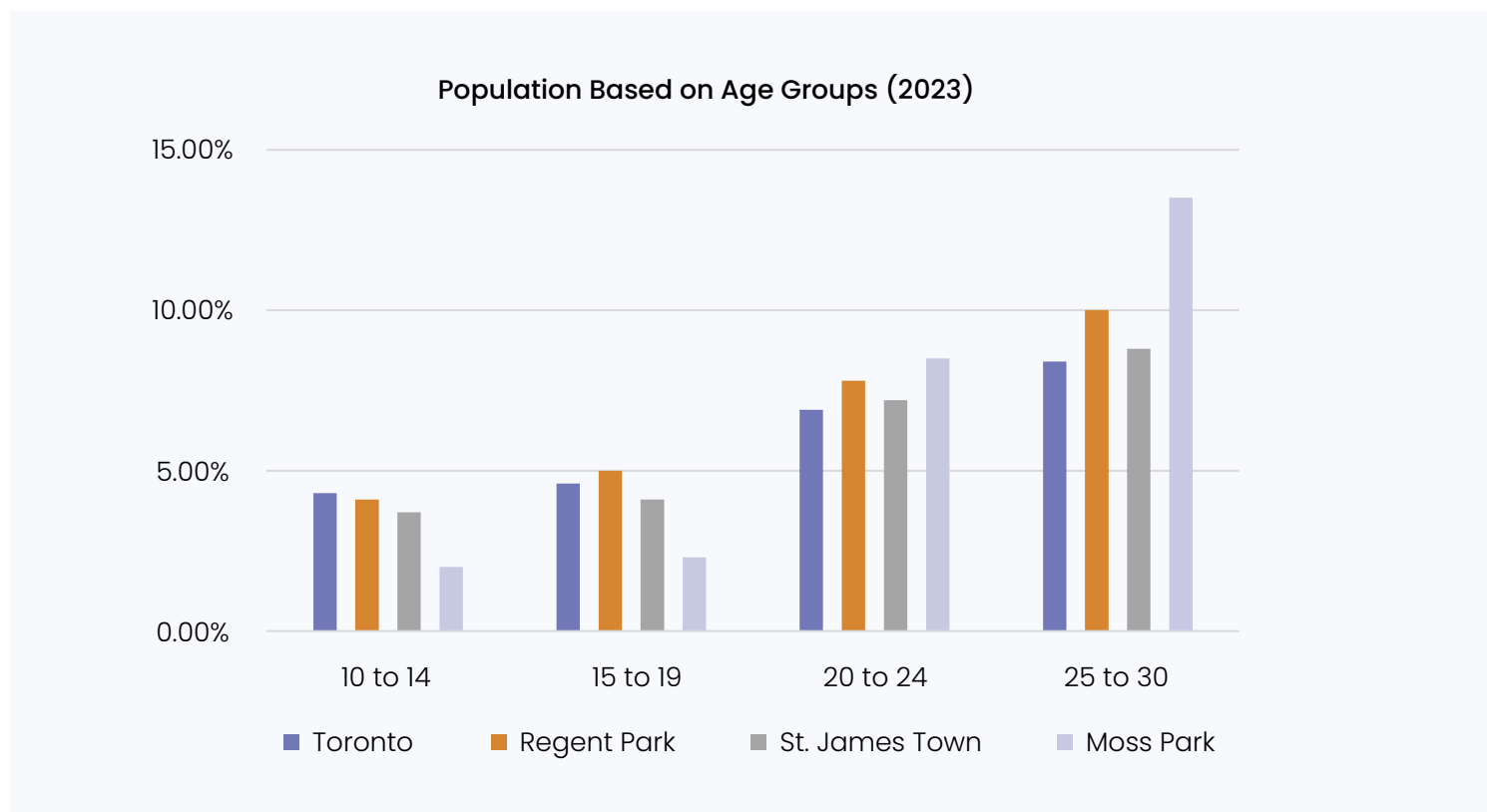
The following analysis will highlight the key population demographics that exist within the highlighted communities that FOCUS Media Arts Centre serves, including data analysis on: age groups, minority population, household income, and family composition. Additionally, this community specific demographic data will be compared against that for Toronto to offer a comparative analysis.

A comprehensive analysis of the demographic data and community composition offers valuable insights into the communities served by FOCUS Media Arts Centre. This analysis and data further evidence a need for FOCUS within the communities it serves to ensure that the diverse perspectives, experiences, and issues that exist within its catchment are effectively represented. As well, FOCUS serves as an available and impactful hub for community members to collaborate and have access to the necessary media resources.

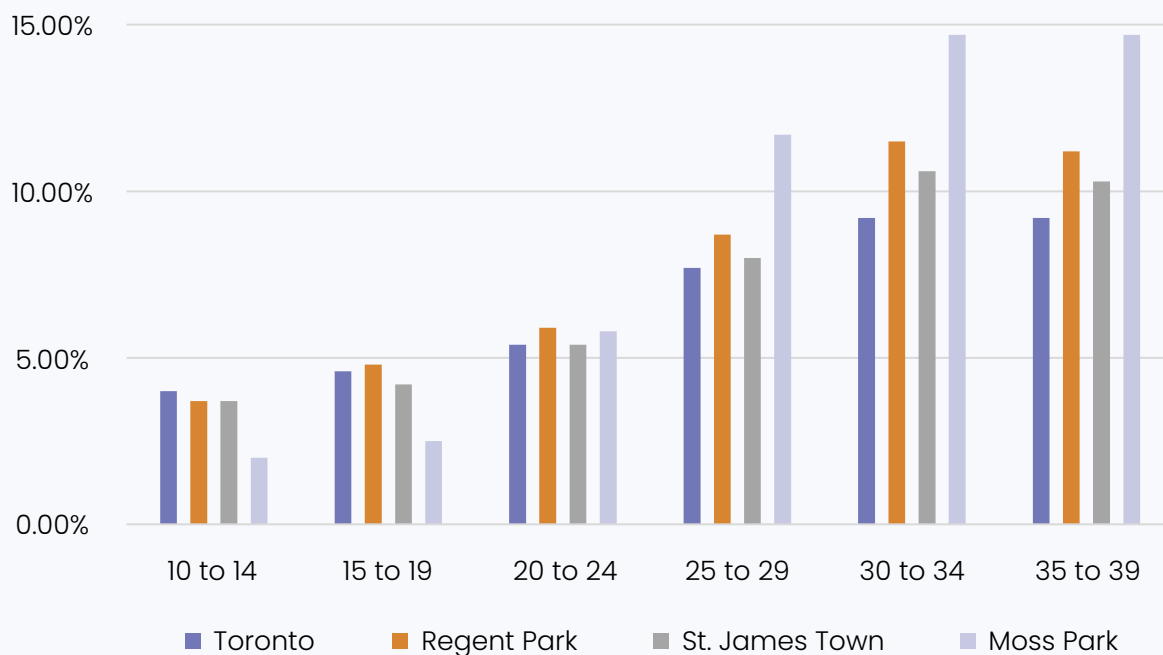
Demographic Analysis

Age Groups

The chart below shows that up to 35% of the population in the three areas contain the target age group of 10 to 30 years old in 2023 with ongoing trends anticipated in 2028.



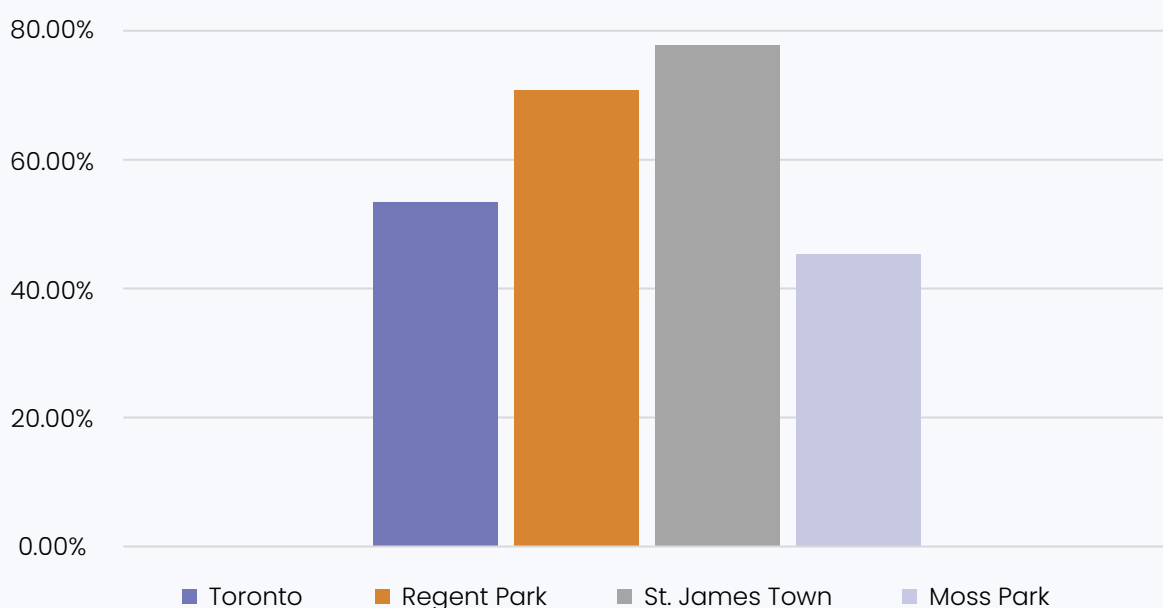
Population Based on Age Groups (2028 Projections)



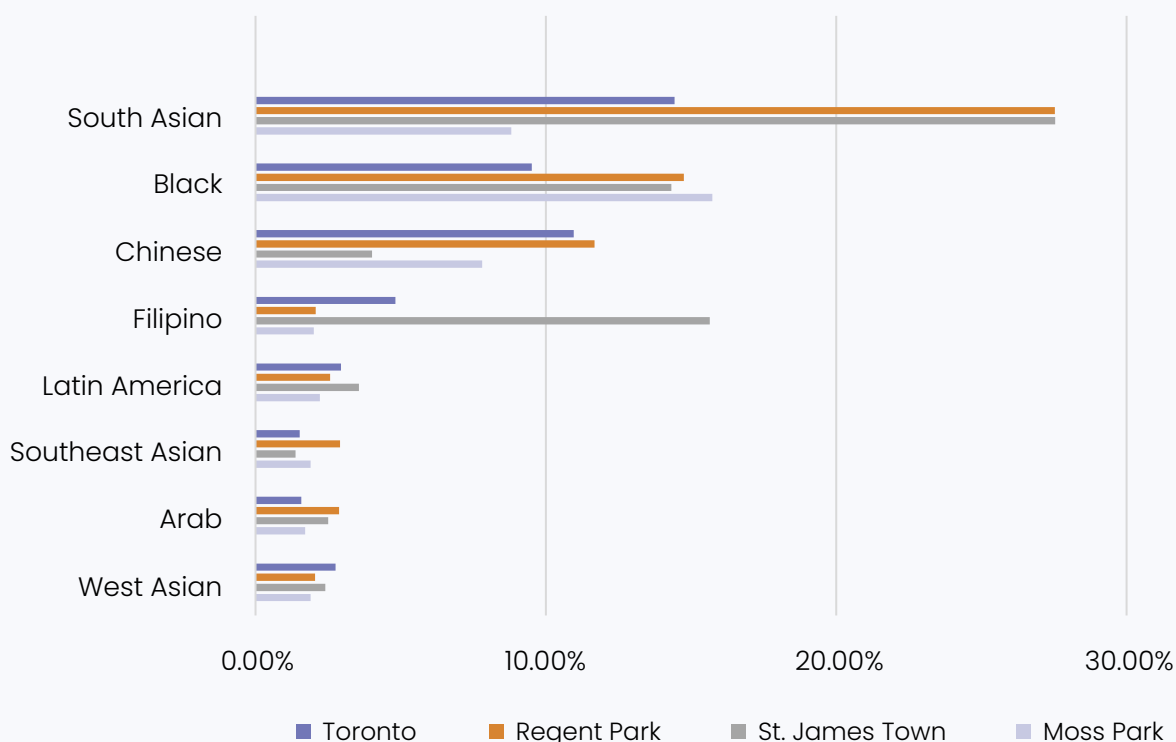
Visible Minorities

The visible minority population is significantly greater in Regent Park and St. James Town, when compared to Toronto at large. While visible minorities represent approximately 53% of the Toronto population, this percentage significantly increases to approximately 71% for Regent Park and 78% for St. James Town. Moss Park has a visible minority population of 45% and is expected to increase by 2028.

Visible Minority Population (2023)



Distribution of Minority Groups (2023)

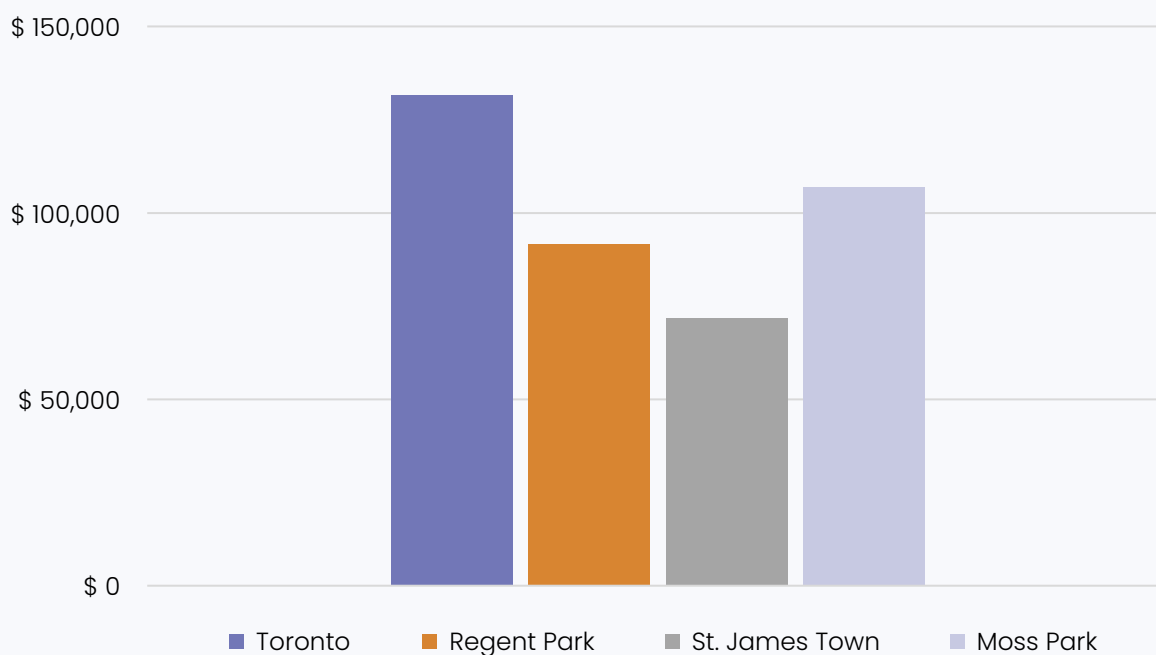


The three dominant minority groups in the areas are South Asian (primarily peoples from Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka), Black (persons of African Caribbean and African ancestry primarily from Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, North and South Sudan and Central Africa) and Chinese (mainland China). The concentration of South Asians is almost double that of Toronto, and the concentration of the Black community is 1.5 times that of Toronto. Further, 2028 projections show a similar outlook, with these values slightly increasing.

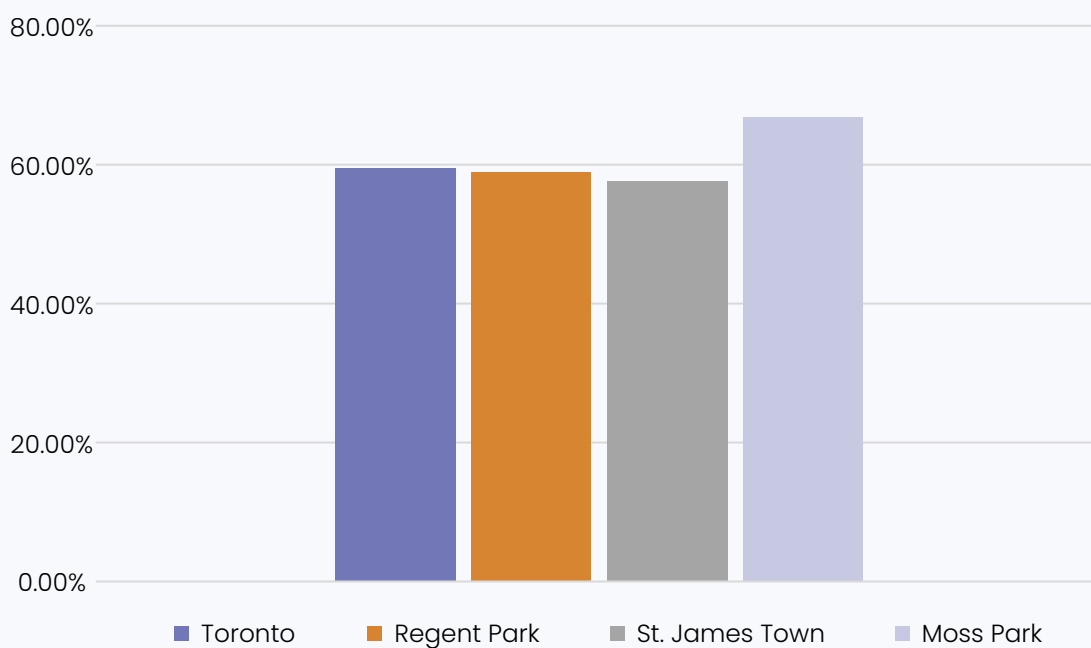
Average Household Income

Individuals within the indicated communities live in households with an average income of \$30,000–\$40,000, approximately 23%–31% lower than that of Toronto. In 2028, while income is projected to increase, the variance between the average household income within the highlighted communities and Toronto overall remains the same. This evidence shows that these households do not have the same level of disposable income when compared to that of other Toronto residents. Further data on employment levels illustrates the unwavering work ethic that exists within the catchment communities. This data demonstrates the impact and difference FOCUS Media Arts Centre has within the community. This impact is achieved through effective training. Mentorship and overall access to resources and equipment that allow members to have a voice to share important messages. In turn, these experiences will inspire the next generation of storytellers.

Average Household Income (2023)



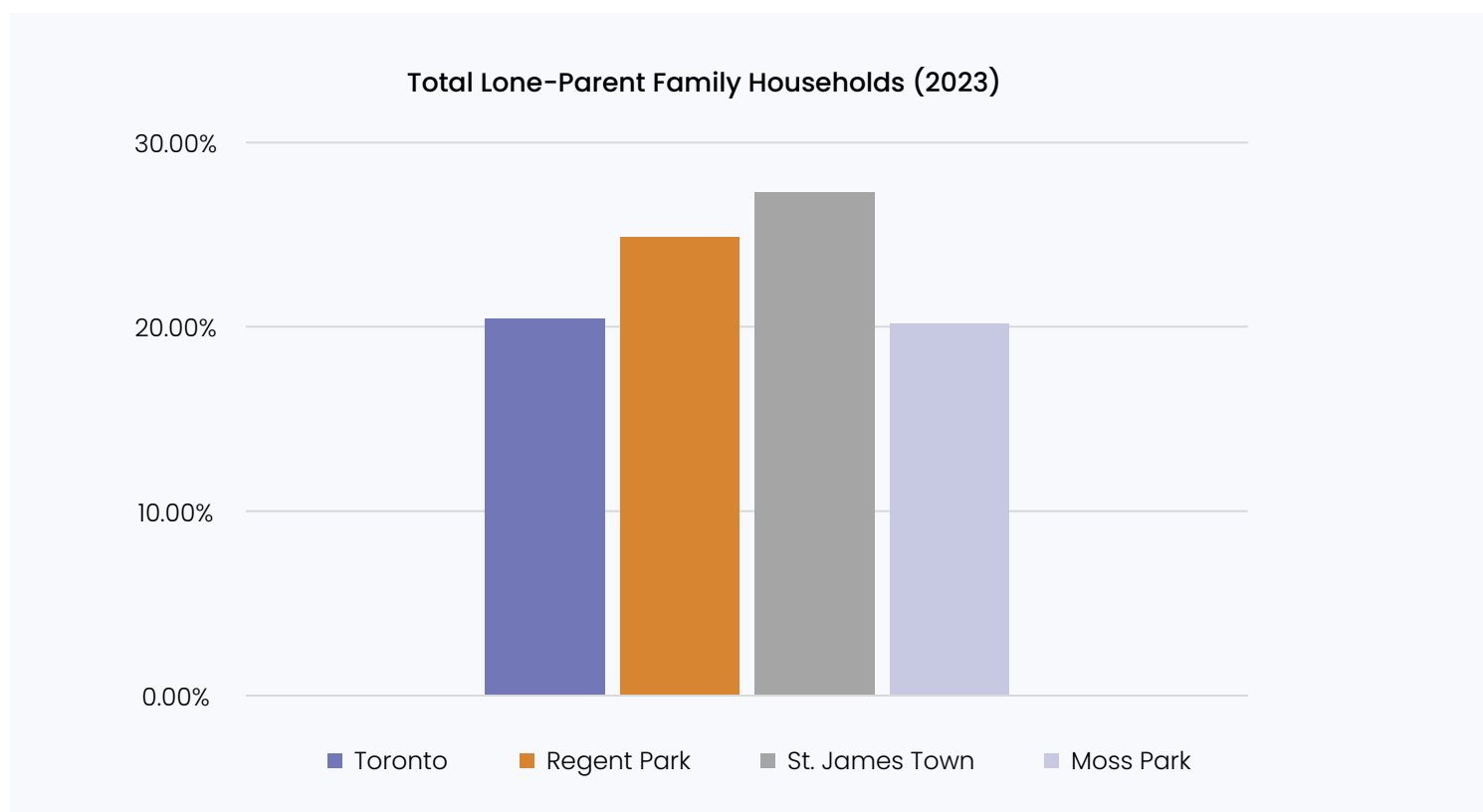
Employment (2023)



Household Composition

Regent Park and St. James Town have a higher density of single parent family households than Toronto and Moss Park. The chart below shows the single parent population in the respective neighbourhoods. For Regent Park these households are 5% greater than in the rest of Toronto. In St. James Town lone-parent households are 8% greater than in the rest of Toronto.

The family responsibilities for those within a lone-parent household cannot be understated. Often, single parents carry additional loads as they work to support their dependents and ensure they have all the resources to prosper. Community organizations such as FOCUS Media Arts Centre is critically important to these community members as it creates accessibility to various services and offerings that can benefit youth and families alike.



Concluding Analysis

This data demonstrates that the three primary communities served by the FOCUS Media Arts Centre are, without a doubt, high priority and vulnerable neighbourhoods that would continually benefit from high-quality services and programs that service racialized and low-income youth between the ages of 10 to 30 years. By providing young people with access to equipment, effective training and mentorship opportunities in the creative arts, FOCUS has contributed to making an impact not only on young people involved but, as shown by the organization's lengthy work in Regent Park, on the communities they reside in.



PROGRAMS OVERVIEW 03

FOCUS Media Arts Centre provides underrepresented communities with the opportunity to tell their stories using different forms of multimedia. The training hub offers programs, courses, and effective mentorship to teach and guide youth on how to use different forms of interactive media as well as different storytelling techniques to share their individualistic experiences as well as recent world issues.

Regent Park TV

The Regent Park TV Broadcasting Program (www.regentpark.tv) develops skills related to technical operations, field production and postproduction. Students are given the opportunity to learn how to operate television and studio equipment, how to set up equipment in the field and edit their work using various systems. The program provides students with well-rounded training in the art of cinematography.

Focus Toronto Community Media Portal

Modeling the work of Regent Park TV, the goal of this new initiative is to provide a supportive digital platform for various neighbourhoods across Toronto to network, produce and share media content relevant to their community. Using a one neighbourhood at a time approach, FOCUS Media Arts Centre wants to build an ecology of local media that showcases the aspirations, stories, obstacles and issues of the unique neighbourhoods across Toronto.

Radio Regent (www.radioregent.com)

The Radio Regent Audio Program allows participants to develop skills related to producing and presenting radio shows or podcasts through the guidance of professional broadcasters. The program works on developing interview techniques, audio editing, creating trailers and ensuring participants have the skills needed to present a radio program.

FOCUS Media Arts Centre operates the radio station Radio Regent. Established in 2011, the 24-hour internet radio station hosts multiple different shows providing a voice to a diverse group of individuals and allowing them to tell their stories, share their experiences and opinions, and receive a fundamental introduction in radio production.



Youth Radio Shows:

- ◉ **The Middle Passage**
Presents eclectic music and interviews with artists and personalities.
- ◉ **Stage Left**
Features members from the Toronto Theatre Community to speak about their productions.
- ◉ **FEMME Collective**
Young Muslim women speak about their teenage life and their perspectives of the happenings of the world.
- ◉ **Word of Mouth**
- ◉ **Democracy Now!**
In-depth discussions of daily headlines with a diversity of people.
- ◉ **State of Mind Podcast**
Conversations exploring mental health, illness, addiction, recovery and well being.

Young Women's Media Programming

FOCUS Media Arts Centre is committed to providing young women (ages 16 to 24 years) residing in Regent Park and beyond with opportunities to engage and express themselves in a variety of media programming including photography, blogs and radio broadcasts.

New Media

The FOCUS Media Lab allows participants to explore different types of new media to create interactive storytelling. New media is gaining increasing popularity in mainstream media and is an exceptional tool used for visual storytelling. Students are given the opportunity to learn how to use 3D modeling software to create 3D objects, learn how to develop games, as well as develop animation skills.

Print

FOCUS Media Arts Centre is also dedicated to written storytelling to allow youth to engage with a large audience. Youth are given an opportunity to improve their literacy levels, critical thinking skills, and overall written communication skills that would aid in their future success. The written collections encourage unique viewpoints, diverse stories, experiences, and opinions.

Print/Magazine Collections:

- ◉ **Catch da Flava On-Line**
Online articles written by community journalists and youth.
- ◉ **Catch da Flava Magazine**
Print & on-line magazine circulated to the Regent Park area.

Music

The FOCUS Music recording studio provides youth a space to learn the art of music recording from professionals in the music recording industry. Participants are taught how to produce beats and lyrics.

Photography

The FOCUS Photography program is taught as a 10-session program. Individuals are taught how to use digital cameras, various shooting techniques and how to edit photographs to eventually create a portfolio of their creative work.

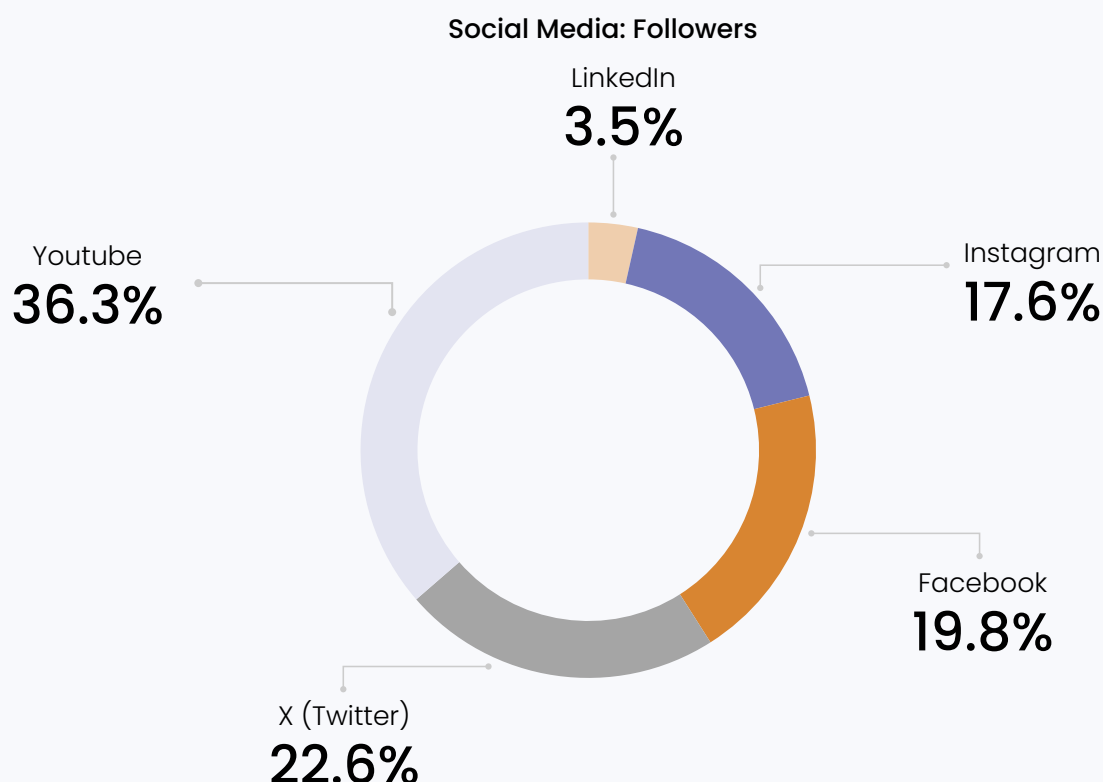


COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING 14

Social Media Presence

FOCUS Media Arts Centre celebrates an incredibly vibrant social media presence that actively engages both the local community and a wider audience. FOCUS Media Arts Centre social media platforms are buzzing with regular updates on community events, programs, and initiatives focused on safety, health, and well-being. FOCUS is always excited to share success stories, upcoming activities, and fantastic opportunities for residents to get involved.

Their YouTube channel, the home of RPTV and the Radio Regent podcast, is a true gem with over 1,200 videos, more than 800,000 views, and 1,570 enthusiastic subscribers. But that's not all, FOCUS Media Arts Centre's growing community thrives across multiple social platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X, and LinkedIn.



Other Ways to Stay in the Know

In addition to social media presence, audiences can stay closely connected with the vibrant Regent Park community through various other channels. FOCUS offers a variety of exciting communication channels to boost awareness and enhance community outreach.

Website

- ⦿ A one stop shop for all things FOCUS Media Arts Centre and Regent Park initiatives, including current programs, recent issues of publications, other ways to engage, donate, and much more.

RPTV

- ⦿ Regent Park Television (RPTV) is dedicated to providing a free listing of community events and producing content in a variety of formats including animation, news shows, documentaries, talk shows, and more.
- ⦿ RPTV provides an exciting opportunity for youth and adult community members to share stories, voice experiences, explore issues and profile the cultural life of the Regent Park community.

Catch da Flava

- ⦿ A collection of articles written by FOCUS journalists, available in both printed and online versions on the FOCUS Blogger website. In it, users have access to all 246 issues of the publication. In addition, Catch da Flava is also available as a digital newsletter sent via email.

Radio Regent

- ⦿ Radio Regent provides Regent Park residents and members of the general public with free access to internet radio broadcasts. Radio Regent features a diverse array of original programming including music, spoken word and news shows with an emphasis on social justice, promoting local artists, and providing relevant community news to Toronto residents.

The FOCUS Broadcast News

- ⦿ The FOCUS Broadcast News is committed to informing the broader community about radio and TV broadcasts produced by the FOCUS Media Arts Centre. It is available online at the FOCUS Media Arts Centre website.

The FOCUS Buzz

- ⦿ An online seasonal newsletter that provides the latest updates on the operations and programs of the FOCUS Media Arts Centre. The newsletter also serves as a valuable historical archive for the organization.



FUNDING PARTNERS 15

The FOCUS Media Arts Centre depends largely on the generosity of multi-year funding partners to support the organization's core operating costs. These annual funding partners are:

Municipal Grants Provided by the City of Toronto

Partnering with the City provides the opportunity to deliver on mutual objectives and amplify complementary efforts and resources all while fostering an equitable and liveable city.

Toronto Arts Council

Toronto Arts Council (TAC) is the City of Toronto's funding body for artists and arts organizations. Since 1974, TAC has offered innovative and responsive programs, enabling artists and arts organizations to explore, create and thrive. TAC grants lead to exhibitions, performances, readings and workshops seen each year by over 5 million people across the city.

Ontario Arts Council (OAC)

The OAC's grants and services to professional, Ontario-based artists and arts organizations support arts education, Indigenous arts, community arts, crafts, dance, Francophone arts, literature, media arts, multidisciplinary arts, music, theater, touring, and visual arts. The OAC is directed by 12 volunteer board (council) members from communities throughout the province and are appointed by the Government of Ontario for a three-year term.

The Canadian Association of Community Television Users and Stations (CACTUS)

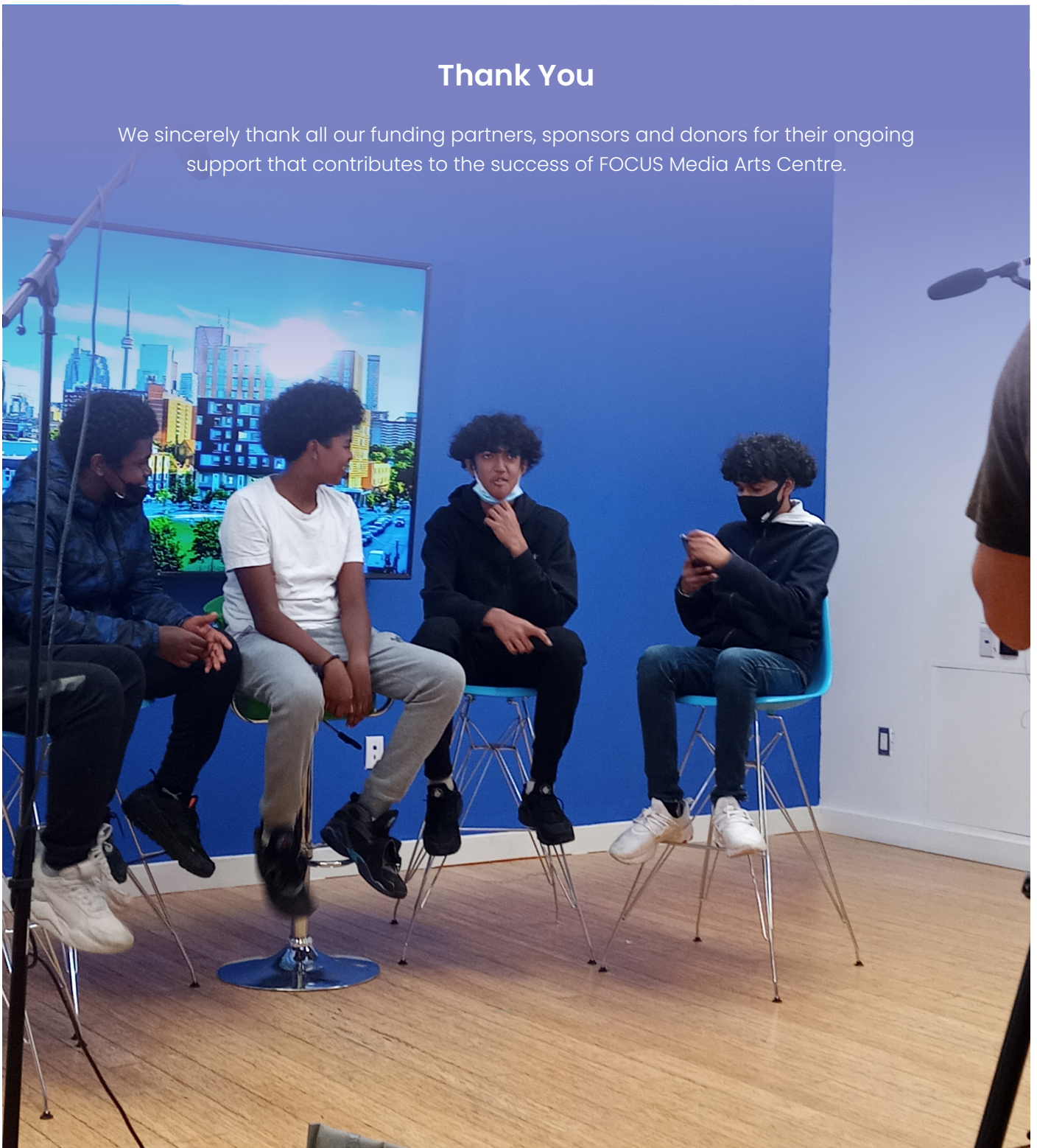
CACTUS advocates on behalf of individual Canadians and community organizations for access to digital skills training, production support, and distribution platforms so that individuals—especially minority and alternative voices – and communities have the tools they need to be heard and express themselves in the digital environment. CACTUS is the funding administrator for the Local Journalism Initiative that is funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Foundations and Other Financial Supports

In addition to the multi-year funding towards its operating expenditures, the organization's ability to deliver programming yearly, depends largely on self-generating funds raised through the provision of media services to other groups and organizations, and project grants and donations provided by individuals, corporate donors, foundations and other provincial and federal funding sources.

Thank You

We sincerely thank all our funding partners, sponsors and donors for their ongoing support that contributes to the success of FOCUS Media Arts Centre.



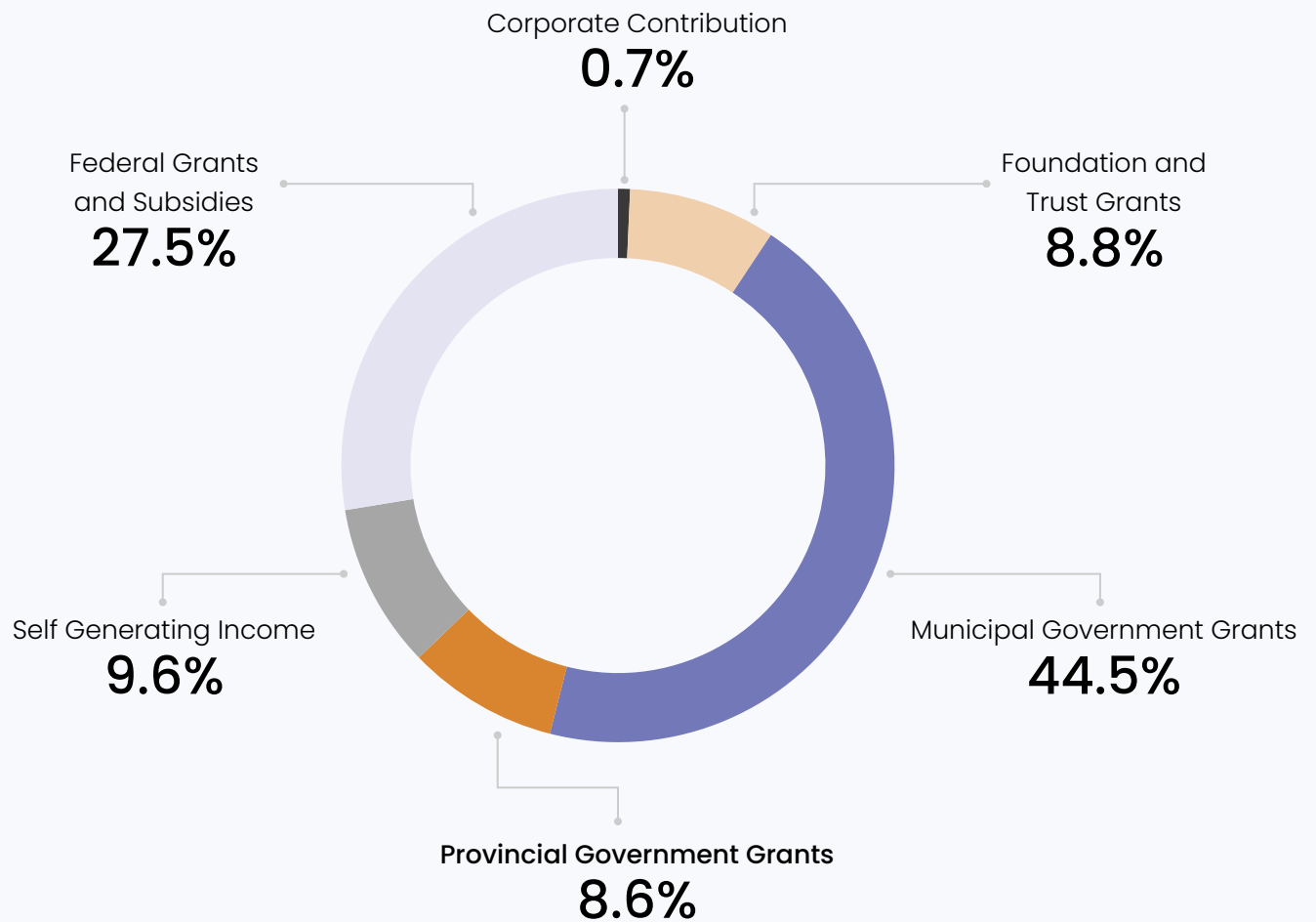


REVENUES

16

Period: April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

Income



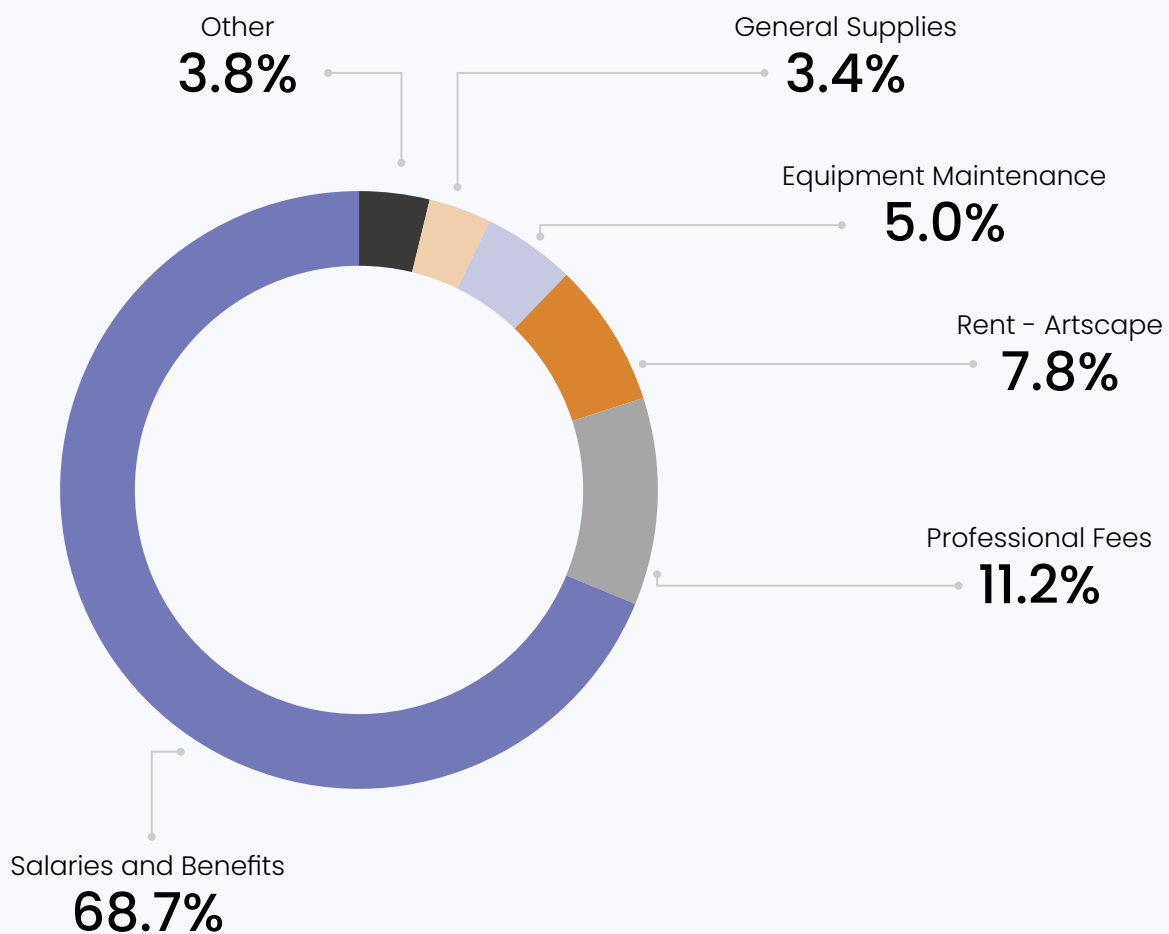


EXPENDITURES

Period: April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

17

Major Expenses









Financial Analysis

FOCUS has concluded the fiscal period in a surplus, demonstrating strong financial management and prudent budgeting. This surplus signifies the ability to maintain financial stability and underscores the importance of cultivating a healthy reserve fund for future sustainability. It reflects positively on the organization's overall financial health and readiness to weather unforeseen challenges.












OUR TEAM 18

Board of Directors

 <p>James Gnani (President)</p>	 <p>Rhoma Spencer (Treasurer)</p>	 <p>Natalie Alcoba</p>
 <p>Theo Nazary</p>	 <p>Joel Williams</p>	 <p>David Ofori Zapparoli</p>

Staff

 <p>Adonis Huggins Executive / Artistic Director</p>	 <p>Milada Kovacova Finance Manager / Bookkeeper:</p>	 <p>Tyrone Maclean-Wilson IT & Social Media Network Coordinator</p>
 <p>Dimitrije Martinovic TV / Video / Photography Production Training Coordinator:</p>	 <p>Fred Alvarado RPTV Weekly News Coordinator</p>	 <p>Dawar Neem TV / Video / Photography Production Assistant</p>
 <p>Kedar Ahmed TV / Video Production Assistant & Community Outreach</p>	 <p>Fatima Hashim & Maryam Shajahan Young Women Media Coordinators:</p>	 <p>Gabriel Meissner Music Recording Studio / Video Coordinators</p>

Summer Staff



Lawrence Rodriguez



Klavon Murdock

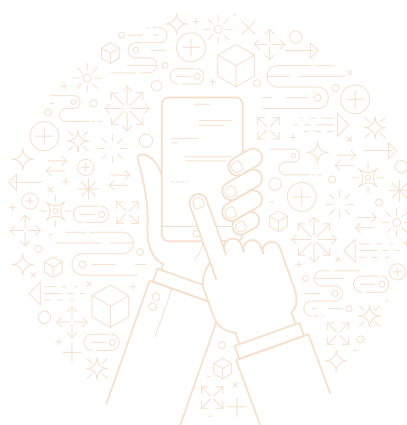


Remon Brown

Volunteers

FOCUS engages volunteers who make a significant difference in the lives of community members. Their generosity with their time and skills as well as their passion and dedication to the organization is truly unmatched and brings FOCUS closer to achieving its goals.





TESTIMONIALS 09

COMMUNITY TESTIMONIAL

JOEL KLASSEN

Community Member

FOCUS has a long history and strong connections in Regent Park and thus carries with it the ability to participate in community affairs with deep understanding. I have seen FOCUS support the growth of community members both through their programming and through their hiring of staff. FOCUS puts out a lot of material that many in the community turn to for information about the neighbourhood. FOCUS, especially through Adonis, has put an enormous amount of resources into supporting the SDP, which is a platform that brings community together to further social cohesion and a sense of belonging amidst the disruption of the revitalization. The SDP is a space where people act together to build up and advocate for the neighbourhood. FOCUS is a key contributor in the community.

STAFF TESTIMONIALS

TYRONE MACLEAN WILSON

IT & Social Media Coordinator

When I originally joined in 2004, FOCUS Media Arts Centre was funded by CAMH (Centre of Addiction and Mental Health). Our primary work revolved around engaging the community about topics such as drug awareness, substance abuse, and mental health. Through video and radio, we were able to facilitate conversations about these topics and create resources for the community. Over time, FOCUS Media Arts Centre has been able to create a positive perception of the Regent Park neighbourhood which used to be plagued with negative stigma, amplified by the mainstream media. FOCUS Media Arts Centre is directly involved in making sure systems of power are held accountable and ensuring that residents can use our tools and resources to amplify their voices and any concerns they may have about the community to create positive change.

KEDAR AHMED

Video Journalist

FOCUS Media Arts Centre empowers marginalized individuals and underrepresented communities to have a voice using professional training, mentorships and participatory based media practices that enable the sharing of stories, experiences and perspectives on relevant matters and issues. FOCUS Media Arts Centre has changed the negative media stereotypes of low income communities.

DAWAR NAEEM

Video Journalist

I was initially hired as a Videographer/Editor and gradually my role developed into a Community Journalist. I came from a country where community empowerment is weak and unheard of. Through filming various community events, and observing community-based initiatives, I was able to realize the importance of an active community working together towards common goals for the betterment of their quality of life.

FRED ALVARADO

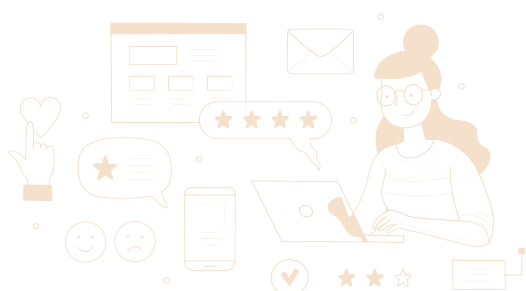
Video Journalist

I have worked with FOCUS Media Arts Centre for the last 3 years contributing to various media projects and community engagement initiatives. I was inspired to work with FOCUS Media Arts Centre because of its commitment to empowering residents through civic journalism and media production. The opportunity to engage and support the community in sharing their stories and reporting on important local issues was a major draw for me. Working at FOCUS Media Arts Centre allowed me to interact directly with residents, service providers, and community organizations, fostering strong connections. By telling their stories and highlighting local issues, I felt deeply integrated into the community's fabric. The overall impact of FOCUS Media Arts Centre has been significant in fostering community engagement and empowerment. By providing a platform for civic journalism and media production, FOCUS Media Arts Centre has strengthened community ties, raised awareness of local issues, and empowered residents with valuable skills.

DIMITRIJE MARTINOVIC

Community Journalist

Working at FOCUS Media Arts Centre fulfills a long-held passion of mine, to work in a field that has a deeper intention – that is rooted in social impact as opposed to monetary impact. As someone who has lived most of his adult life in the downtown area, the concerns, and issues that these communities face have all been profoundly important to me. Working at FOCUS Media Arts Centre has some truly remarkable consequences, to see history being made is quite an extraordinary experience.



FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS | 10

FOCUS Media Arts has demonstrated a strong commitment to challenging stereotypes and empowering communities through participatory media. To further this mission and magnify the continued impacts, the following strategic recommendations are proposed.

FACILITY EXPANSION

FOCUS Media Arts Centre continues to serve as an outlet for the voices of all community members within Regent Park and beyond. However, FOCUS currently faces facility limits that restrict the organization's ability to fully meet the increasing needs and demands for its programs and services. As the catchment communities of Regent Park, Moss Park and St. James Town continue to evolve, the expansion of FOCUS Media Arts Centre is pivotal to ensuring empowering participatory media continues within the communities it serves.

With a larger facility, FOCUS Media Arts Centre will be well positioned to serve as a model of best practice in the field of community media and further achieve the following:

Community Engagement and Advocacy

With a larger facility, FOCUS Media Arts Centre will serve as a cornerstone for community engagement and advocacy. FOCUS will be the community hub where members can gather, collaborate, and ideate future participatory media projects. A new facility will further ensure ongoing accessibility and inclusivity for all community members.

Increased Program Offerings/Capacity

Additional space would allow FOCUS Media Arts Centre to increase program offerings and capacity, including: workshops, specialized training, and community events. Media production equipment and practices can also be further enhanced with the facility upgrade to produce more high-quality content.

Commitment to the Regent Park Community and Beyond

Securing a larger facility further amplifies FOCUS Media Arts Centre's commitment to its mission and overall to the Regent Park community and beyond. An enhanced facility will demonstrate to all members how valued their community advocacy continues to be. Creating and taking more space to challenge injurious media portrayals and advocate for marginalized voices will illustrate FOCUS Media Arts Centre's dedication and long-term impacts to the community, stakeholders, supporters, and Toronto at large.

FUNDRAISING AND DONATION INITIATIVES

FOCUS Media Arts Centre plays a vital role in challenging harmful media portrayals and re-writing the narrative relevant to the Regent Park Community. To maintain and grow these impactful initiatives, enhanced sustainable funding is essential for FOCUS Media Arts Centre.

This can be achieved through implementing a monthly donation program and annual donation campaign that will allow for more secure, stable, and sustainable funding.

Monthly Donation Program

Establishing a monthly giving program where donors may contribute routine donations to support the programs and initiatives at FOCUS Media Arts Centre is an essential fundraising strategy that will deliver steady, predictable revenue. With consistent support, FOCUS Media Arts Centre will be better positioned to forecast future projects/initiatives, allocate resources, and expand community service offerings. An important benefit of these donations is also continued donor engagement and relationship building. Through monthly donor stewardship and recognition, donors will be more engaged in the organization's mission and programs and ultimately have a stronger relationship FOCUS Media Arts Centre.

Annual Donation Campaign

Creating a yearly campaign that the community can anticipate, plan for, and look forward to will serve as an opportunity for community members to rally together annually to support a local organization. An annual donation campaign will create ongoing momentum, magnify awareness about the organization, and encourage donors to make substantial one-time donations during this celebratory event.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

FOCUS Media Arts Centre serves as a representation of community togetherness and collaboration to achieve one unified vision: a voice for the members of Regent Park and beyond. To further expand this success, a strategic partnership between FOCUS Media Arts Centre and other not-for-profit organizations within the community will mutually expand each organization's outreach and overall impact.

In establishing a strategic partnership with other not-for-profits within Regent Park and beyond, FOCUS Media Arts Centre will achieve:

Magnified Impact

Through a strategic partnership, FOCUS Media Arts Centre's commitment to empowering marginalized voices and underrepresented communities will further amplify. Collaborating with other organizations creates the opportunity for broader outreach and therefore exposes more audiences to the critical community issues addressed through participatory media.

Collective Community Action

Together, with a partnered organization, FOCUS Media Arts Centre will further strengthen the advocacy efforts within Regent Park and beyond while also communicating how unified the members of the community truly are. This amplified advocacy will create a combined effort felt throughout the community that promotes awareness and collective action.

Diverse Resources and Expertise

Partnering with other not-for-profit organizations creates the potential to collaborate with many diverse perspectives, approaches, and levels of expertise. With this diversity, comes the opportunity for ongoing creativity and innovation when assessing programs and services. Further, partnerships create access to additional resources and networks that are mutually beneficial to both organizations. This will further enable FOCUS to elevate the quality and scope of work beyond expectations.



CONCLUSION

The purpose of this report is to highlight the profound impact that FOCUS Media Arts Centre has had on the Regent Park community and beyond. Since its establishment, FOCUS Media Arts Centre has provided the community access to different forms of multimedia and has dedicated itself to providing individuals with a platform to amplify their voices and share their narratives. This report evaluates the significance of the unwavering efforts put forth by FOCUS and the difference the organization has made in the Regent Park community.

Based on the analysis, to continue to achieve impactful results within Regent Park and throughout Toronto, it is recommended to expand the facility, initiate diverse fundraising/donation efforts and cultivate strategic partnerships with other not-for-profits within the community. These steps will help FOCUS Media Arts Centre to further amplify their mission and ensure continued success and benefits for the community.

We would like to express our appreciation to all participants, volunteers, and team members who continue to dedicate their time to ensure the success of the initiatives at FOCUS Media Arts Centres. Additionally, we would like to thank partners and supporters for providing the resources that give rise to the groundbreaking initiatives at FOCUS Media Arts Centre.

Looking ahead, FOCUS Media Arts Centre is committed to continuing its mission and providing marginalized individuals with a voice. FOCUS Media Arts Centre is dedicated to creating everlasting change and continuing to inspire. Thank you for being a part of the journey.



FOCUS
MEDIA ARTS