

Chapter Eleven
A New Leader for Common Ground
2008

Finding a New Executive Director Search for Permanent ED for CGC

The contract with David Pitt as Executive Director (ED) was going to end on March 31st. At its January meeting, David told the Board he must leave Common Ground on that date because his son was very ill with cancer. So the Board set up a Search Committee to look for a new ED. Common Ground now had the money to hire an ED to work full-time. The Committee wrote a job description. They agreed on how to conduct the search. The job posting would be sent out to many organizations so we could find the right person to lead us.

Choosing a New Executive Director

At the end of February, the Search Committee interviewed six candidates for Executive Director. When the interviews were finished, the committee met and decided to offer the position to Jeannette Campbell. We all agreed that Jeannette would be excellent as our full-time ED. She very much wanted to work with people with intellectual challenges and she said she thought the Business Partnerships were a wonderful idea! She also had a lot of previous experience as an ED for people with disabilities and with homeless youth.

Job Offer to Jeannette Campbell

In May, the Board voted unanimously (everyone agreed!) to offer the position of Executive Director of Common Ground Co-op to Jeannette Campbell. The plan was to ask Jeannette to begin work with Common Ground on the second day of July. David said he would continue working as our ED until that time, as his son's cancer was in remission.

Partner, Rachel G. and Job Coach Deanna Djos made a presentation at that Board meeting, they told the Board Members about the Surrey Place Get-in-Line fundraising event coming up in August. They encouraged the Board Members to get involved. This was one way to help the Partners and Board get to know each other better.

Joint Advisory Committee JAC Partners Take On New Responsibilities

At the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) meeting, it was reported that the Business Partnerships were starting to have regular meetings again. A few of the Partners had joined the Co-op. It was good to see that Veronica and Nazia were asking questions about why they should join before they did so. Aaron and Mike were willing to take the updated Services Agreement to the Board for signing. Joanna, an alternate rep to the JAC, asked if she could become a member of the Property Search Committee for a new kitchen. Our Partners could be strong! They were feeling empowered by joining the Co-op.

A Partner Takes Action

Partner Aaron met with the chair of the Board, Karen Goldenberg. Aaron did this as a first step toward the final signing of the updated Services Agreement. Karen told Aaron that she had a concern about the indemnity or "fault" clause in the Agreement. That clause stated that the Co-op was responsible or liable for any damages or wrongful acts made by the Partnerships. It was a good thing Aaron had checked with the chair. It seemed there was a need for the Business Partnerships to carry their own insurance. Aaron reported back to the JAC. The Board asked Christine Pearce, our treasurer, to write to Lily Ng, Common Ground's insurance agent at Cooperators. She sent Lily a list of questions about coverage for Partners. I wrote to Brian Iler and he said he would contact Lily too. Together they would see whether insurance could be arranged for the Partnerships.

All four Partner reps were there again at the February JAC meeting. We discussed the Board's concern about insurance for the Partners. As always, the Partner reps asked good questions. We would have to wait to see what Lily Ng at Cooperators would offer the Partnerships. The Cooperators were interested in working out a good insurance policy that the Partnerships could afford. After all, Cooperators is one of our major funders and they are a Co-op too.

Businesses Take Out Insurance

Cooperators, did offer insurance policies to the Partnerships. It would cost each Partnership \$300 per year. Each Partnership discussed and voted on acceptance of the general liability insurance policy. Now the insurance was in place, the Board would agree to sign the updated version of the Services Agreement.

Ontario Disability Support Programme (ODSP) Living on ODSP

Our Partners' earnings give them a little more money to add to what they receive from ODSP. Partners can earn up to \$200 or more per month in their businesses. But they get to keep only half of these earnings. (The money the government takes back is called a "claw back".) These two kinds of income together barely cover rent. They leave nothing left over for food, clothing and transportation. Many of the Partners get help from their families or else they could not live and work independently.

ODSP Action Coalition

The ODSP Action Coalition asked the provincial government to make two changes to ODSP: 1) Raise the monthly rate by a few hundred dollars. 2) Let people on ODSP who work keep all of their earnings. Members of the ODSP Action Coalition had been meeting every month or two over several years. In between meetings they often spoke to individual members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) about their needs and asked for changes.

On Leap Year Day (February 29, 2008) Aaron and I joined Nancy Vanderplaats and Sharon Devers from the ODSP Action Coalition to meet with Common Ground's good friend, Kathleen Wynne, our MPP for Don Valley West. It was a good meeting where we spoke about the hidden poverty of disability. We said that must not be overlooked in the provincial government's new anti-poverty strategy. Aaron spoke about the earnings clawback he was facing. And he said that all the other Partners in our Businesses faced it too. He asked her to use her influence to let people with disabilities who do work to keep their earnings.

Lemon and Allspice Cookery

The Cookery's Tenth Anniversary!

Lemon & Allspice Cookery began on July 2, 1998 with three workers, a part-time Job Coach, a small kitchen and a great cookie recipe. Here we were on July 2, 2008, TEN YEARS LATER! The Cookery had sixteen Partners, three full-time Job Coaches, a big well-equipped kitchen and a complete catering menu that featured many foods, including the original chocolate chip cookies. These were Cathy's thoughts after ten years: "I really like the friendly people I work with, earning money from selling to customers, thinking up new ideas and recipes, and seeing

people smile." On that very same date of the Cookery's Tenth Anniversary, we welcomed Jeannette Campbell as our new leader.

The Search for a New Kitchen Continues

Our Property Search Committee met again at Neill Wycik Housing Co-op. Job Coaches Joan, Jenny, and Tara, and Board Members Larry, Rae and I were there. Melissa Wilkes proposed \$1 000 a month for rent and utilities. The rent seemed high and the Staff was feeling uneasy about a move to this location. It was still uncertain what Community Living would do regarding our present kitchen location. They had not yet made a decision about moving out of Jessie Manson. So the committee decided to let Melissa know that the Cookery would not be moving to the Neill Wycik kitchen at that time.

Community Living and the Kitchen

The CGC Property Committee met again in April. But, by then, CLT had changed its plans. They were proposing to build a new headquarters that would include programme space for the people who were now in the sheltered workshop at Jessie Manson. The building would take a long time to construct. This meant probably Common Ground and the kitchen would have 3-5 more years in Jessie Manson!

Cooperators Visits the Cookery - April 14th

Our good long-time friend, Cathy Lang, brought a group of ten people from Cooperators insurance to see the Cookery kitchen. They came together on a bus to see the work we were doing. Lemon and Allspice Partners served a tasty lunch in the Jessie Manson meeting room. David Pitt and Partners Joanna, Angela and Rachel G., spoke to the group about their work. I thanked the Cooperators for the funding they had promised Common Ground over the next three years. We did all this in exactly one hour!

The Last Bag Lunches for the Out of the Cold Programme

People in the congregation of TSP United Church had been purchasing bag lunches from the Cookery for their Out of the Cold Programme for homeless people since 1999. Now the OOTC programme was closing for good in March. This project, over nine years, had given thousands of dollars of business to the Cookery. Homeless people had received hundreds and hundreds of bag lunches to eat when they had no money to buy food. It was a wonderful coming together of people to help those who needed it.

New College Coffee Shed

New College Shed Hits the News!

The New College student newspaper in March featured a story and photo about the Coffee Shed on the front page! The Partners were working hard to let more and more people know about the work of the Business Partnerships. They wanted people to know how much their work was changing the lives of people with disabilities.



NAZIA AT THE CASH REGISTER
AT NEW COLLEGE COFFEE SHED

Coffee Shed Reaches Out at New College

Alice Bikeeva is the Job Coach at New College Coffee Shed. She was getting to know faculty people at the College. One day in early April, I went with Alice and Partners Ernest and Petra T., to meet June Larkin, Professor of Disability Studies, at New College. June had been a very good catering customer. But she knew very little about Common Ground and the Business Partnerships. So we talked about our Co-op and the social economy. June said she believed many more students would patronize the NCCS if they understood it was a social enterprise. She talked about the possibility of having a student intern work with the Coffee Shed to develop promotion and marketing.

The week before this, David Clandfield, now the retired principal of New College, had written to Common Ground. He offered to volunteer and to help NCCS and Common Ground in any way he could. This was good news!!

Jeannette Takes the Lead

One of the first meetings Jeannette had when she began with Common Ground was with David Clandfield, June Larkin and myself. We discussed the future of the New College Coffee Shed and how students at New College might become interns and "work-study students" in the Shed. This was a good idea! Since that meeting, several students have worked with the Partners at New College Coffee Shed.

A Big Opportunity at New College Coffee Shed

The Grad Room - Is it For NCCS?

Back in May, the University of Toronto had asked Common Ground to make a proposal for operating a coffee and snack bar at the Grad House. That is a large building where graduate students live on campus. The Grad Room is the name of the snack bar. It is at the corner of Spadina Avenue and Harbord Street. We thought of many questions as we talked about this idea. Could we close the Coffee Shed at Wetmore Hall and move it to the Grad House location? Or could we operate snack bars at both locations? Could we keep our catering business going with OISE if we made a change?

We decided to organize a meeting at the Grad Room. We invited the interested people at the University to talk about these questions. The meeting took place on May 27th in the Grad Room. Lemon and Allspice provided the lunch. Common Ground decided to make a proposal. We knew we might not be chosen because other food services would also be making proposals. But we would try anyway. We would know in two or three weeks' time.

So one of Jeannette's first jobs was to help New College Coffee Shed make the proposal for the space at the Grad Room. We knew the big food outfits like Sodexo and Avarak were also making proposals. But we thought we might still have a chance of getting the place

Making Our Proposal for the Grad Room Snack Bar

We met at New College at 10am on July 31st. Nazia, Petra T. and Rachel B. went over their speeches. The Partners, Job Coach Alice Bikeeva, Jeannette and I walked over to the School of Grad Studies. After we climbed the stairs to the third floor, we met Barry Smith, Heather Kelly, Ann MacDonald and a man from Ancillary Services. We made our presentation in the half hour time slot. Nazia, Petra and Rachel spoke very well. Jeannette fielded questions regarding how catering orders would be handled and whether we had enough Partners and Job Coaches. David Clandfield knocked on the door in the middle of the proceedings. He dropped off copies of his letter of support for us. His arrival was well timed! The people there said they would let us know soon.

Grad Room Proposal Turned Down

As it turned out, on August 5th, Jeannette told us we had lost our bid for the Grad Room - what a great disappointment! But we knew we must move on. We would make a greater effort at New College.

Improving New College Coffee Shed

Already in the previous spring, the Partners had given the New College Shed a facelift with the addition of new Partner-made signs! One of our staff people, Natalie Roach worked with Nazia, Rita, Frank, Mimi and Petra S. on the signs. This was a project to help make the Coffee Shed more visible. One sign, made by Mimi and Frank, advertised the fair trade and organic coffee they were selling there. Another sign, by Petra S. explained how the Coffee Shed created employment for adults with intellectual disabilities. Petra S. added the note, "I myself work here!"

Working at New College Coffee Shed

The jobs for Partners at the Coffee Sheds are different from those at the Cookery. The NCCS Partners enjoy their work. Rashida likes making coffee. She is good at making change at the sales counter and cleaning the coffee carafe at the end of the day. Nazia is there when someone needs to take charge of the Shed when others are off making catering deliveries. Nazia especially likes working at the Farmers' Market booth where Lemon & Allspice sells coffee and baked goods one day a week all summer. When it's time to open up the New College Coffee Shed in the morning, either Lynn or Rachel B. is usually there. They like counting the cash and so does Katie. Amy doesn't mind taking the catering

deliveries from New College across campus to OISE. The person who is often ringing up the cash register is probably Rita. Amy likes to take her turn at the cash register too and make deposits of the sales money at the Scotiabank branch at Bloor and Spadina.

SP Coffee Shed Partners are a Smash Hit at the OADD Conference

The Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities⁶ invited three Partners from the Surrey Place Coffee Shed and one rep from Surrey Place Centre to present at their 2008 Conference. It took place in Barrie, Ontario on April 3rd & 4th. Their Job Coach, Deanna, was invited too. This conference was an opportunity for professionals serving people with disabilities to come together.

The title of the Coffee Shed presentation was "The Coffee Shed - an innovation in business - empowering the lives of people with developmental disabilities." There were so many people wanting to hear the presentation that there weren't enough seats. But people stood in the back of the room to watch the team. Partners Andrew and Aldene warmed up the crowd by telling a few jokes. That brought more people into the room who wondered what all the laughter was about! Getting serious, Deanna, Aldene, Andrew and Rachel G. explained about Common Ground's non-profit, co-op model. They told the audience how the model allows adults with disabilities to have the dignity of long-term self-employment. They told stories and used videos to show the Partners in action. They told the crowd how their business had changed their lives.



ANDREW, ALDENE, RACHEL G. AND PATRICK

¹⁷ OADD is a professional organization of people working and studying in the field of developmental disabilities, throughout Ontario.

The Partners spoke proudly about their organization. They were loud and clear with answering all the questions from the crowd. The questions continued after the session was over. The hour and a half presentation was a huge success! The Coffee Shed Partners were the smash hit of the conference!

Harvest Time at Surrey Place

At the April JAC meeting, Veronica announced the first "Worm Harvest Party". The party was planned by the Surrey Place Coffee Shed to take place on May 31st. "This means we will be harvesting the compost made by the worms," she explained.

The vermi-composting project had been working very well. Every working day that year, the Partners collected organic waste from the Coffee Shed and from the offices and meeting rooms at Surrey Place. They had collected coffee filters, orange peels, and other food waste. They placed these items in the vermi-compost bin outside in a corner of the parking lot. The worms ate it all. Now the worm compost could be removed from the large box and sold to people who wanted compost for their home gardens. Small balls of compost could be sold in egg cartons for people to use for their houseplants.

When the day of the harvest arrived, a producer at CBC news arrived to film the event. The film crew caught on camera the Partners, Aldene and Andrew, digging up the compost and sifting through it to extract the rich fertilizer. The magic black worm castings gave organic mega-growth power to plants. The Partners sold out of the castings on the day of the event. The Partners had Cathy Nesbitt of "Cathy's Crawly Composters" to thank for helping to start this successful programme.

Brock University Comes Back to Surrey Place Centre

Brock University was back to school for the second year and resumed holding their classes on weekends at Surrey Place Centre. The classes were for a Master's Degree program in Applied Disability Studies and would start on Saturday and Sunday Sept 13th and 14th. In this year there would be two classes a month at Surrey

Place Centre, taught by Dr. Rose Mary Condillac and Dr. Ivan Brown from Brock University. The Team Leaders at SPC Coffee Shed would be catering snacks and lunches to the students and faculty, from 8am to 3pm. They would be doing this

on all the weekends that the Brock programme was in session for that academic year. The catering was very successful. Brock University continued to use the Coffee Shed's catering service for the next several years.



SURREY PLACE PARTNER RACHEL G. WITH VOLUNTEER CAROL PETRENKO
AT "CITY MIX" AT TORONTO CITY HALL

City Mix 2008 is a celebration of all people ~ One People. One Celebration. One Voice. It's an inclusion awareness event - a Celebration of social inclusion, diversity & empowerment for people of all ages & abilities. City Mix brings all people together to celebrate social inclusion, diversity and empowerment. And Common Ground was there in Nathan Philips Square in August 2008!

Surrey Place Partners - Conference Presenters in Ottawa

Job Coach Deanna Djios and two Partner/Team Leaders, Aldene and Rachel G. were the guest presenters at a Conference in Ottawa on October 15 & 16, 2008. The theme was "Employment Solutions: The Untapped Workforce". They presented two full sessions about their business and their personal experiences as Business Partners in The Coffee Shed. They also gave out informal information to

attendees. The Coffee Shed presenters were among other speakers from across Canada and the International community.

The June Callwood Award

Surrey Place Centre makes awards each year. One of those awards is made in honour of June Callwood. She did many good works in the City of Toronto. Before she died, she helped Surrey Place Centre in its work with people with disabilities. Cathy and I received June Callwood awards at a big gathering of Surrey Place people at Currie Hall in the National Ballet School on June 26th.

Many people from Surrey Place came to the event. Others from Common Ground were David Pitt, Angela Chan, Deanna Djos, Jodine Labor, Doreen Cluett, Christine Pearce and Marg Murray, our first Board chairperson. Partners from Surrey Place and New College Coffee Sheds were there too. Rachel G. from SPCS gave an excellent speech about her life with a disability. A mother spoke about her Down syndrome child and all the beautiful Down syndrome children who have been born.

Cathy and I received the awards because of our work to set up Business Partnerships that have become a new model of employment in the community. Partner Aldene was at this event as an official member of the Board at Surrey Place. She helped hand out the awards. Cathy and I each made a speech when we received our awards. Cathy told about her dream to have the Cookery. I paid tribute to David Pitt for his long-standing dedication to Lemon & Allspice Cookery, the Coffee Sheds and Common Ground Co-op. I said I would always remember him as one who understood fully the ups and downs of our many years of working together to build Common Ground and the Business Partnerships.

JAC Deals with Discounts and Partnership Agreements Cookery Discount to Sheds

Some Members of the Co-op and some Partners in the Coffee Sheds had a concern. Partners in the Cookery were making more money than Partners in the Sheds. They thought the Cookery might be charging too much for the orders from the Sheds. The Sheds could not raise their prices high enough to cover the cost of the food and also give them enough income. Some people suggested that the 25% discount that the Cookery gave to the Sheds was too small. Our Board treasurer, Christine

Pearce, believed that some of the inequities among the businesses could be resolved by changing the discount structure.

Here is what was happening: a Shed would place a \$100 catering order. The Cookery would give the Shed a discount of \$25 and charge the Shed \$75. The Shed could sell the catering order for \$100. So the income to the Shed was \$25. The income to the Cookery was \$75, but some of that \$75 was used to purchase the food from the wholesalers. If the Sheds got a bigger discount, here is what would happen: On the \$100 order, the Cookery would give the Shed a 35% discount of \$35. The Shed could sell the catering order for \$100. But they would keep \$35 instead of \$25. The Cookery income would be \$65 less the cost. The Partners at the JAC meeting discussed whether the Sheds could negotiate with the Cookery for a bigger discount. The discount was finally changed in the summer of 2009. (See Chapter 12, page 130.)

Improving the Partnership Agreements

Another item on the JAC agenda was about the Partnership Agreements. The Partners in each business had signed these Agreements a few years ago. (See Chapter Two, page 11.) The Agreements explain the duties and the rights of the Partners and how they agree to manage themselves. It was time for the Partnership Agreements to be reviewed. Peter and I said we would suggest some changes to make the Agreement easier to understand. We would bring it to the JAC for more discussion with the Partners. Peter would also discuss the changes at a Staff meeting with the Job Coaches.

Woodbine Beach Again

Beach Time - Get in Line!

It was Get-in-Line Day again for Surrey Place Centre and Common Ground Co-op. Many people participated in the walk-a-thon and skate-a-thon on a beautiful sunny and very warm day. Many of our Partners were there and family members too. Team Common Ground raised the most money - over \$12 000 this year. The total raised by all groups was over \$100 000. It's a lot of work raising money this way - but the day was very good.

Summer Fun!

Five days later the Partner/Staff picnic took place at Woodbine Beach Park again. It was good to see how the Partners have formed friendships. They swam in the Olympic pool, brought their own lunches. Tessa swam too - what a trooper! Five days after that event, Deanna, Gladys and Jeannette took ten Partners to Wonderland. They were the top Partner fundraisers for Get-in-Line!

Historic Moments!

Signing the Updated Services Agreement

Eight Partners went to the September Board meeting. They were there to sign the revised and updated Services Agreements between each business and Common Ground Co-op. Aaron and Cathy signed for the Cookery, Nazia and Petra T. signed for the New College Coffee Shed, Rachel G. and Andrew signed for the Surrey Place Coffee Shed, Kirk and Mike signed for the JVS Coffee Shed, Karen Goldenberg and Frank Pickersgill signed all four Agreements for the Board of Directors. It was an historic moment!

There was another historic moment in September. Jim and I had our 50th wedding anniversary celebration. It was held at Trinity St. Paul's church. Four of the Cookery Partners did a very professional job of serving the food and beverages to 150 people: Doug, Mohammed, Aaron, and Susan. Joan and Jodine helped organize in the church kitchen. It was a grand occasion and great to have the Cookery Partners and Staff there!

A Business Partner on the Board of Common Ground Co-op?

At the October Board meeting, there was a discussion about the candidates for the Board at the Annual General Meeting in November. There were five people who had agreed to be candidates. There were four vacant positions on the Board. One of the five candidates was a Partner in the Cookery who was a member of Common Ground. He had put his name forward at a nomination meeting earlier in the month. The Board had voted at the last AGM for a change in the by-law that would allow Partners to stand for the Board. But not all Board Members were sure they wanted to encourage a Partner to be on the Board. They needed more opportunities to get to know the Partners and to hear about their thoughts and

perceptions of the world. The Board decided not to recommend the Partner for a position on the Board.

It was true that a Partner who came on the Board would have a great deal to learn, just as any new Board Member would. Someone would need to help with that. The Board Members needed more time to think about having a Partner on the Board.

Another Great Annual General Meeting! - November 13, 2008

The eighth annual Open House and AGM was wonderful! Many Partners, families, and Co-op Members intermingled. The Honourable David Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario came, as our very special guest, and he wanted to do the same - intermingle! He gave a short talk in which he called our work at Common Ground "revolutionary". He had spoken with some of our Partners at the City Mix in Nathan Phillips Square in September and he could see how much they were learning. David Onley is a physically handicapped person who had polio as a child. He understands what it's like to have a disability.

The Issue of Poverty Partners Attend a Network Meeting

Marvyn Novick and Peter Clutterbuck are part of the "25 in 5 Network". The Network aims to reduce poverty in Ontario by 25 percent in 5 years. I spoke with them about having some of our Business Partners attend a meeting of the 25 in 5 groups at the Y on November 17th. They were happy to invite us. So Cathy, Veronica and Kenny met me at the Y. There we attended a full day meeting with people from all over Ontario. They were concerned about people living in poverty. The people there didn't think it was fair that people had to live in poverty in a rich province like Ontario.

Peter and Marvyn met us and we found a table near the front. People at the tables represented other cities or regions across Ontario. Marvyn spoke on the 25 in 5 blueprint for the government. Our Partners followed the hour-long talk and power-point presentation and made notes. They were fully engaged throughout the day. The Partners talked with me about ODSP and the claw back of their earnings from their businesses. Then they reported to the whole group about having half of their earned income taken back by the government. We also said that poverty among people with developmental disabilities can sometimes be hidden because some of them have families who can support them. Pat Capponi

spoke to our Partners, saying that they had made an important point, especially because sometimes families grow old or move away. I asked Cathy, Kenny, and Veronica to help write a Declaration about bringing people with disabilities out of poverty. We wanted to share our ideas from the meeting. We said we might share with other Partners what we were learning about incomes and poverty.

Peter Clutterbuck wrote about the participation of Veronica, Kenny and Cathy in the meeting. He posted their Declaration in the Poverty Watch on-line newsletter. You can read the Declaration in the Appendix at the end of this book on page 154.

Joint Advisory Committee and the Poverty Issue

When the Joint Advisory Committee met in November, we talked about the Declaration of Young People with Developmental Challenges made on Nov. 17th. I had sent this Declaration to the Job Coaches. There was concern among the JAC Staff and Partner reps. and they wondered whether the Partners wanted to talk about themselves living in poverty. Perhaps we were going to need to use different language. It was good that JAC could serve as a place to come together to discuss these serious concerns.

Poverty - Further Discussion

The next day, I met with Veronica and Deanna to discuss their concerns. Veronica had told Deanna she was uncomfortable about the issue of poverty. She did not want to be identified with poor people. She had an important point. I realized I had to be more sensitive to this issue with respect to some of the Partners. We would need to have more discussion about poverty.

Good News, Good Ideas!

Another Wonderful Holiday Party!

But none of this discussion interfered with the enjoyment of our CGC Christmas party later that evening. For the first time since the early years, the Board Members came and they brought the food. As always, the Partners were wonderful. They seemed always to be so caring toward one another - it was something to see!

\$10 000!!!

To make our holiday joy complete, the cheque arrived from Get-in-Line. It was for Common Ground's share of the proceeds of that day last August. The cheque

was for nearly \$10 000! The Business Partners had once again raised a great deal of the money. This time it was by gathering pledges!

The Future of Common Ground and the Businesses - Planning Ahead for 2009

As the year 2008 came to an end, our thinking turned to the future of Common Ground. We talked about having a Staff retreat to give our Job Coaches a time and place to discuss the philosophy and future of the project. We also thought about a plan for a retreat where Partners, their parents and other family members could participate. It seemed there needed to be an evaluation, new ideas and planning. We were becoming a stronger organization. We could begin to think together about what we had created and how it could improve. We wanted to communicate our work to others. Many Partners depended on their Businesses for paycheques. They wanted to continue to work there. This made future planning even more important.

Chapter Twelve
Taking Charge
2009

Partners Learning and Educating Partners Make a Presentation to the
Common Ground Board of Directors

Two Partners, Rachel G. and Aldene, made a presentation to the January meeting of Common Ground Board of Directors. With Job Coach Deanna Djos, they presented a slide show about Common Ground and the Coffee Sheds. Both our new and continuing Board Members were impressed. This was part of our effort to help Board Members learn more about the Partners and their Businesses.

A New Course for Partners

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation donated funds to Common Ground for a course called Communication Skills Enhancement Program. This course was for some of our Partners. It was about 1) developing more Partner leadership and participation in the Partnership meetings and 2) Partners taking action in the community. Gladys started the educational programming right away and invited sixteen Partners to take the course over a nine-month period. The Partners learned together in a large group for classes and field trips.



STUDENTS IN DISCUSSION IN THE COURSE

They also worked in four groups on specific topics they had chosen:

- 1) Greening the Businesses, with Aldene, Cathy, Frank, and Miranda
- 2) ODSF, with Angela, Teresa, Andrew and Amy
- 3) Our Products, such as fair-trade coffee, with Mohammed, Rachel G. Petra T. and Natalie
- 4) Common Ground Co-op with Aaron, Nazia, Kirk and Veronica



STUDENTS ON A FIELD TRIP TO ALTERNATIVE GROUNDS FAIR TRADE COFFEE WAREHOUSE. ALTERNATIVE GROUNDS IS THE MAJOR SUPPLIER OF COFFEE TO THE COFFEE SHEDS. LINDA BURNSIDE, PROPRIETOR, EXPLAINS THE WORKINGS OF THE COFFEE ROASTING MACHINE.

Graduation!

The course we set up through the Catherine Donnelly grant came to an end on the last day of August 2009. At JVS, there was a graduation event for the Partners who had completed the course with Gladys. There were four PowerPoint presentations on the four topics.

The Partners impressed everyone who attended the graduation presentations. They shared a great deal of knowledge! Common Ground and the Partnerships could look forward to these graduates taking more leadership in the Partnerships and in the community.



GRADUATES: L-R ALDENE, ANDREW, PETRA T., AMY, CATHY RACHEL G., ANGELA, AARON

Partners Speaking in the Community

The Partners did take their presentations into the community. For example, on September 23rd, Gladys and Aaron had a great time speaking with people about Common Ground Co-op and the four Business Partnerships. This was at "Careers that Change the World", a conference held at the University of Toronto. It was about corporate, social and environmental responsibility (CSER).

On September 24th, Aldene and Cathy made a presentation to 12 business students at George Brown College. They spoke about the many ways Common Ground Cooperative was involved in helping the environment, including the vermicomposting project. Other Business Partners who graduated from the Communication Skills

Enhancement Program made their presentations to third year medical students. These students attend a day of interdisciplinary educational, clinical and community activities organized by Surrey Place Centre every year.

College Students Help Out in Our Business Partnerships

Common Ground was proud to be a part of several student and volunteer projects in 2009. George Brown College Business and Finance students signed on to help create new and improved business plans for our businesses. The students suggested new ideas for making the businesses better. Disability Studies students at the University of Toronto became interns with Common Ground and the Businesses. The student interns explored social issues that affected people with disabilities. They learned from the experts - our Business Partners!

Partners Attend Action Coalition Meeting on Human Rights

Petra T. and Amy went with me to a meeting of the ODSP Action Coalition on September 10th. Nancy Vanderplaats, founder of the Coalition, met with us ahead of time so we could review the new Disabilities Declaration proposed by the United Nations. When the meeting began, there was a full table of more than 20 people along with several more on the phone. There was general acceptance of the Declaration. I suggested a "plain language" additional sheet. Petra and Amy said they liked the meeting and wanted to go again. It boosted their self-image when they were included in that kind of discussion, even if they only listened.

Human Rights in Plain Language

That evening, I wrote a plain language version of the human rights part of the document. I sent my version of disability rights and demands to Nancy V. who passed it on to others who liked it. I sent it to Jeannette, Gladys and Alice and asked them to get feedback from the Partners. I introduced it to the JAC Committee. But further discussion was postponed to a later time. A copy of the plain language document can be found in the Appendix on pages 152-3.

More People Want to Join Our Growing Business Partnerships - The Partners Working in our Businesses

In 2009, there were four Business Partnerships - Lemon & Allspice Cookery and three Coffee Sheds. There were 53 Partners, or between 11 and 16 Partners in each Business. The businesses were open for about seven to nine hours every

weekday. Each partner worked three-hour shifts and most Partners worked two, three or four shifts every week. The number of Partners was just right to cover all the shifts for each week. The Partners liked working this way and many had been working in the Business Partnerships for several years. They wanted to stay - this work had become their career.

The Students in the Foundations Program

Gladys Bumanglag had been teaching the Foundations course every year for five years for Common Ground. The Foundations Programme was for individuals over 18 years of age, with intellectual challenges. Each year, six to ten students took her course. Most of them had just finished high school. They wanted to learn what they needed to prepare for a job. One part of the programme was classes and workshops together. They had classes five times a week for four months. Then they each had an opportunity to work shifts in a Business Partnership for up to five months. They continued to meet together as a group with Gladys on Fridays.



DAVID PITT ENJOYS A SPRING FLING ACTIVITY WITH THE FOUNDATIONS STUDENTS.

A few of these students later became Apprentices in the businesses where they had been working. If they were good workers and the businesses needed more Partners, the Partners would vote them into one of the Business Partnerships.

People Who Wanted to Work in the Business Partnerships

But many of the students were not able to join a Partnership, even when they wanted to. This was because there were enough Partners in the Businesses already and few Partners wanted to leave. So these students put their names on a waiting list after they completed the Foundations course.

Many other people besides the Foundations students had heard about our Business Partnerships. They had been putting their names on the waiting list too. But there were not enough openings to make them all Apprentices and Partners. The people on the waiting list and their families were discouraged. They were asking what they could do to solve this problem.

Working to Solve the Waiting List Problem

(See Chapter Ten, pages 100-101)

Finding Another Grant

Common Ground Co-op is a small organization. Members of our Co-op knew that they would not be able to raise enough money to start more Business Partnerships. We began to encourage other groups of families and agencies to start their own co-ops. Our Co-op was willing to help other groups to get started. So we decided to seek a special grant of money.

Common Ground was invited to apply for the Vital Ideas grant from the Toronto Community Foundation (TCF). It would be \$30 000 to hire someone to help Common Ground prepare to start a replication process. Replication means that families, agencies, and other people in the community could copy Common Ground. They could start their own Business Partnerships, with help from Common Ground. As more new Business Partnerships were started, there would be opportunities for the students and other people who were on the waiting list.

\$30 000!

Common Ground was successful in its application for the Vital Ideas grant from the Toronto Community Foundation! This award recognizes organizations that have made outstanding contributions towards improving the quality of life in Toronto. It would provide funding to help us grow and replicate our businesses. They really liked our project of developing Business Partnerships across the province. And this might help people on our waiting list in the future.

Award Ceremony for People with Vital Ideas!

The day arrived for the awards ceremony for the several recipients of the Toronto Community Foundation Vital Ideas grants. The ceremony was held at the Glenn Gould Theatre in the CBC building. The food spread out on tables in the foyer was from Lemon & Allspice Cookery. Cathy's photo was featured in the materials displayed. Staff Jeannette and Deanna, Partner Andrew, and Board Members David Clandfield and I were there. Jeannette received the award of \$30 000 on behalf of Common Ground Co-op.

Over the next two years, Common Ground Staff and Volunteers used the \$30 000 to develop a "kit", a package of information about how to start co-ops and business partnerships. The kit will include films and booklets full of ideas to help families and agencies to get started on new business partnerships. We hope that in the future, many more people will be helped to start their own business partnerships.

Joint Advisory Committee JAC - February 2009 - Changing How Partnership Meetings Work

Every member of the JAC committee was present for the February 2009 meeting. There were four Partners (Veronica, Aaron, Mike and Nazia), two Staff (Joan Barnett and Peter Ackie), and two Board Members (Paula Kaston and myself). First, each rep reported on the meetings of their Partnerships, Staff and Board of Directors.

Peter started a discussion about how each Partnership meeting is conducted. He made notes for everyone to see on chart paper. At some of the businesses, Job Coaches were setting the agendas and few Partners were chairing the meetings. But the Partner reps on the JAC were now willing to work on changing that. They wanted to try to encourage everyone to speak up more in the Business Partnership meetings. In addition, Paula Kaston said she would plan to visit each business site to help with improving business sales.

JAC - March 2009 - More on Partnership Meetings

At the next Joint Advisory Committee meeting at Surrey Place, Joan Barnett, Paula Kaston and I met with six Partners. There were three reps and three alternate reps: Mike, Aaron, Nazia, Kirk, Joanna and Petra T.

We followed up from the last meeting by discussing Partnership meetings. How could we encourage Partners to contribute to agendas for Partnership meetings? How could we encourage more Partners to chair those meetings? They were beginning to take hold of these questions. We also learned that the Partners were successfully running the Surrey Place Coffee Shed whenever Deanna was away for a few hours. This was so good to hear!

JAC and the Flu Epidemic

Five Partners from four Businesses shared activities and ideas at the next meeting of JAC. Two Staff and one CGC Board member spoke about the swine flu epidemic. Jeannette had sent out information about it to Staff, Board and Partners. The Joint Advisory Committee discussed how the flu epidemic might affect their Businesses and themselves. I shared the Businesses' financial reports with the Partners. I told them about plans for new Businesses that might come about through the money from the TCF grant. The reps were becoming much more aware of the overall Common Ground project.

A Special JAC Meeting

JAC held a special meeting in a new location on the 5th floor at Community Living at 20 Spadina on June 16th. Five Partners came - Aaron, Nazia, Mike, Andrew, and Petra T. and Katie (a new partner at NCCS) along with two Job Coaches: Natasha Tutt and Alice Bikeeva. I asked them for comments and memories about their work in the Partnerships.

The Partners spoke about the tough decisions they had to make in their Businesses for letting Partners go. It was especially hard with people they liked but who didn't understand the work ethic of a Business Partnership. Mike recalled, "We let a person go at JVS last year because arguments are not acceptable in a business. If a person is angry, he or she should talk about it, not argue about it." But it was a difficult situation because the Partners at JVS were divided about that decision. Some Partners wanted the Job Coach to decide. But after much discussion and some assistance from the Job Coach, the Partners did vote to let the partner go. The Job Coaches worked to develop clear guidelines for the Partners to follow when they couldn't agree. Talking about the problem at JAC could help with this too.

Veronica

We did not know it at our February JAC meeting, but that was to be Veronica's last meeting with JAC. Just a week or two later, Veronica collided with a bus, injuring her head, on her way to work. She was in hospital in a coma.

The news of Veronica at the March JAC meeting was that she had survived frontal lobe brain surgery and was beginning to waken, so we were hopeful.

Jeannette, Deanna and several of the Partners from Surrey Place Coffee Shed visited Veronica in the hospital. Veronica seemed to be making progress, bit by bit. She was mostly asleep but could see and hear a little. Veronica's parents had put up a message Board. The Partners and Staff who visited wrote messages to Veronica on the Board.

Although Veronica struggled valiantly to live, on July 31st, we received word that she had died. Her parents, Fran and Malcolm Peake, had watched over her in hospital for many months. Several of the Partners and Staff had spent time with her. They found it very hard to accept her death. She had been a good friend to many of us. She had made a wonderful contribution to the Partnerships and to the community. We would not soon forget her. It would take some time to grieve and then try to move on.

Publicity TVO

A group called "Get Involved" had contacted me to invite Cathy to participate with me in a short feature for TVOntario. Get Involved was filming many charities like ours that used volunteers. TVO showed three-minute videos on TV about these organizations. They invited people to "get involved" by volunteering. They wanted to film Cathy and me talking about Lemon and Allspice Cookery. We agreed!

Publicity for the Cookery!!

Peggy Taylor called from Get Involved to ask if she could come to the Cookery the following week. Jeannette said yes. Already, she had made plans with Global TV to be there on Tuesday. The Cookery was finally ready for lots of publicity!

Filming for TVO + Global TV

The day arrived for the filming for "Get Involved" and TVO. Peggy, and the two technicians, Matthew and James, led the way. They arrived at Jessie Manson at 7:30am so they could film Cathy arriving for work. Business Partners Doug, Sean, Kenny, Diana were filmed working at the kitchen that morning too. The crew caught Cathy and fellow Partner Kenny packing goods for delivery. Next, they followed Cathy getting on the bus to take the order to Surrey Place. They drove downtown in order to catch Cathy getting off the bus at Grosvenor and Bay on her way to Surrey Place Coffee Shed. They filmed the Shed, getting a good shot of Paul W. making a sale. Then back at Jessie Manson, they interviewed Cathy and then me for an hour. It was quite a day!

Three days later, on April 27th, Cookery Partners Cathy and Angela were seen on Global TV evening news in a segment called "Making a Difference". It was excellent!

Get Involved Airs on TVO

The Get Involved interviews were on TVO, just before 8pm on October 11th. The three-minute video was the very first one of Get Involved's second season. Also seen on the video was our ED Jeannette Campbell, Kitchen Manager Jenny Hope, and Job Coaches Alejandra Gonzalez, and Deanna Djos. The video was online two days later and was shown on TVO two or three times a week for several months.

Publicity for the New College Coffee Shed!

New College Coffee Shed began a new art project to advertise their Business. They created handmade flyers and posters about the business, about fair trade coffee, and about the baked goods and catering they provide. Every partner created his or her own handmade poster. These were presented at a Business Partnership meeting. The Partners voted on their favorites and they were laminated. They displayed their posters on their fridge at the Coffee Shed and on poster boards around the University. U of T students were active in helping the Partners design and carry out this marketing project. Board Member Paula Kaston made another wonderful contribution of a large professional sign.

Jack Quarter is head of the Social Economy Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. He and the people at the Institute had been regular catering customers of the New College Coffee

Shed for three years. In November, they decided to put the Coffee Shed logo on flyers advertising their weekly events. They did this whenever the Coffee Shed was doing their catering. It made a big difference in Coffee Shed sales to other organizations.

The DVD "Talk to Me"

Way back in March 2007, two of our Cookery Partners, Angela and Cathy, were filmed for a DVD called "Talk to Me" (See Chapter Ten, page 95). The topic was the shopping experiences of people with a disability. The DVD was to be shown to many people who work as clerks in stores and banks in Ontario. Many of them are not sure how to speak and be friendly with people who have a disability. The DVD was being distributed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services of the Ontario Government. At long last, the Ministry was having a gathering at Queen's Park to officially launch the DVD. Minister Madeleine Meilleur was there, along with all of the actors, including Cathy and Angela. Lunch was served, ordered from Lemon & Allspice Cookery. Jenny, manager of the Cookery kitchen, came too. We knew that people across the province were seeing the DVD. My good friend, Sally Martyn, lives in Sparta, Ontario. She wrote to me that she had seen Cathy on the video at a workshop she attended near her home.

Fundraising: A Partner Joins the Fundraising Committee

Board Members suggested to Cookery Partner Aaron that he join a committee instead of coming on the Board. At the next meeting of the Fundraising Committee, Aaron joined Deanna Djos, David Clandfield, Jeannette and myself to talk about the grants we were pursuing. It was good to have a partner on the committee and Aaron offered to speak with his Toronto Dominion Bank Manager about a grant to Common Ground. He was successful too, as the Manager donated \$200!

When some Members of the Fundraising Committee arrived early for a meeting at Surrey Place, we had the opportunity to watch Deanna aerate the worm composting box. It was good to see the project was still going strong! Jeannette, Deanna, Ann Veyvara, David Clandfield, Aaron, Chris Tolley and I had a very positive meeting on fundraising. Everyone contributed to the committee's work by applying for funding. The need for more money never stopped!

Get-in-Line!

In August, we built on our previous involvement in Surrey Place's annual "Get-inLine" fundraiser. Team Common Ground was the Top Overall Fundraising Team for the third year in a row, raising an incredible \$12,850! Our Staff and Partners worked very hard over several months to achieve this outcome!



Two Board Issues

At one of our Board meetings, Ann Veyvara took the minutes and offered to become our Board secretary. She said she would enjoy doing it! The Board was pleased to accept her offer. She agreed to stay on the Fundraising Committee too!

There were two big questions the Board Members were asking in the spring of 2009.

1. Staying at Jessie Manson? At the May Board meeting, Frank Pickersgill and Jeannette reported that they had met with the landlord at Jessie Manson. He was willing to have CGC make a proposal. CGC proposed that the Cookery and our offices stay at 4 Overlea, even if Community Living leaves. However, a few days later, we learned that the landlord would charge far too much for the space

we had wanted at Jessie Manson if Community Living left. So CGC might rent just the kitchen space.

2. Joining Up of the Four Business Partnerships?

There was also a discussion by the Board about joining together the four Businesses into one Business. People in favour of this idea thought it would be fairer to have all Partners earn the same hourly pay. Getting the same pay seemed like a good idea, but the Partners wanted to keep the four Businesses separate. So Jeannette met with each Partnership to talk about changing the discount the Cookery offered to the Sheds. They all agreed to the plan that the Cookery would give a 35% (instead of 25%) discount to all orders from the Sheds. (See Chapter 11, page 113.) Jeannette said this would not affect Partners' paycheques but would help the Sheds to pay their bills - it seemed to be a good business decision. The Businesses would remain separate and each would continue to work hard to improve their sales.

Tessa

Tessa had been a partner in the Cookery for several years. Her multiple physical and intellectual challenges meant that she was on and off the job. After each absence, she returned and found new ways to accomplish tasks in the Cookery. She lived at home with her family and they decided to relocate to another city. All the Partners and Staff were sorry to see her leave. I always think of Tessa as a real trooper, willing to try everything to lead a normal life.



TESSA'S FAREWELL PARTY: L-R JOAN, GLADYS, CATHY, ALEX, SARAH, KATY, TESSA (SEATED IN FRONT), ALEJANDRA, DOUG, JOANNA, MONIFA, AND JENNY

New Projects, Awards, a Retirement and Departures The Farmers' Market

'Twas a cloudy, rainy day in June 2009, but the new Farmers' Market, called MyMarket,¹ at Bloor and Borden had its opening day. Nice white tents allowed for the market to operate every Wednesday, rain or shine. . Common Ground Co-op had set up a coffee stand there. Partners with Job Coach Alice Bikeeva were there from New College Coffee Shed. They were looking forward to selling their fair-trade coffee one day a week, from June until October, at the Farmers' Market. This was a way to bring in a little extra money for the Shed and to let more people know about our Business Partnerships. Several people stopped by and bought a coffee. Then they shopped for strawberries, peas, and radishes from the farmers while clinging to their umbrellas.



JOB COACH ALICE BIKEEVA AND PARTNERS NAZIA AND PETRA T.
FROM NEW COLLEGE COFFEE SHED OPEN OUR STALL AT THE FARMERS' MARKET ON A SUNNY DAY

¹ MyMarket features real farmers, selling what they grow, at Bloor St. and Barton, on summer Wednesdays.

Red Wrigglers Again

Cathy Nesbitt, from Cathy Crawly Composters² and Mr. Willy Wiggler had a blast at the Surrey Place Coffee Shed's second annual Harvest Party on Friday, June 26th. The team worked from 11:00-4:00pm digging out the vermi-compost to sell their worm poo to garden lovers. The Partners set up sales in the parking lot behind Surrey Place Centre. They sold out of all their Willy Wrigglers poo balls and buckets of compost.

Jeannette, Deanna and I met with Cathy and her partner Rick about vermicomposting. The project had been going very well at Surrey Place. They talked about the possibility of setting up a new Partner Business based on vermicomposting. It seemed like a good idea to put forward for a different kind of Business Partnership. It could be combined with outdoor maintenance.

A New Business Partnership?

At the Board meeting in September, Frank and Jeannette presented a plan for a new toy cleaning Partnership at Surrey Place Centre. There were some questions raised about taking on a new Business ourselves rather than working to replicate our Business model. But overall, the Board Members favoured the idea. In early December 2009, Jeannette sent out a Business Plan to the Board regarding the toy cleaning Partnership. She and John Flannery worked on it together. This was the first time we had seen such an excellent detailed plan for any of the Businesses. If they could make it happen as they were planning, it would be great to have another Business Partnership. (This Business Partnership, called CleanAble, was established in 2010 and did well in its first year.)

Tuck Box Programme

The Coffee Shed Partners at Surrey Place Centre had started the Tuck Box programme in October 2008. They had been busy taking orders every two weeks to the four satellite offices that Surrey Place Centre operates in the Greater Toronto Area. The Partners made lots of sales from their Tuck Boxes in these locations. By 2009, they were making average sales of \$70 dollars at each visit to a satellite site!

² Cathys Crawly **Composters** is an environmentally driven vermiculture business in Bradford, Ontario.

JVS Brings in New Products and New Partners



LATHA, KAREN AND JOSHUA AT JVS COFFEE SHED

Partnership meetings at JVS were producing some great ideas for new products and these had been introduced. These new food products had led to greater customer satisfaction and increased sales!! JVS Coffee Shed brought in a new member too. Her name was Patty. She said, "I'm new to the Coffee Shed. I like the job. I go with the flow and learn from the Job Coach and everyone."

Rachel G. Wins Unsung Hero Award

December 3rd was the International Day of People with Disabilities, Rachel G., Business Partner at SPCS, was honoured by the City of Toronto. The City chose her to receive the Unsung Hero Award! The award recognized her outstanding contribution to the disability community of Toronto. It praised her tireless work toward making Toronto an inclusive city. Surrey Place Centre had nominated her for her work on their Self Advocacy Council and as Honorary Spokesperson for the annual Get-in-Line Fundraiser. Rachel received the award from the Honourable David Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. We had met him before when he attended our eighth Annual General Meeting.

Kirk

Kirk had been a Business Partner for a long time, but he decided to leave the Partnerships in August, 2009. His decision to leave came ten years after he joined the Cookery in August 1999. He had worked at the Cookery and at Geneva and JVS Coffee Sheds. He was always full of ideas for improving the Partnerships. But now he wanted to try working in the mainstream economy. He took a one-year leave of absence, so he could come back later if he wished. As it turned out, Kirk did find work and decided to end his relationship with CGC.

Peter

Peter Ackie decided to leave Common Ground after five years as Job Coach at Surrey Place and JVS Coffee Sheds and also as our Business Developer. Peter contributed much to the project and was well liked by the Partners and Staff. We remember him especially for his work to help establish and develop the Joint Advisory Committee.

Susan -The First Retiree from Lemon & Allspice Cookery

The Cookery Partners had a retirement party for Susan. She was the first Partner to officially retire from the Business. She had been a Partner in the Cookery for nine years. She had reached retirement age. We wished her well.

Partners Getting on Board Some New Faces at JAC

Several changes took place at the September JAC meeting. Mike was there continuing as chairperson of JAC. Rachel G. was present to take Veronica's place as rep for Surrey Place Coffee Shed. Joanna and Petra T. were sitting in as alternates for Aaron and Nazia. Joan Barnett was there, continuing as a Staff rep and our minute taker. Natasha Tutt, the new Staff person at JVS Coffee Shed, came as the second Staff rep to JAC. She replaced Peter Ackie, who had resigned from Common Ground a few months earlier. Paula Kaston and I came as the two Board reps.

A Partner on the Board ?

The main topic at the meeting was Partnership representation on the Common Ground Board. Paula reported on the reluctance of some Board Members to have

a Partner join them. The Partners spoke up to say they do want to have a rep on the Board and they wanted to elect a partner themselves.

Partners Plan to Elect a Rep to the Board

Aaron reported to the next JAC meeting that the Partners in the four Businesses had decided they want to elect their own rep to make a twelfth position on the Board. They hoped the Board would agree.

Jeannette, Deanna and I spoke together about the idea that had come up at the JAC about electing a partner rep to the Board. We thought that Partners could select their own rep. It would create a 12th position on the Board, so the Partner could attend the Board meetings. But the Partner elected would not have a vote. We decided we would present the idea to Members of the Board.

A Position on the Board for a Partner!

There was about to be change in the number of people on the Board. Board Members had heard that the Joint Advisory Committee had discussed having a Partner on the Board and the Partners wanted to elect someone. David Clandfield and Frank Pickersgill, Members of the Board, put forward a motion to the Board on October 26th. The motion said that a special additional non-voting position for a Partner be added to the Board on a trial basis for one year. The motion was passed unanimously (everyone agreed). So this was a big step forward!

Partners Elect a Rep to the Board

Andrew and Amy were two of three Partner candidates who visited each Business Partnership and spoke to them about how strongly they believed a Partner should be on the Board. In his speech to his fellow Business Partners, Andrew said, "We deserve to have a say in *Common Ground*". The Partners from all four Businesses elected him by giving him the most votes in a secret ballot held at each Partnership. Andrew became the first Partner rep on the Board, although he did not have a vote. Amy received the second most votes and became Andrew's alternate. This is a very good example of how the JAC made changes and helped to improve communication between Partners and the Board. Finally, at the AGM in 2010, the Membership of *Common Ground Co-op* voted to approve a motion from the Board of Directors. The motion changed the Co-op's by-law to ensure a **voting position** on the Board would be designated for a Partner.

Coming to the End of 2009 and the End of My Story Trinity St. Paul's United Church Helps CGC Again

Gladys prepared to begin her fifth annual Foundations programme class. She found out that there was no longer any classroom space available for the students at Jessie Manson. Once again, Trinity St. Paul's United Church lent us a helping hand. They agreed to donate classroom space to CGC. I went to TSP one weekday morning to see if I could help in any way with the Foundations class. As the students began to arrive, Jeannette turned up bringing all the materials and supplies. The students set up tables and chairs in the Rainbow Room. They interacted well and seem pleased to be there. A volunteer teacher arrived because Gladys was away helping with a programme for children in Thailand for two weeks.

Gladys Decides to Leave Common Ground

Gladys returned from Thailand after a few weeks. She continued her work with the young people in the Foundations Programme until the end of 2009. In January 2010, Gladys resigned from her position with Common Ground to accept a job with the City of Toronto. Many of us attended a farewell party for Gladys at the Cookery kitchen to thank her for her tremendous contribution to our partnerships and programmes over six years and to wish her well.

The Annual General Meeting Number Nine

The CGC AGM took place at Surrey Place Centre in November 2009. Partners, Staff, families, newcomers and people from George Brown Community College attended. All Board Members and candidates were present and two new people were elected. The Get Involved video was shown after the Surrey Place choir sang Christmas songs for us. Nazia and Aldene made a presentation from their course with Gladys. Karen Goldenberg chaired the meeting. Karen described how our present Board had built upon the work of the people who served on the Board in the past. (A list of all Board Members that served over the nine years is in the Appendix at the end of this book on page 145.)

Jeannette's E-mail to the Board

Jeannette wrote a wonderful e-mail to the Board just before the holidays at the end of December:

Board Members,

It is not often that I brag about how incredible it is to work at Common Ground, or what an amazing experience it is to wander up to Lemon & Allspice Cookery and reflect on the fact that my job is to ensure that this continues to grow and provide opportunities for a fantastic group of wonderful, loving, supportive, bright and energetic individuals...but this week has been incredible, and I wanted you to all know how great things can actually be when you not only love what you do, but enjoy every moment when you are working.

I spent a bit of time on Tuesday at Lemon & Allspice being taught how to ice to holiday cookies. Not only was I learning something that I have never done before, I had two Partners critiquing my every move, and having a good laugh at my expense when the Job Coach explained the cost of the little sprinkles that I was 'piling on' a bit too heavily. I had so much fun, and was glad for the break from the paperwork.

I cannot take any credit for the cookies...I couldn't tell you which ones I decorated, but it was definitely a small number. However, today Partner Kenny shared some of his Hanukah inspired shortbread with me, and I almost fell out of the chair. They were the best tasting shortbread cookies I have ever had (and I am part Scottish...)

I wrote Jeannette and the Board Members back to say that I liked to brag about the wonderful ED we have. Wow, the whole project was going very well - better each year!



JEANNETTE CAMPBELL RIDES THE MERRY-GO-ROUND TO SUCCESS
WITH THE PARTNERS

Yet Another Wonderful Holiday Party!

The traditional Holiday party was held at the Cookery dining room. We had food in the dining room and dancing in the activity room. Many Partners and Staff were there, plus four Board Members came - Frank Pickersgill, Paul Wolfe, Paula Kaston and myself. Jeannette announced that we received another \$5000 from Tippet Foundation - a good Christmas present for Common Ground!

And that is most of our common history to the end of 2009!!

Cathy's Thoughts for the Future of the Cookery

"Hopefully we will get a bigger kitchen in our own place so that people can come in and order food or buy it right at the kitchen. And maybe they could sit and eat in a little café in front of the kitchen and that would be ours too!"

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Common Ground Co-operative
Board Members 2001 – 2009

	Board Member	Position	Years Elected at AGM	Years Served	Relative of a Partner
1	Bahri, Chetan		2004	1	
2	Benedetti, Chris		2009	1	
3	Bovaird, Chris		2005, 2006	2	
4	Burnside, Linda		2003, 2004 2006	2	
5	Chan, Angela		2008, 2009	1	
6	Clandfield, David		2008	2	Yes
7	Gale, Bill		2005,06,07,08	1	
8	Gareau, Cathy		2005,06,07,08,09	4	
9	Goldenberg, Karen		2006, 07,08,09	5	
10	Halpern, Norm	Sec'y: 2005-8	2007,08	4	
11	Howden, David	Chair: 2006-8	2008,09	2	
12	Kaston, Paula		2006	2	
13	Klamph, Michel		2003	1	
14	Kushner, Gordon		2000-3; 2006-9	1	
15	Lemon, Carolyn		2007,08	8	
16	Mallindine, Pam	Treas: 2003-4	2009	2	
17	MacLeod, Greg		2001,02	1	
18	MacKenzie, Michael		2001,02	2	Yes
19	Murray, Marg		2001,02	2	
20	Oster, Ray		2006, 07,08,09	2	
21	Pearce, Christine		2006, 07,08,09	4	
22	Pickersgill, Frank	Chair: 2001-2	2001,02,03,05	4	
23	Radford, John	Treas: 2003-3	2001,02, 03	4	
24	Rowland, Ann	Treas: 2006-9	2001-07	3	
25	Sherman, Larry	Chair: 2009	2004,05,06	7	
26	Sherman, Ursula		2003,04,05	3	Yes
27	Smyth, Allan	Sec'y: 2001-4	2003	3	Yes
28	Sparks, Chris	Chair: 2003-5	2001,02,03,04	1	
29	Tolley, Chris		2009	4	Yes
30	Veyvara, Ann		2005	1	Yes
31	Williams, Marty	Treas: 2004-5	2005	1	
32	Willis, Sheila		2008, 09	1	
33	Wolfe, Paul	Chair: 2002	2006	2	
34	Wong, Choi	Sec'y: 2009-10		1	Yes
				80	Yes

The founding members came together in 2000. The first election of Board Members took place at the first AGM in November 2001. Thirty-four individuals have served on the Common Ground Board of Directors, for a total of 80 “service years” given over a ten-year period.

Current Staff at Common Ground Co-op

Name	Current Position	Start Date
Joan Barnett	Job Coach, Cookery	September 1, 1998
Alice Bikeeva	Job Coach, NCCS	November 7, 2003
Jeannette Campbell	Executive Director	July 1, 2008
Karen Curtis	Job Coach, SPCS	November 24, 2010
Andrea Dicaro	Job Coach, JVSCS	September 1, 2010
Deanna Djos	Training Coordinator	September 11, 2006
Alejandra Gonzalez	Job Coach, Cookery	September 30, 2008
Jennifer Hope	Kitchen Coordinator	September 23, 2006
Nazrul Islam	Accountant	July 30, 2007
Leonard Ribeiro	Job Coach, Sheds (relief)	June 3, 2003
Michele Steeves	Job Coach, Cookery (relief)	July 14, 2006
Kate Hough	Job Coach SPCS (on leave)	September 3, 2009

Former Senior Staff at Common Ground

Paula Murphy (Coordinator)	Jan. 1, 2001	Jan. 27, 2006
Sonja Persram (Interim Coordinator)	Nov. 1, 2002	Oct. 30, 2003
Shelina Akter (Accountant)	Sept. 15, 2003	June 30, 2007
David Pitt (Interim Coordinator) (Interim Director, part time) (Director, part time)	March 1, 2005 Jan 27, 2006 June 1, 2006	October 1, 2005 May 31, 2006 June 30, 2008

Former Job Coaches at Common Ground

Name	Start date	Last date
David Chivers	July 2, 1998	May 2002*
Carolyn Teal	Aug 2001*	Mar 2002*
Gladys Bumanglag	Sep 16, 2002	Jan 22, 2010
Leah Dolmage	Oct 16, 2002	Apr 1, 2003*
Jane Schmidt	Aug 28, 2003*	Mar 8, 2004
Christine Womijolou	Aug 2003*	Sep 7, 2004
Tashana Wint	June 1, 2003	Aug 26, 2005
Kathy Young	July 09, 2004	Sep 08, 2006
Peter Ackie	Aug 16, 2004	Jun 25, 2009
Barbara Kita	Nov 23, 2004*	Aug 15, 2005
Tara MacDonald	Apr 25, 2005	May 20, 2008
Delia Reyna	Sep 1, 2005	Apr 21, 2006
Kathryn Gill	Nov 14, 2005	Apr 03, 2006
Tamara Dachuck	April 24, 2006	Nov 19, 2006
Ve Duong	July 12, 2004	Sep 08, 2006
Katherine Facini	Dec 11, 2006	Jun 22, 2009
Tadas Vainius	Oct 15, 2007	Nov 1, 2007
Anna Trusz	Jun 22, 2009	Sep 04, 2009
Natasha Tutt	February 22, 2010	Dec. 01, 2010

*approximate date

Interns Past and Present

Natalie Roach	2007-08
Jodine Labor	2008
Monifa Barnes	2009
Shane Moffat	2009-10
Kim Hutchinson	2010-11

Names Appearing in Book

(Other than Board, Staff, Interns and Partners)*

<p>Altobello, Ralph HRDC Amber, Gillian Scotiabank Amrhein, Carl UofT Anderson, Betsy TSP Aust, Rae Volunteer</p> <p>Baldwin, Graham CLT Biggs, John Accountant Bingham, Robert CLT Boardman, Robert Communications Bowman, Bev HRDC Brown, Ian Brock U.</p> <p>Campbell, Carol Tafelmusik Candillac, Rosemary Brock U. Capponi, Diana OCAB Capponi, Pat 25 in 5 Chow, Olivia TCC, MP Cluett, Doreen Membership Clutterbuck, Peter 25 in 5 Coulter, Kim JVS</p> <p>Devers, Sharon ODSP AC Duff, Rob SPC</p> <p>Ferguson, Mary Eko Nomos Flannery, John SPC Frampton, Peter Learning Enrichment Foundation Friskien, Frances Fundraising</p> <p>Gatiss, Cammie CLT Gibson, Lily TSP Gilani, Amir Designer Godfrey, John, MP Goldberg, Toby SEDI, MCSS Gouveia, David CLT Green, Nancy HRDC Guy, Denyse ONCo-op</p>	<p>Huestis, Linda Newsletter, TSP Iler, Brian Iler Campbell Law Firm</p> <p>Jamieson, Anne United Way Jondreville, Lynn TSP</p> <p>Kelly, Heather UofT Grad Students Kirkwood, Jim & Marion TSP Kogawa, Joy Canadian Author Krumins, Sabina Volunteer Coordinator</p> <p>Lang, Cathy Fundraising Larkin, June New College Ling, Hai Student Bookkeeper Lemon, Jim Finance</p> <p>MacDonald, Ann UofT Ancillary Services Markle, Kerry Ann MCSS McCabe, Marge and Rick FM McNair, Don CCED Meighan, Karen MCSS Developmental Services Meilleur, Madeleine MPP Mihevic, Joe Toronto City Council Miller, David, Toronto City Mayor</p> <p>Nathwani, Rashmi Builder Nesbitt, Cathy Composting Ng, Lily Cooperators Novick, Marvyn 25 in 5 Onley, David Lieutenant Governor Oster, Karen Facilitator</p> <p>Palmer, Don Krackers Catering Park, Chunha Student Bookkeeper Parsons, Sandra Tafelmusik</p>	<p>Quarter, Jack OISE</p> <p>Samson, Paul CLT Schwartz, Julie JVS Scott, David CLT Simidzu, Yone Newsletter Slamet, Nancy Facilitator Snow, Lois Sibley House Sparks, Chris New College Swan, Michael Newsletter Symons, John Business Symons, Marg Membership</p> <p>Taylor, Peggy Q Media Tolley, Viki Membership</p> <p>Ugwu, Julie APSW Van Del Laar, Paul GCA Vanderplaats, Nancy ODSP AC Veyvara, Ann Board Sec'y, Fundraising Vicente, Anna FSA</p> <p>Waxman, Ellen MCSS Whelan, Marg GCA Wilkes, Melissa NWHC Williams, Helen Communications Wright, Wade CLK Wynne, Kathleen, MPP</p> <p><u>Others Who Made a Difference</u> Clark, Fred & Doreen Promotion Diesenhouse, Phyllis Membership Glass, Karen Membership Goldlist, Helen MyMarket Kinsella, Andrew Shed Retrofit Stager, Bev Founding Member Soles, Kama Research/Writing Sukraj, Matt Facilities Development Sutherland, Kate Research/Writing Tait, Bob Deliveries</p>
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<p>Holas, Kim Iler, Campbell Law Firm Houghton, Hilda Office Help Hua, Colleen MCSS Developmental Services</p>	<p>Peake, Fran and Malcolm Petrenko, Carol Volunteer Pretlove, David MP Ass't Prue, Michael, MPP Pupatello, Sandra, MPP</p>	<p>CGC Board Members are listed on Page 145.</p> <p>Abbreviations are explained on Page 159</p>
<p>*Sincere apologies to others who contributed to our project and should be on this list!</p>		

Community Partners

Community Living Toronto

20 Spadina Road, Toronto

Has provided, rent-free since 1998, a kitchen for Lemon & Allspice Cookery Present
location of kitchen is 4 Overlea Blvd. Toronto

Surrey Place Centre

2 Surrey Place, Toronto

Has provided, rent-free since 2001, a kiosk for a Coffee Shed
Built and outfitted a new kiosk near main floor entrance

New College

University of Toronto Campus

Has provided rent-free space for a Coffee Shed since 2003

Built and outfitted a new kiosk space in 2010

Wilson Hall 40 Wilcox Street

JVS Toronto

74 Tycos Drive, Toronto

Has provided, rent-free space, since 2004, for a Coffee Shed

Frontier College

This Canada-wide, volunteer-based, literacy organization teaches people to read and write and nurtures an environment favorable to lifelong learning. Frontier College Literacy Program has offered classes to our Business Partners. has come to a conclusion. Classes include one-on-one help from volunteers. Partners have learned how to strengthen reading and time management skills, how to prepare and give public presentations and more.

George Brown College

Common Ground Co-operative joins with George Brown SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) for financial literacy classes. Business Partners have the opportunity to take the six-week course twice a year. Financial Literacy includes budgeting, understanding your bank account, reading bills and saving for the future with RDSP's.

List of Funding Partners

Ontario Government Disability Support Programme Employment Initiatives

Innovative Project, Ministry of Community and Social Services
Annual Grants 2003- 2005

Options Programme, Family Services Association

Ministry of Community and Social Services
Annual Grants 1998 – 2009

Developmental Services, Foundations Programme

Ministry of Community and Social Services
Annual Grants beginning in 2005-6

Developmental Services, Core Funding

Ministry of Community and Social Services
Annual Grants beginning in 2006-7

The Ontario Trillium Foundation

Grant for New Kitchen Development 2003-4
Grant for Business Development 2006-2009

CEDTAP (Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Progr

Grant for Design of Kitchen Renovation 2002
Grant for Feasibility and Sustainability Plan with SEDI 2003
Grant for Marketing Study with Canadian Business Resource Centre

The Cooperators Insurance

Annual Grants 2004 – Present
For Development of Coffee Shed Businesses

Ontario Co-operative Association

Grant for Cooperative Governance Development 2004
Federal Cooperative Development Initiative 2005-6
Grant for Technical Assistance with Fundraising 2007

Co-operatives Secretariat, Government of Canada, Co-operative Development Initiative

Grant for Research on External Investment from Innovations an Research Fund 2005-6

United Way of Greater Toronto, Toronto Enterprise Fund

Grant for Business Plan and Development of a Coffee Shed 2005-6

Carrot Cache

Grant for Marketing and Development of a Coffee Shed at New College 2006-7

Service Canada

Grant for Membership/Volunteer Coordinator, Computer Equipment 2006-7

Tippet Foundation

Grant 2007-8

Leon Judah Blackmore Foundation

Grants 2007-8, 2008-9

Scotiabank

Grants 2007, 2008, 2009

The McLean Foundation

Grant for Job Coaching 2007-8

Harry E. Foster Charitable Foundation

Annual Grants 2007-2009

FK Morrow Foundation

Grant 2007-8

Catherine Donnelley Foundation

One year Educational Grant for Business Partners 2008-9

Toronto Community Foundation

Vital Ideas Grant

To develop materials for Replication of the Business Partnership Model 2009-10

Bridge Street United Church Foundation, Belleville, Ontario

Grant 2010

ODSP Action Coalition Disability Declaration
2009
Plain Language Version

The government of Ontario runs ODSP. They should change ODSP so that it respects our human rights.

People with disabilities have the same human rights as everyone else.

These are our rights:

1. To have a place to live, enough good food to eat, and clothes to wear.
2. To enjoy life.
3. To be treated with respect.
4. To have a choice about where to live.
5. To be able to get around: on buses, subways, trains, planes, cars, and in public buildings, parks and city streets.
6. To receive and share information using phones, television, computers, reading newspapers, books, and signs.
7. To work at jobs we like where we are treated like others and are given the right tools and fair pay for our work.
8. To have help with finding work.
9. To have our own businesses, if we wish.
10. To go to school to learn and to use our creative abilities and talents.
11. To be appreciated and rewarded when we do good work and perform well in sports, public speaking, music and art.
12. To be included and asked to take part with other people in activities we enjoy.

Because we have these human rights, ODSP should be changed. People with disabilities need these changes to ODSP:

1. We need enough money from ODSP to pay for our rent, food, clothing, and other expenses.
2. When the cost of rent, food and clothing goes up, our ODSP cheque should go up.
3. When we earn money at work, ODSP should let us keep up to \$6 000 of it each year without taking away money from our ODSP monthly cheque.
4. If we do volunteer work in our community, ODSP should give us a special allowance for our community participation.
5. Make it easier to apply for ODSP.
6. Make it easier to talk with staff people at the ODSP office.
7. Give us information about ODSP that is easy to read and understand.
8. Make it easier to find work, to get to work, and to learn so we can keep our jobs.
9. Teach employers that people on ODSP can be good workers when they have support.
10. Explain clearly to us how our earnings from work will change our monthly ODSP cheque.
11. Change the rules so that we can set up our own businesses.
12. Review the rules of ODSP to make them fair – and let us help make the rule changes.

The government of Ontario has promised to reduce poverty. If they make the changes to ODSP that we want, they will help to reduce our poverty.

The ODSP Action Coalition is a group that includes people with disabilities and people who work for organizations that help people with disabilities. The Coalition is committed to trying to make ODSP better so that people with disabilities can live with justice and dignity. We have a website so you can find out more about us: www.odspaction.ca

Declaration of Young People with Developmental Challenges Nov. 17, 2009

(Appears on website of 25 in 5 Network, 25 in 5.ca, under Poverty Watch)

Three young people with developmental disabilities attended and actively participated in the Leadership Forum on Poverty Reduction held in Toronto on November 17, 2008.

Cathy, Kenny, and Veronica, all partners in a small catering enterprise called **Lemon & Allspice - The Coffee Shed**, framed their own declaration on poverty reduction in solidarity with the 25 in 5 Network. With the support of Carolyn Lemon of Common ground Co-operative Inc., they wrote and submitted to the **25 in 5 Network**:

1. Some people with developmental disabilities are living in poverty.
2. Poverty among people with developmental disabilities is hidden.
3. This is because families look after them..
4. Most people with disabilities want to be more independent.
5. Families are aging.
6. We need a poverty reduction programme that includes people with disabilities so they can become more independent as their families age or move away.
7. We want to make other people with disabilities who work business partnerships more aware of the poverty issues and how important they are to each individual in the partnership.

During the part of the program on November 17 when questions were drawn from the participants, these three business partners asked why half the money that they make on the profit from the sale of their goods is taken back from their ODSP benefits. They did not think that this was fair. All present in the Leadership Forum agreed that money earned by recipients of OW or ODSP should not be clawed back until they were out of poverty.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS
Session 38.2 of the Ontario Legislature
November 2, 2005

COMMON GROUND CO-OPERATIVE

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West): I rise today to recognize a wonderful organization in Don Valley West called the Common Ground Co-operative. The co-operative is a non-profit organization that helps those with intellectual disabilities create employment opportunities for themselves.

The idea for the Common Ground co-op was formed in 1998 when Jim and Carolyn Lemon applied on behalf of their daughter Cathy for a grant from the provincial government. The grant allowed Cathy to start up a bakery and catering business called Lemon and Allspice Cookery.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues): That's a good program.

Ms. Wynne: It's a good program. This grant, along with the generosity of Community Living Toronto, which provided Cathy free use of its kitchen, enabled the cookery to expand into a successful business.

As a result of this success, the cookery created the Common Ground co-op in 2000, which provides people with intellectual disabilities the support needed to create meaningful employment for themselves. Last year, Minister Pupatello and I visited the co-op and we can tell you it's really heartening to see people who might not otherwise have this chance actually have the opportunity to be contributing members of the workforce. It's been such a successful model that they'd like to reach out to other communities around the province, and this is a model worth duplicating.

Congratulations to Jim, Carolyn and Cathy Lemon for their vision and for working with the community to create this program. I'm proud that government funding continues to support this wonderful initiative. This year, the Common Ground co-op is celebrating its fifth anniversary. I'd like to invite all members of the House to join me in commending the Lemon family for this initiative.

From Hansard Ontario #257

Talk for Disability Day
Health Canada Building
180 Queen West
December 3, 2007

I want to tell you a story about fifty people who have intellectual challenges who are working year 'round in four successful food businesses in downtown Toronto. Are they sweeping floors or washing dishes? Well, yes, but those are only two of the tasks they are responsible for. You see, these fifty people actually own and operate the four businesses as partnerships, and some of them have worked in these food businesses for nearly a decade.

Perhaps you have heard of a catering company called Lemon & Allspice Cookery, or one of three snack bars called Coffee Sheds. You may not have known that these businesses are registered with the Ontario Government in the names of the Partners who have intellectual challenges. That means the Partners do a lot more than sweep floors and wash dishes. Some of them bake hundreds of cookies, lemon and date squares every week, some of them prepare vegetables and fruit for trays or salads, some of them work the cash register, or make coffee, and some take a coffee and snack cart around to offices in the buildings where they work. A lot of them take deliveries by TTC and that's where you might see them sometimes. They use the phone to request or receive food orders. With help from their job coaches, they count the cash at the end of the day and record it in their log books. They distribute their brochures in search of new business. They make deposits to their business accounts at their credit union or bank. And they all take home a paycheque each month from a portion of their business revenues.

Some people are surprised when they first hear about these Business Partnerships. But after they visit one of our locations and meet some of the Partners, they are amazed! How does this work? You see, each of the Partnerships has signed a contract for services with Common Ground Cooperative, a non-profit, charitable organization that offers administrative, financial, staffing and educational services to the Partnerships for a fee that the partners pay for out of their business revenues. The Co-op Staff and the Business Partners together hire Job Coaches who work alongside them. But make no mistake, the Partners have the legal right to be in charge. They have regular meetings, with the Job Coaches present, to discuss every aspect of their work and operations.

This is what we call "decent work for people with disabilities". We also call the Partnerships social enterprises – real businesses that have a double bottom line. On the one hand, they are succeeding in a competitive market. In this week just past, the Cookery and the Coffee Sheds did over \$8 000 worth of catering business. On the other hand, the Partners are gaining in confidence and social skills. For example, some of them regularly make presentations to workshops and conferences, mostly in Toronto, but occasionally farther afield in Vancouver and Ottawa. The reason only a few of them are here today is that Lemon & Allspice Cookery is catering an International Disability Day Fair at Variety Village.

They all receive government benefits cheques because they have a disability. The money they earn from their businesses supplements those benefits. When they first come to us as apprentices, they may be shy or uncertain of themselves. They may have had little interaction with the wider public. But that changes dramatically for most of them. Just having a regular long-term job and paycheque does a great deal for self-esteem. But the most important piece is having the ability to state their views and make decisions about their enterprises. That's where the empowerment comes into full force!

Common Ground Co-operative itself has a membership of 140 people, many of whom volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors or to raise funds to pay the Job Coaches. Common Ground receives funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services for this project. But that's only 60% of the budget. We rely on our volunteers and, increasingly on our partners, who pitch in to help raise the other funds needed in order to provide the services. We are grateful to the Trillium Foundation and The Cooperators insurance as our major funders and to Scotiabank and five private foundations that are supporting our work: McLean, F.K. Morrow, Tippet, Blackmore and Harry Foster.

Common Ground Co-op and its business partnerships are honoured that we have been invited here today to celebrate the achievements of people with special challenges and to add our story to many other stories of success. You can learn more about our story from our website: commongroundco-op.ca

Carolyn Lemon

List of Photos Placed in Text*


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*Special thanks to Foundations Student Maya Rubin for scanning photo's from the early days of the project!

Abbreviations

<p> <i>AGM = Annual General Meeting</i> <i>APSW = Adult Protective Service Worker</i> <i>AWC = Afghan Womens Catering</i> <i>Brock U. = Brock University</i> <i>CED = Community Economic Development</i> <i>CEDTAP = CED Technical Assistance Programme</i> <i>CGC = Common Ground Co-operative, Inc.</i> <i>CLK = Community Living Kingston</i> <i>CLT = Community Living Toronto</i> <i>ED = Executive Director</i> <i>FM = Families Matter</i> <i>FST = Family Services Toronto</i> <i>GCA = Geneva Centre for Autism</i> <i>HRDC = Human Resources Development Canada (now called Service Canada)</i> <i>IQOL = Individual Quality of Life Programme</i> <i>JVS = Jewish Vocational Services</i> <i>JVSCS = JVS Coffee Shed</i> <i>L&A = Lemon & Allspice Cookery</i> <i>LG = Lieutenant Governor of Ontario</i> <i>MCSS =Ministry of Community & Social Services</i> <i>MP = Member of Parliament (Canada)</i> <i>MPP = Member of Provincial Parliament (Ontario)</i> </p>	<p> <i>NCCS = New College Coffee Shed</i> <i>NWHC = Neill Wycik Housing Co-op</i> <i>OCAB = Ontario Council for Alternative Businesses</i> <i>ODSP = Ontario Disability Support Programme</i> <i>ODSP AC = ODSP Action Coalition</i> <i>OISE = Ontario Inst.Studies in Education</i> <i>OPSEU = Ontario Public Service Employees Union</i> <i>SEDI = Social Enterprise Dev. Innovations</i> <i>SPC = Surrey Place Centre</i> <i>SPCS = Surrey Place Coffee Shed</i> <i>TEF = Toronto Enterprise Fund</i> <i>TSP = Trinity St. Paul's United Church</i> <i>TCC = Toronto City Councilor</i> <i>TTC = Toronto Transit Commission</i> <i>UofT = University of Toronto</i> <i>25 in 5 = 25 in 5 Network to Reduce Poverty in Ontario by 25 percent in 5 years</i> </p>
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Current Business Partners , 2011

<p><u>JVS Coffee Shed 15</u></p> <p>Cassie Gigi Graham Josh Joshua Karen M. Latha Maryam Mike Miranda Nancy Patty Sharon Siu Fan Teresa</p> 	<p><u>New College Coffee Shed 10</u></p> <p>Amy Annie Jennifer Katie Lynn Nazia Petra S. Petra T. Rachel Rashida Rita</p>
<p><u>Surrey Place Coffee Shed 12</u></p> <p>Aldene Alison Andrew Dan Julie Karen N. Kevork Mimi Mei Yee Paul Rachel Terrance</p> <p>Art Work by Josh Art Work on Back Cover by Petra T.</p>	<p><u>Lemon & Allspice Cookery 17</u></p> <p>Aaron Alex Angela Beth Cathy Diana Doug Irene Joanna Katy Kenny Mohammed Ron Sarah Sean Sharon Stephen</p> 