

ACORN FAMILY PLACE

...a place for families



Acorn Family Place is an organization led by staff who grew up being looked after by ancestors from all over Turtle Island and even globally. Our organizational roots are in Winnipeg near Nistawayak (Three Points), not far from the place where the Assiniboine River and the Red River meet. Nistawayak was a traditional Indigenous stopping place. We recognize that Treaty 3 Traditional Territory and Shoal Lake First Nation 40 is the primary water source for Winnipeg, and that community until very recently had a water boil advisory.

Our centre is located on Treaty 1 Territory, the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples, and homeland of the Métis Nation. These peoples have lived here for many thousands of years have made countless contributions to our region. Indigenous people are still here, many of them are members of our community today and worth celebrating.

As an organization committed to truth and reconciliation and social justice, we have a responsibility to try to change the colonial conditions around us that continue to cause harm to members of our community. We strive to be an agent of change and of social justice, to take the lead from our community, and commit to always trying to do better and be better.



Photo credit: United Way



acorn
Family Place



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Who We Are

Board of Directors

Bhavesh Mistry – **Chair**
Noelle Campbell – **Vice Chair**
Jacqueline Flett– **Secretary**
Nataliya Postnova - **Treasurer**
Krista Ringland
Jordy Craddock
Kate Wagar
Christina MacIsaac



Celebrating Our Community

Employee Spotlight: Pamela



In March of this year our community bid farewell and happy retirement to Pamela. We are grateful for her almost 25 years of working and walking alongside this community.

Pamela began her work at Acorn Family Place late in the spring of 1999 (it was known as Wolseley Family Place then) as a support for breastfeeding moms. Over time she would work as a Peer Counsellor, do community outreach, facilitate the New Realities program and then move to the position of Special Projects Manager.



Pamela provided a listening ear and held a safe space wherein folks she supported could learn, share and grow. Over her years at Acorn Pamela empowered many families and individuals. Her work's positive impact can be felt in our immediate community, in turn, out in the wider world and continues to resonate.

She is missed. We wish her well and the best of luck on her new journey!

"I am deeply appreciative for the experience of Wolseley Family Place / Acorn Family Place and all the people with whom my path has crossed or run alongside.

The experience has informed the development of my character and contributed to the person I have become. "

*In gratitude,
Pamela*



Staff

Executive Director – **Emma Fineblit**

Manager of Programs (*Interim*) – **Katherine Johnston**

Manager of Programs (*on leave*) – **Kristen Wilshire**

Manager of Operations – **Melissa Perron**

Playroom Director – **Nadine Mackenzie**

Food Connections Manager - **Joanne Jeanson**

Parenting Coordinator – **Jennifer DeFehr**

Drop-In Coordinator (*Interim*) – **Carlos Sosa**

Drop-In Coordinator (*on leave*) - **Vanessa Wharton**

WrapAround Program Supervisor – **Margot Brandt**

WrapAround Support Workers - **Tiffany Nolin, Ruby Garcia**

Personal Development Coordinator – **Alescha Anderson** (*and Marisolle from July 2023-March 2024*)

Wellness Outreach Coordinator– **Linda Elmi**

Counsellor – **Marcie Wong** (*and Alescha from July 2023-March 2024*)

Community Support Worker – **Marisolle Negash**

Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator – **Lindiwe Lord**

Caring Dads Facilitator- **Matthew Shorting**

Early Childhood Educators - **Darla Smith, Debbie Smith**

Child Care Assistants - **Surriya Miraj, Olivia Doucet, Khadija Moghrabi, Asaria Crouch**

Community Resource Worker – **Deja Opaleke**

Summer Staff (2023) – **Akasha Lord, Shanee Bear, Julianne Zielinski (from RaY Level Up program)**

Kitchen Coordinator – **Ubaida Dramani**

Food Connections Contract Workers – **Jessica Nippert, Tsion Sibhatu, Akuac Dut Kuol, Letensea Mesel**

Housekeeper – **Asaria Crouch**

Bookkeeper - **Leah McCormick**

Practicum Students – **Chantal Elliott-Stevens, Grace Riley, Wendy Carvalho, Leanne Heartley**

Outgoing and term staff during 2023-24: **Pamela Mason, Riley Ray**

Volunteers

Barbara Beardy, Debra Bouvier, Kate-Lynn Miller, Kayla Green
Melvina Castel, April Farnham, Birkty Asega, Letensea Mesel, Louise Pryslak
Kathy Hanson, Cynthia Côté, Rebecca Watt, Susan Rowley



Acorn Family Place

Acorn Family Place is a non-profit, community-based resource family centre which has been working with families in our community for 25 years. Using a strengths-based approach, Acorn Family Place meets families where they are at and walks alongside them in their journeys of living and growing.

We offer a broad range of holistic programs and services aimed at responding to the priorities and needs of families in our community. Our programs range from drop-in and basic needs supplies (food, diapers, clothing, laundry, technology), to group programming (parenting groups, personal development workshops, wellness programming), to individualized support (counselling, resource navigation, wraparound supports), to onsite early childhood education and pre-employment programming.



We work in partnership and collaboration with a network of other agencies in the community to facilitate access to a broad range of supports to respond to the unique needs of each family.

In 2023-24, Acorn Family Place had over 30,000 participant contacts throughout our programs and services, serving approximately 2000 unique community members.

Executive Director's Message



There was much to celebrate at Acorn Family Place in 2023-24. We celebrated twenty-five years of our centre's history of walking alongside families in their journeys. We were honoured in this celebration by a Member's Statement from our MLA, Minister Lisa Naylor, in the Legislature. We were also honoured with a Community Service Award on International Women's Day by Mayor Scott Gillingham. We celebrated the first successful year of our Caring Dads program and the expansion of critical programs like our WrapAround and Counselling programs. We celebrated milestones in families' lives. In summer 2024, we hosted our inaugural Acorn Family Place Fundraising Fashion Show -highlighting the spirit of Acorn Family Place, with beautiful, donated clothes from our Clothing Depot, generous donated prizes, and the courageous, joyful talent on display of our participant models of all ages as they strutted their stuff on the runway.

The year had its share of challenges as well. As the cost of living continues to rise, families struggle to make ends meet (amongst other barriers) and so do community organizations. As we face these challenges, we are grateful for the support of our community – our staff, volunteers and Board members, our community partners, our donors and funders. We are grateful for the leadership that our community members demonstrate in shaping our centre, and contributing to the vibrant, welcoming sense of community that makes Acorn Family Place what it is.

On a personal note, in summer of 2024, after six rewarding years at Acorn Family Place, I have decided to move on from my role as Executive Director. This was a difficult decision for me to make. I love this community and this centre and the amazing things that go on here and it will be hard to walk away from. I'm proud of what our team has accomplished over the past 6 years, and Acorn Family Place is in a very strong place and poised to walk into its next chapter in a good way, with the support of our community.

We have a wonderful team of dedicated, skilled staff who know our community and have established valued relationships and expertise in what they do. We have an excellent Board who is dedicated to our mission and is well-equipped to guide our future, in keeping with the values that Acorn Family Place has been guided by over the last 25 years.

Acorn Family Place would not exist without our community. I want to thank you all – participants, staff, volunteers, community partners and supporters, for all you do to make Acorn Family Place the welcoming, vibrant, supportive community place that it is. Thank you for the care that you show for your families, your community, and yourselves.

You've all made me feel so welcome and been so generous with your time, your talents, and your stories, and it has been a joy to come to work and see your faces. It was with joy and gratitude that I spent my last day with AFP at Tinkertown, a highlight of the year for our community, riding rides with children and witnessing the beautiful memories that families were creating together.

AFP's next Executive Director will start off on solid footing, and I will appreciate your support in welcoming them into our community. They will be able to bring their own approach and perspective to furthering the AFP's mission and doing the work that has been such a privilege for me to do. I look forward to seeing you in the community and I'll be cheering Acorn Family Place on from the sidelines!

In care,

Emma Fineblit

Message from the Board of Directors



In 2023-24, Acorn Family Place continued its commitment to families and the community at large by delivering against our 5-year Strategic Plan, while continuing to be a welcoming place that lives by its values everyday.

This commitment is delivered by a strong leadership team, passionate staff and volunteers, and a Board that believes in the mission we have, to foster the development of community by creating equitable opportunities for families to connect and reach their full potential. Each year we face new challenges, and each year Acorn has responded by building on the strength of our programs and listening to the expanding needs of our community, families, and our partners. We also extend our thanks to the donors, funders, government, and partners for their trust and continued support.

The Board and I would like to pay a special thank you to Emma Fineblit, who after six years as Executive Director, has decided to move on from her role. Her passion and dedication to Acorn was irresistible and one that was a privilege to be part of. She will be remembered as a thoughtful and collaborative leader who built valued relationships and worked endlessly with her team to grow and deliver quality programs to the community.

While we are sad to see Emma leave, we are excited about her future and the impact she will continue to have on our city. It has been a true privilege.

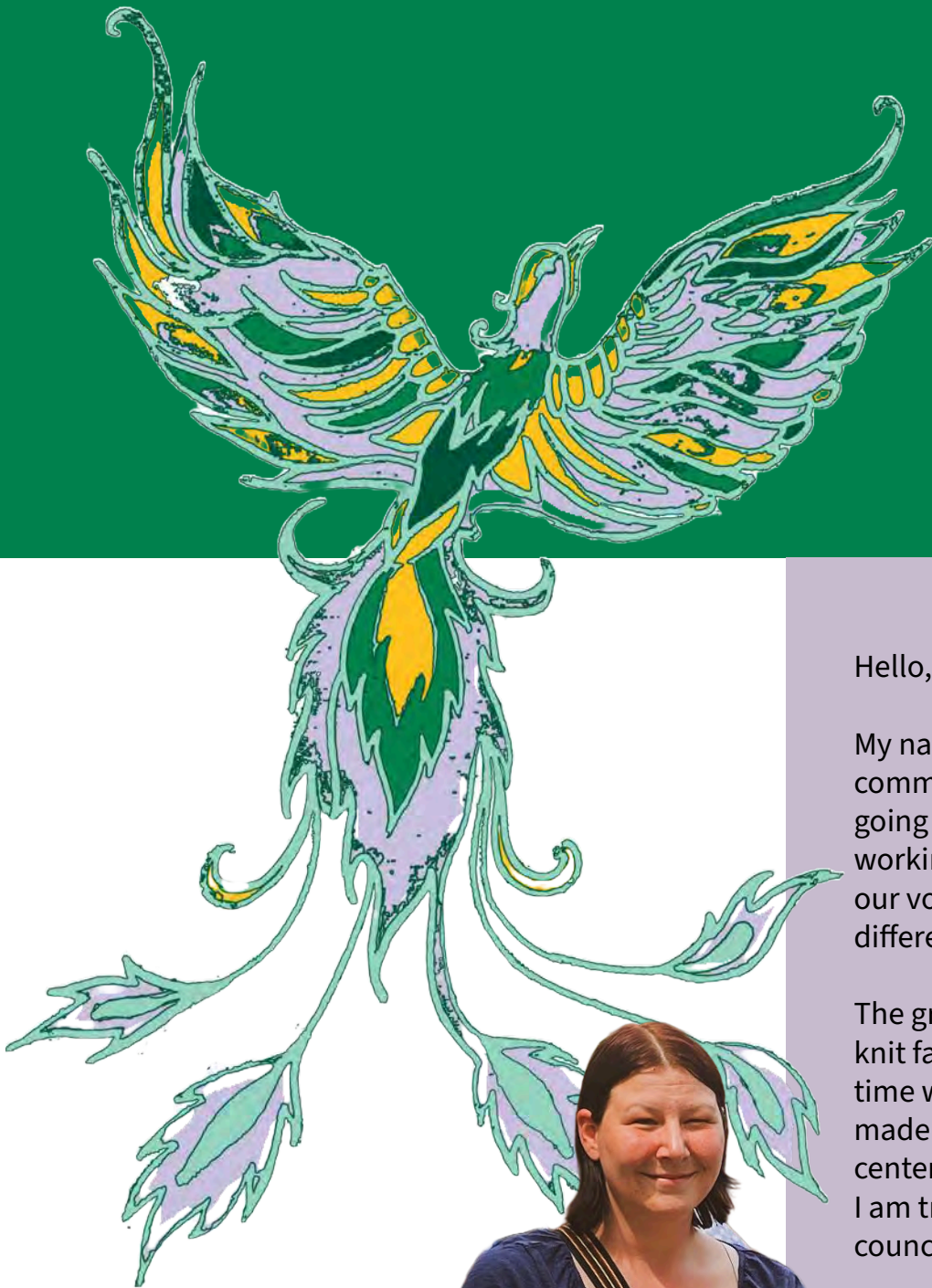
With much respect,
Bhavesh Mistry, Board Chair

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



- This year we distributed 1109 food hampers to help families meet their food security needs.
- Participants in our Food Connections program, who are all parents of young children who face barriers to employment, worked 2,480 hours of supported, paid work shifts.
- Our counselling program offered 471 counselling sessions during the year.
- We provided 261+ bus tickets, 1280 hygiene products, and 2827 people accessed technology (phone or computers) at our centre.
- Our Drop-in remained at the heart of our centre, with 10,440 visits.
- Our Personal Development program offered 235 individual sessions and 1 series of personal development workshops.
- For the first time at AFP, we hosted two 17-week series of the Caring Dads program.
- In total, we hosted 4 series of group Parenting programs, as well as individual certificate series, with 29 caregivers completing parenting program series throughout the year.
- Our Playroom saw 4691 visits from children and hosted programs like the beloved Music Circle, Wiggle, Giggle and Munch, and outdoor summer programs.
- Our WrapAround program completed its third year, supporting 60 families who have CFS involvement or risk.

Message from the Community Council



Hello,

My name is Jolene. I have been a community council member for going on 2 years now. I truly enjoy working with everyone and having our voices heard and being the difference.

The group its self is like a small tight knit family and in the amount of time we have been a group we have made some positive impacts in our center and in the community as well. I am truly grateful to be apart of the council.

Thank you
Jolene





SUPPORTERS

Acorn Family Place is grateful for the support of our 2023-24 funding partners, including:

- An anonymous donor
- Assiniboine Credit Union
- Canada Summer Jobs
- Children's Aid Foundation of Canada
- Communities4Families
- Jewish Foundation of Manitoba
- Local Investment Towards Employment
- ParticipAction
- Province of Manitoba
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Shepherd's Heart Fund
- United Way of Winnipeg
- Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
- The Winnipeg Foundation
- West Broadway Community Organization
- Generous individual donations, including monthly donors



Our 2023-24 Audited Financial Statements are available in a separate document.

Community Partners

WE CAN'T DO WHAT WE DO ALONE!

**THANKS TO ALL THE
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND NETWORKS
WE HAVE PARTNERED
WITH AND COLLABORATED
WITH OVER THE PAST YEAR, INCLUDING:**



- All Nations Coordinated Response Network (ANCR)
- Art City
- CAPC Manitoba Coalition and CAPC/CPNP Provincial Leads Network
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
- Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet)
- Communities4Families
- Community Financial Counselling Service
- Compost Winnipeg
- Computers 4 Schools
- Crossway in Common neighbours: Young United Church, Hope Mennonite Church, Day Nursery Centre, 1Just City, Artemis
- Family Liaison Network
- For Every Family Initiative (United Way)
- Frontier College
- Healthy Baby
- Homeless Outreach Community Support (HOCS) Network, End Homelessness Winnipeg, Leading4Impact
- Persons Community Solution

- International Misericordia Family, including Villa Rosa and Misericordia Health Centre
 - Clinic
- Local Investment Towards Employment
 - Next Step
- North End Women's Centre
 - Prelude Music
 - RESOLVE
- SEED Winnipeg
- University of Manitoba
- West Broadway Community Organization
 - West Broadway Directors Network
- West Broadway Housing Stakeholders
 - Westminster Housing Society
 - WRHA

...AND MANY MORE WHO HAVE SHARED INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND DONATIONS, WELCOMED US INTO THEIR SPACES, MADE REFERRALS, AND BEEN PART OF OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT. WE APPRECIATE YOU!



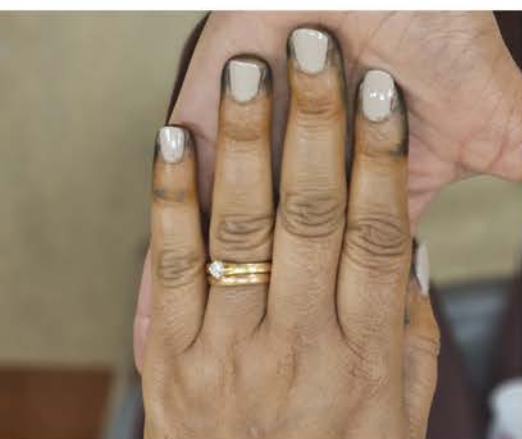
NORTH END
**women's
centre**

Community Partner Spotlight:
North End Women's Centre

Food Connections are in our second-year cooking meals for the NEWC Outreach. It has been a very rewarding experience, and a great opportunity to teach new skills, and to build wonderful relationships in this Partnership.



Photo Credit: NEWC





Acorn Family Place

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24



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