

CONNECTIONS



As more community members are coming to the North York Harvest network, we would like to take a moment to reflect and give a heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated volunteers who play critical roles in supporting our neighbours in need.



The Links Between Us



Volunteers are a large part of North York Harvest. From volunteering at our food spaces, to helping the Development Team garner support, to representing North York Harvest at events, volunteers do a lot for the organization. Aviva Klein is one of these volunteers.

Aviva began her time with North York Harvest when she was on leave from her job. "I needed to find something that would give me a sense of purpose." For the next four years, Aviva has been providing valuable support. At the beginning, Aviva's duties were centered around the office, helping with clerical duties and stewardship. With the onset of the pandemic, it soon changed. The bulk of what we would normally do in person transitioned to online. At first Aviva wasn't sure she would be able to continue volunteering as she was unfamiliar with the technology. Before long she was comfortable

volunteering remotely. "I was very happy to get back to connecting with donors and thanking them and listening to their amazing comments."

Not only has Aviva been a volunteer, she also fundraises for North York Harvest. For Coldest Night of the Year, Aviva said, "I just said, okay, I'm going all out on this

one." Aviva not only reached out to her network, she got her parents involved as well, rallying their friends to support her 5km walk. She made videos to promote her participation on social media and support for her exploded. "I was so amazed, definitely next year, Coldest Night of the Year, I am there. I am doing it again."

Aviva is one of many volunteers supporting North York Harvest and, without them, many of the programs and services would not run as smoothly as they do. Thank you to our volunteers and for all that they do.

Did You Know



North York Harvest has **115** core volunteers and **12** Board Members. A total of **127** "active" volunteers

Oriole Community Food Space – Together

Turning into the Oriole Community Centre, you'll see people entering and exiting through a pair of side doors. Inside, the hallway is set up with chairs lining the corridor as people are registered by a cheerful receptionist or are sitting patiently. Taking a right, will take you into a room filled with food and other essentials, all ordered neatly. People, standing behind tables, are assisting with food requests. These people, are the volunteers of Oriole Food Bank.

Volunteers are the pillar of any food space, not just at Oriole. They are the ones who get to know the community, the ones who bond with people who come into food banks, and the ones who decided to do something to support the community in need. Volunteers

will go above and beyond their prescribed responsibilities to help someone. During the pandemic, a volunteer grew concerned about a client that had mobility issues and organized food drops for her. The volunteer delivered the food to the client, and brought back any feedback or requests that the food bank did their best to accommodate.

A relationship with users of the food bank isn't the only one volunteers are cultivating. The volunteers are a community on themselves, laughing and caring for each other. When a dedicated volunteer, Jean, fell ill, Oriole rallied around her. Her passing left its impact on the team at Oriole, but her generosity will never be forgotten.



Volunteers are a core part of North York Harvest's food banks. They come to food banks to help their community, and subsequently, learn more about the reasons behind food insecurity. The stigma surrounding food banks remain, but with each new volunteer, the stigma lessens as more people learn about their fellow community members who are in need.



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