

January was gone in a blink of an eye and February is looking that way as well. At North York Harvest, it has been an eventful month. In addition to our annual general meeting, here are some things that we've been working on.



COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

Coldest Night of the Year is this weekend! This is the second year we've taken part in the Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) event and we're excited for you to join us.

Aviva, a long-time volunteer and NYH supporter, dived into CNOY with relish last year. She started with her parents to widen her network, created an email for them to send to their friends who knew Aviva. On top of the email campaign to her network and her parents' network, she also launched a social media campaign, rallying friends and family members to support her walk. Riding on the success of her efforts last year, Aviva is back and ready to go!

Sharmini Fernando, the chair for this year's walk, is also looking forward to the walk on February 25. She visited Oriole to check out the space and was happy to hear that our Oriole Food Space created a team to fundraise and walk together.

It's not too late to Join a team or even Support a team.

Visit <https://cnoy.org/location/torontoyorkmills> and join us for a family-friendly event as we raise awareness for food insecurity.

DID YOU KNOW

Total amount of food
North York Harvest distributed
\$7,800,000

Total number of clients
North York Harvest served
223,427

"Last fiscal year"



THE LINKS BETWEEN US - THE 9-YEAR OLD FOOD RAISER

What were you like when you were nine-years-old? Chances are, your memory probably involves school and friends, maybe a memorable celebration. For Romeo, he'll remember taking the initiative to give back to the community.

Romeo has always felt strongly when it came to helping others. One of his two mothers, Christina, spoke fondly of her youngest son's philanthropy and drive to help people. With three children, when Christina does something, she does it for all three of them. So, when Romeo's siblings started talking about food drives at their schools, she took her kids to the grocery store and filled three bags to donate at school. Romeo was surprised when he brought the food to school and was told that his school wasn't running a food drive for the current school year.

Romeo decided to organize a food drive for his school and made a presentation to get the school's approval. Once approval was received, Romeo worked hard to promote the food drive, going from classroom to classroom to remind his fellow students to bring food for donation, and encourage participation.

You would be hard pressed to find someone, even adults, who had the sort of drive Romeo has. On the final day of the drive, Christina took the morning off to go to school with Romeo to collect the food and make the delivery.

Romeo's only concern through the entire food drive, was whether or not his mother's car had enough space to transport all the food raised – and it all made it in! Imagine Romeo's joy when he found out that, through his hard work and tenacity, his school raised 407 lbs of food for North York Harvest!

"When the three children have an idea, we just support it to say, go ahead, do what you have to do to make the idea come to life." At a young age, Christina's children have always been taught that helping others is a responsibility. Romeo embodies these values instinctively. Christina recounted a heartwarming and incredible story about Romeo at age 6. One day, Christina and Romeo were at Mastermind, buying a gift for someone. While browsing, Romeo stopped to pick up a toonie off the floor. Knowing his mother volunteers at a hospital foundation, he presented the toonie to his mother so she could support the hospital.

It's remarkable to see a young boy devote himself to giving back to the community. We have no doubt that Romeo will continue his wonderful work while leading others to support those in need.

