

**2024-  
2025**

# ANNUAL REPORT

[www.stride.on.ca](http://www.stride.on.ca)

 **STRIDE**  
you can work • we can help

# Vision, Mission, Values and Beliefs



## Vision

Stride envisions a world in which barriers to employment have been eliminated for people living with mental health and/or addictions challenges.



## Mission

Stride is committed to providing person centered support to empower people living with mental health and/or addiction challenges to gain and maintain meaningful employment.



## Values

Stride recognizes that employment and self-determination contribute significantly to a person's sense of dignity, independence and quality of life.

Stride believes that people living with mental health and/or addiction challenges make significant contributions to society.

Stride respects the individual needs and strengths of each person. We work collaboratively with partners and individuals we serve to assist them in identifying and achieving their employment goals.



## We Believe:

- In treating people with dignity and respect
- In all individuals having the opportunity to achieve their employment goals
- In providing service levels that exceed expectations for those we serve
- In creative, innovative responses to the ever-changing political, economic and work environments

# Equity Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Stride is committed to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in all that we do.

We strive to create a workplace culture that embraces the uniqueness of individuals and a workforce that is reflective of the community we serve, including those with lived experience. We will treat all employees with respect and dignity and will foster an inclusive working environment in which Indigenous, racialized, and members of other equity-seeking groups feel welcomed, valued, and heard.

We aim to create programs and services that reflect the needs of the diverse communities we serve. We will provide services that are accessible and inclusive of our clients' needs and ensure that every individual can receive services with dignity and respect.

We value the learning and unlearning that is needed to create an inclusive culture. We will encourage and provide all staff with ongoing educational opportunities to engage in this work. We also recognize that this is an ongoing journey that we will not always get right. We are committed to continuing on this journey and wish to create a culture of open dialogue where we can have brave conversations. We invite staff, clients, and community partners to let us know what we are doing well and what we could do better.





# About Us

Supported Training & Rehabilitation in Diverse Environments (Stride) is a nonprofit, charitable, community based vocational rehabilitation organization founded in 1983. Stride's primary purpose is to assist individuals living with mental illness and/or addiction find and maintain meaningful work.



## Our Programs Include:

### Employment Connections

We deliver a wide range of employment services including career assessments, skills development, interview practice, job coaching and ongoing job retention support. An employment plan is developed based on skills and experience. Assistance is provided to locate, secure and maintain employment.

### Youth Employment Program

Our staff assist youth aged 16-29, living with mental illness and/or addiction. Youth are assisted in exploring possible employment options and gaining valuable employment skills. We provide individualized services and supports necessary to be successful in the workplace.

### Pre-Employment Program

This service is designed to enhance and complement the current service model and focuses on assisting individuals to develop vocational and life skills through a variety of training workshops and additional one-on-one support. Staff provide time-limited assistance and guidance in preparing clients for employment through short-term groups and individualized job-readiness support. Services are geared to those interested in obtaining part-time or full-time competitive employment in the community.

### Justice Employment Program

The Justice Employment Program supports the unique needs of individuals that live with mental health and/or addictions and are justice-involved. The Justice Employment Specialist develops an individualized employment plan to meet the needs of each client; supporting them in developing the needed skills, supports and resources to attain and retain suitable employment opportunities. The aim is to increase their resiliency, promote positive mental health and assist in developing positive relationships in their community.

### Employment Peer Mentor Program

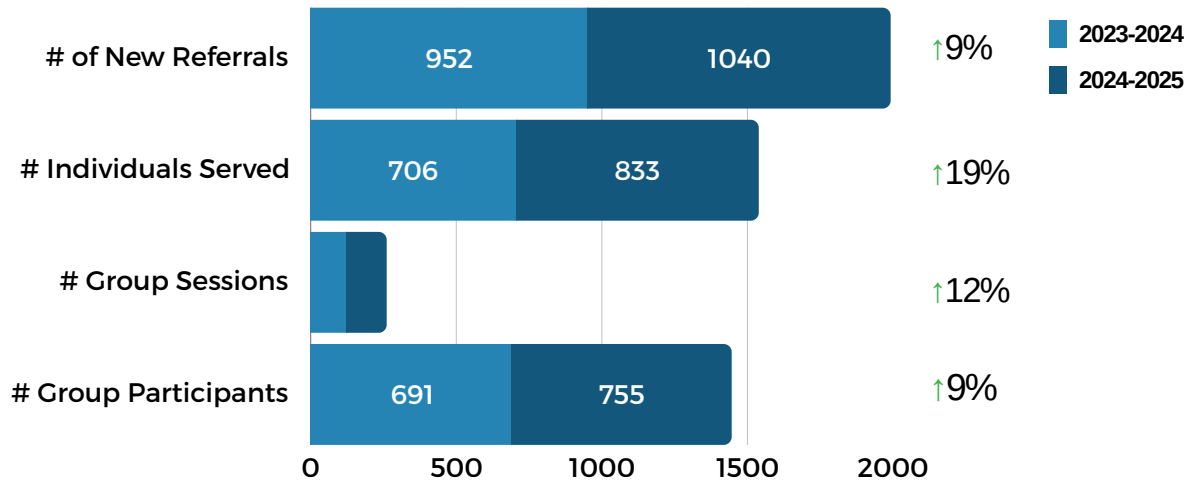
The Employment Peer Mentor program aims to provide enhanced support to individuals facing mental health and/or addiction challenges. The Employment Peer Mentors are persons with lived experience with mental health and/or addictions and are in recovery. They use their experiential knowledge to inspire hope and empower others in similar situations by providing social and emotional support in order to assist peers on their path towards recovery.

### Employer Engagement Specialist

Our Employer Engagement Specialists work with employers to seek out opportunities for previously non-existent jobs based on gaps discovered during needs analysis discussions with employers. Individuals who are wanting and are ready for job development services are referred internally to the Employer Engagement Specialists by the candidate's Employment Specialist or Youth Employment Specialist.



# A Year in Review



**682 intake & assessments completed**



**174 jobs found for clients**




**1, 892 staff training hours**



**31, 139 contacts with clients**

# Quotes From Clients



"The "Power of Possible" workshop really helped boost my confidence and motivation. I learned what to improve upon to better my chances of finding employment and where to look."

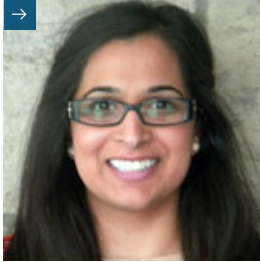
"Stride is the best employment support organization I have ever worked with. Staff were highly trained and constantly sensitive to my mental health needs, in addition to being highly competent at the employment services side of the work. I cannot possibly say enough good things or highly recommend this organization enough. Every person I worked with over the year was a rock star."

"I'm very grateful for the support I received from Stride. I feel the staff went above and beyond to help me with my goals in obtaining employment."

"Stride understood how important it is for me to get a job with a company where I will be able to grow and accomplish my larger career goals."

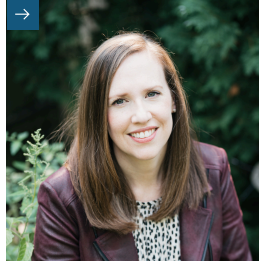
"All staff are amazing, a huge support and have had such a positive impact on me. They were compassionate, considerate, knowledgeable, supportive, honest, real and challenged me to think differently while feeling seen and safe. I have made great progress and will work to continue to use the tools they taught me."

# Board of Directors



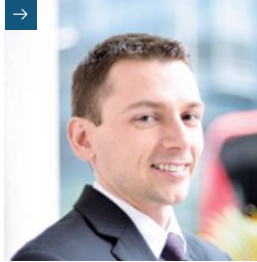
**Fatima Ul-Haq**

Chair



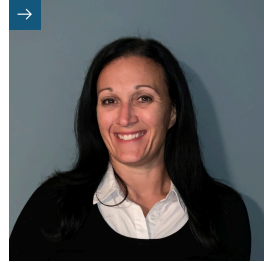
**Sarah Lawson**

Vice Chair



**Todd Valentine**

Treasurer



**Zoe Vulic**

Secretary



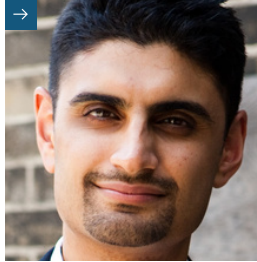
**Georges Abdulahad**

Director



**Zoe Mitchell**

Director



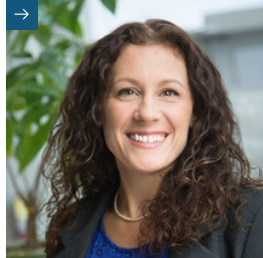
**Joydip Banerjee**

Director



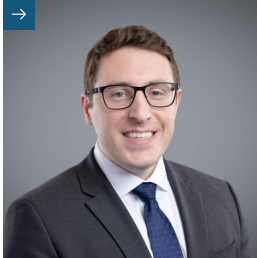
**Allyson McElwain**

Director



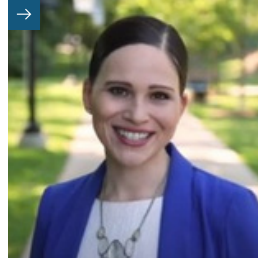
**Amanda Burkholder**

Director



**Seth Holland**

Director



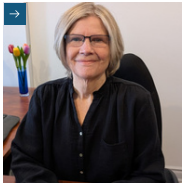
**Dania Ciampini**

Director

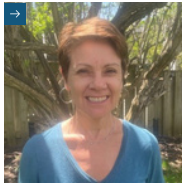


# Meet the Team

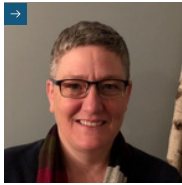
## Leadership Team



**Anita Lloyd**  
Executive Director



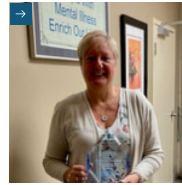
**Terri Skov**  
Manager, Specialized  
Employment Services



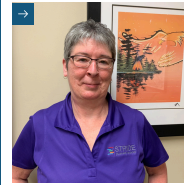
**Bonnie Trimble**  
Manager, Specialized  
Employment Services



**Julie Henshaw**  
Manager, Specialized  
Employment Services



**Stephanie McCann**  
Quality & Operations  
Analyst

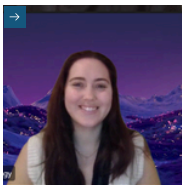


**Julie Lange**  
Human Resources &  
Finance Coordinator

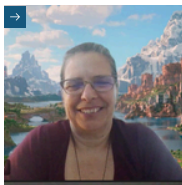


**Christine Villanueva**  
Financial Services  
Specialist

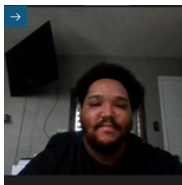
## Employment Peer Mentor & Virtual Services Specialist Team



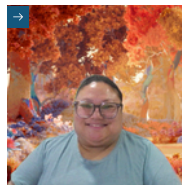
**Alexandria Nagy**



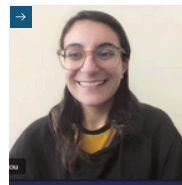
**Genevieve Blazik**



**Justin Chin**

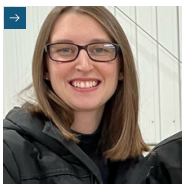


**Karen Jacela**

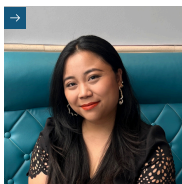


**Jessica El-Helou**  
Virtual Services Specialist

## Pre-Employment Specialists & Intake Team



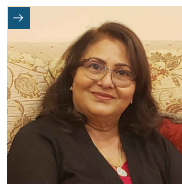
**Kristen Whattam**



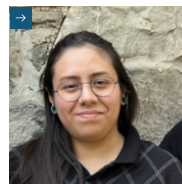
**Marian Lara**



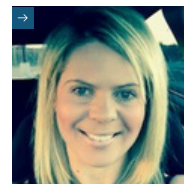
**Giselle Glover**



**Vayola Patel**  
Intake Specialist



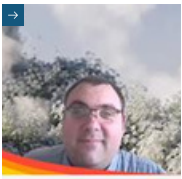
**Tanya Sanabria**  
Intake Specialist



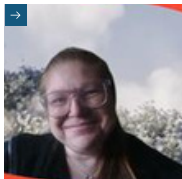
**Monique Clarke**  
Re-Engagement Specialist

# Meet the Team

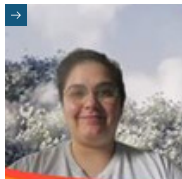
## Youth Employment Specialists & Justice & Youth Specialist Team



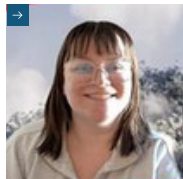
Matthew Wadlin



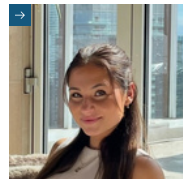
Danielle Larocque



Alyssa Smith

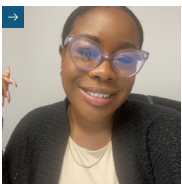


Cassandra  
Dworaczek



Nina Mamula

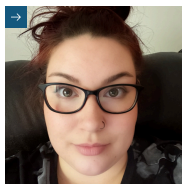
## Peel Employment Specialists Team



Shanté McKenzie

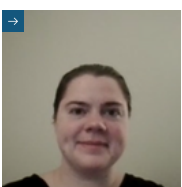


Ramesh Pandey

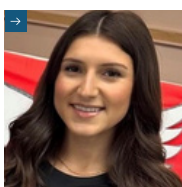


Rachael Mattis

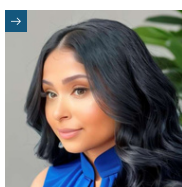
## Halton Employment Specialists Team



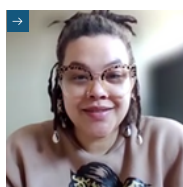
Shannon Mackie



Ashley Soares

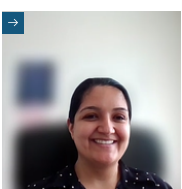


Nishat Ahmed



Bridget Williams

## Employer Engagement Team



Ayesha Siddiqi

# Message from Board Chair

It is a true privilege to serve as the Chairperson of Stride's Board of Directors. Over the past year, I have once again witnessed the organization's unwavering commitment to empowering individuals living with mental health and addictions challenges, helping them access meaningful employment and live with dignity and purpose.

This year marked the third phase of our strategic plan—an important milestone in our journey of transformation and resilience. As we continue to navigate the evolving employment and healthcare landscapes, Stride has remained agile and mission-driven. Our ability to adapt systems, deepen community relationships, and refine our approaches has made a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve.

One of the most notable achievements has been our agency-wide focus on advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. From refreshing job descriptions with a critical competency lens to launching DEI training programs for all staff and leadership, Stride is intentionally building a culture that reflects and respects the communities we serve. These efforts have gone hand-in-hand with our renewed efforts to engage with diverse partners and communities—including promising collaborations with Indigenous organizations and agencies serving BIPOC youth.

Our commitment to innovation also continues to shine. Whether through strengthening job coaching and employer engagement models, piloting new employment pathways in non-traditional markets, or enhancing mental health education for local businesses, Stride has demonstrated its ability to respond creatively and strategically to real-world needs. The introduction of job trials, the expansion of employment supports for youth, and our growing presence in the employer community all reflect this forward-thinking mindset.

Importantly, our staff remains the heart of everything we do. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our incredible team for their passion, ingenuity, and resilience. Your ability to provide consistent support while embracing innovation and system change is truly inspiring. From reimagining onboarding processes to sustaining a 76% staff retention rate and achieving an impressive 87% satisfaction score, you continue to build a workplace culture rooted in care and excellence.

To our Executive Director, Anita Lloyd, thank you for your exceptional leadership during another year of meaningful growth. Your clear vision, calm resolve, and deep respect for your team are reflected in every achievement this year. Your leadership continues to guide Stride with purpose and integrity.

To my fellow Board members—thank you for your dedication, wisdom, and time. Your stewardship and governance ensure Stride remains grounded in its values while striving for greater impact. Our collective work has helped sustain momentum and navigate the complexities of funding, service delivery, and community expectations with confidence.

As we look ahead, we do so with renewed energy and a profound sense of purpose. The work we do at Stride changes lives. And together—board, staff, leadership, and community—we will continue building a future that offers greater opportunity, equity, and hope.



Respectfully submitted,  
*Fatima Ul-Haq*  
Chairperson, Board of Director



# Stride's Impact: Brandon's Journey to Meaningful Employment

**"Stride gave me the confidence and knowledge in finding the best employment for myself."**



Brandon's path to employment success began when his case worker at the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) introduced him to Stride. Intrigued by how Stride could support his employment journey and address his mental health challenges, he decided to move forward with services in the Employment Connections Program. This decision connected him with an Employment Specialist, Ashley, who played a pivotal role in his path to employment.

Brandon came to Stride with clear aspirations of finding employment in forklift or machine operating. However, he faced significant challenges in navigating the job market and identifying suitable opportunities based on his previous work experience. Recognizing these hurdles, Ashley sought to understand Brandon's employment goals and the specific barriers he faced that could impact his job search. Ashley approached Brandon's barriers not as obstacles, but as opportunities for growth and resilience. She emphasized the importance of gaining new perspectives and continually moving forward. Together, they developed a comprehensive Employment Plan that outlined Brandon's employment goals, work experience, relevant training, and mental health considerations. The plan also included preparation activities to enhance Brandon's job readiness.

Through their collaborative efforts, Brandon engaged in various employment preparation activities, gaining the confidence in his resume, cover letter, and job search. The knowledge and skills he acquired from the Employment Connections Program equipped him to stand out to potential employers. With Ashley's guidance, employment resources, and job search strategies, Brandon quickly transitioned into an employment outcome within just 1-month of joining Stride. Brandon expressed his gratitude, stating "I just wanted to say you have been a great help and I truly appreciate what you have done for me, thank you Ashley you are very good at your job". His efforts culminated in securing full-time employment as a Machine Operator, aligning perfectly with his career aspirations.

Even after achieving his employment goal, Brandon has chosen to continue receiving support from Stride to ensure his ongoing success and stability in his new role. He appreciated the continued guidance and resources provided by Ashley.

# A Message from our Executive Director

Another year of meaningful progress and transformative impact – 2024-2025 has been one of the most successful years in Stride's journey. As we reflect on the past twelve months, it is evident that our collective efforts - staff, board, community partners, and funders - have allowed us to grow our reach, deepen our impact, and further our commitment to individuals living with mental health and addiction challenges who are seeking employment support.

While our sector continues to call on the Ontario government to invest in the community workforce and address long-standing wage inequities, Stride remains actively involved in advocacy and collaboration to shape the future of employment services in Ontario. This year, we participated in several strategic provincial engagement sessions, including the ODEN Town Hall with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development (MLITSD), to provide input on Employment Services Transformation. In October 2024, Stride joined other providers in a focused engagement session with the Ministry, specifically addressing the ongoing barriers faced by persons with disabilities within the Integrated Employment Services (IES) model.

## Strategic Growth and Forward Planning

We are proud to report that our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan is nearing completion. As of March 2025, we will finalize and assess progress made against our goals, while identifying any outstanding actions for continued implementation. Our success in executing this plan would not have been possible without the ongoing commitment of our board and staff, and we look forward to shaping our next three-year strategy together.

## Securing Support for What's Next

We are pleased to share that Stride received renewed and new funding this year through multiple channels:

- Our 2024-2025 contracts from WCG Services and Fedcap Canada were successfully secured.
- We received approval for our Multi-Sector Accountability Agreement (MSAA) from Ontario Health.
- United Way Halton & Hamilton approved our funding request for continued program delivery.
- Additional funding from the Burlington Community Foundation supported our work with youth.
- We held several impactful meetings with Ontario Health advocating for additional full-time positions to meet increasing community need.

One of our major initiatives moving forward is to offer Mental Health Assessments and Counselling across Halton. In collaboration with PATH Employment Services, we are exploring both in-house capacity and external partnerships to ensure service readiness and quality.

## Collaboration in Action

Stride's strength continues to be rooted in our meaningful partnerships. This year, we:

- Secured client meeting space in Peel, in partnership with YMCA GTA at Square One.
- Delivered Breaking Stigmas workshops to employers through our agreement with College Boréal.
- Developed a new relationship with Churchill Neighbourhood Centre.
- Partnered with Journey Thrift in Brampton to offer client volunteer opportunities.
- Expanded collaboration with Hope Place Centres through co-delivered Pre-Employment workshops.
- Supported the HART Hub application as a member of the Halton Mental Health and Addictions Alliance, focusing on employment support for individuals navigating homelessness, mental health, and addictions.
- Initiated work with REST Centre to support youth transitioning from care or experiencing homelessness in Peel Region.

Stride is also honoured to participate in Halton Region's Psychological Wellness at Work Coalition, working with public health leaders to promote psychological safety in local workplaces.

## Integration into Ontario Health Teams

Stride continued its active role within Ontario Health systems through:

- Ongoing participation in Connected Care Halton OHT and Burlington Ontario Health Team – Mental Health & Addictions Work Streams.
- Launch of our involvement in the Provincial Data Set (MHA-PDS) Project, helping align our data with provincial reporting and improve service transparency and evaluation.
- Completion of our Health Equity Progress Report to Ontario Health, documenting our ongoing commitment to health equity and Indigenous health initiatives.

## Commitment to Wellness and Equity

Promoting a healthy, safe, and inclusive workplace continues to be a cornerstone of our organizational culture. This year:

- Our Wellness Committee focused on strengthening psychological health and safety, improving internal communication, and building cohesion across the agency.
- We hosted Your Health Space sessions in partnership with CMHA Ontario.
- Held our annual Staff Appreciation Day, fostering connection and recognition.
- Achieved an 87% staff satisfaction rate in our latest Employee Survey, with clear feedback to guide future improvements.
- Participated as a panelist in the Workplace Mental Health Summit, contributing through leadership on employee well-being.
- Relaunched the Guarding Minds Survey, which will inform our 2025 wellness goals.

On the equity front, our EDI Committee advanced several projects, including the development of a comprehensive demographics study to inform service delivery and governance. Staff also participated in the Halton Equity & Diversity Roundtable and represented Stride at Halton Pride Fest.

We also launched new training opportunities through Mindful in Bloom, an Indigenous-owned business, and began a promising relationship with Grandmothers Voice to guide culturally inclusive practices.

## A Culture of Quality

This year marked several advances in our quality improvement efforts:

- Relaunched monthly Staff Target Reports to track visits, client contacts, and service delivery data.
- Created a formal Quality Working Group and continued progress on our Quality Improvement Plan and Key Performance Indicators.
- Staff participated in the E-QIP 2024 Conference, strengthening our culture of continuous improvement.

## Service, Space, and Systems

Our programs experienced a significant increase in referrals this year. From April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, we received 1,040 referrals - up 9% from last year. Notably, Peel referrals rose by 73%, emphasizing growing demand.

We successfully launched our Re-Engagement Program and Employment Retention Program, designed to re-connect with clients and provide longer-term employment support.

Recognizing our shift to a hybrid work model, we made the decision to conclude our lease at 211 Guelph Street, Georgetown, effective July 31, 2024. This will allow us to reimagine our workspace with flexibility and sustainability in mind.

From a systems perspective, we migrated all staff to OneDrive, enhancing data access and security across the organization. Additionally, we were proud to host three Master of Social Work (MSW) students from the University of Windsor, providing them with valuable practicum experience while enriching our team with fresh perspectives and energy.

## Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, Stride is redefining our new Employment Engagement Specialist role to focus more intentionally on business development and employer engagement. The goal is to cultivate strategic partnerships that open doors to meaningful employment opportunities for individuals facing high barriers to employment. These opportunities may include job trials, interview bypass pathways, and long-term sustainable placements.

This shift reflects our commitment to meeting clients where they are while actively working with employers to create inclusive, stigma-free hiring practices. By bridging the gap between talent and opportunity, we aim to build a more equitable employment landscape—one where individuals with lived experience of mental health and addiction challenges are recognized for their strengths and potential.

Stride's adaptability, commitment to equity, and relentless focus on innovation continue to guide us through this ever-changing landscape. I extend my sincere gratitude to our passionate team, dedicated board members, funders, and partners for standing with us through every challenge and success. The future is bright, and together, we will continue to create new pathways and possibilities for the individuals and communities we serve.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire Stride team, thank you for being part of our journey.

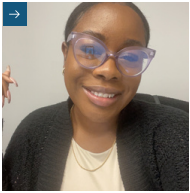


Respectfully submitted,  
*Anita Lloyd*  
Executive Director

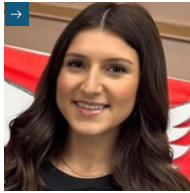


# Years of Service

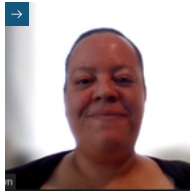
## 1 Year



**Shanté McKenzie**



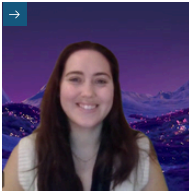
**Ashley Soares**



**Pamela Brown**



**Cassandra Dworaczek**



**Alexandria Nagy**

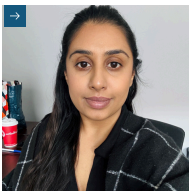


**Bridget Williams**

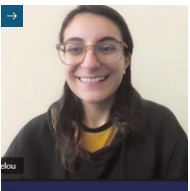


**Marian Lara**

## 2 Years



**Anna Singh**



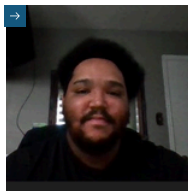
**Jessica El-Helou**



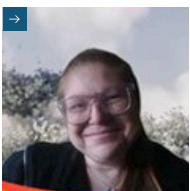
**Giselle Glover**



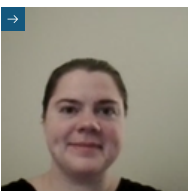
**Ramesh Pandey**



**Justin Chin**



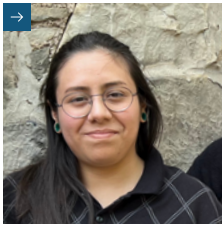
**Danielle Larocque**



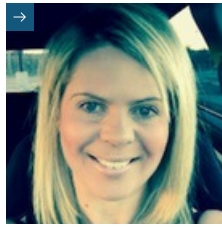
**Shannon Mackie**

# Years of Service

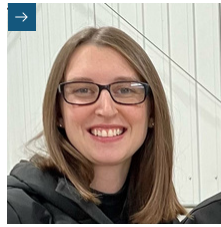
## 3 Years



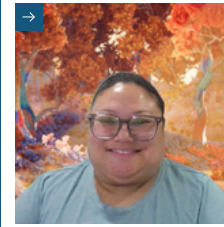
**Tanya Sanabria**



**Monique Clarke**



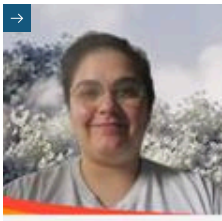
**Kristen Whattam**



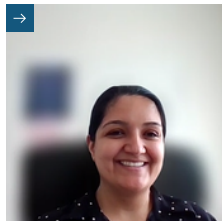
**Karen Jacela**

## 4 Years

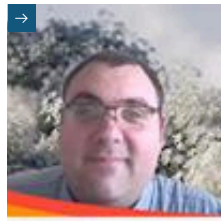
## 5 Years



**Alyssa Smith**

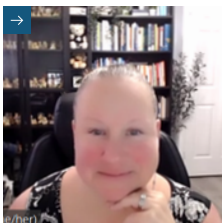


**Ayesha Siddiqi**



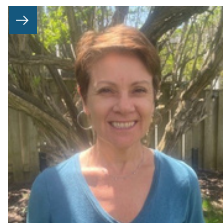
**Matthew Wadlin**

## 10 Years



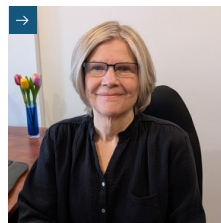
**Crystal Dainard**

## 15 Years



**Terri Skov**

## 35 Years



**Anita Lloyd**

# Building a New Future: Nazia's Journey

Throughout her life, she has been an elementary school teacher, a profession she pursued before moving to Canada. At twenty-one, while working towards a master's degree in economics, she began teaching. The challenges of immigrating and adapting to a new country, along with personal, family, and financial difficulties, left her feeling lost and depressed.

At her lowest point, she connected with Stride Employment Services and Employment Peer Mentor supports. The team at Stride, along with her support in the community, helped her regain direction and clarity. Already studying Police Foundations with a goal of pursuing a law enforcement career, she began volunteering in her community and applied for a security guard license.

With guidance from Stride's Employment and Peer Mentor staff, she navigated her job search and focused on her mental well-being. Despite doubts about whether starting a new career at her age was wise and concerns about her physical and mental readiness for law enforcement, she persevered.

Stride assisted her in preparing for and applying to various roles, including Parking Enforcement Officer, Offender Transport Officer, Transit Operator, Station Safety Ambassador, and Security Officer. She secured a position at Metrolinx as a Station Safety Ambassador, which she described as her "dream job"—a government position with all the benefits she had been seeking.

While continuing her role at Metrolinx, she remained committed to her Police Foundations studies and developed a deep passion for law enforcement. Her dedication and hard work ultimately led to her hiring by the Ontario Provincial Police as a Special Constable. She successfully passed all hiring stages, including physical, psychological, and written tests, and completed her training at the Provincial Police Academy in Orillia in March 2024.



While expressing her appreciation for Stride's support, she mentioned in her appreciation letter "From our very first meeting, it was clear that Stride had a genuine interest in my progress. At that time, I was facing some of the most challenging moments of my professional life, feeling lost and directionless. I was working as a cashier at Walmart, with higher aspirations but uncertain about the path to achieve them. Stride took the time to understand my qualifications, experiences, and career goals. They provided invaluable advice on navigating the job market, including preparing for interviews, crafting my resume, etc. I truly appreciate the personalized attention Stride gave to my resume-building, job search, interview preparation, making me feel valued and confident throughout the process. Stride's assistance and understanding of the emotional difficulties involved in job seeking and your compassionate attitude gave me much-needed comfort and support."

Appreciating Stride's Employment Services, she mentioned "You went out of the way and worked hard on every job application we submitted".

**"The community needs more people like you and more organizations like Stride to provide exceptional support and guidance."**



**"I am now excited to start a new chapter in my career. I am grateful for your unwavering support and the positive impact you have had on my professional development. I couldn't have done this without your unwavering help. Your dedication to helping individuals like me achieve their career goals is truly commendable."**



# Supporting Psychological Wellness in Halton Workplaces

As an active member of the Halton Psychological Wellness at Work Coalition, Stride is proud to contribute to the collective vision of a region where all workplaces are psychologically healthy and safe. Led by Halton Region, the Coalition brings together like-minded organizations to promote psychological health through collaboration, education, and the sharing of best practices.

Psychological health and safety means more than just offering support - it's about creating a culture where people feel respected, included, and empowered to thrive. At Stride, we understand that when employees feel safe to speak up, ask for help, and bring their full selves to work, they are better equipped to support our clients and fulfill our mission.

This past year, Stride actively engaged with Coalition partners and participated in the 2024 Halton Workplace Wellness Summit, where we shared our experiences and learned from other organizations leading in this space. The Summit reinforced our commitment to implementing the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety and highlighted the importance of community-wide collaboration to drive systemic change.

Stride continues to integrate psychological health into our policies and programs through our Wellness & Culture Team, anonymous staff feedback loops, and initiatives like the Guarding Minds survey, flexible work options, and ongoing mental health training. Our participation in the Coalition has also opened doors for joint initiatives and resource sharing, particularly with partners like the Canadian Mental Health Association and local public health units.

Looking ahead, Stride remains committed to building psychologically safe spaces for both staff and clients, and to advancing this important work alongside our Coalition partners. Together, we are making Halton a region where psychological wellness is not just supported - it is expected and sustained.



# Treasurer's Report

In thanks to the ongoing strong support of our various partners and the outstanding efforts of Stride management and staff, Stride was able to deliberately invest into expenditures in excess of revenues for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025 by (\$88,879) (2024 - \$88,465). Management has succeeded in maintaining the financial strength of the organization as the team continued to work diligently to navigate the Employment Ontario transformation, while simultaneously successfully bringing the comprehensive 3-year strategic plan to a close.

Ontario Health Central continues to provide the majority of revenue for Stride (67% of overall), at \$1,809,117 (2024 - \$1,818,104).

As a result of the Employment Ontario transformation in fiscal 2023, we no longer receive funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS-ODSP). Our employment services are now funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLISTD) through Fedcap Canada and WCG Services. Overall, the management team and staff have done an extraordinary job of continuing to navigate these changes, including but not limited to the heavy administrative burden and improving performance-based funding year-over-year, resulting in a 3%, or \$71,982, funding increase to \$728,595 in fiscal 2025 (2024 - \$656,613). Combined, these programs generated 27% of overall revenue.

Total revenue for fiscal 2025 decreased slightly by \$20,733 or -0.7% to \$2,689,013 (2024 - \$2,709,746), driven primarily by the aforementioned MLISTD increases, slightly more than offset by 2024 one-time funding that was not replicated in 2025. Other Revenue decreased to \$76,225 (2024 - \$106,733), Charitable donations decreased to \$12,020 (2024 - \$37,422), and United Way contributions decreased to \$63,056 (2024 - \$90,874). The largest contributions to these reductions include 2024 one-time funding for an Employment Services role and a Virtual Support Services role that were not renewed in 2025, partially offset by increased GIC returns in 2025 compared to the prior year.

Total operating expenditures decreased \$20,319 or -0.7% to \$2,777,892 (2024 - \$2,798,211), an amount in line with the year-over-year revenue reduction. and notably aided by the closure of the Georgetown office. Overall salaries and benefits increased \$12,102 or 0.5% to \$2,354,991 (2024 - \$2,342,889) and represents 88% of total revenues.

The contingency fund created in the prior year remains available for emergencies or unforeseen situations that may develop in the organization. This fund is targeted to equal three months of budgeted operating expenditures, and when top-ups are required, a maximum of 10% of the operating fund may be transferred to the contingency fund. For fiscal 2025, less than 10% of the operating fund, or \$33,200, was transferred from the operating fund to fully fund the contingency fund.

On behalf of Stride I would like to thank our partners and the Stride management and staff for their continued support. The financial results for the year ending March 31, 2025 were audited by Glenn Graydon Wright LLP. Copies of the Audited financial statements are available from Stride.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Todd Valentine, CPA, CMA*  
Treasurer, Board of Directors



# Summary of Revenue & Expenditures

## Revenue

Ontario Health Funding	\$1,809,117
Fedcap Canada	\$498,611
WCG Services	\$229,984
Donations and Other Revenue	\$88,245
United Way	<u>\$63,056</u>

**Total Revenue** **\$2,689,013**

## Expenditures

Salaries and Benefits	\$2,354,991
Rent and Utilities	\$164,667
Other Operating Costs	<u>\$238,000</u>

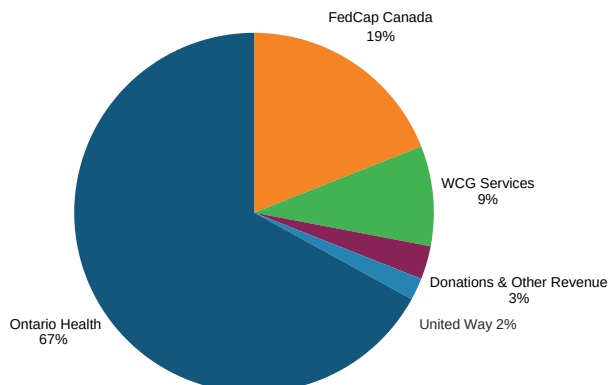
**Total Expenditures** **\$2,757,658**

Excess of Revenue over expenses for year	\$(68,645)
Amortization of capital assets	<u>\$(20,234)</u>

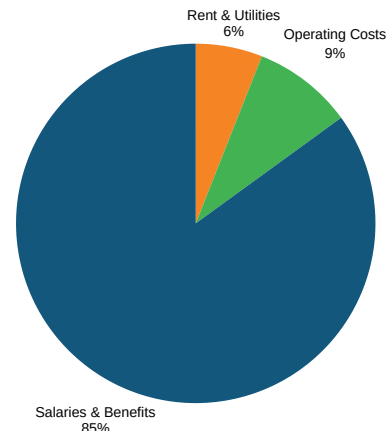
**Excess of Revenue over Expenditures** **\$(88,879)**



## Revenue



## Expenditures



# Final Reflections: 2022–2025 Strategic Plan

Stride's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan set a bold and necessary course to ENGAGE our people, EDUCATE our community, and INNOVATE our systems and services. Now at the conclusion of this three-year plan, we are proud to report meaningful, measurable impact across our agency, clients, and the broader community.

## **ENGAGE – Strengthening Team and Culture**

Over three years, we focused on employee experience, equity, and retention. We launched anonymous staff surveys, improved internal communication via SharePoint and monthly updates, and introduced an Inclusive Holiday Policy. Long-term service recognition was enhanced, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion efforts deepened with staff learning sessions, a DEI Manual, and standardized interview tools with a psychological safety lens.

We expanded demographic data collection and partnered with diverse organizations to support cultural competency and representation. Our most notable achievement: employee retention jumped from 55.88% in 2022 to 94.12% in 2024, significantly reducing turnover.

## **EDUCATE – Raising Awareness and Partnering with Employers**

Stride strengthened its visibility and impact in the community. We surpassed referral targets and deepened employer engagement, forming partnerships with brands like Old Navy, Amazon, and Starbucks. Our “Mental Health in the Workplace” presentation became a core employer resource, later adapted for regional use across Halton and Peel.

We are set to launch a 12-week inclusive hiring campaign in 2025 and introduced standardized placement protocols to support both clients and employers. Our focus remained on finding the “right fit” roles for job seekers, especially those facing complex barriers.

## **INNOVATE – Expanding Capacity and Impact**

System transformation was key to our innovation efforts. We implemented Employment Ontario (EO) transformation in Halton, re-mapped client pathways, and introduced a Re-engagement Specialist to strengthen service continuity. We expanded job coaching via third-party providers, increasing real-time support for clients.

Stride played a leading role in Ontario Health Team (OHT) initiatives, including the HART Hub proposal and regional cross-sector planning. These efforts elevated our role as a trusted partner in mental health and employment.

Internally, we built a more agile, future-ready workplace. Average vacancy fill time dropped to 20 days, and employee satisfaction rose to 87%, exceeding our 85% target. Innovations like job trials and employer-led models extended our reach to underserved populations.

To ensure long-term sustainability, we secured multi-source funding from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training & Skills Development, and United Way. We also submitted new proposals to expand initiatives aligned with our strategic goals.

## **Looking Ahead**

As this strategic plan concludes, Stride enters a new planning cycle grounded in the progress and learning of the past three years. We are stronger - organizationally, culturally, and operationally - and ready to respond to future challenges while creating inclusive pathways to employment and wellness for our clients and communities.



# Year in Review



**Alyssa at The Charity Showcase**



**Danielle & Ashley at UWHH Event**



**Stephanie at Primary Care Event**



**Peel Team photo for Ramesh, winner of WCG Customer Service Award**



**Workplace Mental Health Summit**



**Anita celebrates 35 years with Stride**



**Shannon, Terri, and Karen on Wellness Trail Lunch Walk**



**Karen, Marian and Alex at Grandmother's Voice Event**



**Celebration of Terri's 15 years with Stride**

# Year in Review



**Ramesh, winner of  
WCG Customer Service  
Award**



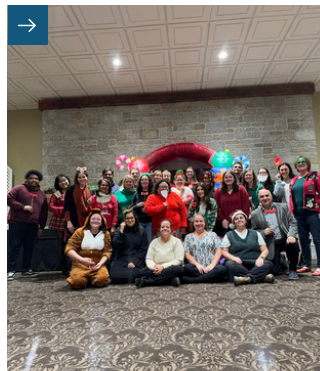
**Staff Appreciation Day**



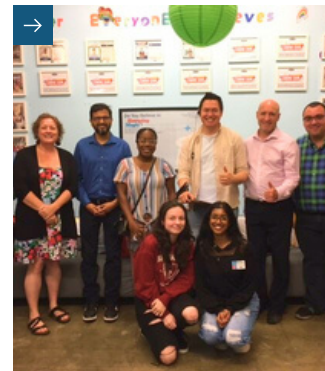
**Fedcap Canada Gift of  
Yoga Mats**



**Monday Morning Coffee  
Meet-Up**



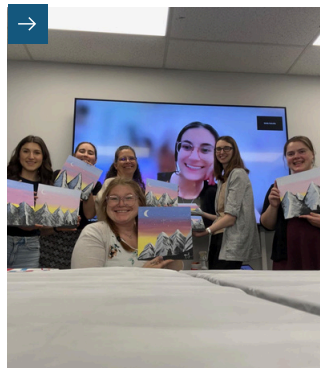
**Holiday Event**



**Staff at Old Navy 'This Way  
Onward' event**



**Terri at  
'100WomenWhoCareMilton'  
Event**



**Bob Ross-esque Paint  
Afternoon with the  
Stride team**



**Staff at Grandmother's  
Voice Event for National  
Indigenous Peoples Day**



# Acknowledgements

Stride gratefully acknowledges the funding and support received from various individuals and the following:

Canada 



Ontario 



Ontario 

Ministry of Labour,  
Immigration, Training  
and Skills Development



JUNE AND IAN  
COCKWELL PRIVATE  
FOUNDATION

Accredited by  
Canadian Centre  
for Accreditation



Agréé par  
Centre canadien  
de l'agrément







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