

Barbra Teena Schlifer March 15, 1947 – April 11, 1980

Barbra Schlifer would have celebrated her 75th birthday this year. In her memory, the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic strives to do the work she had hoped to as a lawyer. Since the Clinic opened in 1985, it has supported more than 100,000 women and gender-diverse survivors of violence whose complex and often intersecting needs demand the wraparound services and expertise only available at the Clinic. Her death was a tragedy. The Clinic, named in her honor, ensures her death was not in vain.



Mission

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic offers legal services and representation, trauma-informed counselling, and multilingual interpretation to diverse women* who have experienced violence. We cultivate women's skills and resilience by fostering their safety, dignity, and equality and we amplify women's voices to create individual and collective change.

Vision Statement

Through the building of local and global partnerships, we envision a world where women live free from violence. We are committed to working alongside communities to create autonomy and self-determination for women, informed by their diverse experiences, needs, and choices.

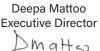
*The umbrella term "woman" recognizes that gender is self-identification that is not necessarily correspondent with assigned sex at birth. We recognize the complexity and diversity of gender and aim to be inclusive to people outside of and across the gender spectrum.

Message from the Executive Director and President of the Board

Recognize that unlearning is the highest form of learning.

Rumi







Sarah Whitmore Board President

In 1980, in the wake of her death, a group of Barbra's close friends and fellow lawyers understood that violence against women was a crisis and that services offered to survivors of gender-based violence needed to change. Their vision established the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic – to honour their friend and to set upon a mission to do the work Barbra had hoped to accomplish in her career. Each year since then, the Clinic has adapted to the changing circumstances that threaten the lives of women and gender-diverse people at risk of violence. Those circumstances – inequity, inequality, language barriers, discrimination, oppression, racism, colonialism, phobias of every shape and kind and, most recently, a global health pandemic – establish how we reimagine what form our services must take to be responsive. Throughout the year, the Clinic evolved its practices to ensure that individuals seeking our support were not let down. We developed a hybrid approach to work that considered the nuanced needs of clients and staff. Funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which was essential to our resilience, supported the operational agility that allowed us to embrace the ebb and flow of the mutating virus with minimal interruption.

Funding is critical to organizations operating in the public service sector. We are thankful to be an Anchor Agency with the United Way Greater Toronto, whose continued support has been essential to our operations. We are equally grateful to the Canadian Women's Foundation, whose belief in our work never wanes. Approval of our Shockproofing Communities Grant ensured that our high-need case management work could support women and gender-diverse survivors of violence, to determine the most appropriate path for their recovery from trauma. The expansion of the Clinic's #AndMeToo project, funded by the Clark Family Foundation, United Way Greater Toronto, and Department of Justice, allowed us to offer the hospitality sector free public legal education and training on workplace sexual assault and harassment.

New funding allowed us to expand the reach of our independent legal advice for sexual assault survivors and to launch the Department of Justice-funded It's My Choice project which works in alliance with agencies across Ontario. Our SHEcovery project, funded by Women and Gender Equality, is the Clinic's initiative to cultivate a more inclusive post-pandemic recovery through comprehensive change to systems preventing equity. Renewed funding from The Law Foundation of Ontario allowed us to forge ahead with our Criminalization of Women project for an additional three years.

Our local, national and international advocacy efforts over the past year did not slow down. We intervened to limit the ability of an accused to use confidential information and records of a complainant to challenge their truthfulness in court. Beyond our immediate work, we united on advocacy efforts to achieve joint goals, including an intensive process to support the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence by co-chairing the pillar on the promotion of responsive legal and justice systems, and by hosting local consultations for clients and community.

We were thrilled to participate in the 66th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women meetings at the United Nations in March 2022. The Clinic's #AndMeToo project was the subject of our virtual parallel event, where

we shared our findings and engaged with an international audience on the inherent complexity of workplace harassment, assault, and precarious immigration status.

The Clinic views evaluations as opportunities to learn and engage with the communities we serve. With valuable input from staff and clients, the Clinic released its Trauma-Informed Evaluation, Learning, and Leadership (TELL) framework. We used a trauma-informed lens to create an evaluation that is more than measurement tools and statistics. The framework will help guide the types of policies, tools and practices necessary to understand the impact of our programs and services and will enhance our capacity to learn and grow in response to evolving needs.

The Board of Directors continues to play an integral role in the growth of the Clinic. Each member brings a perspective invaluable to the evolution of our policies, including the Gender Identity and Inclusion policy that we updated this past year to better reflect the diversity of staff and those we serve. The Board leadership has also been critical to our fundraising efforts, with many serving on committees to enhance the work of the fundraising department.

Preventing systemic oppression, racism, and gender-based violence is not the work of one person or organization. We are all in it together. This year has illustrated ways we can collectively re-imagine how communities, systems, processes, and policies can adapt to effect meaningful change. Our greatest threat isn't stagnation; it is the belief that the status quo will suffice to address re-emerging issues of inequality and inequity. We invite you to be a part of a re-imagined future and to participate in that vision of change.

In parting, I want to recognize the commitment of two significant board members who mark their final term with the Clinic this year. We cannot praise enough the contributions made by Sarah Whitmore, Board President and Sharon Tse, Board Treasurer. Sarah and Sharon went out of their way to provide exceptional leadership, guidance, and support throughout their tenure. We will miss their presence and contribution to the Board significantly. However, we look forward to continuing to work with both in various capacities.

"For me, the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic embodies the strength and compassion that are rooted at the core of women's lived experiences. The Clinic and its staff are propelled every day by a desire to create a world in which women will live free from violence. This fundamental goal runs through all decision-making, big or small, and is central to the Clinic's policies, practices, service offerings, programs, projects, and partnerships across communities near and far. Having had the opportunity to work with, and collaborate, with the dedicated Clinic staff, managers, Executive Directors, and Board members has truly been one of my greatest privileges."

Sarah Whitmore, President

When I joined the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic as a Board member and Treasurer six years ago, I never imagined that I would also witness this organization's incredible transformation. While the Clinic's growth has been energizing to be a part of, it's also bittersweet, as it's a sign of the continued need in our society for these services. I'm in awe of the amazing work and creativity of the team, especially when faced with the challenges that the pandemic brought with it and how quickly they re-imagined how to continue helping clients. Thank you for all that you do.

Sharon Tse, Treasurer

Our work would not produce the results without our donors' support and generosity. The tenacity of our staff, board members, pro-bono lawyers and students continues to overwhelm us, and we are forever grateful for their digging in deeper when it counts the most.

Deepa Mattoo

Sarah Whitmore

(RE) IMAGINE Intake

Where a Client's Journey Begins

It's been two years since the pandemic caused us to halt in our tracks and enter impossible lock down situations. We knew the impact would be drastic and that those already forced to the fringe of society would be made to endure even greater inequalities.

Ensuring that marginalized and racialized individuals seeking our support receive the most appropriate services at the right time is fundamental to survival and recovery. Knowing this, we re-imagined what a fully integrated intake process would look like: how to use it to identify high-risk cases immediately, provide clients with a safety plan to reduce their risk of harm, provide legal information, advocate with different agencies on behalf of the clients to ensure access to justice, refer clients to the services that best address their needs, and reduce wait times.

The re-imagining of Intake also granted the latitude needed to collect and compile baseline and sociodemographic information, in order to develop better service pathways, and to build partnerships with agencies providing services not available at the Clinic.





Special Projects

1,917

18 percent increase in unique clients

During the height of the pandemic, the Clinic noted a general oversight by Canada to view the impact through a gender-based lens. The absence of this analysis was most noticeable in the broadly applied stay-at-home and lock-down mandates that forced women to isolate themselves at home with their abusers. Isolation is a key tactic used by abusers to control the actions and movement of those they abuse.

A Clinic-wide priority was to re-imagine service provision to survivors through the pandemic. We did this by accelerating our efforts to remove systemic barriers to gender equality experienced by high-need, high-risk and harder-to-reach communities. Our projects evolved to support those facing multiple complex issues, including food scarcity, poverty, homelessness, criminalization, language barriers and precarious immigration status — all of which contributed to digital poverty and limited access to support.

Our successful renewal of the Law Foundation of Ontario's Catalyst Grant application for another three-year cycle allows us to continue our important work with our Criminalization of Women project. We launched online training to bolster our roster of criminal lawyers interested in dedicating pro bono hours to the project and the women accessing it.

We partnered with the Migrant Workers' Centre of BC on their Alliance for Gender Justice in Migration project to bring together a broad spectrum of experts in the field, including women with lived experience of discrimination. The anticipated outcome of the Pan-Canadian Task Force includes developing evidence- based legislative and policy proposals to inform policymakers of equitable and actionable solutions to end discrimination against women migrants in Canada.



Special projects identify and fill gaps in service provision for marginalized populations of women and gender-diverse people at risk of falling through the cracks in our social and justice systems.



Through our integrated intake, clients are identified and directed toward the most appropriate project to address their unique and often complex needs.



Those precariously employed may feel they have fewer options to report abuse without retaliation. When Sylvia reported the workplace sexual assault and harassment she experienced, her employer tried to restrict her access to the workplace.

The Clinic's #AndMeToo project supports women and gender-diverse survivors of workplace violence. We successfully intervened on Sylvia's behalf so that she could safely return to work while her abuser was forced to take a leave from work.

Counselling Services

2,907

2,187

33 percent increase in unique clients

There was a time when our group rooms burst with activity. The pandemic flummoxed our team of diverse and experienced counsellors who were accustomed to creating a welcoming and safe environment. In many ways, they pioneered the Clinic's path to providing virtual services. They were certainly among the first to re-imagine the many shapes counselling could take in this unchartered territory, fraught with risk yet rich in opportunity.

The Trauma-Informed Expressive Arts Programming addressed the complex needs of diverse clients. While in-person counselling was restricted due to persisting COVID conditions, the Clinic found ways to connect with individuals we knew were most significantly impacted by those restrictions and mounting barriers to access.

Group programs expanded in scope, variety and sessions. The following groups were led by internal staff and guest facilitators in 2021-2022

- Reclaiming Joy
- Reclaiming Joy: Dance Group
- Deliberate and Afraid of Nothing Restorative Yoga Group for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour
- Returning Home: Group for Racialized Youths
- Open Studio: Queer Series
- Open Studio: Flow Series
- Mind, Body & Spirit A Healing Journey in Community
- SHIFT: Support group for survivors of GBV
- Rise and Remember— Clay & Mindfulness Group

Beyond the breadth of new groups offered, we renewed or forged new partnerships, expanding the reach of clients to include those impacted by human trafficking. Engaging with social justice lawyer Fay Faraday primed the team to understand the unique construct of issues confronted by survivors of human trafficking. Collaboration grew beyond the Clinic's virtual walls in order to build upon its community-based leadership to design the Community Engagement Working Group that supports members who have experienced trauma.



Housing counsellors are paving the way for clients who have been trafficked to access housing through the Special Priority Program's complex application process.



Group diversity grew to include groups specifically for racialized youth, Black, Indigenous and people of colour, and participants from the LGTBQ2+ community.

Allegations of sexual assault are never taken lightly. When the Clinic successfully advocated on behalf of a precariously employed client who reported severe workplace sexual assault and harassment, we provided important context for the situation's complexity, including information on PTSD, trauma bonding, and coerced "consent." Following a two-month workplace investigation, we validated the client's allegations about her workplace sexual assault. The Clinic's counselling team will support her along her healing journey.

Legal Services

2,546

1,818

40 percent increase in unique clients

In 2021-2022, the Legal Department continued to provide a blend of remote and in-person legal services to more than 2,546 survivors of violence with family and immigration law issues and questions about legal responses to sexual assault.

As the pandemic continued to raise barriers to in-person support and services, the department was able to support one client through a complex family trial, bringing together our wrap-around services with legal representation, safety planning and specialized interpretation, all through telephone and video conferencing. While providing services remotely, we saw the client's self-esteem blossom as she advocated for herself, giving testimony to the court online, leading to the outcome she was hoping for.

Our court support workers continued providing services to clients navigating the family court system. Workers attended court with clients by Zoom and assisted clients with online access to justice as part of their support to overcome legal and safety concerns.

The Legal Department continued to provide public legal education about our trauma-informed legal services to lawyers, students and community-based agencies working with survivors of gender-based violence. By meeting audiences online, we could reach larger groups from different locations in Ontario.



24 volunteers donated more than 5,000 hours of their time in support of the legal services offered across the Schlifer Clinic.



Using technology including Zoom, Court Support Workers were able to attend court with clients, ensuring they were supported throughout the process of seeking justice.



When Lily* arrived in Canada, it was with the prospect of a bright future. Her partner initiated her sponsorship application but left Canada - leaving her and their two children behind. Verbally abusive, he frequently threatened to revoke her application. Taking the advice of the Clinic's legal team, Lily withdrew her application and applied instead for a Humanitarian and Compassionate application. Though complicated, Lily's application was accepted, and she and her Canadian-born children can now call Canada home.

* Not her real name

Interpretation Services

6,574

1,680

6 percent increase in unique clients

When the Clinic opened its doors nearly 40 years ago, interpretation was available in a limited manner and only in a few languages. Recognizing how essential interpretation was to immigrant and refugee survivors of trauma and violence motivated the Clinic to include it as part of the Clinic's essential wraparound services.

Interpretation services are freely available to women and gender-diverse survivors of violence directly by accessing the Clinic's core services and service providers in more than 170 languages. Face-to-face, video, and immediate over-the-phone interpretation offer immigrant and refugee survivors of violence the freedom to recount their trauma in their first language. This accommodation relieves a survivor of the additional stress of searching for words to describe her trauma in a second or third language.

As part of our commitment to the community and those we support, we actively identified and responded to gaps in service provision for racialized and marginalized populations in the greater Toronto area. This past year, we recognized an increase in the need for Dari, Gikuyu, Pashtu, Turkish and Yoruba interpreters and sought out or offered subsidized training to interpreters who could fill this gap. Later, in direct response to the war in Ukraine, we ensured Ukrainian interpreters would be available to support women impacted by conflict.

By proactively building alliances and partnerships with organizations that support Canada's immigrant and refugee populations, the Clinic's employment social enterprise Interpreter Services Toronto trained 25 women as certified interpreters. As IST-trained interpreters they are uniquely positioned to provide nuanced interpretation in sensitive, complex, and difficult situations.

With the pandemic, we knew there would be a shift in service provision, with fewer people seeking our face-to-face services. We prepared by ensuring we could offer the same quality service virtually, and we did. We experienced a 14% increase in our over-the-phones services, which aligned with our new virtual existence, but not in accordance to the demand placed on gender-based violence services overall.



Additional languages became available to clients seeking our interpretation services through service providers and our feefor-service interpretation and translation services.



25 interpreters participated in Interpreter Services
Toronto, a modified online training program, to become professional interpreters and translators.

When her abusive relationship escalated to physical violence, Sofija connected with the Clinic for support to safely leave her partner. We provided her with interpretation so that she could share her experience in her first language; to a housing and transitional support counsellor who helped her and her children leave her abusive partner; and to a lawyer who addressed the legalities of her separation from her abusive partner.



* Not her real name

Fundraising

The Clinic confronted significant fundraising challenges as the pandemic progressed into a second year. One of the many highlights, however, was the outstanding success of our Spirit of Schlifer Campaign, with the support of There Management to build an exceptional online platform. Working in collaboration with the Executive Director and the Communications Manager, the Campaign raised \$171, 803. The funds raised through the Campaign supported our services and operations. We are again indebted to our Lead, Award, and Digital partners, along with the many sponsors and donors who demonstrated their support for the Clinic.

The Clinic's 2021 Giving Tuesday peer-to-peer themed campaign supported the needs of the integrated intake department to provide seamless services to clients seeking support. The campaign goal was to cover the cost of 150 hours of intake services, which we proudly surpassed.

The Clinic launched a new campaign to normalize charitable giving as part of a Will. As the Clinic's largest focused attempt for charitable gifts and Wills, the campaign allows the Clinic to leverage a wider audience of supporters who want to use their Will to make significant social change, while still caring for loved ones.

We were grateful for the financial support from Ontario Trillium Foundation, which allowed us to successfully pivot to re-imagine virtual fundraising and conversion to a more efficient database solution.

you have the

WILL POWER

to change lives







If you want to change the world with a charitable gift in your Will, and still care for those you love, contact us at 416-323-9149



The Spirit of Schlifer Campaign saw an increase of more than 38% in new supporters



Our Giving Tuesday peer-topeer campaign raised more than \$7,100 or nearly 240 hours of Intake services



Our annual Client Holiday campaign provided gifts, food vouchers and gift cards to our clients. Generous donations from CHUM Charitable Foundation, the Shoebox Project, and other private donors bolstered a sense of festivity for clients and their children during the holidays.

Financial Report

This statement of operations is an excerpt extracted from the audited statement.

To view our complete Audited Financial Report, please visit our website

https://www.schliferclinic.com/about-us/

Statement of Operations for the Year Ended March 31, 2022

	2022	2021
Revenue (Schedule A)	5,259,618	6,088,947
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	3,256,043	3,062,819
Interpreters' fees and training	484,453	606,829
Building occupancy	285,908	289,326
Purchased services	352,932	335,089
Insurance	42,773	38,983
Client disbursements	35,866	53,637
Promotion and publicity	24,082	5,550
Printing, postage, delivery	20,644	20,934
Telecommunications	85,384	91,278
Equipment, furniture, software	80,600	46,830
Travel	3,318	7,238
Volunteer expenses	50	475
Office and general	72,030	126,564
Program expenses	22,422	17,179
Professional development	20,811	21,534
Membership fees - legal and other	19,918	28,147
	4,807,234	4,752,412
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	\$ 452,384	\$1,336,535





Now in its 3rd year, the Spirit of Schlifer Campaign continues to support survivors of all forms of violence by raising the funds needed to provide our trauma-informed services.

With the ongoing generosity of past and present sponsors and individual donors, the campaign was a great success raising critical funds in support of our operations, programs, and service.

Together, we raised \$171, 803

Special thanks to our Campaign Partners and the many law firms, unions, corporations, businesses, foundations, and individuals who Believe in the work of the Schlifer Clinic and who supported our 2022 Spirit of Schlifer Campaign.

Thanks also to the Fundraising Committee for all their hard work and dedication in making the Campaign a success.

Campaign Partners

Lead Partner

Blakes Lawyers

Digital Program Partner



Award Partner



Spirit of Barbra Schlifer Award



Lise Martin



Lise Martin is the founding Executive Director of Women's Shelters Canada, an organization that provides a unified voice for systemic change to end violence against women while providing leadership for collaboration and knowledge exchange among shelters and transition houses across the country. Prior to joining WSC, she was the Executive Director of Women's World 2011, an international feminist conference that hosted more than 2,000 participants from 92 countries in Ottawa in July 2011. For many years, Lise was with the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW), first as a Research Officer and then as Executive Director. Lise is also a founding member of FAFIA, the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action. She is the proud mother of three sons.



Dr. Jennifer Kagan

Jennifer Kagan is a passionate advocate against gender-based violence in all its forms. As a physician, Jennifer brings her clinical experience to the table when assisting women and children who have been subjected to domestic violence and coercive control. In her domestic violence advocacy, Jennifer strives to amplify survivor voices and to call for systemic and legislative change, particularly in the legal arena.

In 2020, Jennifer's beloved daughter Keira Kagan was killed in a murder-suicide after being failed by the family court and child protection systems. Jennifer subsequently created a campaign in honour of her daughter - #ForLittleKeira. She has reached thousands of survivors across Canada who are being failed by the family court and criminal justice systems.

Jennifer has worked with several Members of Parliament to improve the legal system for victims of domestic violence, including children. She played an integral role in advocating for Keira's Law, contained within Bill C-233, which aims to improve judicial education on domestic violence and coercive control for federally appointed Judges. It aims to reduce femicide and filicide and better protect children from the trauma of domestic violence. She actively provides education to a variety of professionals on domestic violence and coercive control, including physicians and lawyers. She has been invited to testify as a witness in Parliament at the Status of Women Committee about her personal experience and the importance of Keira's Law.

(RE) IMAGINE Support

Thank you to you the numerous organizations, foundations and individuals who fund our work

Funding Partners

Canadian Women's Foundation

City of Toronto

Clark Family Foundation

Department of Justice Canada

Law Foundation of Ontario

Ministry of Attorney General

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Ontario Trillium Foundation

Toronto Enterprise Fund - UWGT

Women and Gender Equality Canada

United Way Greater Toronto

Foundation

Chimp Charitable Impact Foundation Canada

CHUM Charitable Foundation

Conam Charitable Foundation

Echo Foundation

Edwards Charitable Foundation

Give Foundation

LSKR c/o Aqueduct Foundation

Morningstar Fund at the Toronto Foundation

Nancy's Very Own Foundation

Norah Faye Foundation at the Toronto Foundation

Paul Rolston Foundation c/o Aqueduct Foundation

The Ralph M. Barford Foundation

Shum Vourkoutiotis Fund at the Toronto Foundation

Styles Family Foundation

Toronto CREW

Zita and Mark Bernstein Family Foundation

Corporations, Labour & Employee Charitable Fund Supporters

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

Interac

Leon's Furniture Limited

PayPal Giving Fund Canada

Traffix

A special thank you to

Clark Family Foundation

for their continued support of #AndMeToo and its delivery.







An agency of the Government of Ontario Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario







Thank you McCarthy Tétrault for the ongoing and generous support through the firm's pro bono initiative. This initiative helps serve women and gender-diverse survivors of violence.

Thank you Filling the Gap, for supporting the Clinic's mission and for raising more than \$23,000 in 2021-2022 to help survivors of violence.

Our Team Thank You

To our Board of Directors for their steadfast leadership and commitment to the Clinic, its staff and the women we serve. To the more than 50 full and part-time staff who continue to shift gracefully with the tides. Their expertise, professionalism, and openness to change, have laid the groundwork for us to meet the needs of women and gender-diverse people throughout the year.

Thank you also to the many students, pro bono lawyers, and committee members who volunteer their invaluable services to the Clinic.



Photo Credit: Deepa Mattoo, page 3, taken by Jen Squires for the YWCA Toronto 2022 Women of Distinction Award

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic operates on the traditional territories of the Huron-Wendat, Anishinabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and most recently, The Mississaugas of the Credit River First Nations.

Ontario is covered by 46 treaties and other agreements and is home to many Indigenous Nations from across Turtle Island, including the Inuit and the Metis. These treaties and other agreements, including the One Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, are agreements to peaceably share and care for the land and its resources. Other Indigenous Nations, Europeans, and newcomers, were invited into this covenant in the spirit of respect, peace, and friendship. We are mindful of broken covenants and we strive to make this right, with the land and with each other.

We are all Treaty people. Many of us, have come here as settlers, immigrants, newcomers in this generation or generations past. We also acknowledge those who came here forcibly, particularly as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade. We honour and pay tribute to the ancestors of African Origin and Descent







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