

[Click here to begin](#)
annual report
2017 - 2018

VITA MENS SANA

vita
community living services
mens sana
families for mental health



WE ARE VITA.

PROVIDING SAFETY | PRACTICING RESPECT | PROMOTING COMMUNITY

Please click on Page number to access page

2	SECTION 1 ABOUT US
4	MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
6	OUR MEMBERS
7	VITA ADVOCACY
8	WHERE WE WORK
10	OUR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS
14	BRIAN'S STORY
16	SECTION 2 OUR IMPACT VITA'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
16	VISION TO ACTION: PROGRESS AGAINST OUR STRATEGIC PLAN
17	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: PUTTING MEMBERS' NEEDS FIRST
21	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: RESPONSIVENESS
24	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: SUSTAINABILITY
26	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: COLLABORATION
29	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5: LEADERSHIP
32	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 6: EMPOWERMENT
36	NICHOLAS' STORY
38	SECTION 3 BALANCED SCORECARD
40	SECTION 4 OUR WORKFORCE WE ARE PEOPLE WHO LOVE WORKING WITH PEOPLE
41	RECOGNIZING OUR TOP PERFORMERS
42	MINA'S STORY
45	ORGANIZATIONAL-WIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEES
46	SECTION 5 VITA & THE COMMUNITY
48	COMMUNITY & FUNDRAISING EVENTS
54	SECTION 6 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



ABOUT US

WE ARE VITA

We are VITA, a not-for-profit charitable agency comprised of two organizations. Jointly, we provide specialized services to help and support adults with developmental disabilities, dual diagnosis, and chronic mental illness to live life to the fullest in our community.

“Over 30 years Transforming the Lives of our Members and Families”

VITA Community Living Services (Vita CLS): Founded in 1986, Vita CLS is funded primarily by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services to provide a range of community-based, person-directed services for adults with developmental disabilities and dual diagnosis (a developmental disability and mental illness) that foster independence, enhance quality of life and community inclusion.

Mens Sana Families for Mental Health (Mens Sana): Mens Sana was created in 1991 by families in York Region who came together to support one another, and to provide the services and supports their family members needed. Funded almost exclusively by the generosity of donors, Mens Sana offers residential supports, clinical and referral services, and day services for adults with chronic mental illness.

OUR MISSION

To provide safety, respect and community through services for individuals with intellectual disabilities and/or mental health needs.

OUR VISION

Providing Safety, Practicing Respect, Promoting Community

OUR VALUES

Understanding that safety is a basic human right.

Treating everyone with dignity, honesty, respect and compassion.

Being a caring and professional organization.

Having progressive, innovative and adaptive personnel.

Promoting the achievement of individual choices, dreams and aspirations.

Respecting individual rights.

Fostering the Italian Canadian heritage of VITA's origins.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Brian Naraine

As VITA begins the fifth and final year of its 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, it is gratifying to reflect on all that has been accomplished since we set this plan in motion four years ago.

Meeting the needs of our Members has always come first at VITA. In 2015, we set out to streamline operations while continuing to deliver high quality services. We have since reorganized our programs and services to align them with the populations we serve and to enhance service provision. We have developed new fee-for-service options and introduced new clinical and educational services and supports to better serve Members and families, and to close gaps in service.

We have also taken steps to expand and enhance our housing portfolio through innovative partnerships and major upgrades. And, we continue to explore how best to modify our homes to accommodate Members as they age, enabling them to age in place whenever possible.

We have worked closely with our major funder, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), to address a growing gap between our funding allocation and the actual costs of serving individuals with the most complex needs. In the process, we have strengthened our financial policies, processes and practices, and diversified our revenue streams to put the stand-alone agency on a solid financial footing for the future.

As a charitable organization, I am pleased to report that donations to VITA have risen modestly but steadily over the past four years. We are immensely and forever grateful to the 800-plus individuals and organizations that contribute so generously to our signature fundraisers each year — the Rally for VITA, the Annual Paul Flumian Grand Prix and Friends of Mens Sana Annual Dinner — to support our work.

Our collaborations with other agencies, sector partners and networks, as well as academic institutions, continue to bear fruit with the development and delivery of new and innovative Member services, the advancement of knowledge through joint research projects, and by sharing our expertise through educational programs and products, many of which extend across the province and around the world.

As we close another productive and hectic year, the Board looks forward to developing a new strategic plan in 2018/19 to guide agency initiatives and operations over the next three to five years, starting April 1, 2019. I have every confidence that, together, we will continue to make strong and steady progress in fostering an inclusive community where everyone feels at home.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Adam Smith

VITA has made great progress toward the achievement of its strategic goals over the past year.

High on our agenda was meeting the needs of Members and families. Last year, we opened new, dedicated office space for our Rights Group, and created a Service Advisory Group to engage Members and families in the development of new services, and the identification of ways to further improve current services.

In May, we launched a new From Trauma to Trust Clinic for institutional survivors, and participated in the province-wide rollout of our Advocates Against Abuse program to help individuals with intellectual abilities learn to be their own best advocates.

Toward the end of fiscal, our plans to upgrade, renovate and refresh VITA homes and day program locations were approved. Once completed, these improvements will not only modernize our facilities, but make them more accessible, comfortable and practical for Members.

Also last year, we secured two new homes and began collaborating with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) on a proposal to develop a third, specialized home for hard-to-serve individuals. We embarked on a research project with the University of Toronto (UofT) to identify the critical elements of inclusive housing. Results of this study will help inform how we design and structure homes in the future to better meet Member needs.

We also entered into a new partnership with Health Care Access Research and Developmental Disabilities (HCARDD) and the National Association of Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) to equip our staff with the skills they need to serve as effective health care advocates to ensure Members get the health care they need.

Our current and future financial position looks bright, having addressed with the support of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), the growing gap between our funding base and the actual costs of serving people with particularly challenging needs. Last year we, took additional steps to further strengthen our financial operations and enhance accountability through staff training, process improvements and automation.

Last year, we continued to invest in the professional growth and development of staff throughout the agency: we launched a diversity strategy to accelerate our commitment to ensuring that VITA is an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone; and introduced a new Employee and Family Assistance program to help and support our employees and their families to maintain their health.

We also upgraded our IT systems, most notably our Human Resource and Client Information systems to modernize and streamline operations. And we introduced new communication mechanisms to keep everyone at VITA better informed and connected.

In short, it has been another busy, challenging and rewarding year at VITA, an organization that I am proud to lead with the impressive commitment and active support of the senior team, and the sage advice and guidance of the Board.

OUR MEMBERS

01 We are people serving people

For three decades now, people with disabilities have been advocating for the use of “people first” language that puts the “person” before the “disability” to ensure that discussions regarding disability are respectful and inclusive.

02 At VITA

We understand that people are people regardless of diagnosis and that all people do well when they are welcomed, supported and given opportunities to succeed.

03 Developmental Disabilities

A developmental disability is present at birth or develops before 18 years of age. Intellectual disability is a subset or type of developmental disability. An intellectual disability affects a person’s ability to learn. VITA serves people with intellectual disabilities.

04 Dual Diagnosis

When people with developmental and intellectual disabilities experience mental health problems, they have a dual diagnosis.

05 Chronic Mental Illness

People with chronic mental illness are significantly affected by the illness for an indefinite period. Beyond the illness, their lives are compounded by stigma.



VITA ADVOCACY - Speaking up!

Self-advocacy is embedded in VITA’s DNA. Difference is still feared and misunderstood by many people. Our advocacy group works to dispel fear, enhance understanding and eliminate stigma. We actively promote self-advocacy through the following initiatives:



**Rights
Group**



**Member
Times**



**Advocates
Against Abuse**



**Advocating for
a Better Future**



sprOUT

Why do we use the term ‘Members’ when referring to the people we serve? In 2007, VITA initiated a self-advocate group. The group asked that the agency stop using the word ‘client’ and use the word ‘Member’ instead to identify them. We are one community with staff Members, board Members and Members who receive service.

WHERE WE WORK

Our Locations: We offer supported accommodation with varying levels of support to meet the diverse needs of adults with intellectual disabilities and mental illness who live in the City of Toronto and York Region.

Residential Programs:

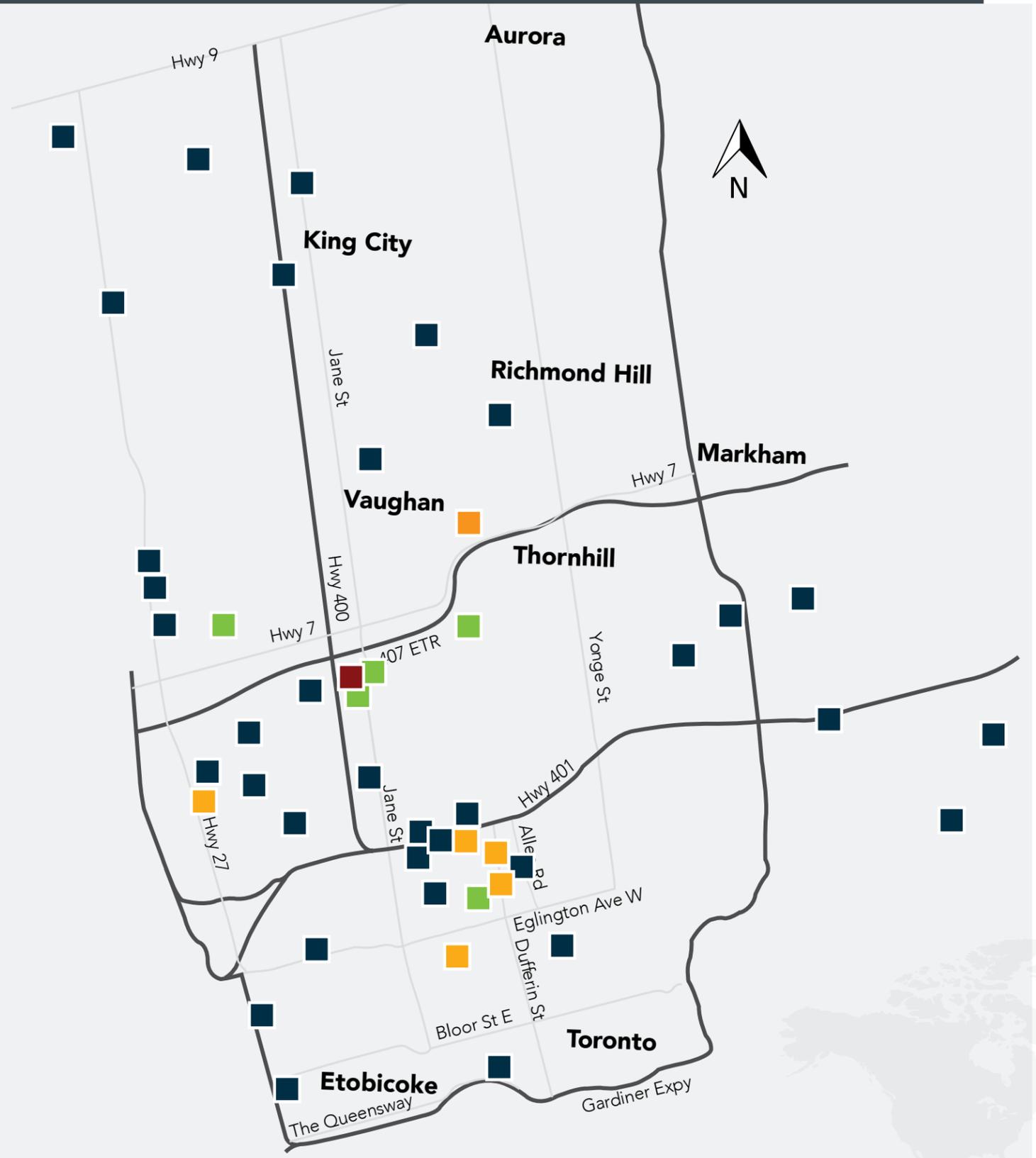
We operate more than **70 homes**, including:

- 32 full support homes
- 31 supported independent living apartments
- 10 enhanced supported independent living apartments

Day / Community Programs: We also run **seven** day and community participation programs in various locations across the GTA

Locations

- Group Homes
- Properties
- 8 Day Programs
- Head Office
- Fee for Service



OUR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

At VITA, we are constantly evolving to meet the needs of our members as they grow and change throughout their lifespan. Working in partnership with families and members, we offer innovative services and supports to meet the needs of our members from early to late adulthood.

VITA PROGRAMS

Clinical and Educational Services

WHAT THEY DO?

Our Clinical and Educational Services (CES) provide **therapeutic interventions and learning opportunities** for members to help them acquire new skills and develop the abilities to live with a sense of well-being and support for the achievement of their life goals.

Training is also offered to Direct Support Professionals and sector-related agencies to keep pace with evolving best practices and to better serve a variety of specialized populations.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Clinical services:** Consultation, life skills and community living training/classes, including our innovative Learning You Program provided in our Day Programs.
- **From Trauma to Trust:** A new therapy clinic for adults with intellectual disabilities who have endured trauma from life experiences, institutionalization, and loss or grief.
- **Educational services:** Using evidence-based approaches, knowledge and skills are broadly shared within the sector, across the country and around the world.
- **The International Journal for Direct Support Professionals:** Provides practical information in an accessible format.

Respite Services

WHAT THEY DO?

Pre-planned, **short-term breaks for family members** who provide daily support for family members 16 years of age or older.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- March Break and Summer Programs
- Vacation / Holiday Respite Programs
- Day, weekend, and overnight respite services.

Treatment Programs

WHAT THEY DO?

Short- and long-term treatment programs available as well as post-treatment supports for adults with complex behavioural needs and/or a dual diagnosis to enable them to live as safely and productively as possible in their communities.

Program supports individuals who might be transitioning from family home, homelessness, other types of treatment, hospitalization, and may be experiencing changing needs.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Transitional Treatment Services and Complex Behaviour Treatment Program
- Transitional Specialized Program
- **Permanent Treatment Services:** Prader-Willi Syndrome treatment program and Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) treatment program

Residential Services

WHAT THEY DO?

Residential supports are calibrated to individual member needs, interests and behaviours, which can change over time. Homes are staffed with specialized and skilled talent to best support our members. Our direct support professionals work closely with Clinical and Educational Services to bolster existing skills and to identify and deliver new skill-building opportunities.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- 24/7-365 Program Support (Clinical Services and Building Maintenance)
- Direct support professionals trained in accordance with VITA policies and procedures and Ministry regulations
- VITA's Rights Approach: Members have a voice at the table and choice in the service they receive — pertaining to privacy and confidentiality, personal support plans, medication practices and procedures, and clinical documentation.

Community Participation Services (CPS)

WHAT THEY DO?

CPS offers educational and experiential learning opportunities aimed at empowering people to create meaningful connections and friendships while developing life, leisure and employment skills.

Our dedicated staff work with the Clinical Services and each member to maximize the individual's input into their own day. Services are designed to support independence, self-advocacy and community inclusion. Services are designed to support independence, self-advocacy and community inclusion.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 Community Participation Programs across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)
- Monday to Friday Service
- Group and 1:1 approaches that build on individual strengths and interests based on choices and opportunities
- Annual goal-setting and evaluation to promote independence and choices while providing members with skills to complete tasks as independently as possible
- Social, communication, life skills, job readiness skills: swimming, bowling, library, computer lab, and day trips to various locations in and around the GTA.

Support Services – This is where it all begins!

Our Support Services staff are VITA's ambassadors: they are typically the first contact point for families looking for help and support. They connect and collaborate with families, members and the developmental services sector to ensure appropriate support. Finding the right service can be daunting. At VITA, we help families navigate Ontario's Developmental Services System and other resources to make their lives easier.

VITA provides a comprehensive range of services:

Program Services are offered for both adults with intellectual disabilities and dual diagnosis (an intellectual disability and mental illness).

Many of our services are funded by the Government of Ontario. We also offer fee-for-service programs.

OUR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

MENS SANA PROGRAMS

Program Services are offered for both adults with intellectual disabilities and dual diagnosis (an intellectual disability and mental illness). Many of our services are funded by the Government of Ontario. We also offer fee-for-service programs.

Residential Mental Health Services

WHAT THEY DO?

We offer 24/7-365 support to promote healthy living, socializing and the development of strategies individuals can use when they feel a loss of control.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Individualized Goal Planning:** health management, skills for independent living, social recreational activities
- **Educational Program:** participants get to know their pre-relapse symptoms, and learn to use imminent strategies to maintain their well-being

Mental Health Day/Drop-In Services

WHAT THEY DO?

Program activities are offered to both members, and their families and support networks. Activities vary, based on individual needs and goals. While some may want to work towards future goals (competitive employment, independent living, furthering education, etc.), others may want to simply attend and choose to participate in activities offered (i.e. mental health management classes, social and recreational opportunities, meal preparation class, art therapy group, computer class, etc.).

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Vocational Skills
- March Break and Summer Program
- Coping Skills
- Social Recreational Groups

Family Support

WHAT THEY DO?

Services are offered to families and people who live with a loved one with mental health and/or intellectual disabilities (dual diagnosis).

We believe that families are part of the solution in care provision and therefore work to ensure that families have the resources and support they need during difficult times.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Assessments for families / Individualized Program Planning
- Wellness educational program
- Mental Health Workshops
- Mental health for Seniors

Mental Health Referral Services

WHAT THEY DO?

Services are offered to both people with mental health needs, and their family and support networks.

We work in coordination with VITA's Support Services Team to connect and collaborate with families, members and the developmental services sector to ensure that individuals and their families receive appropriate support.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Current-sector trends:** Our staff work hard to stay current on the services offered to people with mental health needs.
- **Guidance:** The referral process can be daunting for individuals and their families. We guide you through the paperwork and help you navigate the system. We aim to either provide service or find services that are a better fit.





BRIAN'S STORY

Brian Naraine

VITA's President



“Supporting VITA is my passion. I have always known my purpose in life is to give back to my community, and to care for those who are less fortunate than I am.

I came to the VITA family in 2001 by way of the Board. In 2008, I accepted the position of Vice-Chair, and then Chair in 2011. There is nothing more rewarding to me than making a difference in people’s lives. I am an individual who puts others first. I am always willing to lend a hand, make someone smile, and never make anyone feel that what they say or contribute is not important. I believe that everyone has a meaningful contribution to make.

In addition to my work on VITA’s Board, I am the Community Co-ordinator in Vaughan for Special Olympics Ontario, a position I’ve held for over 20 years. On a professional level, I studied engineering and business. I own a small engineering consulting company that provides technical solutions for companies developing electronic equipment.

In my spare time, I enjoy running and cycling and have participated in a number of marathons and half-marathons, the most memorable being a marathon in Venice, Italy.

My passion for sports has helped me to lead several outdoor fundraising activities and to celebrate hope for a future in which VITA Members can realize their full potential, achieve their dreams and have meaningful lives in the community.

In addition to providing technical support and advice for strategic planning at VITA, I really enjoy acting as the organization’s spokesperson, recruiting donors, and attending fundraising events. Supporting VITA is essential for developing sustainable communities and societies where all can belong. I am proud that our agency provides valuable services and programs that protect and ensure our Members’ choices and human rights.

We have more than 80 locations in the City of Toronto and York Region with over 425 committed and dedicated staff members. Our programs and services enrich our communities in numerous ways while enhancing the quality of life for Members and families.

To strengthen and help build capacity for our agency, we are working diligently to be the best we can be for our community. I will continue to work with all VITA stakeholders to explore the best alternatives, ideas and methods to achieve our mission to provide safety, practice respect and promote community.

I am forever grateful for all that life has taught me, but most of all, for the fantastic people that I’ve had the pleasure of meeting and working with at VITA.”

OUR IMPACT

VITA'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

section 2

Our 2015-2019 strategic plan serves as a road map to guide our work and drive change at VITA. Characterized by a strong focus on the needs of VITA Members, families and staff, our plan includes the pursuit of new partnership opportunities, establishing leading practices and setting the course for long-term financial sustainability. Anchored by our Mission, Vision and Values, our plan helps to focus our actions and behaviours as we work to achieve the following strategic goals.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 PUTTING MEMBERS' NEEDS FIRST

Meet the needs of our Members – innovatively and cost-effectively.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 RESPONSIVENESS

Respond to the complex and diverse housing needs of Members.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure VITA's financial sustainability.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 COLLABORATION

Partner and collaborate for growth and sector leadership.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5 LEADERSHIP

Lead through strong governance.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 6 EMPOWERMENT

Develop robust skills to support growth.

VISION TO ACTION

We are now in the final year of implementing our current strategic plan, which was developed four years ago following extensive consultation with our Members, families, staff, board members, partners, funders, donors and other stakeholders.

Progress against our strategic plan: We engage our staff, Members and families, and partners in translating our goals into actionable annual operating plans that focus our work and help ensure that we stay on course to realize our strategic goals. This year's Annual Report highlights our successes, and showcases the reasons why our members choose VITA. In the year ahead, we will engage those we serve, other service providers and our partners in the development of a new strategic plan to guide our future work.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 PUTTING MEMBERS' NEEDS FIRST

Meet the needs of our Members – innovatively and cost-effectively.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES

New, fully accessible From Trauma to Trust Clinic provides specialized trauma services for people with disabilities who have experienced trauma as a consequence of institutionalization, loss or grief and other life experiences. Led by trained trauma specialists, treatment is sensitive to the real world exposure of people with disabilities, and focuses on person-centred goals and issues that participants identify as personal barriers to wellness, healing and empowerment. Services include individual and group therapy, family services and agency support approaches. Consultative services and training will also be offered across the province.

New dedicated office for our VITA's Rights Group Members now have unrestricted access to an office of their own, complete with accessible washrooms, a kitchen and private meeting space. Located on the first floor of VITA's head office, Members can come and go as they please. This is an important step to recognizing their invaluable contributions to VITA and the broader community over the past 10 years. Learn more about this initiative at the Story Highlight, Strategic Direction 1.

Created and/or updated key Member policies and guidelines, including Personal Care Guidelines, Abuse Prevention Policy, Wellbeing Policy, Right Review Committee, Members' Bill of Rights, Self-Administration and Learning You, to entrench and enhance the active participation of Members, and support improved communication with members.

Provided extensive staff training last year to ensure awareness, knowledge and compliance with 299/10 regulations that pertain to Member rights to further safeguard and uphold our commitment to VITA Members' rights.

Advocates Against Abuse (AAA) program rolled out to 360 developmental service agencies across the province. AAA is an MCSS-funded initiative that educates people with intellectual disabilities about abuse prevention. This program, which was developed in collaboration with four other agencies, is taught by adults with intellectual disabilities who have graduated from the program and been trained to deliver it. People with disabilities who take the program learn the skills they need to keep themselves safe so they can pursue their goals and dreams, and realize their value in the community.

New weekly Family and Member Advisory Group launched to provide Member and family education on a range of subjects including mental health/illness, dual diagnosis, addictions and self care, and to enrich communication with Members and families.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES *Continued:*

Established a new weekly Social Circle for Members of Mens Sana in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association – York Region (CMHA - YR), giving them an opportunity to come together, share their experiences and socialize. Within that group the members also learn new skills, share their thoughts and, most importantly, have fun together. The group is based on a concept that was developed by psychologist Alfred Adler who theorized that *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*, which means social interest or a sense of community, is essential for the well-being of humanity, and that living without it, leads to mental illness. *Dunja*

A Mens Sana Member who successfully transitioned from a multi year stay in hospital to life in the community managed to get back to further his education by taking night courses in English and volunteering at both Progress Place and the Trinity Café. Somehow, he finds time to be an active member of two churches as well.

New Home Alone tool developed in partnership with the Centre for Behaviour Health Sciences at Mackenzie Health, Community Living Essex and Kerry's Place. The tool is used to objectively and systematically identify and prepare individuals who are able and would benefit from living with less intensive supports in the community. Over time, it will help to ensure that members receive the right level of service in the right residential setting, freeing up more intensive residential spaces for more complex and challenging individuals who require 24/7 care.

Updated Sexuality and Consent tool, working in partnership with Mackenzie Health, Toronto General Hospital and Hands: The Family Help Network. The Assessment of Levels of Knowledge – Sexuality and Consent tool (TALK-SC), has been widely used since its inception. Research is now underway to validate its use with people who have intellectual disabilities.

Nuts & Bolts of Healthcare: Training Direct Support Professionals to be effective healthcare advocates. With a grant from the Employment and Modernization Fund, Vita CLS is working with Health Care Access Research and Development Disabilities (HCARDD), the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) in the United States to develop Nuts & Bolts of Health Care, a program to train and support Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) to become better health care advocates for the people they serve.



“This project is going to reduce the barriers between healthcare professionals and people with disabilities.”

- Shermoy Bennett, Direct Support Professional, Nuts and Bolts Implementation Team Member

To help Members successfully navigate the healthcare system, the Nuts and Bolts Implementation Team gathered information from DSPs and other staff about their experiences supporting Members, as well as the issues and patterns they see when interacting with the healthcare system. The Team also asked Members about their experiences seeking healthcare. This information will help the Team to identify the tools and resources needed to improve healthcare for adults with intellectual disabilities, and support staff across Ontario. The Nuts and Bolts project was presented at the 2018 Ontario Association of Developmental Disabilities Conference and to the Research Special Interest Group (RSIG). It will also be presented at the annual NADSP conference in September.

VITA's Members Times — Produced five issues of the VITA Member Times, a newsletter developed for, and by VITA Members. The newsletter tackles important issues like employment, abuse prevention, and features other news and entertainment.

Last year, Members of the Times Newsletter Committee attended a research forum hosted by the Southern Network of Specialized Care. The event gave Committee members an opportunity learn more strategies for self-advocacy which they brought back to VITA to share with their peers.



*Members assembling monthly newsletters



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 HIGHLIGHTS

VITA's Rights Group meets regularly to discuss issues regarding living with a disability and the inherent rights to which people with disabilities are entitled. The Group provides input and feedback to VITA, and reports directly through VITA's Executive Director to the Board.



Early in 2018, we opened new, dedicated office space for VITA's Rights Group in recognition of the Group's many valuable contributions to VITA over the years. VITA's Rights Group successfully accomplished the following activities:

FORMAL REQUEST:

Letter Signed by VITA's Right Group — 2017.

SPACE OWNERSHIP

Symbolical reception of the keys to the new office by the VITA's Rights Group.

SPACE PLANNING

VITA's Rights Group meeting the space before building work — 2017.

INTERIOR DESIGN PROCESS

Colour palette selection by VITA's Rights Group at the Members' Holiday Party — 2017.

BUILDING WORK PROGRESS

Monitored by VITA's Rights Group — 2017.

BUILDING WORK PROGRESS

Housing and Building Services, Clinical, Admin and Marketing Team working together; relocating and adapting VITA's Head Office 1st floor — 2017.

OPENING EVENT PLANNING

By VITA's Rights Group — March 2017.

GRAND OPENING RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

By VITA's Rights Group and Board Members — 2017.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 RESPONSIVENESS

Respond to the complex and diverse housing needs of Members.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES

Improving VITA's housing stock to better serve Members. Several major investments were approved late last year to enhance the accessibility, safety and regulatory compliance of our homes. In the year ahead, we will upgrade, refresh and re-furnish many of our homes, making them more suitable to Member needs and more comfortable.

Making improvements to sensory stimulation. In 2018/19 VITA will upgrade its sensory stimulation offerings at two sites: Robinglade Residential Program and Tycos Road Day Program. An entirely new multi-sensory Snoezelen Room will be built in a soundproof room at VITA's biggest day program on Tycos Road as part of a major renovation of this site. The new facility will be equipped to develop our Members' senses, through special lighting, music, and other sensory stimulating objects. TYCO's Snoezelen Room was funded in part by the proceeds from our annual Rally for VITA fundraiser. Additionally, two communal and one universal washroom will be updated and renovated to better meet member's needs and to meet MCSS current health, safety and accessibility standards.

New research partnership to identify critical elements of inclusive housing. A new research partnership between VITA and the University of Toronto aims to identify critical enablers and disablers of inclusive home spaces for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with a view to informing guidelines for the design and development of accommodation that better meets the needs of members going forward.

Launched Good Neighbour strategy to proactively develop and successfully manage relationships with residents of the communities in which our Members live.

JOINT HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (JHSC)

Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) revitalized to ensure that all staff are safe and receive the support they need to maintain their wellbeing. This committee works as an advisory body that helps to raise awareness of health and safety issues at VITA, identifying workplace risks and developing recommendations to address them.

Last year, VITA passed the Public Services Health & Safety Association's (PSHSA) audit, resulting in a rebate of more than \$46K for meeting PSHSA requirements and reducing the number and costs associated with workplace injuries.

Safety starts with us — VITA celebrated Health and Safety Awareness Week last October to inform and educate both Members and staff on the best practices required to help maintain a safe and healthy working environment for all.

Lunch Walk

Inspiring and supporting Members and staff to get active to maintain their good health.



Zumba Classes

Boosting heart health and cognitive skills while promoting psychological well-being, relieving stress and having fun.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 HIGHLIGHTS

Demonstrating our resilient and adaptability. We live in a time of change in which climate change and other external events affect populations around the world as well as here at home.

VITA Responding to Hurricane Irma

VITA plans annual holidays to southern destinations for many of its Members as part of our Respite program. Last year, VITA staff rose to the occasion to successfully return vacationing Members home from hurricane-ravaged destinations.

Last fall, our staff went above and beyond to put in place a plan to evacuate Members before hurricane Irma landed in Cuba. Led by Mina Matlouby and Catherine Agho-Ayodele, our team showed the true definition of resiliency and team work. They managed to support Members and make it home after 24 hours of travel, stress and many uncertainties.

Casa Abruzzo Day Program

On May 12, 2017, a vehicle drove into Casa Abruzzo, home to one of VITA's day programs. Thankfully, no Members or staff were injured but the accident caused extensive damage to the site which meant we had to relocate the program, staff and Members temporarily. Hats off to staff who handled the situation admirably.

Thanks to the quick response of Housing and Building Services, Casa re-opened to the delight of Members and families last October. Kudos to staff, and thanks to Members and families who worked together to maintain exceptional service under difficult circumstances and conditions.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure financial sustainability of the organization.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES

VITA's current and future financial position looks bright, now that we've started to address the growing gap between our funding base and the actual cost of serving people with particularly challenging needs.

Annual revenues have increased by about \$4M in two years, due, in part to an increase in fee-for-service revenue.

We've introduced automated financial systems and controls to enhance efficiencies, improve productivity, and inform future planning and investments while strengthening transparency and accountability.

Last year, we successfully negotiated a new three-year collective agreement with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) that has brought peace of mind to our employees, Members and families and a period of workforce stability for VITA.

Made unprecedented investments to enhance staff development, Member services, and modernize VITA operations. Areas for investment were selected from a long list of needs and requests put forward by staff throughout the agency based on how well the ideas put forward aligned with our strategic priorities.



LIVING UP TO OUR COMMITMENTS

APPROVED INVESTMENTS



LAST YEAR, VITA INVESTED IN:

- **New Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** to ensure that all employees have access to the help, support and resources they need to help maintain their health and well-being today, and for years to come.
- **New Professional development program** for Program Supervisors to enhance their leadership capacity.
- **New Member database and case management software** that will move VITA from a manual (paper-based) records management system to an electronic one, keeping all information in a single, safe and secure location to enhance documentation and coordinated service planning and delivery.
- **New Human Resources Information System** to handle our scheduling and payroll functions, consistent with our long-term IT strategy. The new system will reduce the amount of time employees spend on paperwork, enabling them to spend more quality-time with Members.
- **A re-design and update of VITA's communications platforms** to reflect the agency that VITA is today, support our strategic goals and ensure compliance with accessibility and French language requirements.
- **New laptops for Program Supervisors** so they can quickly and effectively support staff, Members and program operations.
- **Renovating our Tycos Day Program facility** to better support Members and increase community integration.
- **New, quality furnishings in VITA homes.**
- **New interior signage.**

IMPROVE MEMBERS SERVICES, ENHANCE EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION, MODERNIZE OUR OPERATIONS,
SUPPORT FUTURE GROWTH

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 COLLABORATION

Partner and collaborate for sector leadership and growth.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES

VITA was honoured to participate in an advisory committee overseeing a study looking at people with intellectual and developmental disabilities involved in Ontario's criminal justice system.

The International Journal for Direct Support Professionals, now in its seventh year of publication, is a joint initiative of VITA and Hands: The Family Health Network. The award-winning newsletter is produced monthly and distributed around the world.

Participated in 12 educational webinars, in partnership with The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals, that attracted an average of 285 attendees per webinar from across the globe.

VITA had a seat at many sector tables and committees to advocate on behalf of its Members.

As a founding partner of My Community Hub, an online information source and registration platform for activities, classes, programs, workshops, respite care and camps offered by developmental service agencies across Ontario, VITA continues to explore opportunities to enhance access to services for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

VITA shares best practices at two major conferences. Last fall VITA's clinical team presented its work at the 36th Annual Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) Conference in Kansas City. VITA has been successful in supporting transitions by creating strong collaborations, preparing members for their new community placements and ensuring that new support teams and agencies are well prepared and trained to support the unique needs of these individuals prior to being placed in the community.



“Our team brought a unique lens to the conference as our presentation was specific to the work we do for adults with disabilities who have been successful during transition from treatment to the community.”

— Katie Miller, Heather Hermans and Ashley Kay

In December 2017, VITA partnered with Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities (OADD) to offer a conference on the issue of trauma and people with intellectual disabilities. “Trauma, The Past and Approaches to Healing: Disability Informed approaches to Trauma” was presented by Amanda Gee, Heather Hermans and Dave Hingsburger to an audience of people who traveled from across the province to learn how to incorporate approaches to healing for people with disabilities.



HEATHER HERMANS



AMANDA GEE



DAVID HINGSBURGER



VITA, a proud member agency and partner of the United Way of Toronto and York Region. As a recipient of United Way funding that supports Drop-in Programs for the chronically mentally ill run by Mens Sana, VITA was pleased to participate in the following United Way initiatives last year:

- United Way Food Truck Info Fair where we provided information about volunteer and student placements as well as employment opportunities at VITA.
- United Way Days of Caring®, a unique opportunity for employee, student and other volunteer groups to support local non-profit agencies like VITA by completing a project that the non-profit might not otherwise have the manpower or resources to undertake.
- Last year, VITA organized more than 10 fundraising activities, the proceeds of which go directly to the development and delivery of programs and services determined through the United Way grant allocation process.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 HIGHLIGHTS

VITA has the great privilege of working with the United Way of Toronto and York Region, the largest non-government funder of social services in Toronto and York Region. Current United Way investments in VITA support the delivery of local services, contribute to our research and advocacy efforts, and help strengthen the social services sector.

In addition to initiatives previously mentioned, for several years now VITA has been supporting the United Way Day Workplace Campaign®, a powerful and effective initiative to create stronger communities and to promote staff team building.

2017 UNITED WAY WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN Summary of activities October – December 2017



United Way breakfast served by our Executive Director

Roti Fundraising Lunch

Hallowe'en Fundraising Dance

Internal Silent Auction Fundraiser

CN Tower Climb

Jerk/ BBQ Chicken Fundraising Lunch

Bake Sale Fundraiser & Campaign Closing



We are extremely grateful! Thank you to all the amazing people who donated their time and energy to giving back to the community through this year's campaign. Your dedication means a lot to our community, especially our Members. Funds raised through these 10 activities go directly back into programming and services determined through the United Way's grant allocation process.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5 LEADERSHIP

Ensure financial sustainability of the organization.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES

A more effective Board of Directors — We put several programs in place last year to bolster our systems and practices, starting with a new performance management system and succession plan. We also conducted an extensive review of our policies and procedures, and updated those that needed refreshing. We were pleased to welcome two new board members last year and we thank them for their significant contributions.

The organization's Vision, Mission and Values are clearly stated — Members of the Board and employees reviewed VITA's mandate last year using an inclusive process involving other stakeholders to ensure that it continues to reflect our current programs and supports.

Achieving financial stability and sustainability — VITA balanced its budget last year, diversified its funding sources and negotiated appropriate funding levels for high needs Members with the Ministry of Community and Social Services to put the agency on a solid financial footing for years to come.

Taking care of our human capital — The Human Resources Committee approved a new HR strategy last year to support the organization's goals and objectives. The group also ensured that all of the required policies and procedures are in place to support the new strategy and VITA's employees.

Board of Directors as of March 2018:



BRIAN NARAINÉ
President



FRANK DECESARE
Vice President



SUSAN MIKULICIC
Treasurer



PAUL BOTTOS
Secretary



ADAM SMITH
Executive Director

Governors



**ROBERT
CARUSO**



**FRANK
PETTI**



**MARCELLINA
GALVAN**



**LARRY
ANDRADE**

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5 HIGHLIGHTS

Governance and organizational structures are in place to ensure the organization is using its resources and capacity to deliver on its mission.

Board Sub-Committees	Membership	Mandate
Executive Committee	Brian Naraine, Chair Frank DeCesare Larry Andrade Paul Bottos	Evaluate the Executive Director's performance; conduct pre-planning for strategic planning sessions that occur every three years; develop policies pertaining to governance, orientation and training opportunities for the new and existing Board members; and review the organization's risk management plans.
Advocacy Committee	Frank DeCesare, Chair Adam Smith	Ensure that branding and marketing strategies are in line with the strategic plan, vision, mission and value statements of each organization.
Board Recruitment Committee	Brian Naraine, Chair Larry Andrade Fausto Gaudio Frank DeCesare	Ensure that Board members represent the community with an appropriate balance in diversity and expertise of the members. Recruit new members.
Union Negotiating Advisory Committee	Brian Naraine, Chair Larry Andrade Paul Bottos	Provide advice to the senior leadership team for the initial and on-going negotiation of a collective agreement with unionized staff.
Fundraising Committee	Brian Naraine, Chair, sits on Rally for VITA Committee. VITA Board and management team have become more directly involved in the MEN SANA Fundraising Dinner.	Organize and oversee fundraising events for Mens Sana and Vita CLS (in specific circumstances such as Rally for VITA and Mens Sana dinner).
Executive Director Recruitment Committee	Brian Naraine, Chair Fausto Gaudio Frank DeCesare Larry Andrade	Guide the process for the recruitment of a new Executive Director in consultation with a search firm.
Human Resources Committee	Marcellina Galvan, Chair Brian Naraine, Chair Robert Caruso, and Adam Smith	Oversee the implementation of the Human Resources strategy, policies and practices to achieve VITA's operational goals and objectives. *This committee is also supported by VITA operative employees: Silvana Rosa, HR Director, Angela Bakker, HR Senior Manager and Diana Reyes, Communications Manager.
Finance and Audit Committee (F&A)	Sue Mikulicic, Chair Brian Naraine Larry Andrade Adam Smith	The Audit and Finance Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities relating to corporate auditing and reporting, financial policies and financial risk management as identified in the Strategic Plan. This responsibility is carried out in accordance with approved policies that comply with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). *This committee is also supported by VITA operative employees: Katie Chiragdin, Finance Director and Dee Baldeo, Sr. Financial Controller.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 6 EMPOWERMENT

Develop robust skills to support growth.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES

New Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Consistent with our strategic goal to empower our people to excel, VITA introduced a new Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) for all employees and their family members to ensure they have access to the help, support and resources they need to help maintain health and well-being. The new program begins May 1, 2018.

People Strategy

During the past year, 18 staff have moved from part-time to full-time status signifying their commitment to VITA. We were proud to support five of our direct support workers to complete the apprenticeship program offered in partnership with George Brown College. Another two direct support workers completed our in-house mentorship program to enhance their leadership skills, and have since been promoted to supervisory roles.

Continuous Learning

At VITA, we have formally adopted a culture of continuous learning to ensure that our employees have and/or are enabled to acquire the skills they need to address the increasingly complex needs of our Members. Extensive training has been provided to:

- increase frontline staff's awareness and knowledge of Regulation 299/10 so they can uphold/safeguard Member rights
- build internal leadership capacity
- advance specific skill sets and competencies for Direct Support Professionals (front line staff)



Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week

Every September, organizations working with and for persons with disabilities world-wide gather to celebrate and recognize the outstanding work and tireless dedication of Direct Support Professionals (DSP). As part of VITA's ongoing employee recognition efforts, last year we held a contest to support two of our Direct Support Professionals to attend the 2017 Conference of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) in Omaha, Nebraska. VITA has worked in partnership with the NADSP for several years towards accessible training for DSPs.

VITA's Conference Attendees



**UPANESAI
THEDCHANAMOORTHY**



**MAGDA
CARDOSO**



Contest winners Magda Cardoso, Program Supervisor, and Upanesai Thedchanamoorthy, Direct Care 2, attended the conference and updated their knowledge of the latest trends and best practices in our sector. Topics included working with families, the state of DSPs, participatory management, national policy issues and supported decision making.

Draw held Friday, July 28, 2017, at TYCOS Day Program by Adam Smith, VITA's Executive Director, and Dave Hingsburger, VITA's Clinical and Educational Director.

Building our leadership capacity

VITA has invested in a new professional development program for Program Supervisors with a focus on strategic thinking, operational planning, and change management. At VITA, we believe that skilled leadership is critical to excellent customer service, employee engagement, satisfaction and retention, as well as long-term planning and stability.



IDA ZEEKEH
Program Supervisor



“Through this program I gained more experience in strategic thinking, change management and business planning. I had the opportunity to network with other organizations and built connections that will last throughout my career. I am really honoured to have been a part of this program and have taken away so many skills that have changed my leadership style for the better.”

An inclusive workplace

In May 2017, VITA launched a diversity strategy to reinforce our organization's commitment in providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all. As a result, VITA's Organizational Improvement Committee (O.I.C.) was created to foster employee engagement and communications throughout the agency.

We also took steps last year to identify staff who speak French and to put in place appropriate measures to address the needs of French speaking clients and families.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

Let's have a coffee, but in a different way: 2018 VITA's employee survey

To maintain a 1:1 conversation with our employees, the Committee developed a survey to identify ways in which to engage VITA employees in a positive way, and to obtain staff ideas about how to improve everyone's experience at VITA. The survey participation rate was three times higher than in previous years.

Increasing open dialogue to promote constructive feedback

The Committee has developed an environment to encourage employees to interact and participate more actively in online conversations through emails and newsletters.

Annual staff retreat gets a makeover

The Committee also revamped the Annual Staff Retreat and hosted several internal fundraising initiatives which will directly benefit VITA employees as part of its efforts to heighten engagement and enhance communications across the agency.

Internal Communications

VITA's new staff portal (intranet) is now up and running to provide all VITA employees with the news, information and training they need to maintain peak performance. The portal is an excellent tool that all employees can use to stay informed, share their knowledge and expertise, and provide feedback on current and future initiatives. Our new quarterly newsletter and email campaigns are designed to keep everyone informed.

New Corporate Video

Our new video illustrates our core values, mission and vision in action. It also promotes understanding of disability and support for the dignity, rights and well-being of our Members.

Special thanks to Alessia Cara (Canadian singer and songwriter) for giving us permission to use her song YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, an inspiring and world-changing music on our new video.

Technology and Performance

Technological advances play a crucial role in facilitating cross-agency communication, collaboration and learning. At VITA, we are constantly evaluating new platforms and systems to enhance organizational efficiency, productivity and performance. Our IT Committee is composed of representatives from different departments who are committed to improving our operations while supporting the implementation of VITA's IT strategy.

By drawing on different perspectives and experience from across the agency, VITA has a systematic approach to updating and upgrading our IT infrastructure and systems. The committee has created a roadmap to streamline operations, improve efficiency and support enhanced service for Members and employees. Projects in this area include:

- Wi-Fi access for Members in 31 Day Services and Residential programs locations benefiting more than 160 Members. Expansion project to be continued in the next year.
- Human Resources Information System (HRIS)
- A new Member database and case management software
- New laptops for Program Supervisors
- VITA's website and other marketing products

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 6 HIGHLIGHTS

VITA has the great privilege of working with the United Way of Toronto and York Region, the largest non-government funder of social services in Toronto and York Region. Current United Way investments in VITA support the delivery of local services, contribute to our research and advocacy efforts, and help strengthen the social services sector.

In addition to initiatives previously mentioned, for several years now VITA has been supporting the United Way Day Workplace Campaign®, a powerful and effective initiative to create stronger communities and to promote staff team building.

TRANSFORMING STORIES, DRIVING CHANGE

At VITA, we develop tools and services that can help our Members set and achieve their goals.

Committed to providing equal employment opportunity for all, VITA is proud to celebrate the amazing accomplishments our Members have made over the course of the past year. VITA has seen its Members speak with more confidence, proudly advocate for learning opportunities, and to teach and mentor others.

Employment Opportunities for VITA Members

"I want a job," says a Member of the Rights Group. Many others agree with him. Having a job is important to a lot of people with disabilities, but it can be hard to find employment. It's important for our Members to know what kind of job they want. It's important to have training and support to do the work. It's important that VITA help people who want to get work. VITA can and does provide training, and support with writing resumes, preparing for interviews, and learning how to do the work that is expected, are all things that VITA can do to help.

Last year we welcomed one of our Members who became a VITA employee and team member

Nicholas McDonald was hired as a part-time Head Office cleaner. Nicholas is not new to VITA. Since 2012, he has been participating in our Vaughan Day Program (now located at Confederation Day Program), where he gained the skills that led to this job opportunity. Nicholas works closely with a job coach to successfully perform the duties of his new position.

Nicholas enjoys his independence and being part of the VITA's staff team. Once again — welcome to the team



NICHOLAS' STORY

Nicholas McDonald

VITA's Part-time Head Office Cleaner



Before I came to VITA, I had just finished my co-op placement for high school and was wondering what I was going to do next.

My Mom heard about VITA from one of her friends so we decided to check it out together. I prepared by telling myself that this would be a new experience with new challenges because I knew that I could not just sit at home and play video games all day. This would be a new chapter in my life that I would have to come to terms with, and I am glad that VITA was my choice.

My first impressions were wow! A VITA's (Members') Rights group: I can bring forward my concerns and my voice will be heard. They have programs and training that I could participate in and benefit from. I saw opportunities to make friends and attend sessions outside of program hours. I participated in Abuse and Bullying Prevention, and self-esteem groups. These training sessions were important to me because they validated my opinion as a person, I could have my voice heard and my points taken into consideration. I was treated with respect and dignity, and that made me proud to be a member of VITA.

At VITA, it wasn't just all work and no play. There was a set program in place, but I had fun times too with day trips all around Toronto. We visited the zoo, Reptilia, CN Tower, Ripley's Aquarium and movie theatres just to mention a few of the places. And, how can I forget our annual end of summer lunch at the Mandarin Restaurant?

Before I became an employee at VITA, I was engaged in a couple of work experience programs run by the day program, including Hands on Gloves, Car Wash Program and Oanhss. I would volunteer with these groups to get work experience, and to gain time management and problem-solving techniques. I felt empowered and in control of my life. I was in charge of operating the Car Wash Program. I did the booking, organized a team and together, we carried out the process without much support from staff. It was then that I realized I wanted to work at VITA. I talked to staff in Support Services and they provided me with the information I needed to get started. Once I became a VITA staff member, I had an opportunity to work alongside a job coach who supported me.

“At VITA I stand out, my voice is heard and I contribute to the agency and to my community.”

DIVERSIFIED FUNDING	TARGET \$Millions	ACTUAL \$Millions
Passport Funding	1.19	1.25
Fee-for-Services / Other Agencies	1.93	2.78
Residential Fees	2.11	2.15
Total	5.23	6.18

HUMAN RESOURCES	TARGET	ACTUAL
Supervisor mentorship program	5	5
Part-time promoted to full-time status	7	18
Lost time vs. WSIB lost time denied	27	15
Number of interviews per year	150	199

BALANCED SCOREBOARD

section 3



CLINICAL & EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	TARGET	ACTUAL
Members benefiting from clinical services	125	133
Chapters in Progress to Publication	1	2
Issues of the International Journal for DSPs	12	12
Webinars	12	12
Conference presentations	4	8

MEMBER SERVICES	TARGET	ACTUAL
Members using community participation	126	238
Members using residential services	218	223
Members' families using respite program	89	85
Members using fee-for-service programs	38-Day	40-Day
Safe bed programs	6	4

*Safe Bed has been blocked due to the increased number of crisis in community and lack of funded beds.



OUR WORKFORCE section 4

We continue to work toward becoming a service provider of choice and centre of workforce excellence by:

- partnering with community colleges
- participating in job fairs
- conducting on-site recruitment fairs
- providing student placement opportunities each year
- continuously revising and keeping our policies & procedures up-to-date
- developing robust internal processes and skills to support further growth
- rolling out a succession plan for key roles in the organization
- implementing a new engagement and recognition strategy
- engaging employees in the development of VITA's activities

WE ARE PEOPLE WHO LOVE WORKING WITH PEOPLE

In community after community, one person and family at a time, one day at a time, we are a humanized and collaborative team that emphasizes teamwork and trust and, most importantly, we help others achieve their dreams. Our staff makes the difference at VITA; they infuse the warmth of human connection in everything they do.

Full-time Staff	279	
Part-time Staff	97	
Relief Staff	43	
Full Staff Complement	419	
Total FTE's	349	
<hr/>		
Attended Conferences	11 Conferences	41 People
Employee Recognition Programs	2	
Apprenticeship Program Developmental Service Workers	2	
Operational and Internal Working Committees	8	



RECOGNIZING OUR TOP PERFORMERS

2017 JOHN A. GENNARO AWARD

Established in 1990, this award is named in honour of our founding President and is given to Direct Support Professionals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to VITA, and who have been with the agency for three years or more. The recipient(s) for this award were recognized at VITA's 2017 Holiday Party.



**CATHERINE
AYODELE-AYHO**



**LORNA
ALLEN**



**TAZEEM
BIBI**



**MINA
MATLOUBY**



Mina Matlouby and Catherine Agho-Ayodele - "When I think about this award, I think of someone who has gone above and beyond their regular job responsibilities, someone who has exceeded the expectations of their day-to-day tasks. Mina and Catherine have shown the true definition of resiliency, leadership and above all, a positive outlook on all things that came their way." - *Ashley Kay, Program Supervisor/ Co-Therapist*

Lorna Allen - "Lorna has shown she is willing to do whatever it takes to ensure that our Members get the most out of their day. Lorna can be found singing, or dancing with a Member down the back of the house to get them excited about coming to the Day Program." - *Amanda M. Fisher, Program Supervisor*

Tazeem Bibi - "Tazeem is an important member of our team. Her abilities and contributions are crucial for our continued success. This past year, she took on extra driving responsibilities to ensure all Members could participate in Service every day. Her efforts and actions have made a real and positive difference in our VITA Community." - *Janine Cadeau, Program Supervisor*

“I am not able to explain all of my feelings when I was recognized as one of the 2018 John Gennaro Award recipient at VITA's 2017 Holiday Party. A great and remarkable honour for me. It fills me with pride being part of VITA's family... working at VITA will be a shining light in my life forever!! I will make sure to continue supporting VITA's respectful Members and offer my knowledge and experience to promote our Members' wellbeing.”
- *Mina Matlouby, Residential Counsellor*



MINA'S STORY

Mina Matlouby

VITA Residential Counsellor



“I am VITA. I have become a better person since I started working here – VITA has shaped my personality.

To me, this agency means family and has impacted my life in many ways. I can honestly say that I am who I am today thanks to the daily, positive and life-transforming experiences I have had at VITA by working with its respectful Members. I have been able to put into practice, in both my personal and work life, many mindful learnings (lessons).

When I started working at VITA in 2008, I did not have a clear understanding of what mental health was and of people living with developmental disabilities. VITA has helped me to expand my knowledge and increase my awareness so that I can now take concrete action to create access and promote equal opportunities for the Members.

During this long and fantastic journey which has reaffirmed my life purpose, I have always been willing to share and use my knowledge to support our Members, to help them to improve their skills so that they can have a meaningful life in the community. Knowledge sharing increases social interaction, which leads to a rise in creative, collaborative problem solving for everyone. Therefore, I thank VITA for offering its work team members, like me, opportunities for training and professional development.

VITA has helped me to build up my professional identity as a Direct Support Professional. My 10 years at VITA have made me feel professionally more qualified and stronger to support our Members to realize their dreams. I will continue to support VITA's Members and offer my knowledge and experience to promote their wellbeing.

Working at VITA will be a shining light in my life forever.”

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS

30-YEAR RECIPIENTS



CAROL LANDAVERDE



MARILENA CANDITO



25-YEAR RECIPIENTS



YVONNE HORVATH



FRANCA MOLINARO



20-YEAR RECIPIENTS



LINDA BORSATO



EMILY ROMITA



ALCIRA MARIN



Committee	About The Committee	Team	Meeting
VITA's Member Times Committee	VITA's Member Times Committee produces a quarterly newsletter developed for, and by VITA Members. The newsletter tackles important issues like employment and abuse prevention, and features news and entertainment.	Four (4) Members and one (1) Staff involved	Weekly
Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC)	JHSC committee works as an advisory body that helps to stimulate or raise awareness of health and safety issues at VITA, identifying workplace risks and developing recommendations for our agency to address these risks.	10 Committee Members from Front Line to Management Staff	Quarterly
Accreditation Committee	Responsible for reviewing and approving continuing results for people using services, organizational excellence and community development. Committee also raises awareness about our accreditation process throughout the agency.	7 Committee Members; all VITA Employees	Monthly
Organizational Improvement Committee	Works to engage VITA employees and improve morale and communications within the agency while providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.	10 Committee Members –from Front Line to Management Staff	Monthly
Information and Technology (IT) Committee	Make technology accessible for every VITA employee while evaluating new platforms and systems to enhance organizational efficiency, productivity and performance.	8 Members – VITA Staff and External IT Professionals	Bimonthly
United Way Committee Workplace Campaign	Enhance VITA team's morale while making a difference in our community. Committee organizes several fundraising activities while developing a caring organizational culture and pride among employees.	7 Members; all VITA Employees	Every two weeks for the campaign length.
On-Call Improvement Committee	Analyze practices, measures performance, and troubleshoots challenges facing the on-call system to increase efficiencies and support continuity of service.	5 Members; all VITA Employees	Monthly
Streamlining Incident Report Committee	Reviews and streamlines incident report documentation to better manage QAM requirements, increase efficiency and prepare for transferring systems to an online platform.	5 Members; all VITA Employees	Monthly

VITA & THE COMMUNITY

section 5

Our Members promoting community

Our Members work to improve the lives of others in their community. As part of the Day Services Programs, VITA provides educational and experiential learning opportunities aimed at empowering people to create meaningful connections and friendships while developing life, leisure and employment skills. Throughout the year, VITA works at creating networking opportunities for our members with allied agencies. This allows them to participate in community programs to support independence, self-advocacy and community inclusion. Further, it allows our members to give back to their community and, by doing so, develop a sense of belonging — knowing that they have much to contribute.

Meals on Wheels (MOW)

For more than 20+ years, our Members have volunteered at the MOW Program at Villa Colombo Homes for the Aged Inc. Participant Members help serve Italian style, nutritious, delicious and affordable meals to a variety of groups, including seniors, adults with disabilities who need special dietary planning and assistance, and individuals suffering from illnesses and recovering from surgeries. In April 2018, VITA received a certificate of appreciation from Villa Colombo Homes in recognition of outstanding volunteerism, dedication and commitment.

Earls Court Garden

On an annual basis our Members volunteer at a local garden, supporting with the planting and care of plants, vegetables and fruits. They often get the opportunity to take home what they grow. Members love making a difference in their community and in the natural world around them.

Physical Activity for Physical Distress

Our Day Programs collaborate with partnering agencies to access the facility for physical activity. Thanks to New Leaf, Variety Village and Columbus Centre Aerobics for offering access to their facilities for swimming or aerobics classes. In addition, our Members interact with residents who live in the retirement home attached to Columbus Centre.

Pine Grove Retirement Centre

Members help at Chartwell Pine Grove Retirement Community, a local Italian-inspired program of independent supportive living suites located in Woodbridge, Ontario. Our Members help fold towels with residents. Folding is a great way to help our Members work on those fine motor skills and reinforce cognitive processes such as sorting and counting. But more than that, it enables them to develop social skills and meaningful connections.

Pet Smart and Toronto Animal Services

Socializing and interacting with cats and kittens enriches the lives of our Members as they play with the pets to help with their socialization skills. This is a rewarding volunteer experience, one that is crucial to the physical and mental well-being of the animals in our care and helps them get adopted.

Increasing open dialogue to promote constructive feedback

The Committee has developed an environment to encourage employees to interact and participate more actively in online conversations through emails and newsletters.

Summer Day-Trips

Members and their support staff went to African Lion Safari, Canada's Wonderland, Niagara Falls Museum, Jungle Cat World, Reptilian, and St. Lawrence Market for tasty treats. Every other week the group also goes to Starbucks for a coffee and Chapters to read books.

Thank you to our partners for providing our Members with learning scenarios that allow them to live as independently as possible. We know that organizations like VITA play a unique role in our communities through our own services, and working in partnership with other organizations to influence progressive policies and to improve our Members' lives.



COMMUNITY & FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Engaging Communities: Our fundraising events are about building relationships between our Members and citizens. More important than what we raise in a single day, our fundraising events lead to work and awareness about mental disabilities and mental health.

37th Annual Pride Parade — June 25, 2017

VITA was the first organization to support people with intellectual disabilities to march in Toronto's Pride parade. What began with a request from our LGBTQ Members eight years ago, has turned into an annual event that our Members look forward to every year. In March 2018, David Hingsburger, VITA's Director of Clinical and Educational Services was selected as one of the **winners of the 2018 INSPIRE Awards, Lifetime Achievement Award category**, given out by the LGBTQ+ Community in Toronto for fighting for the rights of people with disabilities to be adults and to be sexual.



The 26th Nick Barbieri Charity Bocce Ball Tournament — August 18, 2017

For more than 26 years, LiUNA Local 506, in partnership with the General Contractors' Section, has hosted the Annual Nick Barbieri Charity Bocce Ball Tournament. Each year, the Committee selects a charity whose cause has, at one point, affected members and families of both event organizers.

This year, **\$20,000** of the funds raised at the event went to Mens Sana Families for Mental Health. We thank LiUNA Local 506 and the General Contractors' Section for their generosity. Their support will help ensure that Mens Sana continues offering innovative services that allow our Members to realize their full potential in a safe and affordable environment. We also value the opportunity to spread the word about our work and chronic mental illness with the community and event attendees. It is part of an amazing community effort to increase awareness about the challenges and needs of people living with or at risk of mental illness.



2017 Rally For VITA (Walk/Run) October 1, 2017

Our Annual Rally for VITA fundraiser brought together more than 80 people in support of the services and programs offered by our agency. This year, we decided to expand the event by doing a 3K walk and 5K run so more Members, families and staff could take part. VITA thanks all participants, walkers, runners, volunteers and corporate sponsors: IC Savings, Universal Care, Jewel 88.5 & Z1035 Toronto radio stations who helped raise more than **\$25,000**. The proceeds of this year's event will go toward the creation of a Snoezelen Room for Members of Mens Sana. Dunja



VITA's Annual Fun Day

At VITA, we care about how our Members can build stronger relationships with their families, Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and friends. On Friday, September 15, 2017, TYCOS Day Program celebrated its Annual Fun Day for Members. This day-long social and recreational event attracted close to **220 people** who relaxed and enjoyed different recreational activities and some delicious food and refreshments. Thank you to all who came out and celebrated with us!



2nd Annual Paul Flumian Grand Prix 24 April 2017

VITA has had the privilege of being one of the recipient charities of the Annual Paul Flumian Grand Prix, a go-kart racing event intended to celebrate the memory of Mr. Flumian and his passion to help others through his community work. VITA participated with a team composed of Members and employees. Participants showed great team spirit and helped raise awareness for community outreach and the wellbeing of our seniors. The **\$20,000** raised by this initiative will support Mens Sana's operations.



30th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade March 19, 2017

For nine years running, VITA Members participated in the Saint Patrick's Day parade in downtown Toronto. The parade offers a great opportunity for VITA Members to take part in a large community event and to publicly express that VITA is a diverse and welcoming agency.

Mens Sana 26th Annual Fundraising Dinner



In October 2017, Friends of Mens Sana hosted its Annual Fundraising Dinner at the Famee Furlane Club. Now in its 26th year, Mens Sana is looking ahead to the next 25. This year's gala gave us a renewed sense of optimism to continue making life more accessible and inclusive for adults living with chronic mental illness.

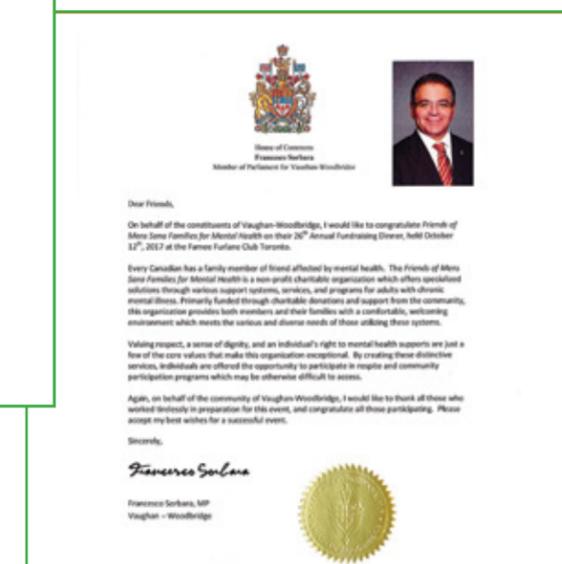
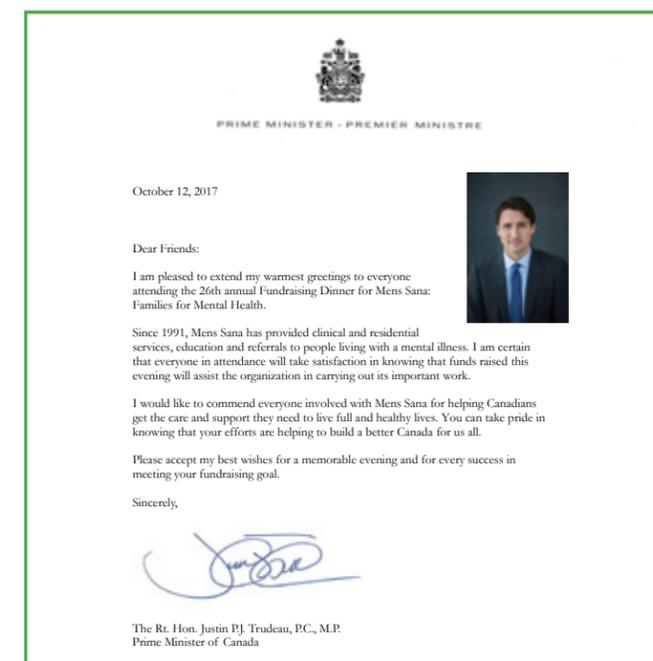
Our thanks go to every one of our 450+ guests, partners, volunteers and sponsors for standing with and by us at this year's event. With your support Friends of Mens Sana raised over **\$268,000.**

1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental illness their lifetime – CAMH

A NEW WAY TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

This year's event featured several activities that reinforce our commitment and vision for the future. Take a look at our 2017 event highlights.

Special Messages from the Federal and Provincial Governments



“I would like to commend everyone involved with Mens Sana for helping Canadians get the care and support they need to live full and healthy lives. You can take pride in knowing that your efforts are helping to build a better Canada for us all.”

– THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JUSTIN P. J. TRUDEAU,
PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

Mens Sana 26th Annual Fundraising Dinner



Mark Henick — Keynote Guest Speaker

Mark is a millennial mental health advocate and speaker. From an early age, he has dedicated his life to opening minds and creating change by eliminating stigma and improving our mental health care system.

In honour of mental health advocate Amy Bleuel, the late founder of Project Semicolon

Amy Bleuel, who fought for better mental health services after her own personal battle with depression, chose the semicolon tattoo as a symbol of hope to continue living. Sadly, Amy passed away at age 31 in March 2017. The semicolon (;) has become a powerful symbol for people with mental illness around the world for promoting awareness, reducing the stigma and providing tangible and comprehensive support services for mental health.



Mens Sana 26th Annual Fundraising Dinner



It's time to add a semicolon to our Canadian health care system; There is still so much more to do

2017 marks the beginning of a new era for Friends of Mens Sana. Our goal is to see all Canadians experiencing mental illness reach their full potential and participate as fully and independently as possible in their communities. Yet, after 25 years of tireless work to achieve this goal, we know that there is still so much more to do.

Be a Conduit of Change: This year, we joined the world's biggest social change platform — Change.Org — to advocate and support one another in building a better mental health system; one that truly meets the needs of adults and families living with mental illness. Find the Petition at Change.Org.

Thank You To Our Donors

Mens Sana Programs would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. Our sincere thanks go to the following organizations: Local 183 Members' Benefit Trust Fund • LiUNA Local 506 in partnership with the General Contractors' Section • Carpenters Union Local 27 • Ontario Formwork Association & Concrete Forming Association of Ontario • Manned Equipment Limited • MAGNA-FORM Construction Ltd. • 2017 Rally for VITA. We are also immensely grateful to this year's fundraising committee and lead sponsors. Your passion and sense of community inspire all of us at Mens Sana to deliver innovative treatment programs and services that are more accessible, inclusive, safe and easier for our families and Members.



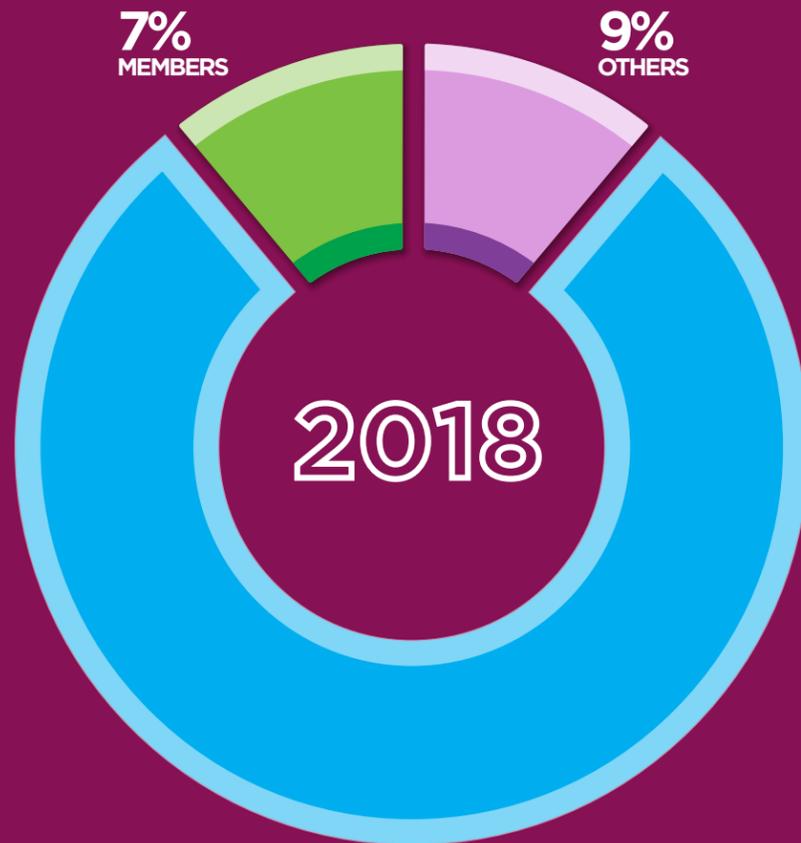
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY section 6

Vita CLS achieved strong fiscal results in the past year; despite static base funding and huge increases in operating costs in Toronto and the GTA. All indicators are that occupancy and labour costs will continue to increase in the foreseeable future. With little appetite for increase in funding; the challenge will be to deliver more services with potentially less financial resources. VITA is up for the challenge and will continue to ensure that resources are strategically invested to ensure that quality services to Members are not compromised.

\$30 M
(in \$ millions)

REVENUE SOURCES

\$29 M
(in \$ millions)



2018

2016-2017

2017-2018



REVENUES OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS



EXPENDITURES

15%

Variable

85%

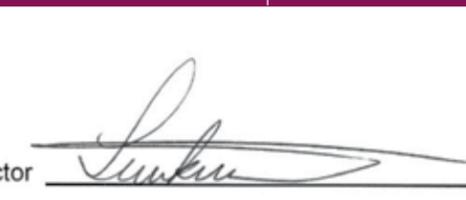
Fixed

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Statement of Financial Position

Year ended March 31, 2018, with comparative information for 2017

ASSETS	2018	2017
Current assets:		
Cash (note 2)	\$ 4,217,814	\$ 2,111,650
Accounts receivable (note 3)	257,436	657,717
Provincial grant receivable	232,506	622,870
Due from Mens Sana Families for Mental Health (note 4)	17,076	-
Sales taxes recoverable	409,901	405,608
Prepaid expenses	144,583	50,590
	5,279,316	3,848,435
Capital assets (note 5)	5,014,794	5,268,826
	\$ 10,294,110	\$ 9,117,261
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 6)	\$ 4,270,714	\$ 3,336,436
Due to Mens Sana Families for Mental Health (note 4)	-	285,766
	4,270,714	3,622,202
Advances from Villa Charities Inc. (note 7)	548,071	548,071
Deferred government grants related to capital assets	2,661,901	2,900,698
	3,209,972	3,448,769
Net assets:		
Net assets invested in capital assets (note 8(a))	2,352,893	2,368,128
Unrestricted net assets (deficiency)	460,531	(321,838)
	2,813,424	2,046,290
Commitments (note 10)		
Economic dependence (note 12)		
	\$ 10,294,110	\$ 9,117,261

 Director
  Director

Statement of Earnings

Year ended March 31, 2018, with comparative information for 2017

Revenue	2018	2017
Ministry of Community and Social Services ("MCSS")	\$ 23,931,506	\$ 23,817,189
Fees for service and other client fees	3,395,916	3,888,495
Other	2,782,213	1,275,107
	30,109,635	28,980,791
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	22,361,589	21,561,324
Maintenance	1,740,169	1,884,878
Purchased services	1,198,773	1,061,744
Office and general	1,057,172	791,146
Rent	920,228	860,230
Vehicle operation and maintenance	540,234	465,204
Food	531,926	599,185
Supplies	295,584	215,958
Program expenses	183,763	176,703
Residents personal needs	152,506	176,739
Insurance	152,187	128,648
Transportation and travel	118,524	121,238
Bad debts	59,930	77,824
Bank and interest charges	9,637	8,083
Professional fees	5,044	8,291
	29,327,266	28,137,195
Excess of revenue over expenses before the undernoted item	782,369	843,596
Amortization of capital assets (net of deferred capital grants related to capital assets)	15,235	16,181
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 767,134	\$ 827,415

If you would like to view the complete audited financial statements of Vita CLS, please visit www.vitacls.org



4301 Weston Road,
Toronto, ON M9L 2Y3

T. 416.749.6234

F. 416.749.1456

www.vitacsls.org