

Life After Trails: Continued Learning

In September 2011 more than 20 graduates will be studying careers education, law, medicine, and business. Funds have been made available through the Danielle Dion Bursary, the Wendy Anderson Bursary and G.R. Chang Bursary.



SHOUT OUT!

Thank you to the following donors who made our summer trips possible!
Erin Holt for Haliburton Highlands Trip, Sona Doshi, Lisa Ernst, and Laurie Melbourne for Temagami Trip, and Mary Campbell for the Sea Kayaking Trip on Georgian Bay.

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NEWS FROM THE TRAILBlazers

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Trails Youth Initiatives www.trails.ca 1-877-836-0285

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Helping Toronto Youth Thrive

The transition from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence into young adulthood are often fraught with difficulties. Offering at risk youth opportunities that develop the skills necessary to overcome obstacles enables them to build a record of success and to make meaningful choices for themselves. During the four years that participants are part of Trails, they get a chance to make mistakes, and to tackle the thorny issues of adolescence in a place where compassionate adults provide opportunities for them to discover their innate abilities.

The other day, I was reading an article that suggests we typically speak about only 150 words a minutes, while our internal dialogue is about 400-600 words per minute. Consider this for a moment: 400 words per minute equals 24,000 words per hour, 384,000 words in a 16 hour day! Take a moment to reflect that these internal conversations, as our self talk become the structure that supports our beliefs about who we are. There will be those whose core belief is "I am stupid" or "something is wrong with me" or "I'll fail" or "I'll do it my way" or "everyone looks down on me" or "it is not my fault," these are their blueprints, and this constant

chatter in their heads reinforces limiting beliefs, perceptions and values. At Trails we work with kids to turn negative thoughts and insecurities into confidence.

After almost 20 years, Trails remains committed to its core mission of serving vulnerable kids using outdoor education as the principal mechanism for delivering its core curriculum over an extended period of time. Using outdoor residential experiences, Trails supports youth to cultivate leadership, emotional resiliency and coping strategies, conflict resolution skills, and improved health and fitness.

In short, we seek to help these youth thrive, in spite of their challenging beginnings. Our commitment is to provide youth with opportunities to develop independence, self-esteem, and positive experiences to build a solid foundation for their future.

WE THANK YOU for your commitment to help high risk youth living in disadvantaged circumstances, who are at risk of poor health, poor academic performance, chronic unemployment, high drop-out rates at school, and welfare dependency. This type of investment is more than just about funding – it is an investment in building healthy and vibrant communities in the city of Toronto.

Julia Morch, Executive Director



Amaranth George
Gold Medal, Skills Canada
National Competition, P.Q.

Summer 2011 Recap

Every year, Trails offers 88 kids an opportunity to participate in a two-week outdoor experience. These experiences are designed to create states of uncertainty, as participants discover and meet personal challenges through outdoor activities expanding their leadership abilities and challenging themselves on solo experiences.

This past summer, our younger participants (first and second years) camped outdoors on-site at Trails. During this time, participants experienced adventure-based activities like high-rope courses, canoeing, hiking and swimming. Year 3 and 4 participants enjoyed amazing wilderness canoe experiences; Year 3's in the Haliburton Highlands, Year 4's in Temagami.

Our Events

Visit our website www.trails.ca under Fundraising for more information.

Roots & Wings Spring Gala – April 15, 2011 at the Eglinton Grand – This Spring Gala is shaped up to be an evening to remember raising \$90,000 (net). The evening started with a delectable oyster bar and martini cocktails, followed by dinner, dancing and live/silent auction and a chance to hear inspiring stories from some of Trails' graduates. Save the date for next years gala on April 27, 2012.

The 18th Annual Tour de Creemore – June 19th, 2011, in Creemore – A cycling event in the beautiful Creemore area and the ability to make a difference; what could be better? In this 6th annual ride for Trails, organized by Kimchan Ramatran, family and sponsors ensured that more than 200 cyclists raised \$35,000 (net) for Trails.

The Gobi March – June 26th, 2011 – The Gobi March was founded in honour of three missionaries who walked across the

Finally, our Leaders in Training (LIT) 5th year participants, a 13-day Georgian Bay sea-kayaking trip; participants took turns as leaders of the day, facilitating evening de-briefs, and being responsibility for group travel and safety. The group ended their experience at Limberlost Wildlife & Nature Reserve and acted as ambassadors for Limberlost Challenge, an annual Trails fundraising event.

Brad, age 12, had so many wonderful memories of Trails it's hard for him to choose his favourite...

“ *At Trails I have learned how to resolve problems peacefully, to take a leadership role, to canoe faster than a fish, but most of all I want to say thanks for giving me a family in the form of my group!* ”

Gobi Desert and Jim Willett was able to see parables for life as a cancer survivor to test his limits in the challenging ultra marathon, placing 23rd! Jim raised \$7,000 (net) meeting his fundraising goals.

The 2nd Annual Limberlost Challenge – July 16th, 2011 – Limberlost Wildlife & Nature Reserve – The Limberlost Forest and Wildlife Reserve is the trail runners dream with its challenging terrain that will take you alongside pristine lakes, through a wetland with its tier of beaver dams, up and over some steep inclines and either tiptoeing or splashing through the occasional creek or mud hole. This year more than 500 runners participated in trail races from 14km to 56km raising \$4,200 (net).

The 4th Annual Grand Fondo – August 7th, 2011 Trails Paul Parker and his High Flyerz club continue to use riding as way for personal transformation, testing their limits over 160 km in rain and heat raising \$6,500 (net) for Trails.

THANK YOU! >>>>

Thank you to all the Trails volunteers and donors who make these events so successful!



Upcoming Events

16th Annual Golf Tournament – September 19th, 2011 at Summit Golf & Country Club Richmond Hill

Bay Street Fore A Cau\$e Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation guided by a group of Bay Street professionals and Trails is fortunate to have been chosen as one of two charities to receive funds from the annual tournament supported by major

institutions, professional firms and corporations, with the goal of raising funding through exclusive events that will have a meaningful impact on the lives of youth in the G.T.A.

Humour Me – October 6th, 2011
CEO Comedy Classic raising funds for youth at risk.
www.humourme.ca

Moving Forward

We are thrilled to announce the appointment of Gordon Cressy to our Board of Governors as Vice Chair of Expansion. Gordon's experience is impressive, to say the least. He has served as President and CEO of The United Way of Greater Toronto, Vice-President Development and University Relations at University of Toronto, Founding President of The Learning Partnership, Vice-President of Advancement at Ryerson and President of The Canadian Tire Foundation for Families. Gordon's leadership has already benefited Trails in concrete and profound ways. We are excited have Gordon as a key part of our team. Welcome Gordon!

Welcome also to Mandy Mullin who recently became Trails' new Associate Program Director (APD). Mandy has been a Trails facilitator for 6 years. Over this time, Mandy has demonstrated growth and commitment consistent with our vision and priorities at Trails. Mandy is now committed to stretching her leadership wings and looks forward to new growth and learning opportunities in her role as APD.

Looking forward and in accordance with our strategic initiatives for 2011-2012, Trails is committed to expansion & replication of our programme model. Some activities in development are post-graduate opportunities, in particular: Peer Internship for

Graduates funding from the W.C. Kitchen foundation to be employed at Trails enhancing skills, knowledge and experience; Mentor-In-Training Bursary Mentorship, specific Alumni are chosen to mentor recent graduates of Leader in Training programme over Grade 12 Year, and Parent Workshops sharing Trails intervention tools and tips to help their children build on their capacities outside of Trails.

Additionally, Trails collaborates with community partners, co-developing curriculum and specific interventions for vulnerable youth in other catchment areas leveraging the core tenets of the Trails programme. Three pilot programmes will be offered this fall with the: York Catholic District School Board (18 youth) Havergal College GEP Programme (7 youth) and Leacock Foundation (50 youth). Trails is built on the hypothesis that collaboration should take precedence over competition, synergy should be a primary goal, and collective decision-making means a commitment to change that is inclusive, thoughtful, and sustainable. Thank you everyone for joining on this journey to nourish the human spirit of our vulnerable youth, supporting them to become future agents of change!

Julia Morch, Executive Director

RETENTION RATE >>>>

Our retention rate with youth who are part of our 4 year programme is 80%!