



T *TOGETHER* **E** *ENCOURAGING* **E** *EDUCATING* **C** *CHANGING*

The 2020 Annual Report

Dear friends, supporters and donors.

We are delighted to give you this report of the work that The Excel Empowerment Centre Inc. has accomplished in the year of 2020. In spite of the impact of Covid-19 which throughout the year forced us to periodically shut down many times. And when shutdowns were lifted, we did open at a scaled down operation to comply with the government's public health guidelines. While we did not operate normally last year, our outreach to provide support to our participants and the communities that we served has even become very important to help them cope with the adverse impacts of the Covid-19. Through phone calls, contact through social media and other innovative means such as Zoom, we have continued to keep in touch with our clients to make them aware of the available resources, answer their questions and worries in these difficult and uncertain times. The networks of support in our program prove vital because we check in with our clients and their families.

Before the Covid-19

We began the year 2020 with a high optimism building on the success from the year before when our drop in Centre was opened on August 2019 here in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Our tailoring class in January 2020 was receiving a considerable number of applicants. We received additional computers which are used for job search, resume development and provide basic introduction to computer usage. Our knitting, painting, storytelling activities helped our participants to develop confidence to express their inner feelings and build teamwork spirit. Beginning this year, we were making progress on our mission of Empowering women and children with the focus to relieve poverty among the newcomers, immigrants, refugees and the inner-city communities in Winnipeg. To achieve that we offered employable skills such as one on one tutoring, sewing class, learning basic English reading, writing and speaking, introductory basic computer learning, made our computers available to the public for job search and resume development.

Adapting to the Covid-19 Health Guidelines.

In March, the activities at our drop in Centre were closed in accordance with the government's public health guidelines that require a shutdown to control the spread of Covid-19 early in Manitoba. However, the administrator and staff and volunteers continue to work from home and sometimes step to the office for paperwork and administration duties. From March to June, we continue to be in touch with our clients through phones, email and social media to provide answers to the community. The objective was to give them answers regarding the available resources especially those with language barriers. To check on their well-being. Our administrators, staff and volunteers continue to drop off shopping and supplies for students and families. In June, when the government relaxed the restrictions for the business and

organizations that can meet the health protocols such as social distancing, a minimum number of people that can be in the building and effective hygiene, we were able to open while adhering strictly to the Covid-19 health guidelines.

Our Summer Youth Program: Winnipeg Green Team and the Canadian summer youths job programs.

While COVID 19 has affected our operations at our drop-in centre in Winnipeg and our resource centre in Bor, South Sudan. The summer of 2020 was a very important achievement of our program here in Winnipeg Manitoba. Early in the year, we had applied for various grants for youth summer programs. In March, The Excel Empowerment Centre Inc. was fortunate to have been approved for the Winnipeg's Green Team and the Canadian Summer job program.

12 youths hired during summer

With the funding of the Green team's and the Canada youth summer job, we were able to employ six youth positions from June to September. We hire six youth from diverse backgrounds in Winnipeg with the partnership of Green team. In addition, with the funding from the Canada summer job, we hire another six youth from different backgrounds and adhering to programs requiring employment equity, focusing on youth members from visible minorities. The employed youth ranged from 15 years to 30 years as per the grant's requirements. Most of the 12 youths have never been in the job market before. The objective of both Green Team and Canadian summer job programs are to help the young people acquire employable skills and mentorship. And with the funding of those two programs we work very successfully to hire, train and mentor the youths and we worked together as a team and offered an exciting and memorable summer of learning, teamwork, and enjoyable programs to both our youth and our employed youths.

Success of our summer youth Program.

While Covid-19 has affected every Canadian in terms of loss of life, employment, freedom of movement and many more. Our youth summer program for the year 2020 was a glimpse of hope and our important highlight for last year. While strictly adhering to the public health guidelines for Covid-19, we were able successfully delivered from June to September our summer program. And within those three months, no child, staff, employed youths or volunteers got sick at our program because we follow the minimum number of people public health guidelines. We had a big hall and space to ensure social distancing beyond the six feet. We use the outdoor parks to deliver our lessons as well as recreation activities. We utilized technologies both new and old such as zooms, social media to meet and teach the children in our program.

The numbers of youths and children which came to our summer program.

In total, 49 youths and children ranging from age five to 16 beside the 12-youth hired were able to benefit from our summer program. 24 participants would attend in person and 25 through remote learning and then came on other days in class. We utilized a hall and extra classes at our drop-in Centre. We use outdoors, mostly public parks and field trips to ensure we always have our participants active and most importantly adhered to the health guidelines. Adults as well would drop in to pick up stuff, use our computers and printer. We give six women sewing machines to take them home to continue practicing their sewing skills and make masks for their families. We continue throughout the summer and now still in touch with our participants through phone calls, social media and zoom so as to give them answers they may need, check on their wellbeing and deliver them shopping and supplies mostly those with children and others with other barriers.

Christmas Hampers and food drop off on December; 61 families received

Another exciting event at our program in Winnipeg this year was the Christmas food drop off. Every year normally, the holiday's season of December is usually an exciting time. We normally organize a diverse Christmas carnival gathering to celebrate with food, diversity fashion shows to let's participants celebrate any cultures of their choice and singing along happiness songs. However, because of Covid-19, we couldn't hold it last year. As a result, with the help of volunteers, we organized Christmas hampers through which we bought food and dropped it off to 61 families of diverse backgrounds. It was a success and it lifted up the spirits of our new and old participants and families. Again, we deliver that safely and our participants can't wait for things to go back to normal.

In Conclusion.

While the year 2020 has been a challenging year because of COVID-19 for The Excel Empowerment Centre Inc. (TEEC) teams are encouraged and have high hopes and good faith to continue to deliver services in our communities. Thanks to our anonymous BP, Pastor Michael and all the church council of First Lutheran Church. Please refer to our website: teec.ca

Mission: TEEC strives to assist the war-affected newcomers and immigrants including refugee women and children to garner the skills and confidence required to attain employable "success".

Vision: The Excel Empowerment Centre Inc. (TEEC) is that every Newcomer, including Refugees, should have the skills, confidence, and emotional wellness they need to succeed in Canada. We also envision boosting the ability of women and children to support themselves in Canada and South Sudan.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Deng on behalf of the board of directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'RD' or 'Rebecca Deng', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.