



The
WorkPlace
Group

Your Goals. Your Vision. Your WorkPlace.

Annual Report 2021-2022



Our Mission

To enrich the community of Sarnia-Lambton, by providing quality, professional employment services that encourage and engage individuals towards achieving their maximum employability.

Our Vision

To engage our clientele in a respectful, encouraging, and inclusive manner that enables each individual to maximize their potential.

To offer services with flexibility; being respectful of the needs of individual clients and members of our business community.

To deliver services with integrity, quality, and with a desire to surpass all service standards.

Our Values

Our vision is supported by the following values, which will be adhered to in carrying out our mission and achieving our objectives.

- We provide a supportive and encouraging setting for employees, clients, and community partners. We are flexible and inclusive in providing services that meet client needs.
- We recognize and value that success is best achieved through community engagement, collaborations, and partnerships consisting of employees, clients, service providers, educators, and community members.
- We provide a “no wrong door” approach and ensure that individuals requesting assistance are assessed and directed to the most appropriate service that will support their needs.

President's Report

It has been another challenging year for staff, clients, and our community, but things are slowly returning to a normal environment. Despite all the challenges with the pandemic, staff worked very hard to meet most contractual obligations, even though provincial shutdowns were in effect for more than 28% of the agreement period. We had very positive feedback from our Ministry with respect to activities during this timeframe.

After many years of advocacy for our clients, our organization received funding for Employer Training and Incentives, and pre-employment dollars to assist clients with costs associated with employment needs. This has opened many new employment and apprenticeship opportunities for our clients. The workload that this entails will be a challenge, but I am confident that staff are up to that challenge.

At this time, I would like to acknowledge the 11 years that Christine Atkinson has given to this organization. Christine always serviced her clients with empathy, professionalism, and down a path to employment opportunities. We wish her well with her retirement.

On behalf of the Board, I want to acknowledge the hard work and professionalism of our Executive Director, Noeleen Tyczynski, and her staff of diligent employees.

I want to extend a sincere thank you to all members of our Board of Directors; your commitment to The WorkPlace Group's continued success is invaluable.

Respectfully,

Donna Cain

President, Board of Directors



Executive Director's Report

Our year in review is one of resilience, adaptability, and focus. As we worked through the second year of a global pandemic, staff have shown tremendous strength and advocacy skills, and a sincere desire to work in the best interests of both our individual job seekers and our business/employer clients. Along with all the challenges the pandemic brought, our sector is currently undergoing government mandated transformational changes throughout the province. As a result of these changes, we have worked hard to build organizational and financial capacity through a solid service delivery model.

We have developed innovative programs and services to help modernize our delivery, while at the same time, ensuring we continue to offer a hybrid delivery to our most vulnerable clients who are often digitally disadvantaged and benefit more from in-person supports and services.

After many years of advocacy, our organization was rewarded with an influx of funding dollars to assist job seekers with pre-employment supports, along with employment and training incentives that provide mutual benefit to both our employers and job seekers. This funding has been instrumental in our ability to assist clients in moving forward with their career goals, and it provides us with a level playing field across the Employment Ontario Network. Staff worked diligently to create and implement new processes for tracking and financial accountability, with respect to the new funding envelope. As a result of this new funding, our Board of Directors graciously supported staffing requests to forgive the current outstanding loans acquired by clients through our Bridging Loan program. Moving forward, the remaining revenue in the Bridging Loan program can continue to be accessed for individuals that may not be eligible for the Ministry pre-employment dollars, or may need support in an amount that exceeds Ministry guidelines. We are grateful that our Board of Directors displays both compassion and respect to our client base and maintains a solid understanding of the work we are doing on the front line.

Further to our client commitment, the organization continues to invest in professional development for staff. This past year, all staff received certification in Trauma Informed Counselling and Common Assessment Process training that was delivered by the Employment Sector Council of London-Middlesex. Staff continue to be supported with training including Bridges out of Poverty and Indigenous Canada certification through the University of Alberta. We continue to work closely with our local Social Service Network and community partners, developing activities and best practices through a diversity and inclusion lens.

Staff represented the agency on various committees and projects over the past year, and we enjoyed collaboration with local Employment Services on several projects focused on supporting marginalized job seekers regain entry to the workforce, as well as initiatives to promote apprenticeship opportunities. Our presence in the business community was very strong as we worked hard with local businesses to address very real recruitment and retention issues that they continued to face post-pandemic. Our membership on the County of Lambton's Early Childhood Educator task force is one example of us supporting a sector that is critical to the economic health of our community.

As always, it's so important to acknowledge the depth of the dedication and passion that our staff show in working with our clients. Our WorkPlace team has been exceptional in their ability and commitment to being adaptable and creative in addressing the challenges that the employment sector has faced under the cloud of the pandemic. We look forward to continuing to support clients and our business community, and moving towards a healthy economy amidst very uncertain times.

Respectfully,

Noeleen Tyczynski

Executive Director



Board of Directors

The WorkPlace Group is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. This committed group of volunteers has the responsibility of ensuring that The WorkPlace Group is managed effectively in order to fulfill its mission and value statements to the community. Their dedication to the community, the clients we serve, and staff members is the reason for The WorkPlace Group's longevity and reputation in Sarnia-Lambton.

We are fortunate to have representatives from education, human resources, community services, and the legal profession. Our board members are equipped with a wide range of skills including, but not limited to, finance, community capacity building, extensive employment sector experience, newcomer services, diversity training, disability specialists, poverty initiatives, apprenticeship coordination, human resource management, strategic planning, social service networking, information and technology skills, health and humanitarian organization, and risk management.

Our 2020-2021 Members

Donna Cain – President and Director
Michelle Smith – Vice-President and Director
Chandrika Patel – Secretary and Director
Mary-Lou Robb – Treasurer and Director
Lucille Frayne – Director
Margaret N. Capes – Director
Todd McKelvie – Director
Beth Scheiding – Director

Leadership:

Noeleen Tyczynski – Executive Director

Employer Connections

The 2021–2022 year proved to be a very busy year with a continual increase in the number of businesses connecting with us through social media, our online presence, and employer referrals. As an organization, we responded to the everchanging and challenging needs of both our job seekers and employers. This was the year of pivoting and making ourselves relevant as we broached on the new normal of 2021.

More than ever, TWPG has continued to collaborate with various employment sectors, sitting on committees and being a part of several initiatives to attract talent to Sarnia-Lambton. We were invited as the only employment service provider to partner with the County of Lambton in a pilot project addressing the dire need to support and attract talent to the childcare sector. A truly critical situation, not only locally, but provincially and nationally. TWPG brought the know-how of recruiting, both in a hybrid fashion and in-person, at a successful job fair. This ongoing initiative involves building relationships with the various centres and bringing them talent, which is not only imperative for their business sustainability and growth, but also the support that Early Childhood Educators bring to the families of Sarnia-Lambton.

This is only one example of a sector that we support; every day we have employers reaching out to us who are struggling to find the right person to fit their company's needs. Both the employer and the job seeker have struggled over the past two years, and the reality of our "new world order" is proving to be more challenging than ever. The work we do goes beyond the guidelines of our funder... the work we do is making a difference to our job seekers and employers right here and right now, each day.

Sincerely,

Sharon Prouse

Senior Consultant





Client Testimonials

“They are an excellent resource, very professional and friendly as well.”

- CLIENT

“The workplace group was such a great resource for my needs. The application process was simple just a few information forms and my advisor was so well organized, and informed. I was able to get a clear picture of what I needed to do to achieve my goals and was given resources to access I didn't know existed. Open spacious office with wifi and computers. I highly recommend this place for anyone needing any direction in seeking employment, looking for upgrading or needing tools and resources to help you figure out what your trying to achieve, whether it be change of industry, change of skills, gaining and learning skills, preparing you for successful job searching and job placement.”

- CLIENT

“I really am so thankful for your guys help, it literally was the difference between me working and not.”

- EMPLOYED CLIENT



A New Chapter Begins...

The WorkPlace Group was very fortunate to receive access to Employment and Training Supports and Placement and Incentives funds. The WorkPlace Group has operated for a long time without monies for training dollars; continually finding creative ways to meet our clients' needs, a prime example being the Bridging Loan. This new funding will allow us to support clients at an unprecedented level.

Employment and Training Supports

Employment and Training Supports are available to address temporary financial barriers to participation in employment.

- Transportation
- Work clothing or grooming needs
- Special equipment or supplies
- Certification charges
- Short-term training costs
- Emergency or infrequent childcare
- Language skills or academic credentials assessments
- Translation of academic documents
- Workplace accommodation needs for persons with disabilities

Placements and Incentives

Employers may receive financial incentives to provide on-the-job training placements, including apprenticeships; work experience opportunities; and skill level assessments for participants in trial placements. The total amount of incentive varies based on the complexity of job skill level and the length of training required per individual.

Employers who receive financial incentives must commit to:

- Developing a relevant training and work experience plan
- Provide feedback and assessments to participants
- Have potential for long-term employment for the participant
- Provide adequate supervision
- Place the participant on the company's payroll and provide the same employment terms, conditions, and benefits as for all regular employees

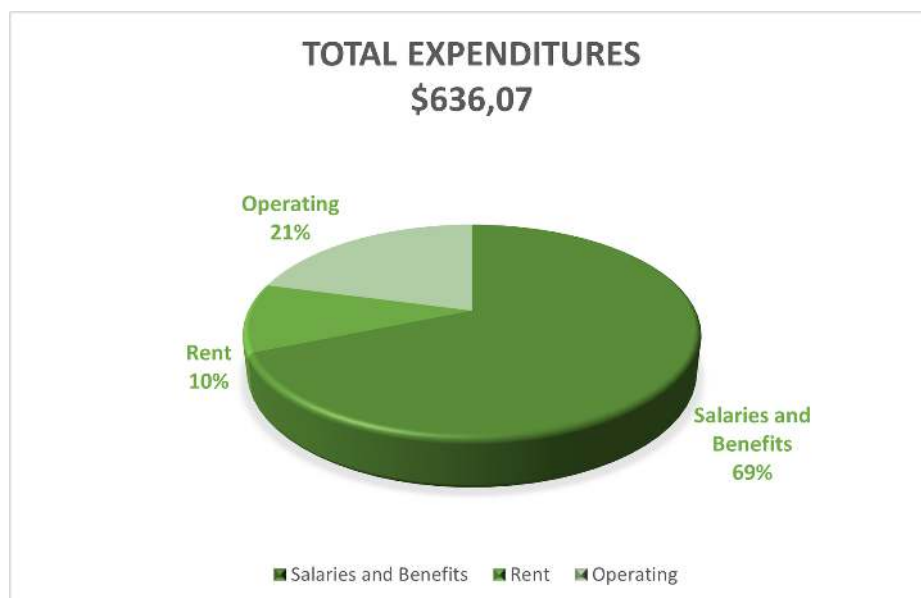
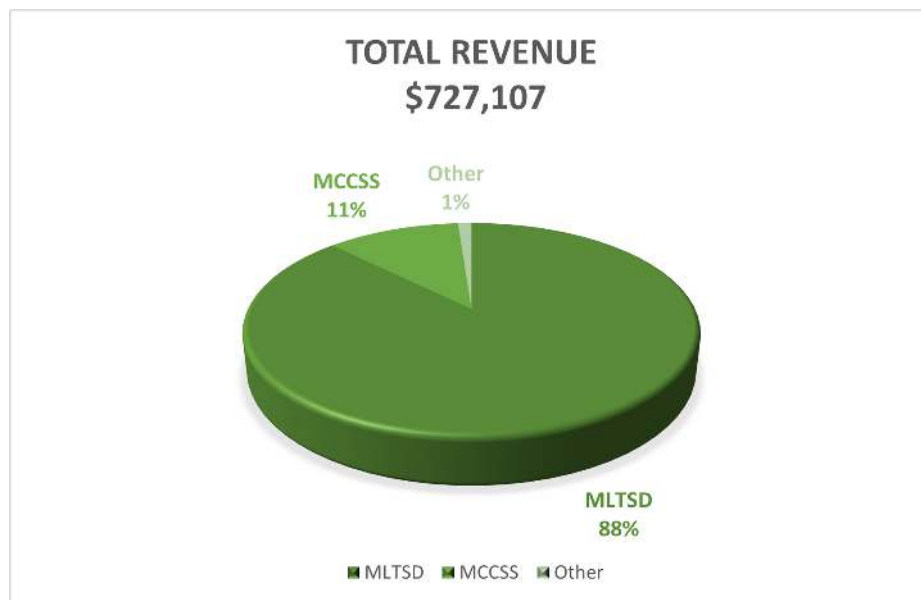
Access to this funding marks a new beginning for The WorkPlace Group, and one that we are truly grateful for.



Financial Overview

April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022

Below is a summary of the revenues received and expenses incurred during the 2021-22 contract year.



Warm wishes to Christine Atkinson on her retirement!



We would like to take this time to acknowledge the contributions of Christine during her 11 years here as part of our WorkPlace family. Christine has always demonstrated compassion and enthusiasm as she supported her clients on their journeys to employment. It was a privilege to work alongside her. Over the years we have had the pleasure of sharing both personal and professional milestones with Christine. We wish her everything she wishes for herself, as she retires from her professional life and moves on to enjoying more time with family and friends.

In loving memory of Gayle Montgomery (1958-2022)



It is with profound sadness that our organization shares the passing of our beloved friend and colleague, Gayle Montgomery. Gayle was a steadfast supporter of The WorkPlace as a member of our Board of Directors for many years. She displayed great passion and worked tirelessly to support and advocate for marginalized persons living in poverty. She was a champion for social justice, women's rights, Indigenous persons, and the LGBTQ community. We were privileged to work alongside Gayle, and she instilled in us a desire to always be a voice for those who did not have the privilege to self-advocate. She has left a large void both in our hearts and our community. God speed Gayle, you will forever be in our hearts.



The
WorkPlace
Group



GET CONNECTED

www.theworkplacegroup.ca

St. Clair Corporate Centre

265 Front Street N. Suite 107

Sarnia, ON, N7T 7X1

519-337-7377

