

TURNING POINTS

THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE



JVS TORONTO
ANNUAL REPORT
2024-2025

“I started my journey with JVS Toronto hoping to find my dream job. At first, it was hard but I found it with their help. This is a big step in my life. I hope everyone can find their own path.”

- JVS Toronto Client

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WE ACKNOWLEDGE

At JVS Toronto, we are mindful that our work takes place on the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples who have cared for this land for generations. Our offices and staff operate in the areas now known as Toronto and York Region, which are part of the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples.

We acknowledge the enduring presence and resilience of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples, and we are committed to fostering respect, inclusion, and reconciliation. As we reflect on the work we do, we honour the knowledge and histories of the original caretakers of this land and the ongoing contributions of Indigenous communities.

Adapting Together: Thriving Through Change

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

THE SHIFTING WORLD OF WORK

Change is constant. At JVS Toronto, we see it every day – in our economy, in funding priorities, in the evolving needs of employers, and in the transformative technologies reshaping the way we work. This past year, these forces brought both challenges and opportunities.

Shifts in Canada’s labour market affected people in real and personal ways. Nationally, unemployment rose, and in Ontario it averaged 7%, with some groups – like recent immigrants, adults with disabilities, and youth – facing even higher rates of joblessness. Behind these numbers are people trying to navigate longer job searches, career changes, and the uncertainty that comes with transition.

NAVIGATING A TURBULENT MARKET

At JVS Toronto, we work with newcomers from around the world building new careers in Canada, young graduates eager but anxious to enter a competitive job market, and mid-career workers retraining as their industries evolve. Rapid advances in technology, including Artificial Intelligence, continue to reshape what work looks like and the skills employers value most.

In this environment, adaptability is essential. We strive to ensure the individuals we serve learn new skills, build confidence, and find ways to succeed in a job market that continues to evolve.

OUR IMPACT IN 2024-2025

- JVS Toronto served **15,016 individuals** last year, with **80%** of those who completed our programs successfully moving into employment or training. We:
- Supported **3,151 youth**, with **85%** moving into work, training, or school.
 - Welcomed newcomers from **150 countries**, including **242 international professionals** in bridge training programs.
 - Assisted **226 individuals** through specialized disability services.
 - Helped thousands more through mentoring, sector-specific programs, and one-on-one counselling.

We also hosted hiring events connecting **1,733 job seekers** with over **50 employers**, creating pathways to meaningful employment in industries facing talent shortages.

MEETING CHANGE WITH INNOVATION

- In a time of government changes, shifting funding priorities, and evolving labour needs, JVS Toronto adapted our services to remain both relevant and impactful by:
- Introducing training programs aligned with growth sectors.
 - Integrating new technology into our services and enhancing digital literacy.

We ensure the individuals we serve learn new skills, build confidence, and find ways to succeed in a job market that continues to evolve.

- Strengthening employer partnerships to address labour market demands and connecting job seekers with employment opportunities.
- No matter how the world changes, the values that have guided JVS Toronto for over 78 years keep us focused – empowering people, strengthening communities, and living our commitment to excellence, integrity, respect, and collaboration.

STORIES OF CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

At JVS Toronto, we help individuals not just navigate change, but grow stronger because of it. This year’s report features stories of people who embraced their challenges with strength, like **Chiora**, an experienced researcher and senior policy advisor, who took part in specialized newcomer employment programs to rebuild her career. **Adem**, for whom living with a developmental disability made speaking in public next to impossible. **Adele**, a volunteer emergency response worker, providing medical aid and security in Southern Israel. And **SVP Sports**, an employer we partnered with to provide a nurturing environment where at-risk youth are not only employed but encouraged, coached, and prepared for success.

These stories reflect the heart of our mission – real people transforming challenge into opportunity.

OUR LEGACY OF HELPING ALL THOSE IN NEED

While the world continues to face profound challenges, the effects reach deeply into our local community

– affecting mental health, economic stability, and opportunity. These challenges remind us of our roots: founded in 1947 to help Holocaust survivors and veterans rebuild their lives, JVS Toronto has always stood beside people in times of uncertainty.

That same spirit continues to guide us today. No matter how the world changes, we remain committed to the enduring Jewish value of helping all individuals in need. This commitment forms the foundation of our work and the reason we respond to change with strength and compassion.

THANK YOU

To our donors, funders, partners, and friends: your support makes everything we do possible. Together, we help thousands of people – like those you will read about in this report – adapt, learn, and build meaningful futures in the face of change. Thank you for being part of our journey.



Allison Steinberg
Allison Steinberg
Chief Executive Officer



Ariella Fuhrmann
Ariella Fuhrmann
Chair, Board of Directors



Mission and Vision

For over 78 years, JVS Toronto has impacted thousands of individuals by helping them find meaningful employment, plan their careers, and build sustainable livelihoods.

OUR VISION

To be a leading employment services provider spearheading innovation in local communities and across the country.

OUR MISSION

To empower people from diverse backgrounds and communities to achieve their employment potential and partner with employers to develop a strong and inclusive workforce.



Our Values

Our values are the foundation of our organization. They serve as guiding principles for the continued growth and development of our organization and provide a clear direction as we strive to create a positive and lasting impact.

EXCELLENCE

We are dedicated to realizing our organization’s potential, actively pursuing opportunities for improvement to deliver unparalleled quality of service and become leaders in our field.

INTEGRITY

Ethical conduct is at the heart of our service delivery. Our work is based on the highest standards, emphasizing transparency in communication with both those we serve and collaborate with.

RESPECT

Recognizing the diverse needs of each individual, we tailor our services to provide relevant and personalized support. We treat everyone with dignity and compassion, fostering an environment where all feel valued and heard.

COLLABORATION

We work effectively with our donors, volunteers, government, businesses and the community to build an inclusive workforce in an environment of trust and shared values.



“Visiting JVS Toronto was a life-changing experience. I was impressed by how much they care. This remarkable organization played a pivotal role in launching my career and guiding me towards the right path.”

- JVS Toronto Client

Our Heritage

JVS Toronto was founded in 1947 by a group of Jewish business leaders to provide employment and vocational services to Holocaust survivors and veterans of the Second World War.

Building on our success in serving the Jewish community and grounded in our values of helping others, we proudly work within the broader community and honour our legacy by supporting the Jewish community in Canada, Israel and around the world.

Sewing a buttonhole was a lifeline and the spark that ignited the creation of JVS Toronto. Max Enkin, the Agency's founder, met with Holocaust survivors living in Displaced Persons Camps. Known as The Tailor Project, if they could sew a buttonhole, they were considered tailors and were permitted entry into Canada. As a result, 2,000 Jewish garment workers came to Canada to rebuild their lives.

164
donors and funders
gave generously

155
dedicated staff
worked diligently

400
volunteers gave
their time



Max Enkin (centre) testing at Bergen Belsen Displaced Persons Camp, 1947. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre.

RiseAbility

Promoting Inclusion for Adults with Disabilities

At JVS Toronto, we help people achieve their employment potential. People with disabilities often face greater barriers, and through our Disability Services programs, we provide individuals with expert support to build skills and access meaningful, training, work and volunteer opportunities.

RECOGNIZING A NEED

In 2024 the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities was 8.1% (compared to 5.1% for those without). Many of these individuals continue to face barriers to finding work and when they look for support, long waitlists and limited program spaces often stand in the way.

INTRODUCING RISEABILITY

RiseAbility is an innovative program launched in 2024 and designed to empower individuals with developmental disabilities through essential communication and employability skills, fostering independent living, and promoting community activity and inclusion.

This one-year program provides a structured learning environment with a curriculum based on the Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS), helping individuals with autism, learning disabilities, or developmental delays build independence and succeed at work and beyond.



BUILDING SKILLS

RiseAbility helps to:

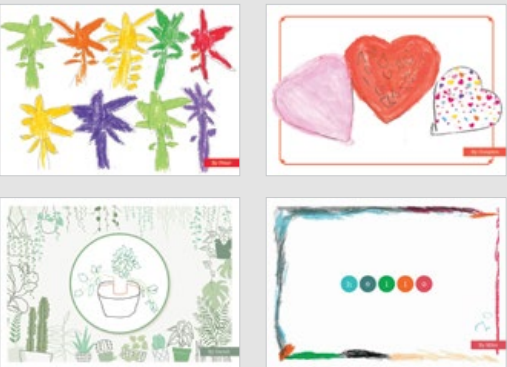
- Identify barriers to finding and maintaining employment.
- Develop essential employability skills.
- Enhance knowledge of employer and workplace practices and expectations.
- Provide hands-on volunteer opportunities and workplace simulation experiences in customer service, food handling, and retail.
- Track progress and offer individualized support.

The first 10 participants will complete the program and celebrate with a graduation ceremony this fall.

For more information on RiseAbility, visit www.jvstoronto.org/riseability.



Workplace simulations provide training opportunities and equip participants with the tools to develop employability skills.



THE ART OF GIVING BACK

JVS Toronto's Disability Services programming guides individuals while building essential skills that lead to employment opportunities, volunteer roles, and greater inclusion in their communities.

This past year, participants in the *Developing Work Connections* program created artwork to help support our fundraising efforts.

Available for purchase as printed greeting cards or e-cards, these art pieces help fund the vital work we do.



www.jvstoronto.org/give-back/send-an-e-card

Learn more about
*Developing Work
Connections* on page 17.

In Pursuit of Knowledge

Working with Chiora

Adapting to a new job market can be difficult even for highly skilled newcomers. Chiora, an experienced researcher and senior policy advisor came to Canada from the Republic of Georgia. With a strong background in government, education, and private consultancy, along with a Master’s degree, she was confident the transition into the Canadian labour market would be smooth.

After more than six months of job searching without success though, her confidence began to fade. Unemployment rates for immigrants are significantly higher than those of Canadian-born individuals. Barriers such as language skills and lack of Canadian work experience make it harder for newcomers to find stable employment. Many resort to precarious, gig economy jobs in order to make ends meet.

A PLACE TO LEARN

Unsure of what to do, Chiora turned to JVS Toronto. She took part in the *Job Search Workshop for Newcomers* program where she refined her resume and learned about the Canadian labour market.

Inspired by this new knowledge, Chiora joined *Road to Employment for Immigrant Women* where she learned to navigate Canadian workplace culture, hiring practices, and participated in mock interviews. She then enrolled in *Canadian Workplace Communication for International Professionals* where she expanded her knowledge of sector-specific terminology.



“Perseverance in times of uncertainty is necessary and JVS Toronto accompanied me throughout my journey.”

- Chiora

FROM CHALLENGE TO OPPORTUNITY

Empowered by the insight and tools she gained at JVS Toronto, Chiora returned to her job search with renewed confidence. She secured a position as a Case Analyst at World Education Services. The role is a perfect fit, aligning with her previous experience in education and her personal mission to help international students, immigrants, and refugees thrive in Canada.

Chiora is more than a success story – she’s a leader and a mentor, sharing her journey with other immigrants, reminding them that with resilience and the right support, newcomers can find not just a job, but a future.



THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE ROAD TO EMPLOYMENT FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Immigration is disproportionately challenging for women, who often put aside career aspirations in order to tend to their families. By the time they are ready to enter the workforce, they face barriers such as gaps in their employment history, financial illiteracy, and lack of confidence.

Road to Employment for Immigrant Women offers wrap-around support that builds resiliency, motivation, and preparation for the Canadian labour market; turning change into action.

Newcomer clients
originated from
150
countries
worldwide



Lost and Found

Working with Serhii

Serhii arrived in Canada with no idea what type of career he wanted to pursue. He knew he wanted a stable job with long-term growth opportunities; one that would afford him the chance to build a better future. He had previously worked several short-term, physical labour jobs in Poland, Ukraine, and Germany, but knew that wasn't the direction he wanted his life to take.



Looking for any type of employment, Serhii received nothing but rejection emails. Along with the uncertainty of adjusting to a new country, Serhii realized he was lost.

FINDING HIMSELF

Serhii discovered JVS Toronto and enrolled in the *Career Exploration Opportunity* workshop, which helps individuals understand labour market trends and explore potential career options.

Career exploration focuses on uncovering a job seeker's strengths, interests, values, and personality traits. Through an aptitude test, Serhii learned that his personality was well suited for the role of Executive Assistant. With that new understanding, Serhii and his career counsellor began looking into employment opportunities.

After discovering what he valued in a job, Serhii was offered a position that did not align with his values. He decided to turn that role down believing that, in time, he would find the right job for him. That opportunity came during a job fair hosted by JVS Toronto, where Serhii met an employer hiring for an Executive Assistant role.

A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Today, Serhii is thrilled with his new job. The insight he gained at JVS Toronto helped him find a career path with the stability and long-term growth he wanted, saying, "I learned you need to put in effort to get results. If you want to find the right job, you have to take the time to understand yourself and develop the skills needed to stand out."

"I got the chance to explore different career paths and get support in figuring out what direction to take. It was the perfect opportunity to get the guidance I needed."

- Serhii

THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE

EMPLOYMENT & CAREER SERVICES

The career landscape is shifting, with some roles experiencing higher demand and others becoming less relevant. Economic factors and emerging technology are reshaping the labour market and many Canadians are changing careers in favour of the jobs of the future and the evolving needs of employers.

Career exploration helps individuals better understand how their talents and skills can transfer to a new role – providing a solid foundation from which to take the leap into a more fulfilling and lucrative role.

2,163
referrals were made
by JVS Toronto to
ensure individuals
were connected with
the right services

Peace and Purpose

Working with Adele

Adele's job was harder than most. She was a volunteer emergency response worker with Magen David Adom, Israel's emergency services system, providing medical aid and security to communities in Southern Israel.

Working in an area experiencing conflict can have a significant impact on one's mental health, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and even depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Adele came to Canada from Israel for a much-needed break, but the peace and stability she found inspired her to stay. After moving to Toronto, she struggled to find work and was soon facing financial hardship until a chance encounter at JVS Toronto's partner Agency, Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS), changed everything.

AN UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITY

While picking up a clothing donation for a friend at JF&CS, Adele met a JVS Toronto employment expert. That chance meeting led her to **EMETEmployment**, JVS Toronto's Jewish community employment program.

Adele had an impressive resume, but didn't know how to navigate the Canadian job market. At **EMETemployment**, she began receiving guidance and personalized support including job search assistance, resume preparation, and interview coaching. Her employment expert worked closely with Adele to identify opportunities that matched her experience and needs. They even connected her with a driving instructor so she could begin the process of obtaining an Ontario driver's license. **EMETemployment** gave Adele what she needed most – guidance.



“Meeting the incredible people at JVS Toronto changed everything for me. Their support gave me the direction I needed to rebuild my life.”

- Adele

FINDING PURPOSE

Adele was looking for work that felt both meaningful and rewarding. Her employment expert told her about an opportunity with a security company serving Toronto's Jewish community. Through **EMETEmployment**, she participated in paid security training and was able to purchase professional clothing for her interview, giving her the confidence she needed. She was hired into their Security Operations Centre, beginning a new chapter in a career that she is proud of.

Today, Adele is happy at her new job and takes pride in giving back to the community that supported her. Through the support of JVS Toronto and our community partners, Adele is now building a peaceful life, with purpose, in Canada.

Identity changed at client's request.



THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE EMETEMPLOYMENT

JVS Toronto was founded in 1947 by a group of Jewish business leaders and we honour that legacy by supporting the Jewish community in Canada, Israel and around the world. Over the past year, we have seen a staggering rise in the number of Israeli immigrants and have served over 1,200 individuals.

EMETemployment is a force for change, connecting individuals facing unemployment with jobs and social support to help them rebuild their lives.

974
individuals served
in Jewish community
funded programs

1,235
employers actively
working with
EMETemployment



Adem tending to the gardens at Evergreen Brickworks.

Finding His Voice

Working with Adem

Finding confidence at work isn't easy. For Adem, a 24-year-old with a developmental disability, it is even more challenging. Social situations are intimidating. Speaking up feels overwhelming. Time management and commuting on public transit are exhausting. These stresses also make finding work difficult.



Determined to change that, Adem joined JVS Toronto's *Developing Work Connections (DWC)*, a pre-employment program that supports adults with disabilities in building work and life skills, leading to greater independence and community inclusion.

A SAFE SPACE

Through DWC, Adem found support from peers and staff. He took part in group activities, volunteering, mock interviews, and job search workshops that helped build his communication skills and independence. He also attended a weekly Communication Club, where he practiced speaking in public.

With new confidence, and the support of the Disability Services team, Adem applied for and secured a seasonal Guest Services role at Sheridan Nurseries.

GROWING AND THRIVING

With help from JVS Toronto, Adem learned to navigate public transit for his early morning shifts, overcoming his anxiety and proving he could handle challenges. His dedication earned him an invitation back to Sheridan Nurseries for the next season.

Building on his success he began volunteering at Evergreen Brickworks, expanding his skills in gardening and tree planting – each step bringing him closer to his goal of “doing things you need to do to make a better life for yourself.”

“I like volunteering through JVS Toronto. It gives me an opportunity to explore new places.”

- Adem

THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE

DISABILITY SERVICES

In 2024, the employment rate for adults with disabilities in Canada was only 46.4%. Many individuals want to work but require specialized supports to get there.

At JVS Toronto, our Disability Services programs are designed to build employment and life skills through on-site and community-based activities, group collaboration, and personalized coaching – changing futures by building independence, community integration, and belonging.

226
individuals served
through specialized
employment programs for
people with disabilities

6,000+
services or supports
were accessed at
JVS Toronto last year

From the Ground Up

Working with Matthew

Matthew graduated from high school in 2021 with no idea what to do next. He tried finding a job, but with little to no work experience, he wasn't successful. He also struggled with anxiety and depression which were exacerbated by his lack of direction.

Young people between 15-24 years of age face unique challenges finding their place in today's workforce. Economists report that 25 to 29-year-olds are working many of the entry-level positions that younger people used to do; making it harder to find those jobs and enter the labour market. After almost three years adrift, Mathew was referred to JVS Toronto's *YouthReach* program by a mental health counsellor.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

Matthew worked closely with his employment expert to explore his interests and skills, and identify jobs that could eventually lead to a future career path. During the program, Matthew expressed a love for animals and *YouthReach* found him the perfect opportunity to find a suitable job – a two-day hiring event at the Toronto Zoo.

JVS Toronto helped Matthew prepare for the event by developing a resume that focused on skills rather than work experience. He attended workshops and participated in mock interviews to build his confidence.

While at the job fair, Matthew had the opportunity to apply for a variety of roles, but had never really had a job interview before. He quickly felt overwhelmed, but his employment expert was on-hand to coach him through his anxiety. As a result, Matthew aced his interview and The Toronto Zoo offered him a Retail Operator position in their gift shop.



“JVS Toronto provided me with opportunities I wouldn’t have been able to have otherwise. They opened doors for me.”
- Matthew

BUILDING MOMENTUM

Energized by his success, Matthew worked diligently at his job. He enjoyed the friendly atmosphere, assisting customers, and getting to see the animals up close. The Toronto Zoo was so impressed with Matthew's performance and enthusiasm they asked him to return for another season.

The Toronto Zoo's gift shop was more than just a job for Matthew. It was a turning point that helped him realize his true passion. He plans to pursue post-secondary education in a field related to animal care. Matthew's future is brighter now that he has a path to building a successful career.



THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE YOUTH SERVICES

There are long-term consequences when young people have difficulty finding meaningful work experiences. It affects their ability to build a resume that will support their professional progression, gain financial security, and find their place in society.

JVS Toronto's Youth Services provides young people, ages 15 to 30, with specialized counselling, paid training and job placement opportunities – helping to overcome barriers to entering the labour market.

3,151
youth served
last year

85%
of youth gained
employment or returned
to school/training



The Power of Teamwork

Working with SVP Sports

Youth unemployment is on the rise across Canada. According to the Ontario Government, unemployment rates for youth in the GTA rose significantly, from 13.2% to 19.8% in 2024 and are currently the highest they have been since 2009 (outside of pandemic years). Young job seekers, ages 15 to 24, are having a harder time than ever finding employment opportunities.



JVS Toronto bridges these gaps by connecting job seekers with employers willing to hire individuals who face challenges like a lack of previous work experience. SVP Sports, a retailer of brand name athletic apparel, has been one of these employer partners for over 18 years.

SVP Sports recognizes the barriers young people face and has worked together with JVS Toronto to create meaningful pathways to career success for members of the Jane-Finch community. Over the years, SVP Sports has hired many young job seekers from JVS Toronto's youth services programs and provided them with hands-on training, valuable work experience, and opportunities for long-term employment.

WORKING AS A TEAM

JVS Toronto's employment experts work closely with SVP Sports to support every young job seeker with on-the-job coaching tailored to their specific needs. Store Manager, Norman Higgins, takes a special interest in mentoring each employee to ensure that their time at SVP Sports sets them up for success in their future careers.

SVP Sports cultivates a nurturing, inclusive environment where young people are not only employed but encouraged, coached, and prepared for success in both their personal and professional lives.

A LASTING IMPACT

After two decades of helping youth build brighter futures, SVP Sports has become a symbol of opportunity for so many.

"All the candidates from JVS Toronto were excellent workers, and some still work at SVP Sports to this day. I personally enjoyed training each and every one of them."

- Norman Higgins,
SVP Sports Store Manager

THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE EMPLOYER SERVICES

At JVS Toronto, part of our mission is to partner with employers from all sectors to develop a strong and inclusive workforce.

We work with employers to understand their needs, create training and employment opportunities, and help find skilled candidates who are ready to work. This gives job seekers the chance to overcome past challenges, enter the workforce, and develop their careers, while employers build a team dedicated to their success.

5,002
employers in 45
different sectors or
industries worked
with JVS Toronto

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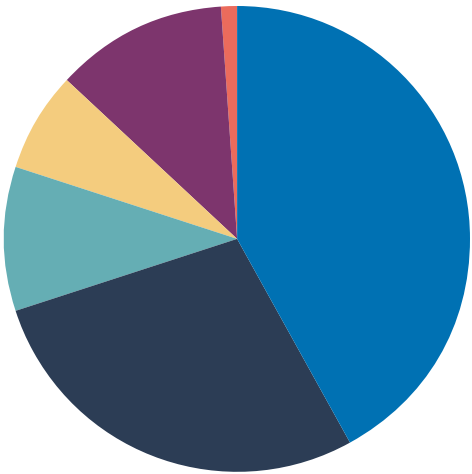
Financial Summary

REVENUE	2025	2024
Federal, Provincial and Municipal Grants	16,084,829	16,580,720
Fees For Service and Other	419,076	394,540
UJA Federation	303,667	308,987
United Way Greater Toronto	561,929	558,205
Donations Recognized per the deferred contribution method	94,845	666,124
Total	\$17,768,013	\$18,508,576
Total Donations Received in Fiscal Year	120,520	669,387

EXPENSES	2025	2024
Employment and Career Services	7,008,307	6,712,724
Newcomer Services	4,795,481	4,916,275
Disability Services	1,748,391	1,724,531
Youth Services	1,241,572	2,048,748
Administration	2,019,514	2,243,814
Amortization and other	121,331	175,493
Total	\$16,934,595	\$17,821,584
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	833,418	686,992

Breakdown of Revenue

- 42% Employment and Career Services
- 28% Newcomer Services
- 10% Disability Services
- 7% Youth Services
- 12% Administration
- 1% Amortization and other



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