

The background of the cover is a photograph of three young people. In the foreground, a Black man with a mustache and a red beanie is looking directly at the camera with his hand near his face. Behind him, a white woman with blonde hair is smiling, and to the right, a woman with dark hair and large hoop earrings is partially visible. The overall tone is bright and positive.

SPRING 2023

# eva's Community

## In our first issue

- Hear from our Executive Director about Eva's organizational journey
- Meet Amir and learn how your donations provide a lifeline to support young people
- Read about the importance of partners like Home Depot Canada who are investing in longterm systemic change



# Welcome

## Message from our Executive Director

Dear readers:

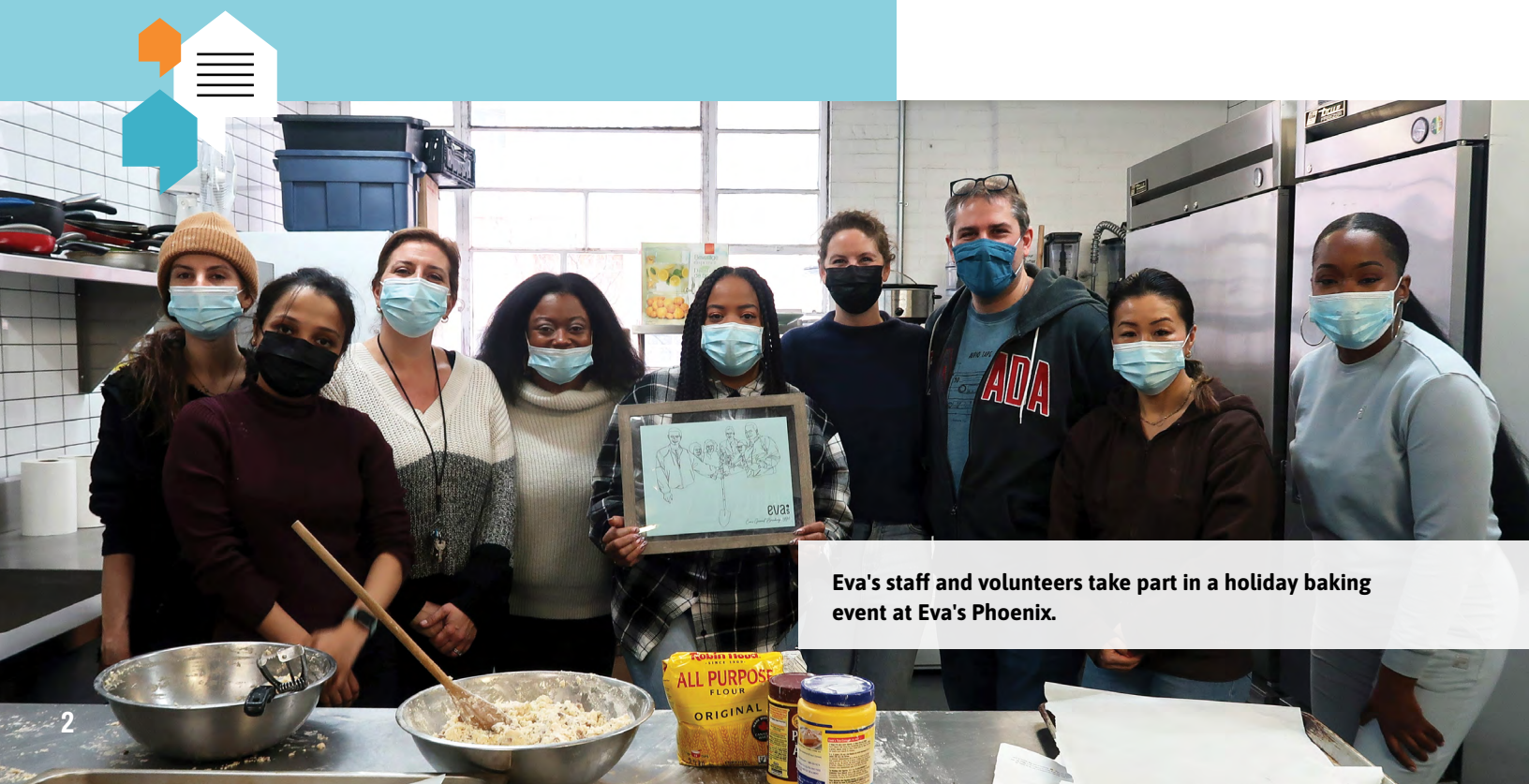
This spring Eva's will embark on our strategic planning exercise to guide the organization for the next several years. This plan will honour the legacy of our founder, Eva Smith, and the lived experiences of the young people we support, while centering the needs of Black youth experiencing homelessness.

Eva's has gone through many changes during our history as we adapt to our environment and the needs of young people.

We look forward to sharing this journey with you.

Thank you for your continued support.

*Louise Smith*



Eva's staff and volunteers take part in a holiday baking event at Eva's Phoenix.

## Youth build life skills at Eva's Phoenix

**There's a lot to learn about living on your own. For youth who have experienced homelessness, trauma, and systemic barriers, the learning curve can be steep.**

"It's tough to transition from being in an emergency state in a shelter. Living at Eva's Phoenix is a time for youth to stabilize and build on the skills they need to live on their own and keep up with work or school," said Natalie, life skills program facilitator.

Youth learn skills like nutrition, self-care, financial literacy, and goal setting. "We bring in guest speakers and run orientations and coffee chats where we talk about goals. We also do one-on-one skill building if that's better for some youth. We want to accommodate different learning styles and make life skills as engaging as possible."

### DID YOU KNOW?

Eva's 2022 youth survey results indicate there is an overrepresentation of Black, newcomer, and 2SLGBTQ+ youth accessing services at Eva's.

51%

of young people at Eva's sites self-identified as Black.



Source: Eva's Initiatives for Homeless Youth's administrative data (2022)

## "Eva's was a lifeline for me."

At a difficult point in his life, Amir ended up with nowhere to sleep and struggled to afford to eat.

"It was one of the lowest pits of my life. My mental health was in tatters. I had moments of wanting to give up," he said.

He was ready to change his life, and not long after, he applied and was accepted into Eva's Phoenix.

## "I took every opportunity offered to me."

"In the Youth Succeeding in Employment Program, I attended every class and completed a three-month Print Shop internship."

He built life skills, completed food handling and first aid certifications, and worked on recovering from trauma. Today, Amir has a job in a print shop and is better able to manage stress.

"I've had the opportunity to better myself and recover. For the first time, I feel optimistic and hopeful for the future. Eva's was a lifeline for me."

Read the full story at [evas.ca/blog/amir](https://evas.ca/blog/amir)





# Home Depot helps Eva's come to life

## Eva's and Home Depot are on a journey together.

In 2012, the Home Depot Canada Foundation committed to preventing and ending youth homelessness in Canada. Since then, it's invested \$50 million in housing, employment, life skills, prevention, and research. It plans to dedicate \$125 million to the cause by 2030.

"We support over 200 organizations annually and Eva's has been a strategic partner since the beginning because they've been a leader in this space for many years. As they've evolved, so has the way we support them," said Amy Bilodeau, senior manager of community investment at Home Depot Canada.

Most recently, the foundation supported our diversity, equity and inclusion framework. Over the years, it has funded job readiness programming, provided renovation work in our shelters, and supported events and initiatives for youth.

Eva's also partners with Home Depot stores in the GTA as part of the foundation's Orange Door campaign. "Eva's has great relationships with their local stores. They've put the work into making those connections and demonstrated the great work they do so that they have increased community support," said Amy.

She believes Eva's will continue to be an important partner as the foundation works to achieve its goals. "We want to support long-term solutions that help provide youth with mentorship and life skills. Eva's is a pioneer, bringing expertise and wraparound community support that is so important as youth transition out of emergency shelters," said Amy.



Eva's staff take part in an in-store fundraising drive at a Home Depot.

"Eva's also has a long history of supporting Black youth specifically, which is important to us because we prioritize funding for marginalized or underserved youth. Our partnership allows us to understand the needs of Black youth and new Canadians so we can further our work and facilitate learnings across organizations."

# Connect

## Your gift to Eva's builds pathways out of homelessness

Eva's was chosen as one of Charity Intelligence's Top 10 Youth Impact Charities for 2022.

Make a gift today:  
[www.evas.ca/donate](http://www.evas.ca/donate)



Call: **416-977-4497** ext. 2025

Interested in fundraising? Email a member of our team at [donate@evas.ca](mailto:donate@evas.ca).

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