

Deepening our focus



Evolving from a decade of poverty-reduction experience, HCF is launching ABACUS: Advancing Post-Secondary Access, aimed at helping more young Hamiltonians achieve their potential through education.

“This is a natural next step in achieving prosperity for more Hamiltonians and one that citizens have themselves identified as a priority,” says President & CEO Terry Cooke. “Changing educational outcomes, particularly for those who face multiple barriers, is a strategy that we believe will benefit individuals and our city as a whole.”

The ABACUS goals are to improve high school graduation rates and access to post-secondary education, including the trades and apprenticeships. It focuses on the middle school years — Grades 6, 7, 8 and the transition to high school — a pivotal point when intervention can have life-changing impact, yet an age group that is lesser served than others.

See ABACUS/p.2

CREATIVE ARTS FUND MAKES FIRST GRANTS

More than 30 arts programs and organizations will share in the first grants from HCF’s new Creative Arts Fund.

The fund invests in Hamilton’s arts scene in four areas: providing arts experiences for kids from low-income families, neighbourhood arts projects, building the capacity of arts organizations to carry out their work, and supporting arts performances and exhibits.

“We were pleased to see such a broad representation of the arts for this fund,” says Grants Manager Sharon Charters. “The grants will support a wide range of programming, including visual, performing, media and literary arts, and will assist both well-established and grassroots organizations.”

This year’s funding is the first instalment of an arts commitment of up to \$600,000 over the next three years from this fund alone, adding to HCF’s ongoing record of support to Hamilton’s cultural scene.

A complete list of grants is available at hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca

Realizing potential

The Clarks were early believers in neighbourhood change

For over a decade, Hugh, Marlies and Alan Clark have invested in Hamilton's neighbourhoods, supporting a wide range of initiatives both through their funds at HCF and through their personal commitment.

So it was with interest and pleasure that they recently visited the McQuesten neighbourhood to hear from residents about exciting developments, including the burgeoning McQuesten Urban Farm – an innovative venture that will benefit local food security as well as economic vitality.

As early investors in Hamilton's neighbourhoods, the Clarks share fond memories of annual celebrations where residents showcased projects and celebrated the positive changes they were making together. Since then, local planning teams have been established in many more neighbourhoods, with new partnerships and a broad range of initiatives taking root.

"I remember talking about a community kitchen with a group in McQuesten," says Marlies. "We thought it was vital in a neighbourhood where there is no nearby grocery store, and something we wanted to support. It is rewarding to see how that idea has developed."

For the Clarks, the neighbourhood underscores their inherent belief in the power of people to build their community. For HCF, it's a story that personifies the profound impact HCF's donors can make.



Carolyn Williamson, Hugh Clark, Marlies and Alan Clark

bringing together people, ideas and resources to change the trajectory for kids and our city.

Perhaps one of the most definitive aspects of a community foundation is that, as a forever organization, we can invest in long-term change. Of course witnessing that change takes time, patience, and belief in what's possible. The Clark family story is a great testament to the impact such a commitment can deliver.

Driving positive change by connecting people, ideas and resources lies at the heart of every story in this edition. I'm inspired every day both by what's happened and more by what's ahead. I hope you will be too.

ABACUS results from three years of extensive research and community consultation supported by The Fairmount Foundation. It is based on four pillars common to successful early intervention programs: academic upskilling, mentoring, goal setting and incentives. Its three components are:

- Granting to expand the community's capacity to provide four-pillar programming.
- GradTrack: A pilot project involving outreach, coaching and intense support to a small group of students who are disengaging from school.
- Bringing together stakeholders to identify and address systemic barriers to post-secondary access.

"Skills shortages now and in the future mean that prospective employees need post-secondary credentials to be competitive," says Terry. "Our community has told us that education is the right focus, and that catalyst is the right role for HCF to play."

Learn more at hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca/ABACUS

A community foundation's reach: every page tells a story MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT & CEO: TERRY COOKE

Is there one thing that makes a community foundation unique? In my opinion there are many, and this issue of Legacy touches on several. One is a broad reach and the ability to grant across diverse sectors and people: the environment, the arts, recreation, seniors, education, youth and more – you'll find examples throughout these four pages.

Another is community leadership - ABACUS demonstrates this in action: defining the issues, and

Sprouting healthy citizens

Community starts early in the McQuesten neighbourhood, and that includes cultivating its young urban farmers through Sprouts Camp. Throughout the summer, kids from this east Hamilton community attended the camp, focused around the neighbourhood's urban farm. Camp days always included a long visit to the garden, a bounty harvest and a lesson or two about gardening and nature. An HCF grant contributed to the camp's programming, allowing about 150 neighbourhood children to participate.

The urban farm has started with a community garden and a learning space. The farm will be fully operational in spring 2016. Nestled behind the St. Helen Centre on Britannia Avenue, the farm is managed by a group of volunteers and yields a wide range of produce, from tomatoes to potatoes and cantaloupes to ground cherries.

The farm doubled up as a hub of activity for the kids at camp. Aside from harvesting the produce, they learned gardening tips, whether it is recognizing when a cantaloupe is ripe or being aware of harmful bugs. Kids were encouraged to learn and grow by combining recreational activities with hands-on opportunities.

See more Sprouts Camp photos in the McQuesten Urban Farm album on Facebook: [HamCommFdn](https://www.facebook.com/HamCommFdn), and read more at hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca/urbanfarm



Getting information on the spot



New "one-stop" kiosks are bridging the digital divide and making information more accessible to older adults. Responding to a community need, The Dundas InfoSpot for 55+ is a web-based computer application, curating information about programs and services in an age-friendly format.

Led by the Hamilton Council on Aging, and supported by HCF, InfoSpot draws listings from Information Hamilton's directory of community services. The kiosks use large touch-screen computers to ensure content readability, and wheelchair/scooter accessibility. Users can also print their search results in an age-friendly font size. The kiosks are installed at the Dundas Public Library and the Dundas Lions Memorial Community Centre where volunteers of the Dundas Active 55+ Steering Committee can assist InfoSpot users. In addition, InfoSpot is also accessible online from any computer.

SPORT HIJAB A WIN FOR GIRLS

A grant from HCF is helping to put more girls on the playing field by providing sport hijabs to 20 local schools. For Muslim girls, taking part in athletics can be challenging when wearing a traditional hijab due to the fear that it could fall off, or that the fastening pin could injure a player. It's a particular risk in sports like basketball and soccer. Sport hijabs eliminate these risks with a design that accommodates physical activity. The program, also supported by the Hamilton Muslim Association, will make the hijabs available on loan, just like other sports equipment, helping the girls to enjoy and reap the benefits of more athletic participation both in gym class and on school teams.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- Sarah Glen is HCF's new Manager, Community Initiatives. She will support neighbourhood and community building programs including the Neighbourhood Leadership Institute. Most recently Sarah has been a video producer, as well as an instructor with McMaster University's Bachelor of Health Sciences Honours program.
- Best wishes go to David Derbyshire on his retirement. David played an instrumental role in launching the Foundation's first neighbourhood program and in those that have followed. HCF's past CEO Carolyn Milne said about David, "He has an ability to connect with people on all levels that not only improved neighbourhood life, it also transformed the Foundation."
- Considering a charitable donation through your will? New legislation affecting estate donations comes into effect January 1, 2016. It's a good idea to review your plans with your professional advisor to make sure your goals will be accomplished under the new rules.

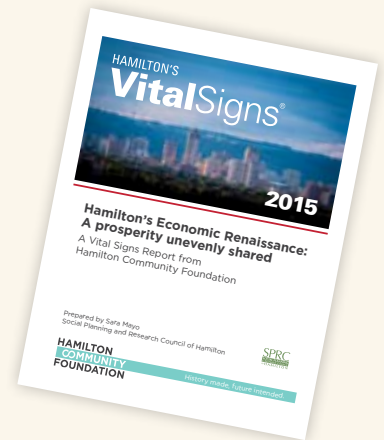
Vital Signs

Disparity amid "justifiable optimism"

Hamilton's economy is booming, but the benefits have not yet spread widely, says HCF's latest Vital Signs report.

The report shows that while unemployment rates are down and the real estate market is up, the city is reaching unhealthy rental vacancy rates and more than half of Hamilton's workers are in "insecure employment".

"There is a justifiable optimism in Hamilton," says Terry Cooke, "but we can't afford to lose sight of those who are falling farther behind. Addressing issues like affordable housing remains critical to reducing disparity and ensuring all Hamiltonians benefit from the prosperity."



The full report is available at hamiltonvitalsigns.ca; or call HCF at **905.523.5600** for a copy.

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