

COMMUNITY REPORT

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CANADIAN
MUSIC
THERAPY
FUND

About

Canadian Music Therapy Fund

Based in the Music Therapy Centre in Toronto, the Canadian Music Therapy Fund (CMTF) is a registered charity that increases public awareness and access to music therapy. Since 1994, the CMTF has helped thousands of Canadians to improve their health, realize goals, and positively change their lives. We provide clinical grants to make music therapy more accessible and scholarships to support music therapy interns.

Our vision is to create better lives through the transformative power of music therapy.



Natalie Pooran
Co-Chair



Scott Weisbrod
Co-Chair



Chrissy Pearson
Executive Director

Message from our leaders

Let's begin by saying how grateful we are for the support of our community. Looking back at 2020, we are struck by the many successes that happened amidst incredible challenges. Coping with the obstacles would have been impossible without you.

When the global pandemic arrived, we had just kicked off our annual Music March for Music Therapy fundraiser. This annual event, held in Toronto during Music Therapy Awareness Month, is always a fun day to raise money while we increase awareness of music therapy. Given that this event is one of our major annual fundraisers, we needed to pivot quickly and plan a new course. The result was our first Song Session for the Frontline.

This live, virtual event pulled together amazing musicians who generously donated their time and talents to help us raise money to provide free music therapy services to frontline healthcare workers and their families. Three projects from across Canada were funded (see page 7 for more details).

Cancelling our March soon led to cancelling our annual Un-Gala event in the fall. We decided if we couldn't have a party, we would help people focus on personal wellness instead. Our online UN-wind event was born! Engaging Canadians in music experiences designed for self-care was powerful for everyone involved.

We continue to cherish our wonderful partnership with George Stroumboulopoulos, who generously funds an annual scholarship for music therapy interns. He also jumped in last year when we needed a host for our online Song Session event.

A highlight of the past year has been continuing the work made possible through the Aubrey and Marla Dan Foundation, as well as the Lewitt Family Foundation. With a focus on mental health and virtual accessibility, respectively, our Toronto Music Therapy Centre has continued to reach people throughout the pandemic.

In the following pages you will learn about a new partnership with the Awesome Music Project. We love meeting new people who are inspired by music's human impact and who work to further the positive effects music can have on people and communities.

Last year was a sad one for the CMTF. We lost our first Chair of the Board and fundraiser, Fran Herman. Not being able to celebrate her life and contributions to the music therapy community was difficult. We look forward to honoring Fran and her legacy later this year.

As a preview to next year's report, we are excited to share that we are a recipient of an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant. This grant will help us to recover from the financial impact of COVID-19 and allow us to dive even deeper into fundraising and building our resources.

Lastly, we recently made some major structural changes to the CMTF. We have created an exciting team that includes a Digital Communications Manager, a Centre Manager and an Executive Director. This reorganization moves us forward with renewed energy and focus, and we are excited to continue our mission and make music therapy more accessible across Canada.

Fundraising Events

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted our fundraising efforts. We are proud of our dedicated team and Board of Directors who quickly planned two new major events.

Song Session for the Frontline

With the cancellation of our annual Music March for Music Therapy, we turned to social media to host a live virtual event: Song Session for the Frontline. Hosted by George Stroumboulopoulos, an amazing lineup of musicians helped us raise over \$19,000. The money allowed us to disperse three grants for certified music therapists to provide free music therapy for frontline healthcare workers. See the projects section for details.

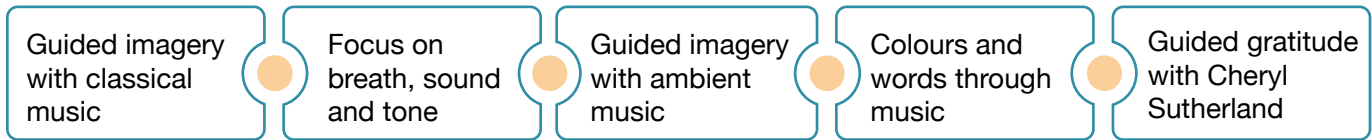


UN-wind



The pandemic continued to impact our fundraising efforts in the fall. After cancelling our Un-Gala party, we decided to UN-wind instead. Five specially curated music-wellness sessions delivered by certified music therapist and CMTF's Executive Director, Chrissy Pearson, were provided weekly, including a special finale session featuring Cheryl Sutherland, founder of PleaseNotes. Sessions were provided as a pay-what-you-can offering. Our sponsors and donors helped us to raise over \$42,000!

Sessions overview:



During a time of unprecedented stress and mental health challenges, taking time for personal wellness was top of mind for our community.

Here's what some participants had to say:

"I was so relaxed after the session, I wish I could have crawled into bed and gone to sleep."

"I felt at peace with myself and proud of doing something great for my body and mind!"

"My body and mind felt lighter. I was able to fall asleep earlier that night too!"

"It was amazing. I felt relaxed and centred!"



Program

The Music Therapy Centre (MTC)

The Music Therapy Centre in Toronto, Ontario, is the CMTF's head office and home. It is also an accessible music therapy clinic, offering subsidized services. The certified music therapists who work with the Centre also provide music therapy in community organizations such as long term care homes, day centres and group homes. The Centre continues to serve a diverse group of clients, for example, seniors with dementia, children on the Autism spectrum, adults coping with mental health challenges and people living with disabilities.



MTC 2020 Stats



400+

clients served
throughout 2020



1/3

of our clients were successfully
transitioned to virtual sessions



1425

sessions delivered
in-person and online

Message from the Centre Manager



Emily Stegweit

When the pandemic forced us to put music therapy sessions on hold, I could never have anticipated the long wait we would face to return to seeing one another in-person. I also didn't anticipate the resilience and creativity that our amazing team of therapists and our hundreds of clients demonstrated as we discovered a new way of working together virtually. In a time of intense isolation and uncertainty, we connected with clients over 1000 times online.

Virtual sessions were inaccessible to many of our clients who did not have the resources to connect this way. However, with the support of the Lewitt Family Foundation, we were able to improve access by providing equipment and instruments to those who needed assistance. Support from the Aubrey and Marla Dan Foundation also allowed us to continue supporting community organizations such as Casey House throughout this difficult time.

For the members of one virtual music therapy group, song-writing became an avenue for peer support and connection during the pandemic. Each week, the group would bring their grief, longing, fears, and hopes to the session. Together, they created an entire collection of original songs that served as a container to hold and explore all of these complex emotions. One group member shared, “It’s been really hard not seeing my family the past few months, but it’s been comforting having music therapy every week - it makes me feel less alone knowing that everyone else is going through this stuff, too.”



I continue to be amazed at the power of music therapy to connect us meaningfully to one another and to the world around us. I am endlessly grateful to have a team of certified music therapists, staff, donors, and 400+ incredible clients and families with whom to share it.

Scholarship

The George Stroumboulopoulos Scholarship

The 2020 winner of the George Stroumboulopoulos scholarship was Jennifer Lin from the Concordia Master’s of Creative Arts Therapies program.

This scholarship has helped music therapy interns achieve their goals since 2018. Jennifer plans to obtain her PhD in Music Therapy and conduct research to help increase the accessibility of music therapy for queer people and people of colour. We can’t wait to watch her succeed!



Projects

Song Session for the Frontline

Following our event, three successful applicants received grants to provide free music therapy sessions to frontline healthcare workers. Catherine Staples in Vancouver Island, British Columbia, provided guided imagery and music sessions for frontline staff in a complex care facility. JB Music Therapy in Calgary, Alberta, provided music therapy sessions for frontline staff in a non-profit community organization that supports health, housing and community services for seniors and people with disabilities. Kathleen Skinner in Kitchener, Ontario, engaged frontline staff from a long term care home in a group song-writing project and provided some staff with music therapy sessions.



Catherine Staples



Kathleen Skinner



JB Music Therapy

One certified music therapist said:

"I am working with the frontline healthcare workers and their families. In some cases family members are together at home, and in other cases, we are connecting long-distance online. We use songwriting, singing, movement, guided relaxation and active listening to foster moments of meaningful connection and promote feelings of collective well-being for families feeling disconnected or overwhelmed during the pandemic."

One frontline healthcare worker expressed:

"The experience was extremely rewarding and gave me several tools to use moving forward. I would recommend music therapy for anyone who is looking for a way to relieve pressure, stress or depression and as a tool to get in a more mindful state. Music is the soundtrack to our life and, without realizing it, the sounds can improve mood immensely and help to change/improve our thought patterns and ease worrisome feelings."

Josée Préfontaine Fund Disbursement



In August, 2006, the Canadian music therapy community lost one of its great leaders to leukemia. Josée Préfontaine was a strong advocate for music therapy education. Her work ensured that Quebec music therapists had access to supervision and professional development. She was a recipient of the *Frani Award* for her significant contribution to the field. A fund to honour her legacy was initiated by Sylvie Boisvert and a committee of friends and colleagues in conjunction with the CMTF.

We are proud to announce that the money raised by the Fonds Josée has been granted to Concordia University to support an annual music therapy student award over the next 10 years. A fitting memorial to a music therapist who dedicated her life to achieving excellence in music therapy training.

Partnerships

The Awesome Music Project (AMP)

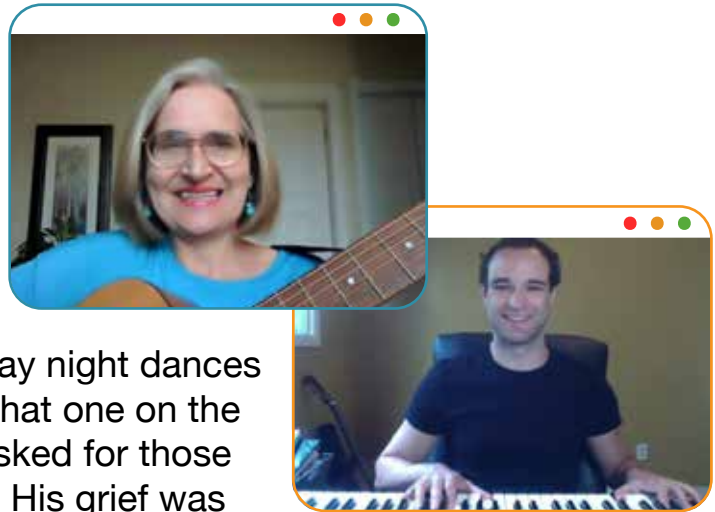
An exciting partnership developed in 2020! The Awesome Music Project's "super awesome goal" is to build a community that can accelerate solutions to mental health challenges through music. When the pandemic hit, they were struck by its impact on the mental health of residents in long-term care homes. After reaching out to the CMTF, the AMP4Life program was born and the first project began at Pinecrest Nursing Home in Bobcaygeon, Ontario. Certified music therapist, Ruth Roberts, provides virtual music therapy sessions to improve mental health and increase meaningful interaction during this time of isolation. 2021 will hopefully see Ruth going to the home to provide in-person services.

Enabling virtual music therapy in long-term care is only one part of our relationship with AMP. The CMTF also provides consultation for their other music and mental health initiatives. We are excited to support them as they reach more and more people with tools for using music intentionally.



“In August 2020, I embarked on the first ONLINE music therapy journey of my career! “Can this work?” I wondered. Well, after 10 months I can say a resounding “YES!”.

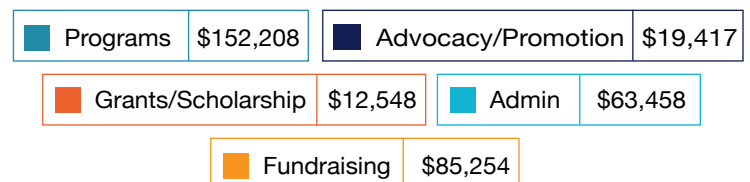
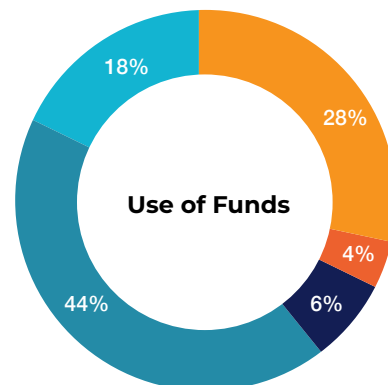
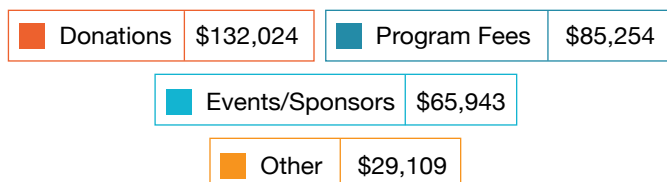
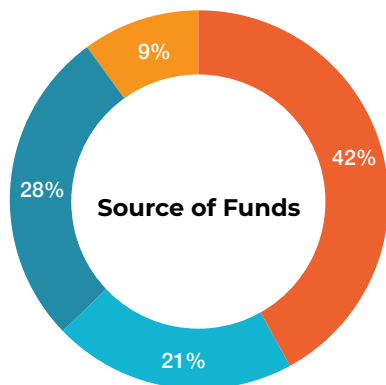
One resident I was privileged to work with was George. His wife of 64 years was gravely ill in a hospital in another town. He couldn't visit to say goodbye due to Covid. After her death he reminisced, mourned and asked for certain music, explaining, “That was the last song they played at the Saturday night dances we went to every week”, or “She sang that one on the local radio station with her sister.” He asked for those songs because they allowed him to cry. His grief was expressed, held and acknowledged in the music.



Song, story, laughter, tears, connection, comfort, and hope. All of this and much more in music therapy each week. I am grateful for this wonderful opportunity. It is good to know that, despite the litany of hardships, music therapy remained an ally through this global pandemic.”

Ruth Roberts, RP, MTA, FAMI
Certified music therapist

A Look at the Numbers



Our Supporters

Thank you to our event **sponsors**, who helped us pivot virtually during a difficult year! RX Music, Music Canada, Slight Music, Sony Music, Long and McQuade, and Lyric Find.



"RX Music supports the important work of the Canadian Music Therapy Fund as an extension of the values we hold dear. The CMTF embodies a spirit of servitude, giving, and accessibility. It's our honour to help them in their quest of making Music Therapy available to all who need it."

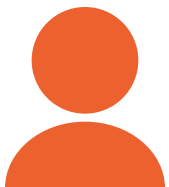
- Gina Awdish, President & CEO, RX Music

"Music Canada shares the Canadian Music Therapy Fund's commitment to creating a better and more inclusive music ecosystem, and we support their important work to enhance communities across the country by providing access to music therapy. We're proud to partner with the CMTF on programs that help create healthier lives through the transformative power of music."

- Patrick Rogers, CEO of Music Canada.



Finally, thank you to our dedicated **donors**. During such a difficult time, you still gave. Your generosity keeps us going throughout the year and we couldn't do our work without you.



"I donate to the CMTF because I am amazed at the impact music therapy has on people who are struggling, coping, learning, and growing. Music therapy is really remarkable."

- Anonymous monthly donor

"My name is Mya and I was born with Autism. I was diagnosed at 18 months. Music therapy has helped me broaden my vocabulary and speech. It also increased my focus and attention and improved my body awareness. It helped me feel comfortable with my peers and complete tasks at home. Through music, I was able to complete simple tasks like brushing my teeth and getting dressed with minimal frustration."

- Mya and her mom, Christy Swainson - Annual donor



In Memoriam - Fran Herman

On October 9th, 2020, the CMTF lost a very special person. Fran Herman was the CMTF's first Chair of the Board and the original driving force behind all of the charity's fundraising efforts. She single-handedly mobilized the Canadian rock music industry to help support music therapy across the country. One of Fran's proudest accomplishments was opening the Music Therapy Centre in Toronto in 2002. Her vision for this storefront clinic on Bloor Street West was for a place that could provide accessible music therapy, welcome potential donors and supporters, raise awareness, bring together the music therapy community, and provide a home-base and office for the charity. To this day, it remains all of these things. Fran served the CMTF for 15 years and received many honours for her work, including the Music Industry Association of Canada's inaugural MIAC Award and, more recently, the Meritorious Service Medal (Civic Division) presented by the Governor General of Canada.



Fran spent her music therapy career working with children with disabilities such as cerebral palsy. In 1988, she collaborated with artist James Smith and wrote a book called *Accentuate the Positive* which provided information about working creatively with disabled children.

Fran was a pioneer of music therapy in Canada and the CMTF's first leader. Her creativity, passion, and hard work to support and develop music therapy in Canada will not be forgotten. We will hold Fran in our hearts as we continue our mission!

You can honour Fran's work by donating to The Fran Herman Memorial Fund. Once we are able to gather, we look forward to celebrating Fran's life in person!



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our events**



**Start music therapy
program or event**

Have any questions or ideas of how you can support the CMTF? Send us an email!

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