

Message from the Board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer

“Each of our many accomplishments over the past year ignited our passion to keep moving forward.”



Every accomplishment we celebrated at the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario over the past year was achieved by – and for – amazing people: the families and individuals affected by schizophrenia, the staff and volunteers who work to impart hope where none is evident, the brilliant minds who make it their life's work to find a cure for mental illness and the donors who make it all possible. You'll meet some of them in the pages that follow.

Thanks to all of these people, we have touched more lives than ever before, not only in Ontario, but all across Canada. Innovative new programs and services, such as our Strengthening Families Together (SFT) online video series, are bringing learning and support to anyone with internet access, regardless of location. Our “Ask the Expert” web feature, online media kit and strong presence on social networking sites have increased traffic to our website by 264% over the past fiscal year. We have extended our reach farther than we ever imagined.

In addition to our extraordinary online reach, we also engaged more people than ever before across Ontario. In all, our various family education and support programs reached more than 4,700 people. This included family members and individuals living with schizophrenia who joined us at nine community forums across Ontario to discuss access to treatment. By identifying the barriers to treatment they've encountered, they helped us to develop an advocacy platform, which SSO is moving forward. We trained volunteers to help educate and support families facing a diagnosis of schizophrenia and we implemented a support group for siblings of people living with schizophrenia.

SSO experts provided information and insight to numerous media becoming a valuable resource for journalists covering mental health and justice issues that were in the news throughout the year. The *Globe and Mail* series on mental health, called “Breakdown”, lauded our Justice and Mental Health (JAMH) program as the only one of its kind in Canada and also highlighted the documentary, Fear|Less, alongside an inspiring profile of SSO champion Jesse Bigelow. Each of these opportunities brought us closer to our goal of raising awareness and promoting inclusiveness for people living with schizophrenia.

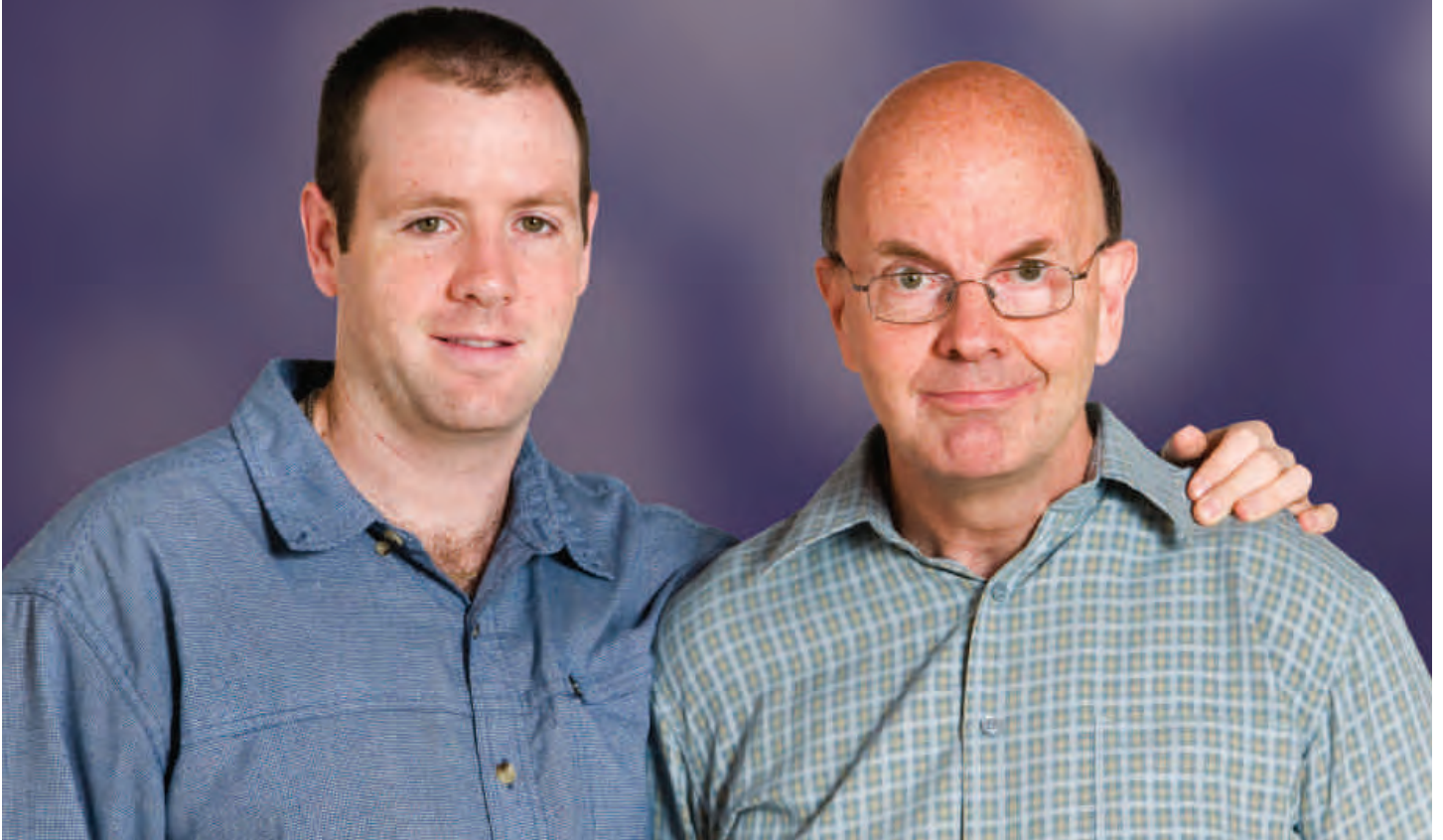
Signature events, including the 3rd annual Yoga-thon for Schizophrenia, Walk of Hope and the Iris Ball, continued to engage new people and raise much-needed funds. At our Iris Ball we were thrilled to award 11 “Moving Lives Forward” scholarships to help young people living with schizophrenia return to school. With the continued generosity of our corporate and individual donors we will empower more young people to move forward, with hope.

Each of our many accomplishments over the past year ignited our passion to keep moving forward. We hope this report and the stories you are about to read will inspire you as they have inspired us. We thank you for continuing to make hope possible.

Rick David, BOARD CHAIR

Mary Alberti, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

NATHAN RODER & DR. JOHN RODER



“Schizophrenia is a complex disease that will not be understood next year, but perhaps it will in a decade.”



We trained 45 people during three full-day advocacy training workshops, adding to our growing team of champions.

Through the Justice and Mental Health (JAMH) program we delivered 14 training sessions to police officers across Ontario on ways to effectively interact with someone who is experiencing psychosis.

Dedication

“To cure schizophrenia, we need to know the cause, and that’s what research is all about,” says Dr. John Roder, a senior scientist at the Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute at Mount Sinai Hospital. Dr. Roder and his research team found that mutating one gene in mice led to symptoms of schizophrenia or depression.

Published in 2007, this was the first study to unearth a common genetic link between the two illnesses – a discovery he hopes will one day lead to new, more effective treatments for schizophrenia.

While Dr. Roder is making in-roads to discovering the causes of mental illness, his career began very differently. With a PhD in immunology, Dr. Roder was a successful cancer researcher when his son, Nathan, was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 2001. The diagnosis inspired Dr. Roder to change his focus and he now studies mental illness almost exclusively.

Eight years after the diagnosis that changed his family forever, Nathan Roder is doing well. A talented violinist since the age of seven, Nathan performs in a local symphony orchestra and plays hockey and soccer. He also speaks to university students about his symptoms and recovery, with the hope of dispelling some common myths and misconceptions about the disease.

“I always had the impression that it was my fault,” he says. “People sometimes think it’s something you should be able to fix, like, ‘why can’t you just stop thinking those strange thoughts?’ But if you have a broken arm, no one expects you to fix it yourself. If you ‘break’ your brain, it’s the same thing – it has to be fixed, you just can’t see the injury.”

Dr. Roder’s laboratory is busy with a team of graduate and postdoctoral fellows working to build on his findings and eventually ‘fix’ schizophrenia. “I think one of the important jobs of any scientist is to train the next generation of researchers to work in the field of schizophrenia,” says Dr. Roder. “Schizophrenia is a complex disease that will not be understood next year, but perhaps it will in a decade.”

This past year, SSO continued to support two research projects from the Bill Jefferies and Tam Grant research funds.

SSO received significant national media coverage, with notable inclusion in the *Globe and Mail’s Breakdown* series about mental health, achieving a total audience reach of more than 15 million.

The Strengthening Families Together 10-part online video series drove a 264% increase in traffic to our website.

Advocacy

Whether he's addressing a roomful of Schizophrenia Society of Ontario supporters at our golf tournament, or lobbying for better access to treatment in front of government representatives, Roman Kuczuk's conviction is evident. His family has been touched by schizophrenia, so he understands better than most the importance of raising awareness about the disease – especially among young people. It's what drives his involvement with SSO.

"It's essential that young people realize just how common schizophrenia is, and that it can touch anyone at any time," he says. "People need to feel unashamed to talk about mental illness and empowered to seek help for themselves or their family members."

Volunteers are behind every success at SSO. When passionate spokespeople like Roman advocate on behalf of people and families living with schizophrenia, we move another step toward our goal of removing the stigma around mental illness.

"Education and knowledge are key to dispelling the shame and fear around schizophrenia," Roman says. "I hope that by reaching more young people and youth workers with information and facts about schizophrenia we can help people identify the signs earlier and break down the barriers to treatment."

By creating awareness in teens and youth, we are taking crucial steps toward ensuring early intervention – and effective treatment – for anyone who experiences psychosis. Roman's fervor continually inspires us. It is our hope that he inspires other young people to learn about the disease that affects them in such large numbers and to have compassion for their peers who live with mental illness.

SSO staffers are a generous lot! We had a 92% participation rate for our first-ever Staff Donor Campaign, which divided staff into two teams, each one competing to raise the most funds.

SSO established a Major Gift Program Committee, which received their first major gift of \$100,000.

In Ottawa, 1,330 high school students at 24 schools listened to young people talk about their own experiences with psychosis and stories of recovery. This awareness program is now in its 4th year.

“By creating awareness in teens and youth, we are taking crucial steps toward ensuring early intervention – and effective treatment...”

SSO hosted a screening of the Fear|Less documentary, which profiles the recovery story of Jesse Bigelow. Jesse was on hand at the cinema answering questions about his journey.

Ongoing education programs in London area high schools reached 1,200 students through more than 60 presentations.

Through movie screenings, the online Globe and Mail *Breakdown* series and our website, the Fear|Less documentary has reached approximately 10,000 people.

MIKE & LEE
GRENON



“We’ve all got to keep pushing to break down the stigma around schizophrenia.”

For the 8th year, Art in Strathcona Park served to raise awareness and funds for schizophrenia. Art from 150 exhibitors attracted more than 3,000 people to this year’s event which raised \$12,000.

In a joint presentation, SSO Niagara and CMHA Niagara welcomed more than 140 people for a talk by Dr. Austin Mardon, an Order of Canada recipient who lives with schizophrenia.

The Trillium Foundation provided funding for Talking About Mental Illness (TAMI), a three-year initiative in Niagara region that delivers presentations to high school students. In the program’s first six months, more than 150 students were reached.

Commitment

Confused and looking for answers, Mike and Lee Grenon turned to the internet when a family member was diagnosed with schizophrenia. “It seemed no one could tell us what we needed to know,” says Mike Grenon, but the information they found online was disparaging and their anxiety deepened, until they placed a call to the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario (SSO).

“SSO put all the overwhelming and confusing information into perspective for us, they put us at ease and they directed us to programs that could help,” says Mike. “They have compassion and they understand the illness. We were in shock and SSO helped us get through.”

From this first encounter, the Grenons have been staunch supporters of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario’s fundraising initiatives, such as the Walk of Hope for Schizophrenia and the annual Harry & Shirley Young Drive to Survive Golf Classic, raising more than \$16,000. Mike and Lee also give through monthly contributions. “If you’re passionate about something, you make the extra effort,” says Lee Grenon.

Mike and Lee credit SSO with supporting them through the diagnosis to a successful outcome. “Schizophrenia can make or break a whole family,” says Lee. “I feel very strongly that the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario is integral in the recovery of everyone involved – not just the individual who is ill. ”

Though the Grenon family has a personal reason to support SSO, they encourage others to get involved, too.

“You don’t have to be touched by schizophrenia to do your part. Come to the walk, even if you don’t have thousands of dollars on your pledge sheet – every little bit helps and just having people there to show their support is so important,” says Mike. “We’ve all got to keep pushing to break down the stigma around schizophrenia.”

SSO received \$6,000 from Queen’s University for three students to manage special projects. One psychology major created a resource booklet of programs and services available across Kingston for those that experience psychosis.

The Christmas Open House at the Kingston office welcomed 75 guests including MPP John Gerretsen and MP Peter Milliken.

SSO was a feature presenter at the Ontario Region Psychology Conference, delivering a presentation focusing on correctional officers dealing with prisoners with mental health issues.

Action

Our volunteers are bold and vibrant, bringing their enthusiasm to everything they do at the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario. Whether or not their lives have been directly affected by schizophrenia, they give freely of their time, their talent and their voice to help us achieve our goals.

You might say that two of our volunteers also lend a certain “Yogic” quality to our fundraising efforts. Michael and Marina Gwynne use their shared passion for yoga to help raise awareness and money for people and families affected by schizophrenia. The father-daughter duo practise yoga at the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centre in Toronto, where they are also instructors.

Since 2007, Michael has been a volunteer for the Yoga-thon for Schizophrenia and has served on the organizing committee for two years. Marina has raised \$1,200 for the Yoga-thon since also becoming a volunteer in 2007, and each year she lends her beautiful voice to the day by singing during the opening ceremonies before taking part in a full day of yoga. Both say their participation has taught them about schizophrenia and the importance of early treatment – information they hope to pass on to others.

“The Yoga-thon helps support perhaps the most vulnerable constituency of society,” says Michael Gwynne. “SSO gives people an immediate resource and a place to turn where they can get answers quickly.”

In 2008, the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario used the funds generated through the Yoga-thon to reach out to 2,300 youth, through presentations and interactive workshops that focused on recognizing the early symptoms of psychosis.

“Early intervention is crucial,” says Michael, “and it gives me contentment to engage in an activity that can help more people receive the treatment they need.”

Since its inception in 2005, the Yoga-thon has raised nearly \$100,000 for SSO’s early treatment programs.

The Strengthening Families Together (SFT) program ran seven times in the Peterborough/Durham region, highlighting the need for education and support for families living with a mental illness.

In Hamilton, 40 students and service providers in the fields of addiction and social work attended an SSO workshop on Understanding Schizophrenia and Other Mental Illnesses.

In partnership with Lynx: Early Psychosis Intervention Program, SSO hosted Margaret Trudeau at a presentation that provided education, awareness and entertainment to a rapt Campbellford audience.

MICHAEL & MARINA
GWYNNE



“SSO gives people an immediate resource and a place to turn where they can get answers quickly.”

SSO has participated in Crisis Intervention Training with a specific focus on mental illness for more than 300 regional and provincial police officers, dispatch workers and police services staff.

The Behind The Minds Eye Film Festival, which presents movies related to mental health, welcomed 500 students to film screenings and panel discussions to raise awareness about stigma and early intervention.

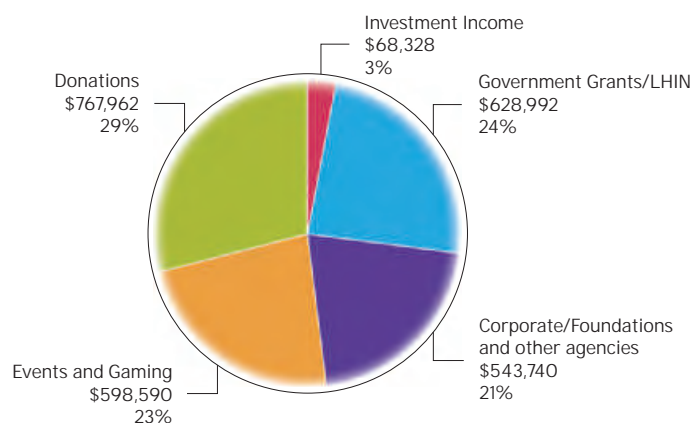


Statement of Financial Position

MARCH 31, 2009

	Total 2009 \$	Total 2008 \$
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash	340,666	390,178
Amounts receivable	79,282	62,350
Bequest receivable	53,198	–
Prepaid expense	83,801	100,821
	<hr/> 556,947	553,349
Capital assets	96,077	121,631
Investments	1,946,799	2,053,691
Planned gifts	554,409	554,409
	<hr/> 3,154,232	3,283,080
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	42,185	60,639
Deferred contributions	171,993	140,181
	<hr/> 214,178	200,820
Deferred planned gifts	554,409	554,409
	<hr/> 768,587	755,229
NET ASSETS		
Externally restricted for endowment	50,000	–
Externally restricted	1,850,638	1,856,315
Internally restricted	388,930	541,919
Invested in capital assets	96,077	121,631
Unrestricted	–	7,986
	<hr/> 2,385,645	2,527,851
	<hr/> 3,154,232	3,283,080

Revenue

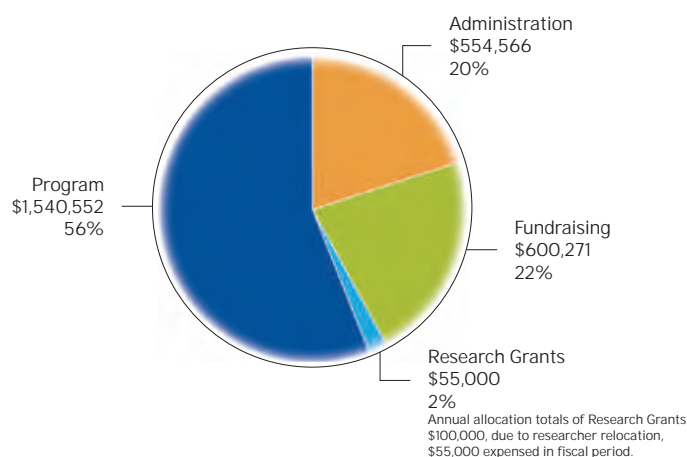


These statements are extracted from the 2008-2009 financial statements. Complete audited financial statements are available on request from the provincial office.

Schizophrenia Society of Ontario
Statement of Operations
 YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2009

	Operating Fund \$	Designated Fund \$	Total 2009 \$	Total 2008 \$
REVENUE				
Contributions				
Donations - individuals	330,971	56,555	387,526	297,809
Donations - corporate	19,651	1,054	20,705	28,238
Donations - foundations	10,757	—	10,757	8,800
Membership dues	27,305	—	27,305	27,495
Bequests	321,669	—	321,669	475,993
Special event - Family Matters Conference	—	—	—	79,520
Events and gaming	548,578	50,012	598,590	695,917
Grants				
Provincial government	566,394	—	566,394	531,102
Government - other	62,598	—	62,598	66,140
Corporate	181,194	—	181,194	168,600
Foundations and other agencies	362,546	—	362,546	532,640
Investment income	31,306	37,022	68,328	89,448
Sundry	571	—	571	450
	2,463,540	144,643	2,608,183	3,002,152
EXPENSE				
Program	1,536,702	—	1,536,702	1,643,427
Research grants	—	55,000	55,000	100,000
Membership fees - Schizophrenia Society of Canada	3,850	—	3,850	3,910
Fundraising	580,271	20,000	600,271	630,657
Administration	529,246	25,320	554,566	516,057
	2,650,069	100,320	2,750,389	2,894,051
NET REVENUE (EXPENSE) FOR THE YEAR	(186,529)	44,323	(142,206)	108,101

Expenses



SUPPORTERS

Thank you one and all!

We are grateful to all our donors who have supported our work over this past year. Through gifts of \$1,000 or more given between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, the following supporters have contributed significantly to our efforts to provide a reason to hope and the means to cope to people affected by schizophrenia across the province.

Government Supporters

City of Hamilton
Government of Canada
Hamilton Niagara Haldimand
Brant LHIN
Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
Ministry of the Attorney General
Regional Municipality of Halton,
Halton Healthy Community Fund
Regional Municipality of Peel
Toronto Central LHIN

Foundations Supporters

BMO Employee Charitable Foundation
Community Foundation of Ottawa
Federated Health Charities
IBM Employees' Charitable Fund
Lee Tak Wai Foundation
Marc Santi Foundation
Niagara Community Foundation
Ontario Trillium Foundation
OPG Employees & Pensioners'
Charity Trust
RBC Foundation
The George Lunan Foundation
The Harold Crabtree Foundation
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Foundation

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