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Heart-Link: “Under the Stars”: Prom Dance for Emily’s House Children and Families



One beautiful, young lady in a lovely dress, sported a wrist corsage of tiny, mauve, sweetheart roses. Her mom provided a long-stem rose in the same colour for each child in a wheelchair. Our very own Emily looked radiant in her formal wear. All the parents and children were smiling, expressing great fun, and happiness. One dad gently lifted his beautiful daughter from her wheelchair, holding her securely, and danced with her to, “I love you just the way you are.”

It was, indeed, a special night under the stars, for our 56 special guests: 28 young people and their loved ones. Heartfelt thanks go to the staff, volunteers, and Summerhill Market catering, who hosted our families. By all accounts, the evening sparkled with thoughtful details, celebration of life, and, “so much magic and memories made, never to be forgotten.”

Board of Directors, 2018:

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www.philipazizcentre.ca | www.emilyshouse.ca
Phone: 416-363-9196 | Fax: 416-363-6983

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In Your Words:
Client Impact

“I can’t tell you how helpful [my PAC volunteer] is. As always, she was very helpful to me. Since Meagan has started working with me, I am more confident and I feel better about myself. Thank you for bringing her into my life.”

– a client in our community program

“When it comes to my son, there are many things that I don’t get to choose, like, for example, my son is gonna pass. But, you know, I couldn’t have chosen a better way for it to happen. It’s happening around people that now love him... if I had to choose how my child was gonna go, I couldn’t have chosen anything better, literally, I couldn’t have.”

– an Emily’s House mom



Heart-Link: “Under the Stars”: Prom Dance for Emily’s House Children and Families



When parents first hear that their child has been diagnosed as palliative, often they feel they have to let go of many of the dreams they have for their child, like a first father-daughter dance at a fancy-dress social, or of cheering on their local sports club... If our team at Emily’s House can come up with a creative solution to help make some of these dreams come true for our families, it will happen. They will find a way for a new baby to experience a Maple Leafs hockey game with his family; or, create a magical event like our first, much-anticipated, “Under the Stars”: Prom Dance for Emily’s House Children and Families held in February.

Our Recreation Coordinator lead the team to create an enchanting, fairytale-like ambiance. Our children and their families received beautiful, wedding-like invitations. The everyday entrance of our

Emily’s House residential children’s hospice was transformed. Dressed in their semi-formal wear, guests walked across a red carpet, where they were met by the camera flashes of paparazzi (aka, our children’s hospice volunteers). Families were surrounded by vibrant balloons and stars, that lead them through a lighted arch of perfect purple, and the scene was set to make new memories. The occasion came to life, with a live DJ, lights, colour, a prom photo booth, a chocolate fountain, and “cuddle dances.”

One of our team members wrote: *“Casa Loma and Disneyland have nothing to compare to the magic that happened at Emily’s House. Moms, dads, children, staff, and volunteers – stylishly dressed in formal wear – were a wonderful sight to behold.”*

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YES! I would like to help make the most of the moments available.

I would like to give a one-time donation of: \$500 \$250 \$100 Other \$ _____

A monthly gift of \$ _____ to be: charged to my credit card direct bank withdrawal

Please give today to support the following programs:

- In-home Volunteer Visiting Hospice Program
- Emily’s House
- Children & Families Programs
- Spiritual/Bereavement Program
- Wherever the need is greatest

Emily’s House and the Philip Aziz Centre for Hospice Care provide respite and palliative care for children and adults living with life-threatening illnesses and their families: **compassionate care, when there is no cure...**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Prov.: _____
Postal Code: _____ Tel.: _____
Email: _____
 Cheque (Please make cheques payable to Philip Aziz Centre)
 Credit Card VISA MasterCard
Card #: _____
Exp.: _____ Signature: _____

To donate online www.philipazizcentre.ca
(Tax receipts will be provided for donations over \$20)

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For more, visit:
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558 Gerrard Street E., Toronto, ON M4M 1X8
Tel: 416-363-9196 • Fax: 416-363-6983
www.philipazizcentre.ca
(Charitable registration # BN 89422 8063 RR0001)

From the C.E.O.'s Desk's: Rauni Salminen

It is with sincere gratitude that I write this today. Gratitude for a culture of compassion and an excellent staff team that has come to distinguish **Emily's House** and our **Philip Aziz Centre (PAC) Visiting Hospice** programs. To keep you updated, I'd like to share these recent accomplishments:



Rauni Salminen, CEO, dismantles a gingerbread house for children visiting Emily's House.

- Emily's House and Philip Aziz are tracking steady growth in admissions, requests for care in the community, outreach engagements, and educational opportunities. Our partners continue to access our volunteers to support their patients and families both in the hospital as well as in the community. At the same time, we are finding new opportunities to strengthen our partnership and pathways of care with **SickKids Hospital**. In collaboration with SickKids, we have created three Emily's House referral videos (i.e., respite, advanced care and an Emily's House facility tour), highlighting: our relationship with SickKids, our hospice programs, staff and home, and, most importantly, client impact stories. ([You can find the new Emily's House / SickKids videos on our websites. Please take a look!](#))
- Emily's House completed a successful audit and achieved Accreditation. Philip

Aziz Centre was Accredited last year. Accreditation is an indicator of compliance with **Hospice Palliative Care Ontario (HPCO)** standards for residential hospices and visiting hospice services. Accreditation assures the delivery of consistent, high-quality hospice palliative care.

- PAC was approached by the **Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (TC LHIN)** to provide leadership in the development of a centralized resource for training volunteers involved in the delivery of palliative care across the health care sector.
- Our client voices are key in ensuring quality. Their feedback is essential to our Quality Improvement. We launched our **Parent Advisory Council for Emily's House** to ensure that caregivers and care-providers are working in unison.

I continuously receive feedback from clients, referring agencies, and hospital partners about the trusted, high-caliber care and support our hospice staff and volunteers offer adults, children and families. From our clinical care, to music and recreation, from administration and fundraising, to spiritual care, case managers, and our trained volunteers, I can confidently say, we are making a measurable, quality impact in the health care system. All this is made possible through the generosity of our donors and the **Ministry of Health**, who believe that every person should have access to quality palliative care, when and where needed. Together we make this possible. Thank you for contributing to this success.

Many Compassionate Hands Do Make Light Work! Emily's House / PAC Volunteers

These are exciting times for the Philip Aziz Centre and Emily's House Volunteer Program. We continue to prioritize being an essential psycho-social support for all our clients, in both the community and residential hospice programs. Recently, we've also focused on team building, education, new volunteer opportunities, and engagement.



- New performance record – This winter, we broke our own record for “most volunteer hours served” in a single quarter (across all programs): **an outstanding 13,237 hours in three months!**
- **Youth Advisory Council (YAC)** – YAC continues to support Emily's House family events throughout the year, showing up in costumes, and pitching in to assist in practical ways (set-up, activities help, and clean up). This spring, our youth team is gearing up for another fun-filled, food-related event, to help raise money for client care programming through their **Hike for Hospice Team**.
- Awards – Congratulations to volunteer, **Mick Kahan**, for winning the **Volunteer Toronto Legacy Award 2018** for his involvement at Emily's House and in Hospice Palliative Care Advocacy!
- **Shout Out to the Volunteer Team** – Amanda Maragos, Manager of Volunteer Programs, Education and Community Outreach, writes: *“Congratulations and thank you for all your care, commitment and hours! Please keep your eyes on your email inboxes, as it continues to be the primary communication channel for volunteer-related information, opportunities and event details.”*

Donor Profile:

Damian's Campaign and Employee Grants from **Macquarie Group Foundation, AG Growth International, and Connor, Clark & Lunn Foundation**

Thank you to the committed team who cycled and fundraised as part of **Damian's Campaign 2017** in the Blue Mountains Centurion: **Lindsay Holtz, Tim Close, JD Christman and Terry Landrigan**. Their team of over 25 people raised more than \$150,000 for Emily's House, with leadership support from their generous corporate philanthropic programs.

Born in 2010, Lindsay and Tim's son, Damian, only lived for seven days: *“We started Damian's Campaign to honor our son's life, and to address the lifelong love that a parent has for a child, even when they are no longer with us. ... When we learned our newborn son would die, we were beyond devastated. We are fortunate to have tremendous support from our family, friends and employers.”*

On supporting Emily's House, Lindsay explains: *“Watching our child die is, we hope, the worst thing that we ever endure. Emily's House provides care that is much needed by families facing this tragic situation. From the perspective of a family that would have welcomed this support, Emily's House is a special place whose benefits cannot be quantified.”*



Events for Your Calendar:

Save the Dates and Check Our Website Year-round for Details and Updates



- Grace Manning Memorial 3-on-3 Hockey Tournament and Charity Social (Apr 7-8/18)
- Toronto Hike for Hospice (May 6/18) – Online registration is open now. Prizes for the first participants to raise \$100+
- Healing Cycle Ride (Sept 23/18)
- Host Your Own Fundraising Event: If you, your baseball buddies, book club, work team, school group, or friends are considering hosting a fundraiser for Emily's House / PAC, please contact us.

United Way Campaign Designations

Did you know that even though Emily's House / Philip Aziz Centre is not an official UNITED WAY charity, your UNITED WAY donations can still provide compassionate care for our hospice clients? If you are participating in a UNITED WAY campaign through your workplace, you can select to designate your giving to Emily's House / PAC. You can support your work team, and your favourite hospice team!

For our families... Ava's Garden Memorial Ceremony for Emily's House Families – Sunday, June 24th. Come plant flowers, sing a song, or release a balloon. Invitations to follow.

For more on fundraising event updates, visit: www.philipazizcentre.ca or <https://www.facebook.com/PhilipAzizCentre/>.