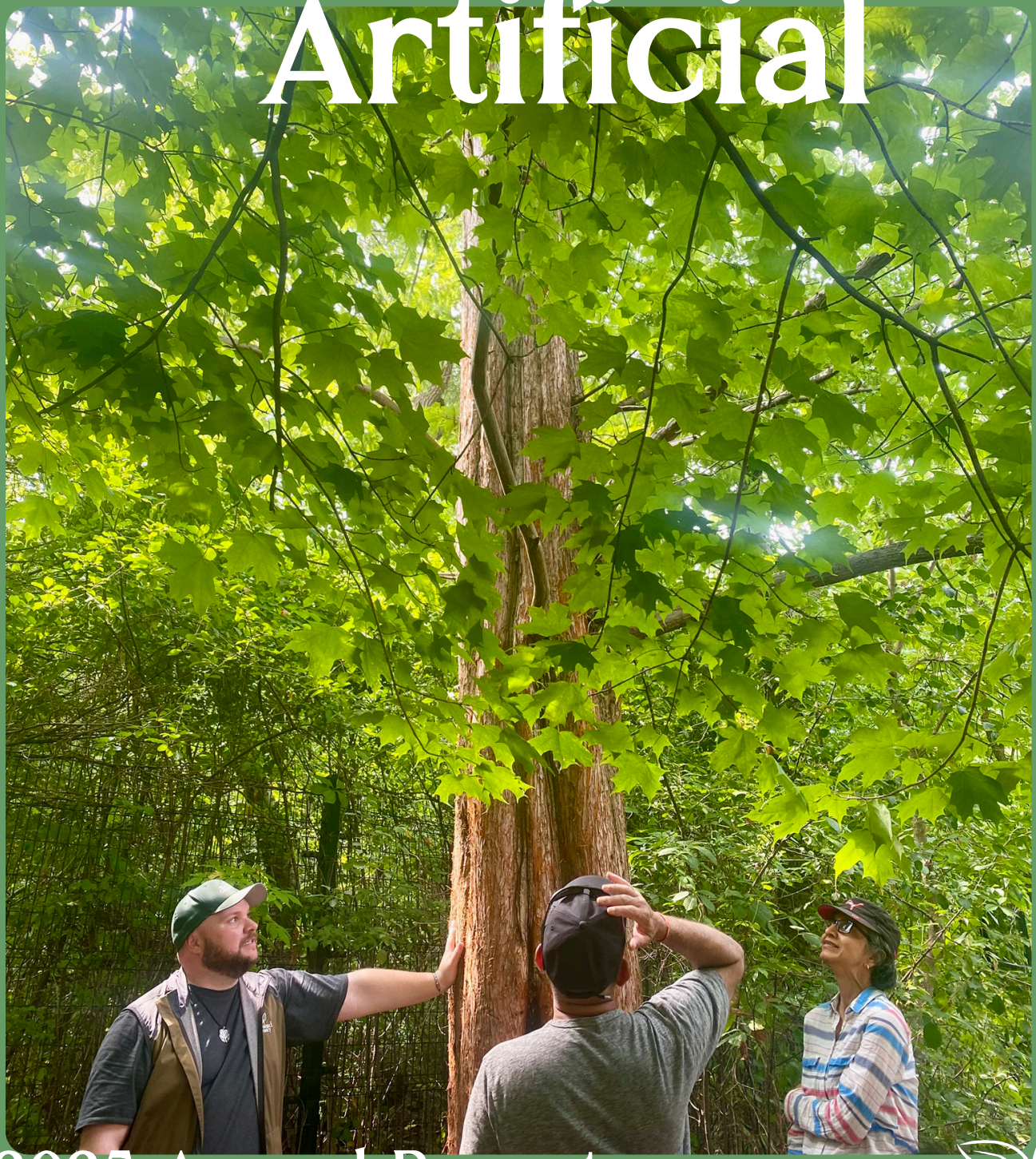
Nothing Artificial



2025 Annual Report

The Riverwood Conservancy

Front cover: Program Director, Derek Stone, left, leads a tree identification walk at our 2025 Summer BioBlitz

Craving the authentic

It's no secret that this is a time of relentless information. We can't seem to go more than a few minutes without accessing the digital, whether it be the 24-hour news cycle, artificial intelligence, or deceptive social media comparisons. As these forces weave themselves into our daily routines, they also remind us how essential it is to stay connected to what's real.

Real life – the kind we experience with all of our senses – is what happens at The Riverwood Conservancy. Here you can pause to hear the birds chirping, see the Credit River flow, and smell flowers growing from the soil – an authentic experience, felt in real time.

Our mission is to protect the wonders of what's real, for today and future generations. We stayed true to that purpose throughout 2025, connecting more than 16,000 people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to nature. But that's only a number! What it really represents is schoolkids putting down their phones and heading off into the woodlands; families building bird boxes – and relationships – together; young people getting experience for green careers; and co-workers getting soil on their jeans as they plant a tree.

At Riverwood, we "touch grass" every day. However you are connected to us, thank you for stepping away from the artificial and choosing to be part of what's real.



Sara Wilbur-Collins, MCL
Executive Director



Executive Director, Sara Wilbur-Collins, and Acting Chair, Clement Mbulu

The Riverwood Conservancy would like to acknowledge that the land on which we operate is within the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the traditional land of the Wendat Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. This land is part of the Upper Canada Land Surrenders to the Crown. Today, the region surrounding Riverwood remains home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work here.



2025 Board of Directors

Peeter Poldre
Chair

Clement Mbulu
Vice-Chair

Heather Shaw
Past Chair

Elinor Laffey
Corporate Secretary

Tim Pickering
Treasurer

Imdad Hussain Junejo
Member-at-Large

Swaroop Dogra

Amy Tjen

Peter Newsome

Jonathan Davis

Monica Jako

David Reid

Keeping it real

Our city is changing quickly, and The Riverwood Conservancy is evolving right alongside it. As life becomes increasingly digital, the need for meaningful outdoor experiences has never been clearer. Riverwood offers something rare – a place to slow down, reconnect with nature, and enjoy the simple, grounding beauty of the outdoors. In the years ahead, we know even more people will seek out this green sanctuary at the heart of our growing urban landscape.

Last year was one of renewal and forward momentum. We expanded our nature-based day camps and wellness programming, expanded our Membership offerings, and deepened our Indigenous allyship efforts. Alongside this program growth, we continued to strengthen our financial foundation. Our second Great Riverwood Hike was a tremendous success – be sure to mark your calendar for this year's event on Sunday, October 4!

We were pleased to welcome David Reid to our Board of Directors in 2025. If you've participated in our programs, you may already know Dave – his enthusiasm for Riverwood is unmistakable. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to Alan Lytle and Christina Woodward, who retired from their Board service in April 2025, for their thoughtful leadership and dedication.

This year, we also said goodbye to two cherished Riverwood champions, Shirley Daniels and Garry Watson. Both were instrumental in our early days as the Mississauga Garden Council, offering wisdom, commitment, and a steady belief in what Riverwood could become. As the gardens come alive this season, we hold their memory close.

Reflecting on the past year, I am filled with gratitude – for our volunteers, Members, donors, and staff. Riverwood is a community defined by care and connection, from the gardens to the boardroom. And that's as real as it gets!

I invite you to read on and discover how the real comes to life at Riverwood.



Clement Mbulu
Acting Chair

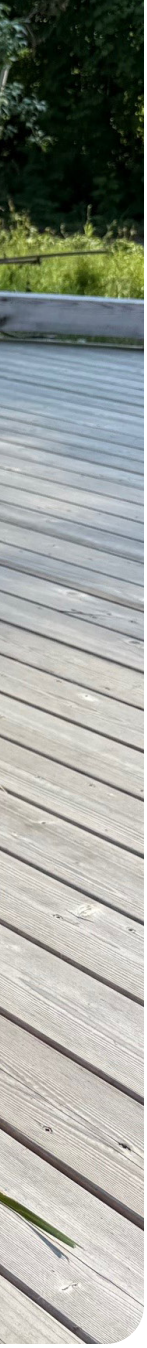


Andrew Stanistreet, foreground, and TRC conservation volunteers work inside the MacEwan Pond

“

I feel proud to volunteer and contribute to any of The Riverwood Conservancy’s projects as it gives me a sense of purpose and achievement in wanting to leave the world a better place than I found it.

Andrew Stanistreet
TRC Volunteer, Member, and Donor



A commitment to conservation

Conservation is at the heart of everything we do, and that means not only working to protect our precious woodlands, wetlands, gardens, and waterways, but also bringing in the community to take part in that work.

Removing invasive species, planting trees and wildflowers, and cleaning up litter are year-round efforts that we must undertake to keep Riverwood beautiful and safe for people, and ecologically healthy for the wide array of plants and wildlife that reside here.

To accomplish our work, we connect individual volunteers to our conservation program, and host group volunteer outings from local businesses in Conservation Crew experiences.

One standout bit of feedback we received from a Conservation Crew participant read, “It’s great to hear why we did the conservation activity. It’s also nice to revisit areas that we worked on in the past to see the impact we’re having. The TRC team always makes me feel appreciated!”

Our individual conservation volunteers are always ready to dig, and sometimes wade, into the work. One such volunteer is Andrew Stanistreet, who started volunteering with The Riverwood Conservancy because he wanted to do something meaningful with his spare time.

“I’ve volunteered with the bird feeding program, with event support for The Riverwood Indigenous Social, and assisted with invasive species clearance, tree planting, and bird box building,” says Andrew.

In addition to volunteering all around Riverwood, Andrew supports our work as a donor.

“I donate to support all the passionate individuals at The Riverwood Conservancy who understand the role nature plays in bringing a sense of calm to the world,” he says. “Riverwood makes me feel part of a community with a common goal. I also feel more connected to nature. It’s my happy place.”

11,019

Volunteer hours contributed across all of our program areas

956

Volunteers engaged in 2025

750

Trees planted through our conservation programs

988

Pounds of invasive garlic mustard removed from around Riverwood



Summer BioBlitz



Mississauga Mayor, Carolyn Parrish, and Ward 8 Councillor, Joe Horneck, at the official re-opening of the MacEwan Pond

Everyone's to discover

201

Discovery programs delivered in 2025

5,540

Participants in our Discovery programs

16,654

Participants across all of our programming areas throughout 2025

Since there's no single way to connect with nature, we strive to have our Discovery programs act as accessible routes to the natural world for everyone who comes to Riverwood.

In 2025, we created Discovery programs to appeal to birders, gardeners, stargazers, yogis, wildlife lovers, forest bathers, Tai Chi practitioners, and more! The varied nature of our Discovery programs means more members of our community can find connections to nature that speak to them.

Over 5,500 people across a range of ages, backgrounds, and abilities took advantage of those programs last year.

At the end of each program, we send participants a survey to share their thoughts on their experiences, and here's one response that caught our attention.

"With my mum's (sic) reduced mobility, the volunteers and staff kindly made a wheelchair accessible route for her as we realized her walker was not going to cut it on some of the paths/hills," the anonymous program participant told us.

"The kindness of everyone made it really work for my mum, and she enjoyed it 'more than if you made me walk that hill,' she said. Ha!"

From plans, achievements

Goals from our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan	Achievements in 2025
Protect and restore the diverse ecosystems, natural features, and wildlife populations of Riverwood and the surrounding area	Engaged in restoration projects across 75 acres of the Riverwood property, with 750 trees and 1,800 wildflowers planted
Design and maintain diverse and engaging gardens, expressing a vision that connects Riverwood with the community	Completed significant upgrades to the Sensory Path to include new interpretive signage, tactile elements and an inviting wingspan board
Continue the development of an integrated revenue strategy	Completed research and garnered community feedback on the creation of a hybrid donor-member model of membership which will be instituted in 2026
Work with Indigenous communities to support their goals for wellbeing through programs and ceremonies at Riverwood	Hosted “Truth Before Reconciliation” presentation by Jason Johnson, Founder of Turtle Island Charity, took part in The Indigenous Network’s “Walking Together: A Journey for Reconciliation” event at Riverwood
Spark wonder and delight by delivering high-quality outdoor education programming that engages children, youth, and their families	Delivered Camp Riverwood programming for kids in Grades 1-6 on P.A. Days, during March Break, and for eight weeks during the summer
Support our mission and revenue goals with a comprehensive communications and marketing program	Increased total number of social followers (across Facebook, Instagram, X, and LinkedIn) by 7%
Enhance and expand fee-for-service offerings and donations	Achieved record annual revenue for Education Naturally field trips, raised $4,000 through hosting our first Native Plant Sale
Engage people in volunteer roles that provide purpose, social connections, and physical activity	Secured funding from an RBC Foundation grant of $50,000 over three years to expand group conservation volunteering by one-third by 2028


Native Plant Sale


“Walking Together” Event



Sensory Path Upgrades

264

Education Naturally programs delivered (a new annual record)

6,782

Education Naturally participants (a new annual record)

Now entering an AI-free zone

Extensive screen time on its own is potentially harmful for young children, but there's a growing body of research that suggests when AI-generated videos that contain incorrect or nonsensical information – often referred to as AI slop – flood their devices, it can actually delay development and hinder their understanding of cause-and-effect.

Time spent away from screens is vital for developing minds. That's a big reason why programs like our field trips, day camps, and therapeutic horticulture activities matter so much to parents, educators, and community group leaders, and of course, the kids themselves who take part in those programs.

Our Education Naturally field trips welcomed a record number of students to Riverwood in 2025, while also raising a record amount of revenue.

Camp Riverwood is no longer just a summer affair, with our nature-based day camps taking place on P.A. Days and March Break during the school year, in addition to eight weeks of programming in July and August.

And our therapeutic horticulture programs, offered to participants of all ages, continue to provide individuals with special needs experiential education in our gardens, in our classrooms, and on the trails.



Therapeutic horticulture programming



Education Naturally programming



Jahreleaseya Lehmann-Simpson supports a summer camper

> I felt supported every step of the way in learning my role, and I really enjoyed seeing how the campers grew over the summer, how their comfort level increased interacting with each other socially, and interacting with nature!
>
> **Jahreleaseya Lehmann-Simpson**
> **2025 Summer Camp Counsellor**

Sadia Tahir *is a Grade 5 Teacher at Ahmadiyya School Mississauga. After bringing her students to Riverwood for an Education Naturally field trip, she shared this lovely letter of thanks with us.*

Our sincere thanks for the incredible and informative field trip you hosted for our students. The experience was truly engaging, educational, and memorable for everyone involved.

Your team did a fantastic job of creating a welcoming environment while delivering meaningful, hands-on learning opportunities. The students not only deepened their understanding of the natural environment but also developed a greater appreciation for conservation and sustainability. They especially enjoyed learning about navigation skills and exploring biodiversity, which sparked curiosity and encouraged them to think more critically about the ecosystems around them.

It was wonderful to see the students so engaged, enthusiastic, and actively participating throughout the day. We are especially grateful for the effort and care that went into planning and leading the activities. Your passion and knowledge made a lasting impression on both students and staff.

Thank you once again for such a well-organized and inspiring experience. We hope to have the opportunity to visit again in the future.

169

Camp Riverwood participants across March Break, P.A. Days, and summer months

816

Therapeutic horticulture program participants

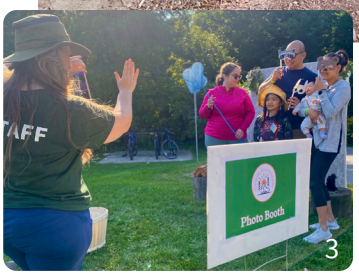
169

Therapeutic horticulture programs delivered

The second edition of **The Great Riverwood Hike** (photos 1-4) smashed its fundraising goal! Through our caring community of hikers, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and supporters, the event raised an incredible $34,000 — through sponsorships and donations — for The Riverwood Conservancy! Because of everyone who took part in the Hike, we can continue to protect Riverwood's green spaces, and give individuals, families, schools, and community groups the opportunity to connect with nature here.


1


2



3


4


7


5


6

The **Junior Naturalists Club** and **Mini Naturalists Club** (photos 5-7) proved once again to be among our most popular offerings, with spaces for both programs filling up within minutes of registrations opening. We're thrilled to see so many kids, and their parents, have a drive to explore and engage with nature!

“

We’d like to recognize the significant contributions The Riverwood Conservancy has made through restoring habitats, managing invasives, and educating visitors, leading watershed stewardship through ecological revitalization and inclusive community engagement. Your long-term vision ensures both environmental health and community connection to nature in the Credit River Watershed.

Michael Palleschi
Credit Valley Conservation Chair



Board Member, David Reid, and Board Chair, Peeter Poldre



Program Director, Derek Stone, Executive Director, Sara Wilbur-Collins, and Acting Chair, Clement Mbulu

HERITAGE MISSISSAUGA

2025 Natural Heritage Award

Credit Valley Conservation
inspired by nature

2025 Watershed Excellence Award

Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2025

	2025	2024
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 314,001	$ 303,433
Short-term investments	-	50,000
Accounts receivable	9,396	22,772
Harmonized sales tax receivable	6,101	6,499
Prepaid expenses	14,972	20,426
	344,470	403,130
Capital assets	22,950	13,532
	367,420	$ 416,662
Liabilities and net assets		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$ 55,046	$ 65,509
Deferred contributions – operating	43,224	63,502
Deferred contributions – capital	17,481	6,487
	115,751	135,498
Net assets		
Operating Reserve	246,200	274,119
Capital Asset Reserve	5,469	7,045
	251,669	281,164
	$ 367,420	$ 416,662

Approved by the Board of Directors

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended December 31, 2025

	2025	2024
Operating Reserve		
Balance, beginning of year	$ 274,119	$ 421,556
Excess of expenditures over revenues	(27,274)	(147,437)
Transfer to the Capital Asset Reserve	(645)	-
Balance, end of year	$ 246,200	$ 274,119
Capital Asset Reserve		
Balance, beginning of year	$ 7,045	$ 9,882
Excess of expenditures over revenues for year	(2,221)	(2,837)
Transfer from the Operating Reserve	645	-
Balance, end of year	$ 5,469	$ 7,045

Statement of Operations

For the year ended December 31, 2025

	Operating Reserve	Capital Asset Reserve	Total 2025	Total 2024
Revenues				
Grants	$ 540,900	4,402	545,302	699,814
Program fees	270,262	-	270,262	201,306
Donations	135,335	-	135,335	195,960
Events, fundraising, and sponsorships	110,185	-	110,185	96,125
Honoraria	-	-	-	150
Other revenue	20,660	-	20,660	23,037
	1,077,342	4,402	1,081,744	1,216,392
Expenditures				
Administration	124,025	-	124,025	116,688
Amortization	-	6,623	6,623	6,534
Communications and marketing	13,183	-	13,183	7,462
Fundraising	23,474	-	23,474	41,052
Program expenses	71,927	-	71,927	93,607
Purchased services	2,176	-	2,176	4,054
Salaries and wages	869,831	-	869,831	1,097,269
	1,104,616	6,623	1,111,239	1,366,666
Excess of expenditures over revenues	(27,274)	(2,221)	(29,495)	(150,274)

Results reflect our planned multi-year financial recovery. Some program fees, sponsorships and event revenue were budgeted as donations in 2025.

2025 Major Supporters

Guardians of Riverwood | $100,000+
City of Mississauga

Guardians of Riverwood | $25,000+
Hoffman-La Roche Ltd.
Ontario Trillium Foundation
RBC Foundation
Anonymous (1)

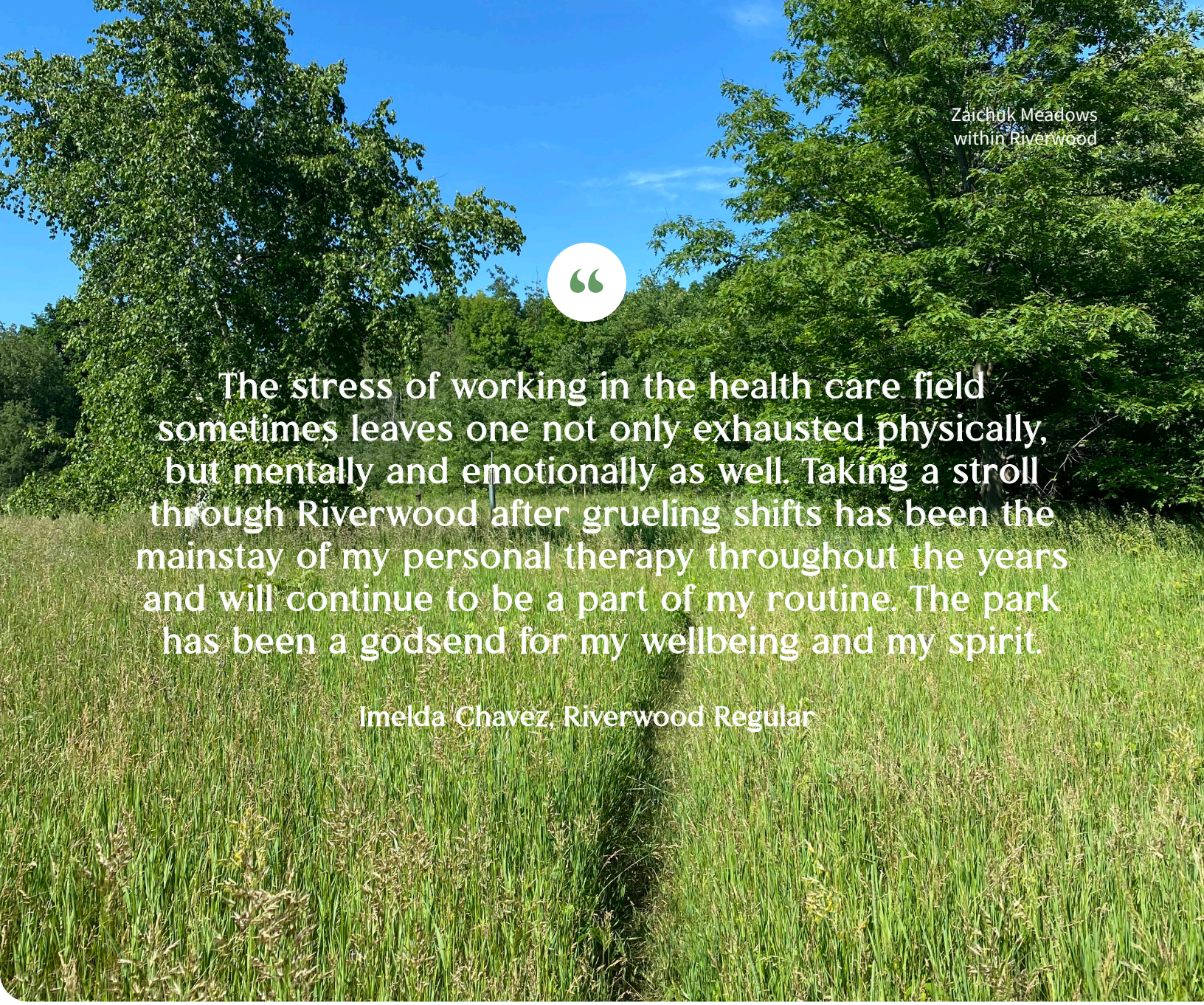
Sunshine Circle | $10,000+
Armstrong Milling Co Ltd.
Employment and Social Development Canada
Gordon and Patricia Gray Animal Welfare Foundation
Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA)
Scotts Canada Ltd.
Sherilyn Ketchen RBC Wealth Management
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
The Frank Fowler Foundation
Walker Industries Holdings Ltd.

Pollinators' Circle | $5,000+
Archie D'Cruz Magic of Giving Fund
Capra's Kitchen/Massimo Capra
Johansen Larsen Foundation
Stantec Consulting Ltd.
Anonymous (1)

Gardeners' Circle | $1,000+
Alectra Utilities Corporation
Allegis Group Foundation
Ash Grove Cement
Axis Communications
Baxter Canada
Boston Scientific
Brian Deegan
Brian Packham
Canadian Turner Construction Company
Carolyn Parrish
Catherine Doehler
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Riverside Natural Foods
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Suzanne J. Roy
The Riverwood Conservancy Endowment Foundation Fund at the Mississauga Foundation
UTM Student Association for Geography and the Environment
Violet C. Bull
Anonymous (1)

Sapling Donors | $500+
Amy Tjen
Arthur and Carol MacDonald
Bruce Crockett
Carolyn Sherk
Credit Valley Horticultural Society
David Pavanel
Dean M. Sane
Douglas Markoff Riverwood Horticulture Fund at the Mississauga Foundation
Franca Vettese
Joe Horneck
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Medtronic
Michael Briem
Northside Contracting
Orlando Shkodra
Peeter Poldre
Penny Stanley
Rasheed Clarke
Rick Holden
Robin Haley-Gillin
Rotary Club of Mississauga
Sidrah Thakur
Steve Hoscheit
Timothy Pickering
Ulrich Krull
Urban Nature Store
Westburne Electrical Supply

Thank you to all of the individuals and organizations who contributed in 2025!
For a list of additional donors, please visit **theriverwoodconservancy.org/supporters**.



Zaichuk Meadows within Riverwood

> The stress of working in the health care field sometimes leaves one not only exhausted physically, but mentally and emotionally as well. Taking a stroll through Riverwood after grueling shifts has been the mainstay of my personal therapy throughout the years and will continue to be a part of my routine. The park has been a godsend for my wellbeing and my spirit.
>
> Imelda Chavez, Riverwood Regular

Many thanks to our Guardians of Riverwood and Sunshine Circle supporters

Mississauga Grant Recipient

Roche

Ontario Trillium Foundation / Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

RBC Foundation

Armstrong Canada's Premier Bird Food

Employment and Social Development Canada
Canada

Gordon & Patricia Gray Animal Welfare Foundation

Toronto Pearson

Scotts

Sherilyn Ketchen
RBC Wealth Management

TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

The Frank Fowler Foundation

walker

@yourriverwood

You can bring our vision of a community that lives in harmony with nature to life. Make your gift today at **theriverwoodconservancy.org/donate** or email **info@theriverwoodconservancy.org** and let's talk about your giving plans.

The Riverwood Conservancy.org