



Annual Report

Envision the Future

FY 2013 - 2014

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Message from the Chair

New Beginnings

I'm delighted to have joined the iSisters Technology Mentoring board, an organization whose mandate serving women in need ("learners" in iSisters parlance) is so worthwhile. I'm lucky that out-going chair Pat den Boer has left things in good order, which makes stepping into her shoes that much easier (see more at [A Special 'Thank-You' to Patricia den Boer](#)). I'm also blessed with an executive director and fellow board members who are both collegial and energetic.



A Strategic Approach

We've extended and refreshed four strategic priorities from the past year to guide our way into fiscal year 2014-15. Core to them is ensuring we continue to deliver relevant programs to our learners, with the relevant tools to measure this. As with most organizations, donor stewardship is also a key thrust. And while iSisters is well-known to the group of partners and donors that we currently work with, we are striving to expand our profile within the city, region and province. Finally we wish to both keep and strengthen our focus on organizational effectiveness.

Maturing the Organization

This past year has seen iSisters embark on a series of "firsts". For example as part of an accreditation exercise, iSisters went through its first ever financial review engagement, resulting in re-statements for both this and the previous fiscal year. (Learn more about our accreditation efforts in [Message from the Executive Director](#).) We also recently updated our by-laws to provide a more explicit focus on members as part of continuing the corporation under the new Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. The learnings from these endeavours have caused us to redouble our focus on excellence in governance and accountability.

Looking Ahead

While there is a wealth of good things happening at iSisters, the organization is not without its challenges. Adjusting to an unexpected executive director resignation eighteen months ago, the organization necessarily lowered last year's fund-raising and program objectives; however this is not our desired status quo. Having made a significant reduction in expenses, we are now focused on the path to offer high-quality technology mentoring to the greatest number of learners we can.

Claire Toplis
Chair
September, 2014

Message from the Executive Director

As I reflect on all iSisters has accomplished over the past 13 years, I recognize the journey has been fueled by the kindness, compassion, and generosity of our board members, donors, partners, volunteers and our community. iSisters' transition continues, as we grow and develop, helping empower women in need live better lives, create brighter futures and build stronger communities.

Our last fiscal year was a very busy and productive one as we continued to work with our community partners to create innovative and relevant programs for our learners, matured as an organization by completing the Imagine Canada Standards application, and remained focused on our Strategic Priorities.

Our partnership with The Salvation Army Bethany Hope Centre began last September, and continues to flourish. We successfully completed two pilot projects in the spring of 2014, where fourteen young mothers participated in our new Technology Mentoring for Young Mothers program. Through this program, our goal is to offer young at-risk Mothers a full set of digital and media literacy skills, which enables them to return to and succeed in high school, and prepare for employment. The program builds community capacity to support at-risk, young parents.

Our learners spoke, and we listened! A new Career Connections program was created to enable our learners to move beyond basic computer functionality. Along with our dedicated partners, the program now offers workshops on Employment Search, Web Marketing, and Social Media & Networking. These new enhancements allow us to better connect our learners and graduates with employment opportunities, expand and mature our program offering, and leverage existing resources to support the transition to work for our learners.

Staying true to our commitment to maintain organizational effectiveness, iSisters completed the Imagine Canada Standards Program application. The Standards Program awards accreditation to charities and non-profits that demonstrate excellence in board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, staff management, and volunteer involvement. My sincere thanks and gratitude go out to Andrew Silver, Carleton University Law Student, and my volunteer Project Manager for the Standards application for his hard work, patience and commitment. I am proud to announce that on September 19, 2014, iSisters was notified that it was awarded accreditation by Imagine Canada's Standards Program!

If the best indicator of the future is the past, we hope to continue to serve women in need, knowing our supporters believe in our mission, and boldly envision our future.

Linda Milton Perreault
Executive Director
September, 2014



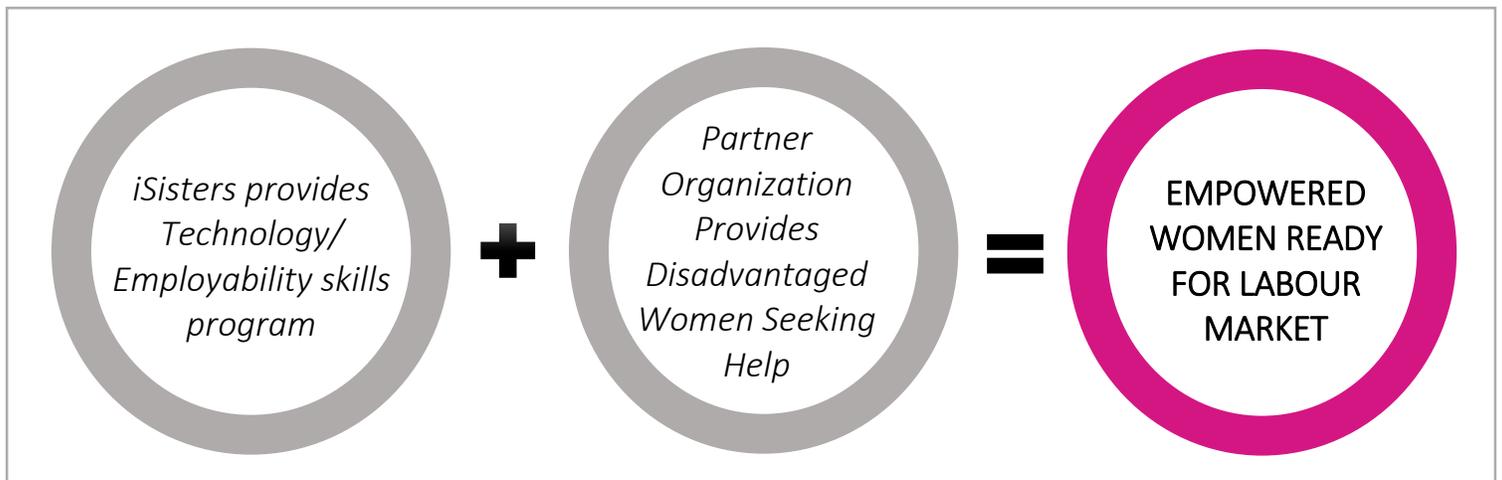
"The iSisters program offers women who are struggling with homelessness and unemployment a chance to dream."

*Sue Garvey, Executive Director,
Cornerstone, Women's Shelter*



"Operation Come Home has been fortunate enough to partner with iSisters to provide a computer course to the female youth in our Roger's Achievement Centre and the Job Action Centre. This course has given them the opportunity to upgrade their computer knowledge, but also offers them a sense of accomplishment. The instructor, Tim has worked effortlessly with the ladies by patiently guiding them through a variety of programs and has successfully managed to instill a sense of accountability and perseverance during the 4 weeks. I've always received extremely positive feedback from the ladies who have been fortunate enough to partake in the workshop."

Melanie Savage, Job Action Centre Employment Support Staff



At iSisters, we believe in education, volunteerism and community capacity building.

We are passionate about the potential of technology as a means to learn,
grow and gain economic independence.

About iSisters



iSisters Technology Mentoring Inc. is a Canadian charitable organization that was founded in 2001 by a group of teachers who wanted to contribute to their community.

iSisters connects women in need with technology through mentoring. We increase economic earning potential and independence for women in poverty in Ottawa who are unemployed, have limited education and depend on government services for basic needs. iSisters' award-winning, sustainable and innovative technology mentoring programs, offered free to participants, are built through

strategic alliances with non-profit community partners. iSisters' programs enhance employability skill development, provide a critical and effective stepping stone to improved quality of life and initiate long term and high impact positive change for marginalized women.

We design and deliver community-based technology learning programs in partnership with community organizations which support women in need. Through technology awareness, mentoring and coaching we aim to increase earning potential and economic independence for women in need. Our learning programs are aligned to ISTE NETS (International Society of Technology in Education National Education Technology Standards) and the Conference Board of Canada's Employability Skills 2000+.

At iSisters, we believe in education, volunteerism and community-capacity building. We are passionate about the potential of technology as a means to learn, grow and gain economic independence.

Our learning programs are built in collaboration with community partners, are customized to meet the needs of learners and are built to be sustainable (without the need of onsite support from iSisters) within two years.

OUR MISSION

- To provide access to technology;
- To develop and deliver technology mentoring programs; and
- To enhance career opportunities through technological awareness.

OUR VISION

iSisters Technology Mentoring, the leader in technology learning and development, helps empower women in need to live better lives, create better futures and build stronger communities

OUR VALUES

We are passionate and committed to:

- Being Learner Focused
- Being Respectful
- Excellence
- Being Community Oriented
- Being Accountable

Accomplishments and Highlights

We're proud of the following achievements in the past year:

- Celebrated our new partnership with the Bethany Hope Centre and saw fourteen young mothers participate in two pilots for our new *Technology Mentoring for Young at Risk Mothers* program in preparation for the formal launch in September 2014
- Together with our donors and corporate partners, Accenture, Cowan Insurance Group, Cowan Foundation, City of Ottawa, and Invest Ottawa, redeveloped and customized our Career Connections program to better meet the needs of our learners by offering new technology workshops such as Employment Search, Web Marketing, Social Media and Networking
- Partner sustainability: this year, our partners graduated 229 women while running the iSisters program solely on their own
- Successfully completed our first Financial Review Engagement
- As part of strategic plan to maintain organizational effectiveness, completed Imagine Canada's Accreditation application process. This strengthens and publicly demonstrates iSisters' compliance in board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, staff management, and volunteer involvement.
- Upgraded our online, trademarked e-Learning technology site, iTeachnology in preparation for an expansion of our curriculum, services, and programs which can now be delivered to new partners, in new ways.
- Since its inception, iSisters has graduated over 2,250 women from our technology programs!

Spotlight on Volunteers

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

Charitable organizations are nothing without the efforts of their dedicated volunteers, and iSisters is no different. We have had the privilege of a growing volunteer base this past year, and in July we held a Volunteer Appreciation Brunch. Historically we have had a core of dedicated volunteers, and many continue to volunteer with us to this day.

Listed below are some brief highlights of our newest volunteers and how they have contributed to increase iSisters' awareness. Their enthusiasm has translated into valuable support for the organization, helping to share its success stories and projects with the greater Ottawa community through social media and expanded program options.



Lindsay Coderre – Lindsay approached iSisters with a novel opportunity early in the new-year: to complete an alternative teaching placement with us for her studies at Trent University. The three week placement in April-May saw Lindsay prepare a new online presence course for iSisters! She is continuing to volunteer with us, as needed.

Alia Beg – Currently a student at Carleton University, Alia has a particular interest in human rights, with a focus on women and children. She has extensive volunteer experience within and outside Canada, and is providing assistance with our social media and AGM preparation.

Dana Jorgensen – A graduate from Business Marketing at Algonquin College, Dana is passionate about social justice, women and education, poverty, mentorship for girls, and women's rights. Dana has provided help with our social media and onsite events as needed, recently taking pictures at the launch of our Bethany Hope program.

Leslie Youngson – Leslie comes to iSisters with an extensive background in project leadership, taking great pleasure in solving problems that involve the intersection of technology and people. Keen to become more involved with an organization focused on providing technology training to women in need, Leslie has been assisting us with proposal work and at events like the recent launch of our Bethany Hope program.

Anna Yassin – In her 3rd year at Carleton University, Anna is interested in, and has helped with new families, particularly working Somali Youth in a mentoring program. She has strong research skills and is providing administrative support to iSisters' Executive Director.

Elsbeth Tory – Elspeth was profiled in our spring newsletter for her assistance with the Program Development Committee. In addition, Elspeth has been assisting our Executive Director with the website and newsletter preparation.

Danielle Turcotte – Danielle is a recent graduate from Ottawa University and is eager to return time and effort to the community. She is a very capable researcher and has made herself available to be on the Communications Committee.

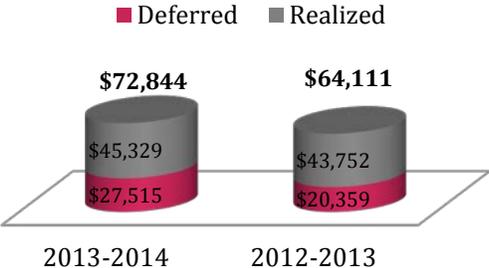
Alicia Puritt – Alicia is excited to be joining iSisters this fall and volunteering with the team - helping with the communication strategy and social media. Working as a Marketing Lead for a small IM company, Alicia saw iSisters as the perfect fit for community engagement and expanding her marketing experience.

Financial Summary

As was noted earlier in this report iSisters underwent its first financial review engagement, resulting in a transition from a cash basis accounting method to an accrual basis method. Fiscal year (FY) 2013-2014 financials and a re-statement of FY 2012-2013 figures are presented here as prepared by Welch LLP, iSisters’ accountants in the review engagement.

Response to grant applications this past year was up approximately 12%, with a number of repeat donors making contributions again in FY 2013-14.

Fundraising

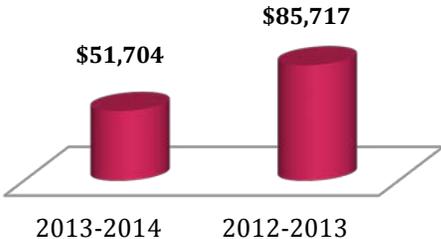


In FY2013-14, revenues recognized were \$45,329 and additional restricted funds of \$27,515 were deferred. These restricted funds are allocated to the FY2014-15 Career Connections and Bethany Hope partner programs, which are now currently underway. Revenues this year increased very slightly over FY2012-13, with virtually all (96%) of this year’s revenue being from grants rather than donations.

Revenue



Expenses



As part of a re-shaping the organization in the last eighteen months, iSisters has significantly reduced its expenses over prior years, becoming a lean organization led by an enthusiastic part-time Executive Director. iSisters is well-positioned for FY2014-15.

Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

April 30, 2014

	2013-14	2012-13
<u>ASSETS</u>		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$47,228	\$22,743
Accounts receivable	5,082	5,230
	\$52,310	\$27,973
<u>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</u>		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$3,197	\$ -
Deferred contributions	47,874	20,359
	51,071	20,359
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted net assets	1,239	7,614
	\$52,310	\$27,973

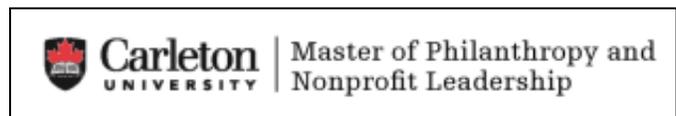
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

Year ended April 30, 2014

	2013-14	2012-13
Revenue		
Grants	\$43,495	\$37,380
Donations	1,834	6,142
Other revenue	-	230
	45,329	43,752
Expenses		
	51,704	85,717
Excess of expenses over revenue	(6,375)	(41,965)
Net assets, beginning of year	7,614	49,579
Net assets, end of year	\$1,239	\$7,614

Thank You to Our Key Sponsors

iSISTERS IS DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO OUR 2013-2014 DONORS



A Special 'Thank-You' to Patricia den Boer

Having served with distinction as Chair of the iSisters organization for the past seven years, Patricia den Boer's decision to step down last year was received with no small amount of trepidation. She has guided the organization from its early days, and her legacy is particularly clear in the strong governance focus brought to the board. Pat's stewardship of iSisters is characterized by both innovative ideas and strategic thinking establishing the foundation from which we move forward.

The Directors are most grateful, Pat, for your extended dedication to the mission of iSisters.



An accomplished community builder, Pat is a distinguished contributor to the Queensway Carleton Hospital Board of Directors, the Women's Business Network of Ottawa, and the Diefenbunker Museum. In 2012, Pat was recognized for her contributions as United Way Community Builder Award winner. Pat remains, thankfully, a director on the iSisters board as Past Chair.

The iSisters Team

iSisters has become a lean organization comprised of a part-time Executive Director leading a cast of hard-working instructors and volunteers. We are proud of what this small team has been able to accomplish!

Board of Directors

Claire Toplis	Chair
Patricia den Boer	Past Chair
Colleen Kelley	Director, Treasurer
Maria Magaso	Director, Secretary
Cathy Lewis	Director, Founder
Beth Nightingale	Director, Communications
Judy Puritt	Director, Volunteer Management
Melynda Layton	Director
Sarah D'Angelo	Director, Human Resources

Staff / Mentors / Contributors

Executive Director	Linda Milton Perreault
iSisters Mentors	Tim Birch-Jones, Mobile Lab Teacher and eLearning iTeachnology Fran Harding, Community Liaison, Asset Mapping Bernarda Jurela, Technology Instructor Eric Calvert, Technology Instructor
Bookkeeper	Mark Zarek

Information

Contact Information

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Executive Director
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lindamp@isisters.org

Visit our **Facebook Page** and “Like Us” to stay up to date with all of our communications.
Follow us on **Twitter** under the handle @iSistersorg.
Join our group on **LinkedIn**
<http://www.linkedin.com/company/isisters-technology-mentoring>

Charity Information

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