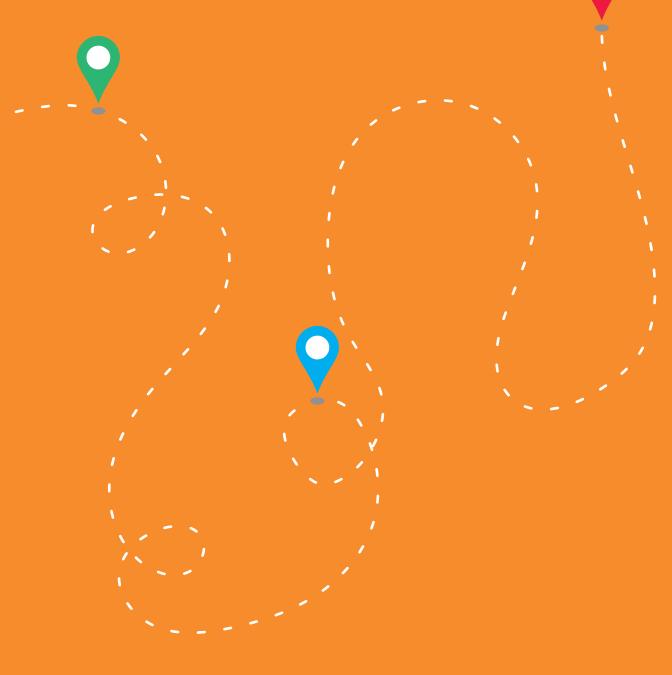


Report to the Community 2019/2020





At Phoenix, we acknowledge that it is a privilege to live and work in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We would like to take this opportunity to confirm our desire and intention to respectfully walk in friendship.

Since 1987, Phoenix has been dedicated to supporting youth and contributing to a vibrant community. Phoenix's ten locations in Halifax/K'jipuktuk, NS, provide a wide range of care for youth ages 11–24 and their families. We offer important services and programs including shelter, food, housing support, health care, parenting support, recreation, education and employment services, and clinical therapy. Our team of caring professionals recognizes that each person who comes to us has individual needs as well as strengths. People are the leaders in their own lives; Phoenix is a leader in supporting them.

SERVICES

Advocacy Youth outreach Community engagement Youth and family therapy Arts, recreation, and leadership Health services Parent support Money management Crisis support Education support Employment counselling and support

PROGRAMS

Phoenix Supportive Housing Program Phoenix Centre for Youth Phoenix Youth Shelter Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre LE@P (Learn & Explore at Phoenix) Phoenix Youth and Family Therapy Phoenix Youth and Community Centre Phoenix Youth Outreach Program

SOCIAL MEDIA

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KEEPING THE FAITH TOGETHER

he global pandemic continues to exact a terrible toll on the world. Lives lost, families dealing with unimaginable pressures, and anxiety about what tomorrow will hold.

In its kinder, more gentle moments, COVID-19 affords us insight and a reckoning with ourselves that brings into sharp focus what really matters. We have all had those meaningful moments of "reset" in our lives where we pause and take stock of where we are and of what's important to us. These moments can often be defining and transformative. What is so incredible in these times is that we are all experiencing this at once, together yet apart. We have been forced to deal with the challenge before us and to gather what resources we can to allow us to press on.

Because of this, existing inequities are showcased like they have never been before. The deeply disturbing faces of poverty and marginalization show themselves in dramatic and terrifying ways. A terrible storm is swirling around us and it can breed isolation and fear.

Our challenge at Phoenix is to march headlong into that storm with as much grace and strength as we can summon. We are doing just that. Our staff have been amazing and courageous, never flinching and never losing sight of our mandate to advance social justice. Each and every one of our programs are fully active and fully engaged in modified but meaningful ways. We are here and we are standing with the youth, families, and communities we serve to say in loud and resonate voice: Your community is with you in whatever ways you need us to be.

To our staff – you are simply amazing. To our volunteers, donors, and government partners – we need you more than ever. Thank you for keeping the faith with us as we rise to this challenge together! We could not be more appreciative.

Over the last year, we have had some brilliant success, and introduced a new strategic compass that will ensure our reputation for work that is impactful continues to be warranted. I hope you celebrate with us what has been achieved over these last 12 months and that you continue to know that it is only made possible through your belief and investment in our work.

We will make it through this global pandemic and we will continue to provide beautiful support that is inspired by the strength and resilience of those we serve.

I offer a huge and heartfelt thank you for the year that has been, and join with you as we exercise hope for healing and better days ahead.

Timothy Crooks Executive Director



THE ART OF SELF DISCOVERY

estinie faced many challenges in her life, but when she came to Phoenix she found stability – so much so she returned to her passion of art and drawing...a talent that went all the way to Parliament Hill! "Phoenix has helped me a lot," says Destinie. "[They] provided a roof over my head, food on the table, and the ability to get back on my feet."

Destinie was involved in programs across Phoenix, including Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre (PLEC). The obvious talent she exhibited at PLEC led to her being invited to submit a design for the annual Phoenix and East Coast Lifestyle limited-edition apparel line. Now in its 4th year, this partnership generates much needed funds for Phoenix and enables a youth to hone their skills as a designer.

Employment outreach worker René Boudreau recalls, "[Destinie] was confident in her designs and capabilities as an artist."

The final design Destinie submitted, a lobster in sou'wester, represented her life at that moment.

"The lobster represents me as they have a tough outer shell to protect themselves, and, like me, are resilient. ... The hat symbolizes protection."

Learning how to take her illustration from paper to apparel added design experience to Destinie's resume. And her colourful lobster went all the way to Parliament Hill. It's not every artist who can say the prime minister is wearing their design!

Thanks to this experience, Destinie went on to explore educational opportunities, and ultimately applied for and was admitted to school for 2D/3D animation.

René says, "I believe this project has brought [Destinie] that much closer to her goals. We are all very proud of her!"





Member of Parliament for Halifax, Andy Fillmore, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau wear Destinie's East Coast Lifestyle design.

JOURNEY TO THE WILD

hanks to the generous support of Rotary Clubs Halifax Northwest, Halifax Harbourside, Dartmouth, and District 7820, six youth and three staff from across Phoenix programs were able to join Outward Bound for an excursion to Kejimkujik National Park in July, 2019.

"Supporting youth is ... a key priority for Rotary International," says pastpresident Dick Hodgson, who is also a great believer in the Outward Bound movement. Dick describes his own experience with Outward Bound as "transformational." He saw this as the perfect opportunity for Rotary funding to connect the two groups.

The excursion included long hikes, canoeing, and portaging from campsite to campsite. Outward Bound's process creates a sense of collective responsibility between participants. "Somebody cooks, somebody makes sure you have clean water to drink, somebody sets up the camp area – everyone's got a job and everyone's dependent on someone else," says youth outreach staff and seasoned camper Greg Rozon.

Greg remembers the first day being beautiful, but rain that night put a damper on the youths' moods. The key that night, he says, was to make sure the youth felt supported so they knew they could do this.

The sun returned the following day as they got into their canoes. "That's when things really started to gel," says Greg.

Far removed from the city, the youth focused

on bolstering their leadership and team-building skills. "One youth, W.T., started out feeling unsure of her camping and canoeing abilities," says Greg, "but found her footing in the leadership role. Another youth, P.F., didn't want to be a leader, but she did well when it was her opportunity. The youth really did shine."

"The resilience of the youth we work with is the thing that I believe most people will be surprised about," says Greg. "These youth are dealing with a lot of things that we would say are tough for an adult."

Upon returning to the city, the youth gave a presentation of their trip to the Rotary Club, highlighting the exciting and challenging moments they experienced over the week.

"I think that those who committed to going are brave," says Dick Hodgson. "My hope and expectation were that even if you couldn't say that it was a lot of fun, there was a feeling of accomplishment and self-esteem that came from doing it and completing it."

BUILDING FUTURE SKILLS TODAY

The agrant from the RBC Future Launch program, the Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre (PLEC) supports youth with the workshops, guidance, and skills training they need to be wellprepared to enter the workforce.

"When a youth comes in, we do an assessment to help them with career

exploration and figure out what skills they have and what skills they should gain," says PLEC manager, Michelle Poirier, who points out that by supporting PLEC, RBC is also helping to remove stigma and breaking down barriers for youth in their early careers.

"Educating the public on what it is youth may need and getting the employers to be a bit flexible based on the specific needs of the youth is part of what we do," says Michelle. "[We] support the employer just as much as we support the youth."

"RBC Future Launch is our largest-ever commitment to a social issue and it is not something we can do alone," says Stewart Robinson, regional director, RBC Dominion Securities, Atlantic Canada. "We're working collaboratively across multiple sectors,

and with leading organizations like Phoenix, to help young people find meaningful employment through skills development, networking, work

experience, and mental well-being.

"More than ever, our future prosperity depends on our ability to work together and harness the energy, innovation, and optimism of young people," adds Stewart. "When they succeed, we all succeed."

RBC is a long-time supporter of Phoenix, and their staff have been engaged in several activities including sitting on our board of directors, preparing meals at the shelter, stocking stuffing during the holiday season, and sitting on event committees, with Stewart serving as co-chair for the Holiday Luncheon.











CULTIVATING FUTURE LEADERS

ultivating leaders is a value Stewart McKelvey holds dear. Their team have been leaders in supporting Phoenix youth for over 20 years. Deanne MacLeod, partner at Stewart McKelvey and vicechair on the Phoenix Board of Directors, says, "[We] look to support those organizations where members of [our] family are giving of their time and energies. Phoenix has fit that profile for many years, and we are proud of our long association."

In 2020, Stewart McKelvey sponsored the Future Leaders Program, which connected Phoenix youth with the opportunity to attend a talk with former U.S. president Barack Obama.

Phoenix youth Tata attended. "I was such a big fan of Obama and his role as a leader. This experience was better than I expected. His wise words spoke to me as a future leader."

"The team at Phoenix is dedicated and effective, and they are focused on making a difference for the youth they serve and their families," says Deanne. "Phoenix really does facilitate positive change in the lives of their youth, and I am honoured to support their work."

"Phoenix helped me grow through becoming a better leader for my peers," says Tata. "They gave me courage, influenced my leadership skills as well as my confidence through my journey of high school and now my future in university."

"We are fortunate to live in a community that sees the value and potential in the youth Phoenix serves," continues Deanne. "The success of Phoenix is ... a result of the incredible work of management and staff, but also the thousands of volunteers and community members who have contributed to Phoenix over the years ... I think that is what makes it so special – it is a community show of love!"

"It only takes a spark to ignite the spirit of leadership," says Deanne. "It was our wish that through the Future Leaders Program, president Obama and this thoughts on leadership, hope, and civic engagement would inspire our youth of today to become the leaders of tomorrow."



Tata, pictured second from right, attends a talk with former U.S. president Barack Obama in November 2019 with friends. ike many urban centres across the country, Halifax has been hit with an affordable housing crisis. This phenomenon didn't happen overnight but was a gradual decline as the vacancy rate reached its lowest point of 1 per cent at the end of 2019.

Finding an apartment in a saturated market is difficult even for those with the means to be selective. For youth, securing affordable housing close to their community resources and support systems can feel like an insurmountable task.

"Youth are often marginalized when seeking affordable housing," says Rob Morris, Phoenix senior director of residential programs. "These barriers are intensified as youth don't always have the same level of capacity that other folks may have in securing a safe place to live."

Historically, Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, and LGBTQ2S+ communities, among others, were marginalized in the housing sector. Tactics such as community segregation, environmental racism, financing barriers, and even violence were used to keep some groups on the periphery of entering burgeoning new communities. Youth who identify with these communities continue to experience marginalization today.

Phoenix strives to understand what youth need to be housed securely and responds to those needs accordingly. "Housing is the first thing for everything. It sets the tone for youth going back to school, youth being employed, and it sets the tone for improved well-being," says Rob. "Part of what Phoenix Youth Shelter and Phoenix Supportive Housing Program are doing is always looking at a Housing First lens to get the youth grounded, supported, engaged, and feeling like they have what they need to make this work."

For over 30 years, Phoenix has helped connect youth with safe and affordable housing. A partnership with St. Paul's Home in 1987 brought

Phoenix House to life, providing a 10-bed residence for youth age 16 to 24. Since then, St. Paul's Home has expanded its support by providing the physical spaces for Phoenix Youth Shelter, one of three Phoenix Homes for Independence, and Phoenix Centre for Youth, each for only one dollar per year. These spaces allow Phoenix to provide youth with emergency shelter, stable housing, and access to resources as they develop skills for independence.







"We need housing for youth to live independently. But we also need housing for youth who need much more intensive, wrap-around supports," says Rob. "All of our work, whether that be housing support or intensive case management, has been designed to help youth to achieve their potential."

Phoenix continually explores new ideas and adapts to the needs of youth in a critical housing market. Staff from across Phoenix programs intentionally look at the barriers that exist for youth right now and find ways to break these down. We are striving to identify the current housing models available for youth and learn what Phoenix can do to respond to specific needs in a housing market that can be hostile, all in an effort to support youth in their unique housing needs.

Relationship building also extends to the those within the community. Phoenix's involvement in the whole housing journey includes nurturing and facilitating the relationship between youth and landlords and building capacity within the youth to advocate for themselves. In particular, Phoenix's Housing Support worker assists youth in finding safe and appropriate housing, budgeting for monthly expenses, and supporting youth as they engage landlords often for the first time.

As COVID-19 entered the Halifax community and social distancing guidelines were announced, the conversation turned to how one shelters in place when there is no place to call home. Phoenix quickly pivoted to provide alternate service delivery for programming, established distancing measures and protocols in residences, and offered intentional and direct support to youth in the community to shelter in place throughout this pandemic. Addressing food security and providing access to basic needs has ensured many youth remained safe through this time.

Rob says, "There is a uniqueness to every youth we see. Every youth has their own journey and their own story. We're trying to follow their lead from a youth perspective, from a first-voice, and from a client-centred place. Supporting them in their housing journey is essential in all aspects of their well-being and health."





In 2018, the federal government established the National Housing Strategy, enshrining housing as a human right. Phoenix is working alongside federal, provincial, and local partners as part of our continued effort to give youth the housing stability they need and deserve. Our efforts are focused on prioritizing the critical needs of youth and strengthening their access to safe and affordable housing in communities where they have access to the resources they need.

HELPING YOUTH ON THE ROAD TO ACHIEVE THEIR DREAMS THROUGH OUR SIGNATURE EVENTS

hoenix's signature events, Dreamscape and the Holiday Luncheon, always bring our community together in spectacular fashion. A total of 1,500 people attended these events this year and we can't thank those who participated enough for your generosity. Your donations ensure Phoenix can continue to provide much-needed support and resources for youth.

Along with delighting you with entertainment from local artists and delicious meals prepared by RCR Hospitality Group, these events also provide a space for youth to share their stories of how your support impacts their lives. This past year, Jennifer and Amanda graciously spoke of their journeys.

Dreamscape co-chairs, left, Graham Langille and, right, Luke Hansen MacDonald speak at the event.



EXCERPTS FROM JENNIFER'S SPEECH AT DREAMSCAPE 2019:

When I was 15 years old, I ran away from home. I began looking into shelters in Halifax and I learned about Phoenix Youth Shelter, and I gave them a call...

I was accepted to Phoenix House and I arrived with a half-full garbage bag that was filled with everything I owned. I settled quickly at Phoenix House; the staff made me feel at home.

We did programming in the House, and we had outings in the community. I learned about living with people, and I learned about respect. I learned about conflict management and about walking away. I learned that those who were hardest on me only wanted the best for me. And I learned that I deserved way more than I was giving myself. After a while I realized this opportunity I was given. I was given a home that was stable and supportive. I was given amazing staff and they cared about me.

The Phoenix Learning and Employment Centre helped set me up with information about adult high school and correspondence courses. I was determined to graduate at the same age I would be if I hadn't dropped out. And I will tell you something about my determination, it is fierce.

I graduated from high school, I was valedictorian at our ceremony, and I was accepted into my college of choice. I'm about to be married to the most amazing man I've evet met in my life. I have a close group of amazing and supportive friends, and my life could not be better.

Every single Phoenix staff stood behind me, they encouraged me, and they supported me, and I would not be here without them. I also know that without you guys, the people in the community who support them to do their work, they wouldn't be able to be there for me.



EXCERPTS FROM AMANDA'S SPEECH At the phoenix holiday luncheon 2019:

I was living with my children in a duplex when I heard about Phoenix Centre for Youth. I was struggling to keep the oil tank full, was also on income assistance and did not have enough money to pay the bills, buy groceries or any extra for the kids.

My children love going to Phoenix Centre. At the Centre they have lots of fun, eat snacks, run around playing with toys and other children, and bring smiles to everyone's faces. It is nice to know that other young parents go there, and I find that comforting.

Phoenix started feeling like a second home to me and my kids. The staff made me feel very comfortable. I could talk to them about my feelings and goals.

I realized that things needed to change, I had to go back to school to create a better future for my kids.

I had three main goals: the first was to apply to NSCC for the adult learning program and get my high school diploma.

The second goal was to secure daycare for my two younger children.

My third goal is to become a nurse.

My worker at Phoenix Centre is Leah. She is the parent support case manager. As soon as I told Leah my goals, she wanted to help me right away.

Only two days later she had found not one, but two spots at a daycare right across the street from Phoenix Centre.

I am currently enrolled in the Adult Learning Program offered through NSCC and doing really well!

Once I get my high school diploma, I will apply to the nursing program at Dalhousie University.

The staff at Phoenix Centre truly want to help us succeed. I am an example of that. If it wasn't for Phoenix Youth Programs and the support of everyone in this room, I don't think I would be where I am today.



Amanda talks about her journey with Phoenix during the Holiday Luncheon.



Over 1,000 people gathered at the Cunard Centre in support of youth at the Holiday Luncheon.



Global Morning News Anchors, Alyse Hand and Paul Brothers host the Phoenix Holiday Luncheon.



The youth we work with at Phoenix are unique, but the commonalities we see time and again are strength, determination, and resilience. Youth allow us to be a part of their lives and place trust in the guidance, programs, and services we offer. We are humbled and honoured to come along on their journey and to celebrate each and every success along the way.



CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

ANSWERING THE CALL ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a great way for Phoenix to connect with the community and share how we are supporting youth. It has also been an instrumental tool in



helping to secure items our youth were needing. This year, we put out a call for essentials like toothbrushes and toothpaste, socks and underwear, and even a mini fridge to stock insulin and other medications. The responses were overwhelming! Individuals, groups, and businesses collected items and had them at our door within 24-hours – amazing!

Engage with us on Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, or Instagram to stay informed on the many great things happening with Phoenix.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Website – phoenixyouth.ca Facebook – @PhoenixYouthPrograms Twitter – @PhoenixHfx Instagram – @phoenixhfx YouTube – PhoenixYouthPrograms LinkedIn – @PhoenixYouthPrograms

Dr. Sura Hadad of Lozowski & Hadad Family Dental Centre responded to the social media call for dental hygiene products by donating toothbrushes and toothpaste for Phoenix youth.



TEAM BUILDING IN AND OUT OF THE OFFICE - ADMIRAL INSURANCE

Staff at Admiral Insurance let their generosity shine by collecting and donating over 200 toys during the holiday season. Along with this collection, staff hosted raffles and were able to donate over \$6,000 to support Phoenix youth.



During the holiday season Admiral Insurance dropped off boxes of toys for Phoenix youth and their families.

QUILTS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

During a three-day event hosted by Atlantic Fabrics called Quilts that Make a Difference, community members volunteered their time and talent to craft quilts for local shelters and organizations. For over 10 years, Atlantic Fabrics and their community of crafters have been providing Phoenix youth with comfortable quilts that they can call their own.

DOUBLE THE GIFT -DOUBLE THE IMPACT!

y making a gift and taking advantage of a workplace matching program, donors like Dan Young are doubling their gift – and its impact – for the youth and families at Phoenix.

As a parent, Dan often wondered what would happen if one of his sons needed help. What would happen if a program like Phoenix didn't exist for youth and families who need space and support?

So in 2017, Dan asked his employer, Encana Corp. (now Ovintiv), to add Phoenix to their list of eligible charities. Every month, Dan makes a gift to Phoenix deducted directly from his pay, and his employer matches that gift dollar for dollar.

"Giving monthly through payroll deduction is a convenient way to contribute to charitable efforts in our community," says Dan. "When employers offer matching opportunities or volunteer grant options to employees, our collective effort doubles to serve social good."

Does your company or employer subscribe to a matching gift or volunteer engagement program? If so, you could be doubling your impact, just like Dan.

MAKING THE GRADE WITH PHOENIX

he transition from junior high to high school and then to post-secondary is hard for almost any student. But some students are shouldering significant additional challenges, such as housing insecurity, stigma, mental health, and more.

Two years ago, Phoenix launched a pilot program that offers academic coaching and emotional support for students in grades 10 through 12 at Citadel High School. Coaching also takes place at the Phoenix Youth Community Centre (PYCC) in Mulgrave Park.

Citadel High School's International Baccalaureate coordinator, Heather Michael, first met Phoenix's academic coach, Doug Coldwell, during her time as a volunteer tutor at PYCC, and was soon seeing him regularly in the school's halls.

As Heather says, the students have gotten to know Doug and have established personal connections with him. That means Doug can provide the appropriate, individualized support each youth needs.

The connection goes beyond the coaching. The program has fostered a sense of community outside of the classroom, which, Doug says, has enabled him to build a trusting relationship with the youth and their families alike.

Having that community support creates a "level of accountability that is both supportive and motivating," says Heather. "That's the advantage of having someone who knows the kids and knows their stories."

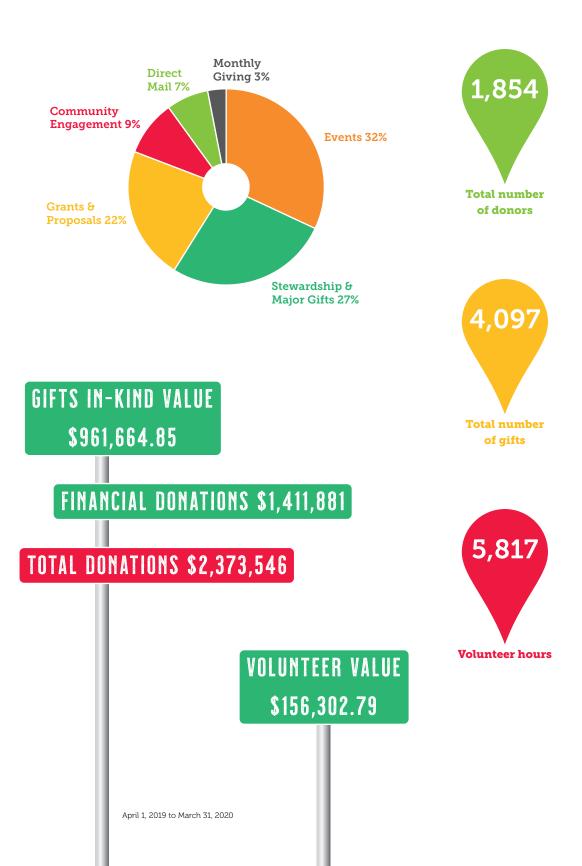
"Being at Citadel, working one-on-one with youth, engaging them in academics, and enabling them to see the bigger picture outside of their high school years is something I value immensely," says Doug.





Phoenix's Academic Coaching program began in January 2018 with the goal of providing extra support for youth in and out of the classroom. Since the program's inception, Doug has supported 145 students through their high school years and has continued to support youth on their journey into postsecondary studies.

YOUR SUPPORT ADDS UP



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER



s we move forward together in a world that has changed dramatically, we are grateful for your faith in Phoenix.

 \checkmark Every day Phoenix meets youth where they are and provides them with the tools and programs they need to follow their paths and reach their goals. In partnership with community, we identify and implement opportunities for the growth and well-being of youth, their families, and communities.

Phoenix's innovative and compassionate work could not happen without all of you who believe that positive change is possible.

Thank you for your commitment and care – as trusted friends, volunteers, supporters, and champions. Knowing that you are with us makes a huge difference.

We look forward to our ongoing collaboration with you and to welcoming you back into our spaces.

Elizabeth Church Chair, Phoenix Board of Directors

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Laura Methot

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* refers to monthly donors with cumulative gifts of over \$100.

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