





# Hope is a Place

The gains made by our students are sustained, allowing youth to rediscover their lives beyond addictive behaviours, forging fresh paths to brighter, healthier and more hopeful futures.

It was a very unthought-out cry for help.
All the running away from home, all the stresses, lying, stealing, cheating.
I'd started falling behind in school, smoking pot, getting super anxious, but I didn't know what to do with the anxiety. I was in a family of divorce; there were feelings of stress and sadness. To have me in the centre, almost pushing them further apart — we got to a point where there was no more space for me to be acting the way I was acting. I was getting myself to a place I couldn't come back from."

- Callie, PRI graduate

Thankfully, Callie\* and her family found Pine River Institute (PRI) and together, after much support and hard work, they found their way back to each other.

At PRI, we believe that hope is a place. Since we opened in 2006, hundreds of youths who struggle with addictive behaviours and related mental health challenges have rediscovered themselves beyond addiction and created a better future.

Ours was the first program of its kind in Canada — a live-in treatment centre and outdoor leadership experience for youth, ages 13 to 19. PRI combines therapy with a fully accredited education program to reinforce healthy life skills. We support the developmental transition toward maturity — instilling empathy, lack of narcissism, the ability to be separate in relationships, future orientation, social ethics, regulation of emotion and abstract thought.



Our 4-stage program begins with the **Outdoor Leadership Experience**, where youth spend six to eight weeks in Algonquin Park, camping, canoeing, hiking and taking part in therapy. In the **Campus** phase, students live on campus and participate in academics, therapy, community service, art and athletics. During **Transition**, youth and families are supported as the youth moves from campus to home or to higher education. **Aftercare** helps to ensure success with regular coaching sessions, workshops and family retreats. Parent involvement is an essential component. Caregivers/ parents engage in a Parallel Process where they grow and develop alongside their child.

Pine River works. The majority of our students experience long-term improvement in their mental, behavioural and relationship health. They embrace school or work. Families are more attuned, and function with new levels of acceptance and communication.

But the need for Pine River is growing at a worrying rate. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated issues of mental health and substance use among adolescents and youth. More youths are experiencing increased anxiety and stress, while parents are more and more frustrated in their efforts to help their children. These problems will not subside with the end of the pandemic; ongoing investment in mental health and addiction, particularly focused on young people, will be essential to the overall health of our society.

Today, Pine River remains the only program of its kind in the country.

\*Name changed to protect privacy

### Welcome!

Pine River Institute and Pine River Foundation are pleased to present this annual report.

2021-2022 was our 15<sup>th</sup> year of operation. That milestone represents just one of the year's highlights. It was a time of extraordinary growth. We increased our capacity on campus to treat more vulnerable youth, added a new transition house for youth leaving our campus, and extended our educational outreach to large, new audiences of parents, guardians, clinicians and educators across Ontario.

Pine River's on-campus expansion was fuelled by the new dorm built through the generosity of our donors. In turn, in July 2021, the Ontario government agreed to an additional \$4.2 million in annual funding. As a result of this remarkable public-private collaboration, we added 30 new publicly funded beds and nearly doubled the number of young people we serve. We have been diligently hiring more therapists, youth counsellors and other staff throughout the year to service this newly increased capacity.

In April 2021, The Lang Family Foundation — already an instrumental supporter of the new dorm — generously donated \$1.4 million for the acquisition of a property in Orillia to serve as a transition house. This allows us to provide tailored support and continuing care to students who may not be returning to their home community after their time on campus. Lang House opened the doors to its first students in June 2022.

Parents' needs to better understand addiction and mental health issues have never been more urgent. It has become clear since Pine River opened its doors in 2006 that we are well positioned to provide that unique expertise. Thanks to a \$1-million gift from the Slaight Family Foundation, our new Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) now extends that knowledge to parents before their children may require intensive treatment. CFI@PRI delivers this to parents directly as well as via partnerships developed with school boards and other organizations.

Pine River has managed this growth with speed and efficiency, in great part due to the work we put into developing our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. Our strategic priorities acknowledge and define the societal forces that are affecting the mental health of youth in Ontario, and position Pine River as a leader in youth addictions, practice and research.

That we were able to respond to society's urgent need for greater addiction and mental health resources in the midst of a global pandemic is a testament to the amazing people we call the Pine River community. First and foremost, the Ontario Ministry of Health not only supports us with funding, it has made a clear commitment to live-in care for Ontario youth dealing with addictive behaviors and mental health challenges. In these extreme times, the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Unit provided invaluable assistance with Pine River's COVID-19 response. At the same time, our boards of directors exhibited their strength of commitment during demanding circumstances, while our donors redefined the meaning of the word generosity.

We have been blessed with heroic students and families, and staff; students and families who rise to the occasion every day and announce to the world that they are not going to let addiction and mental health challenges dictate their future, and staff who have dedicated their time, and every ounce of their physical, emotional and mental selves to the well-being of our families.

The impact of this addiction and mental health crisis is devastating. Yet our community has met the challenges with remarkable resilience, for which we are profoundly grateful. We are committed to this journey along with our students and their families who inspire us with their courage each and every day, and we thank all those who have committed to joining our effort.

Vaughan Dowie, CEO, Pine River Institute

### **HOPE'S RIPPLE EFFECT**

It was a crisp September day in 2021 when Christine Elliot, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Sylvia Jones, MPP Dufferin-Caledon, and Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions Michael Tibollo came to Pine River Institute (PRI) to announce the Ontario government's decision to contribute an additional \$4.2 million annually to fund 30 new treatment beds on campus.

The seeds of this expansion were sown more than three years ago, when the Foundation launched a campaign to build a dorm that would nearly double our capacity. Donors responded with enthusiasm to a vision of growth that became reality in 2021. The newly opened Moffat House, with eight bedrooms, each accommodating four students, and therapy and activity space, made it possible for Pine River to rapidly apply the government's additional investment to increasing the number of students in the program.

In addition to nearly doubling our capacity on campus, thanks to the generosity of the Moffat/Huband, Lang and Slaight families, Pine River added a transition house and launched the Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) to support families and professionals working with youth. It's long been said of Pine River that hope is a place; now we are seeing the ripple effects of that hope.



#### **Expansion Helps More Kids Reclaim their Future**

Standing in front of Moffat House — named in recognition of donors Craig Moffat, his wife Dr. Louisa Huband and their children — Minister Elliot connected the investment to the stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic and the dramatic increase in demand for mental health services for young people. "Supporting the health and well-being of children and youth has never been more important," she said. "We know that when children and youth are struggling, communities and families are struggling as well."

Minister Tibollo spoke of the great benefits of public-private partnerships like PRI's: "Individuals help us build the capacity by building the bricks and mortar," he explained. "Then we can look at the annualized funding for programs where we can measure the outcomes and determine the success, and then spend more money expanding more programs."

Before more youth could be welcomed to the campus, the staff complement had to grow. New skilled therapists, counsellors and teachers joined PRI to match the expanded enrolment. "We're building up capacity in a measured way," said John Fallis, PRI's Executive Director of Operations. "Prior to the funding, we were at 35 to 36 kids. Now, we're approaching our new capacity of 64."

The biggest impact for youth in need is on the waitlist, which was up to 2 years long before expansion. "Parents were in shock when they learned about the waitlist," said Amanda Ragazzon, Admissions Manager. "One told me, 'This is devastating. I'm scared for my son and for our family. Two years is a lifetime."

The wait time has been reduced. "Now when families are in crisis, we're able to offer access more quickly," said Amanda. "This is so important, because the longer that kids wait, the higher their needs."

"The expansion is exciting and complicated," said John Fallis. "Everybody has embraced it, because the bottom line is we're helping more kids and their families."

This new dormitory was a project of the Pine River Foundation with generous donations, and because of the operational funding from the province, we have new beds to help youth with their recovery from addiction. It's a great example of a partnership between private donations and government investment."

- MPP Dufferin-Caledon Sylvia Jones



#### Serving up Therapy

First, COVID-19 protocols forced our dining hall to switch from one to multiple meal sittings. Then PRI's much-needed expansion meant this space needed to grow to allow us to accommodate all diners at once. This matters because at Pine River, therapy and community building takes place everywhere, including — and especially — at the dining table.

Mealtimes at Pine River have purpose. Youth working to develop healthy behaviours, self-awareness and relationships forge a sense of belonging and connection over breakfast, lunch and dinner. Our dining hall needed to grow.

For alumni parent, Peter Neal, co-owner of Neal Brothers Foods, leading the charge to raise the money for our dining hall expansion was a perfect fit. Peter, his wife Lara and their children Becca, Hannah and Bridget stepped up to the proverbial plate, reaching out to their friends, co-workers, associates and extended family, including close friends Corrie and Patrick Higgins.

"Our intent was to support Peter and Lara and to get a glimpse of what they had gone through," said Corrie. "To meet the people and see the facility was just mind blowing. There was a sign — it read 'Hope is a Place' — and I think about that often."

Wanting to build awareness of both PRI and the cause, the couple offered to match up to \$10,000 in donations for the dining hall. "We reached out to family, friends and acquaintances via social media, telling them about this magical place for children and families that were suffering," Corrie explained. "Our goal was reached — surpassed! — in just 18 hours!"

The expanded dining hall will be named Neal Hall. "We knew it was important to choose someone with passion at the intersection of food, family, and mental health," said Vaughan Dowie, CEO, Pine River Institute. "As a Pine River alumni family, and people who have all shared openly about their mental health challenges, not to mention their connection to food via their company, the Neal family was the perfect choice."

"We are incredibly humbled," said Peter Neal. "Pine River literally saved our lives, and our daughter's life. It's emotional, and it's really spurred my wife and I on to bring in more funds and make this happen for kids who are in so much need."

Neal Hall will serve its first meals to the entire PRI community in late 2022.



#### Outreach Takes Off Across Ontario

"Absolutely brilliant. I feel rejuvenated and ready to parent successfully. Thanks for this valuable and eye-opening session!" This feedback from a parent who attended a Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) workshop underscores the hunger for PRI proprietary knowledge and skills beyond the physical campus.

CFI@PRI evolved from PRI's first community-based workshop in 2017 designed to help parents/caregivers/teachers identify and navigate early signs of problematic behaviours. COVID-19 prompted a move to online education, which proved extremely successful at reaching a wider audience. Thanks to the generosity of the Slaight Family Foundation, Pine River was able to greatly expand its outreach model with the launch of CFI@PRI in the spring of 2021.

The harmful effects of the COVID-19 pandemic inspired the \$1-million gift. In a press release, foundation president and CEO Gary Slaight said, "It is evident that we are experiencing the largest mental health crisis of our lifetime. "Our 2021 mental health initiative will provide support during a particularly challenging time for so many Canadians and will help to reduce the demands on our health-care system, to build stronger community supports in mental health."

CFI@PRI hit the ground running, presenting 30 webinars, two Masterclass presentations, a podcast and six 6-week Caregiver Waitlist Support Program sessions.

Webinars typically focus on subjects such as parenting for positive mental health, dealing with issues such as screen time and managing anxiety and depression in young people. "These are for people who have questions but don't have a child in need of live-in treatment," explained Amanda Lamb, Director of CFI@PRI. "We're seeing people from all over Ontario attending these webinars to learn about positive parenting strategies through COVID."

The Caregiver Waitlist Support Program has been anxiously awaited. It recognizes the needs of pre-admission families and educates them about PRI's developmental model of addiction, coping tools and interventions for children who struggle with mental health and/or addiction concerns. "We teach how to be emotionally attuned to your child, how to set limits and how to take care of yourself as the caretaker of a child who is really struggling," said Amanda.

New partnerships are leading to more diverse audiences. A 3-year partnership with the Simcoe County District School Board saw CFI providing customized webinars for parents/guardians, community agencies and staff.

"CFI@PRI expands our reach to parents who may need support much earlier than we normally see people," said Vaughan Dowie, PRI CEO. "As we prepare for a post-pandemic world, we need ongoing investment in mental health and addiction, particularly focused on kids and young people.



#### Transition House Provides Safety Net

"Pine River does such a great job of giving kids the tools they need. This transition piece, and having it customized to the individual's need, is so important and it really resonated with us," said Erin Lang, of the Lang Family Foundation.

The move from PRI's idyllic campus back to one's family and community can be a daunting prospect for some of our youth. They have undergone years of trauma and upheaval before coming to Pine River, where the environment is protected and supportive. Leaving our campus to embark on a more independent life at college or university or pursuing employment can be a challenge. Some students need more of a safety net if they are to continue making progress on their journey.

That's where Lang House comes in. A donation of \$1.4 million from the Lang Family Foundation supported the purchase of a home in Orillia that will accommodate up to eight youths, enabling students in the final phase of treatment to shift from an intensive treatment bed on campus to a more home-like setting. "We first got involved with Moffat House and really enjoyed working with such a passionate team at Pine River. We wanted to continue to help in a strategic way, and this was one of them," explained Erin.

Residents will benefit from the support of therapists and likeminded housemates. Our Lang House staff team will work with each youth, assisting them in their pursuit of education, work, sporting and extra-curricular activities. Youths will assume greater responsibility for their daily life and grow in confidence and strength.

The goal is to provide students with structure that supports their maturity and enables them to successfully enter young adulthood with a strong sense of self and direction, healthy connections with family and peers and into their desired vocation.

"This resource gives us the capacity to do more for those students whose journey home is more complex," said Vaughan Dowie, PRI CEO.

These people who are working at Pine River, day in and day out...my wife and I just called them angels. They were our saviours. We learned a lot about ourselves. We learned a lot about relationships. Our daughter went through hell and back and thank goodness for Pine River. It literally saved our lives and our daughter's life. And it has continued to save and help hundreds of kids who otherwise would have been on the street."

- PRI alumni parent



# The Year in Review

## APRII

Thanks to a \$1-million gift from The Slaight Family Foundation, the Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) opens, to provide education and training to families and professionals working with youth.

The Lang Family Foundation donates \$1.4 million to fund a new transition home, scheduled to open in mid-2022.

Pine River CEO Vaughan Dowie appears on CBC Radio's Metro Morning to discuss the lack of long-term live-in treatment beds in Canada.

### **SEPTEMBER**

Ontario's Minister of Health, Christine Elliot, MPP Dufferin-Caledon, Sylvia Jones, and Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Michael Tibollo, make a campus visit to announce additional annual funding of \$4.2 million which will effectively double PRI's capacity.





Craig Moffat, Dr. Louisa Huband and their children join students on campus to officially open Moffat House, the new dorm that will house half of Pine River's students in Shelburne.

Pine River Foundation launches "Picnic for Pine River", inviting supporters to help expand PRI's dining hall so that students can all gather for meals at the same time.

### **OCTOBER**

Pine River Foundation launches its campaign for a new dining hall to accommodate the entire student body. PRI alumni parent Peter Neal, who shared his family's PRI experience with listeners of Zoomer Radio podcast The Tonic Show, agrees to lead the fundraising effort.

PRI's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan is finalized, focusing on ways to serve more youth and their families and to advance youth addictions treatment.

### NOVEMBER

CFI@PRI signs a 3-year agreement with the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) to provide expertise in treating youth mental health and addictions to families, educators and community agencies in the region.

Dr. Laura Mills, PRI's Director of Research, presents the insightful paper, "WHO IS IN THE CRACKS? Profiles of youths seeking intensive substance use treatment," at the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction Substance Conference.

Associate Minister of Addictions & Mental Health Michael Tibollo visits Pine River where he speaks with students, acknowledging their courageous journeys.

## ANUARY

CFI@PRI begins a learning series entitled Wellness Wednesdays with Trillium Lakelands District School Board & Protestant Separate School Board of Penetanguishene.

### MARCH

Pine River Foundation holds the first Pine River Insider event: Unleashing the Power of YOUR Story. Insider offers members parenting workshops, educational content, newsletters, access to CFI resources, exclusive donor events and a private parenting group session.











### **DECEMBER**

PRI's Research Director Dr. Laura Mills' article, "The Importance of Parent Engagement in Outdoor Behavioural Health Programs for Youth", is published in the Journal of the National Association of Therapeutic Schools & Programs.

## **FEBRUARY**

After a months-long search, Pine River acquires a house in Orillia that will become Lang House, a temporary home for some of our students transitioning to life beyond Pine River.

Annual PRI Olympics features torch-lighting ceremony, broom-ball tournament, snowshoe rallies, skating and more.

### YOUTH PROFILE

Ongoing evaluation is built into Pine River's vision and mission. Client-centered outcome information is collected before, during, and for years after the program. This helps us validate our model, understand our strengths, and engage in treatment quality improvement.

Our data shows that *Pine River works*, and the gains made by our students who complete the program are sustained, allowing youth to rediscover their lives beyond addictive behaviours, forging fresh paths to brighter, healthier and more hopeful futures.



#### **DAILY SUBSTANCE USE**

Before PRI, two-thirds of caregivers (63%) reported that their child used substances daily. One year after graduation from PRI, that number fell to 14% for youths who completed the program.





#### **DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY**

Before PRI, 72% of caregivers reported that their child had been formally diagnosed with depression and anxiety - an increase of some 25% in the past 5 years. For students who completed the program, the number dropped to 52% one year post-PRI.



#### **BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS**

Before the program, 72% of caregivers reported their child exhibited problematic behaviour problems. For those who completed the program, that figure dropped to 50% post-PRI.



72%

**52**%



#### **RESPECT FOR LAW**

For applicants to PRI, police contact and arrests were 10 times the national average: 62% of caregivers reported police involvement with their youth. One year after PRI, 4% of graduates who completed the program experienced police contact.





#### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

Pre-PRI, about 55% of youths earned Cs and Ds or were failing. One year after PRI, this figure dropped to 19% for completers of the program.



#### **SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT**

Before PRI, 38% of youths who should be in school are not. One to two years after PRI, 91% of youths who completed the should be in school were in school.







#### **WORK DAYS MISSED BY CAREGIVERS**

Before PRI, mothers and fathers missed 13% and 7% of work time, respectively, to support their youth. One to two years after PRI, parents report missing less than 1% of work time.



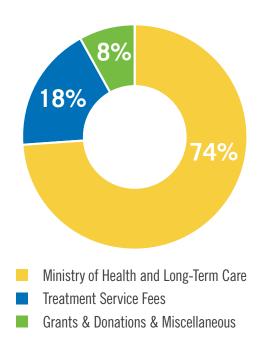
# Financial Snapshot Pine River Institute



#### Revenue

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	\$6,439,380
Treatment Service Fees	\$1,612,535
Grants, Donations & Miscellaneous	\$703,458

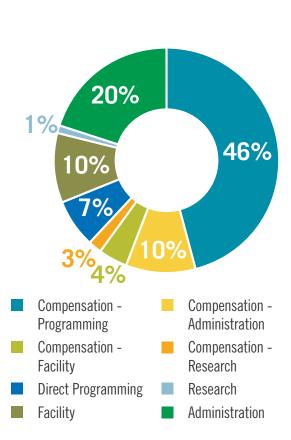
\$8,755,373



### **Expenses**

Compensation - Direct Programming (Admissions/Clinical/Frontline/Aftercare/Family Program/Medical/CFI/ Lang House)	\$4,007,386
Compensation - Administration (Mgmt/Finance & HR/Admin/Communications)	\$899,212
Compensation - Facility Maintenance	\$342,466
Compensation - Research	\$220,663
Direct Programing (OLE/Lang House/Program/Travel)	\$601,285
Facility (Rent/Telephone/Utilities/Maintenance/Amort'n/Taxes/Insurance/Linens)	\$842,061
Research	\$52,508
Administration (Office & IT/Communications/Memberships/Training/Recruitment/Prof. Fees/Other)	\$1,789,790

\$8,755,371





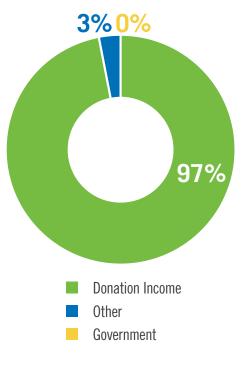
### **Pine River Foundation**

PINE RIVER Foundation

#### Revenue

Donation Income	\$3,147,617
Other	\$108,173
Government	\$0

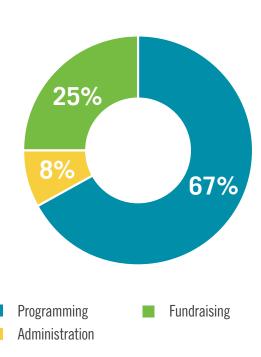
\$3,255,790



### **Expenses**

Programming	\$928,353
Administration	\$103,408
Fundraising	\$346,719

\$1,378,480





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### **Donor Appreciation**

On behalf of vulnerable youth and their families, thank you. We are grateful to every donor who saw the need and supported Pine River Foundation in 2021-22.

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