



Annual Report 2022

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Summary

Blankets for T.O. was founded in 2019 at the University of Toronto Scarborough as a non-profit organization that aims to address homelessness in Canada. Among our goals is to combat stigma around the homeless community, spread awareness for solutions, and provide resources for individuals and shelters in need. We are an organization **founded and operated by university students, which has expanded to multiple locations across Ontario.**



The Blankets for T.O. 2022 Annual Report aims to summarize the work carried out by the organization over the past year. **It provides a descriptive snapshot of the organization, essential to providing the transparency and accountability that we owe all our donors, supporters, and sponsors because all our accomplishments would not have been possible without their support.** This is an opportunity to share and celebrate these accomplishments as one integrated community. **This report also addresses the future plans of the organization as we move into 2023.**

2022 marked another year full of progress for Blankets for T.O. Across various donation initiatives and campaigns, **Blankets for T.O. was able to help hundreds more individuals with direct donations and spread our cause to thousands more.** With the launch of our podcast and appearances in public media, we have made important strides to help generate public discussion about homelessness issues across the country. Furthermore, our organization has expanded its reach with the addition of new chapters in multiple cities.

Sponsors

Foreword

With the start of 2023, Blankets for T.O. wants to take a moment to show great appreciation for the continuous support of its sponsors because these sponsors have helped Blankets for T.O. in reaching its 2022 goals.

From older to more recent sponsors, we are extremely thankful with them continuing to stay connected with us throughout 2022. Below, you will find our wonderful sponsors:



Media Coverage

Blankets for T.O. is grateful for the **support of numerous media outlets, including the Toronto Star, UofT News, and CBC Radio.** Their endorsement over the past year has helped Blankets for T.O. spread awareness about homelessness and encourage thoughtful discussion about the homelessness epidemic in Canada.

The logo for the Toronto Star, featuring the words "TORONTO STAR" in a white serif font inside a blue banner with white scrollwork ends, set against a blue circular background.

1 Toronto Star

In December 2021, Blankets for T.O. was featured in the Toronto Star. The article highlighted their **Tote Bag Competition initiative, which involved more than 50 clubs from different universities across Canada** that created care packages for homeless individuals in need

2 UofT News

During an interview with UofT news in December of 2022, the co-founders of Blankets for T.O. discussed their motivation for creating the organization and the **accomplishments Blankets for T.O. has made since its creation in 2019.**

The logo for UofT News, featuring the words "UofT News" in a white serif font, set against a dark blue circular background.



radio

3

CBC Radio

In December 2022, Blankets for T.O. co-founder, Naman Sharma, was interviewed by CBC Radio to share the purpose, goals, and achievements made by the Blankets for T.O. non-profit organization. Blankets for T.O. graciously received over \$500 in donations from numerous viewers of the CBC Radio news show within five minutes of the interview airing.

4

Podcast

In March 2022, Blankets for T.O. launched a podcast called **Beyond the Blankets**. In the podcast episodes, executive members of Blankets for T.O. discuss homelessness and the stigma surrounding homeless people with guest speakers including Dr. Steve Joordens, a University of Toronto Scarborough professor, and Eric Bollman, a Canadian Psychological Association representative.

BTO

BEYOND THE
BLANKETS



BTO Chapters



Homelessness is not isolated to any single community, city, region or country. After establishing our founding chapter at the University of Toronto Scarborough, we have extended our reach across Ontario by establishing multiple chapters across the province so that help is never too far away!

BTO London



Started in **March 20, 2022** at the **Western University Campus**, BTO London aims to help homeless shelters in the London city, through donation, education and advocacy.

The 2700 individuals accessing emergency shelter is actually a statistic from 2015. More recent data regarding this topic is unavailable, but the growing crisis in London alludes that this number can only have grown.

Blanket Donation to Unity Project Shelter

Team London, **partnered with The Unity Project**, a registered charity committed to helping the homeless community. They aim to **aid individuals in reaching housing stability, restoring their well-being, and escaping homelessness.**

Together, with organizations like The Unity Project, the team wanted to combat the growing homelessness crisis in London, and **they achieved this via donating 50 foil blankets to Unity Project.**

Winter clothing drive

In **January, 2023** the Team London hosted a winter clothing drive on campus and successfully collected an estimate of over 150 items to donate!

Bake Sale Fundraiser

Along with the same, The team also organized a **bake sale Fundraiser to raise money that can help purchase additional supplies for the winter clothing drive and be used for the future events!**

BTO Oshawa



Started in March 2022, BTO extended its reach to **York University** to help students engage, and spread awareness in the York region.

MONTHLY THEMES:

Team York exclusively conducted monthly themes like **Waste Food prevention in September**, **Raising awareness for Women experiencing homelessness in October 2022**, followed by highlighting **indigenous**

communities experiencing homelessness in Jan 2023. By addressing important issues such as these, they aim to create awareness and collect monthly monetary donations, which are then donated to the homeless shelters!

In September, the York team approached the streets of Toronto to **distribute leftover food from the York orientation**

In October 2022, Team York organized the **Pumpkin Carving Night**, and managed to raise donations of \$88

In November 2022, BTO York started its **first annual clothing drive!** This drive aimed to collect new /lightly used blankets, tents, winter jackets, mittens and hats as the cold winter approached.

BTO London



Started in **Nov 2021**, at the **Ontario Tech University**, the Oshawa team conducted has so far conducted

Let it Snow :

- November 202: Team Oshawa **hosted a holiday- themed event "Let it Snow !"**. They organized activities like **Christmas ornament making, a photo set up booth, and holiday movie night!** All the donations collected here go towards the care package donation in January!
- This was also followed by an **Annual Movie Night held on November 14, 2022.**

BTO UTSG & Hamilton



We also have **BTO UTSG** and **BTO HAMILTON**, which began operations in **November 2021** and are situated at the **University of Toronto (St. George campus)** and **McMaster University** respectively.

Donations

Blankets for T.O. supplies essential items to local shelters such as blankets, hygiene products, non-perishable food items, socks, gloves, sanitizers and much more!



**Total Money
Raised in Dec 2022**

\$1351



**Net Items
Donated 2022**

7209



**Total Number Of
Donations 2022**

3434

Events

February 2022

- **Valentine's Movie Night:** A virtual movie night where we watched the film Crazy Rich Asians with members of our community. We also used this opportunity to introduce our group and gave gift cards to attendees as a token of gratitude.

June 2022

- **FemiCare Fundraiser:** A fundraising initiative in collaboration with the UofT Mental Health Association and Cards4Humanity to create care packages for two women's shelters in Toronto (Ernestine's Shelter and Anduhyaun Inc.). The care packages included supplies such as hygiene items, sanitizing products, and mental health products.

September 2022

- **General Meeting:** Our first general meeting of the 2022–2023 academic year, held in person, where we introduced our group to the student community by highlighting our goals, accomplishments, and membership opportunities. Attendees participated in a Kahoot to win prizes, pizza was served, and BTO merchandise was available for purchase.



Events

October

- **Halloween Pumpkin Carving:** This Halloween-themed fundraiser consisted of a pumpkin carving activity and a horror movie viewing. The proceeds from the ticket sales were used to supply attendees with carving utensils and a pumpkin, as well as fund our future events and donations.

November

- **Donation Drive with Campus Safety:** A tabling event was held in collaboration with UTSC's Campus Safety to collect donation items to be given to local shelters and to introduce both organizations to the school community. Refreshments were offered to all who stopped by, and BTO-themed merchandise was available for purchase.

December

- **Dares for Donations:** A GoFundMe fundraiser, that prompted different dares to be undertaken by various BTO executives once a certain donation amount was met. More than \$1,300 was raised with the execution of dares.
- **25 Days of Giveaways:** A 25-day-long initiative of performing acts of kindness as a way to give back to our community. We distributed gift cards, care packages, and made monetary donations to the UTSC community, individuals in Toronto, and non-profit organizations.



Next Steps

Blankets for T.O. (BTO) aims to continue our growth in the number of items we donate. In 2022 alone, **we were able to donate 3,434 items leading us to a total of 7,209 items from the past 3 years of establishment.** Our goal for the coming year is to reach a total of 15,000 items of donation.

During the beginning of 2023, **BTO is planning to host our Tote Bag Competition in-person at University of Toronto Scarborough Campus (UTSC) for the very first time!** We anticipate to **gather at least 50 groups of individuals across Ontario** to participate in this competition. Each group will be asked to create a care package with items they deem essential to an unhoused individual. **We will be awarding the group with the most creative and meaningful package with a gift at a value of \$100.** All packages created by the participating groups will be **directly donated to shelters and homeless individuals in Downtown Toronto.**

Currently we have 107 undergraduate students of UTSC as general members of BTO. We would like for more students to join our non-profit organization and volunteer their time at future donations and events. **BTO's general members will continue to be encouraged in coming up with new and innovative ideas to help us eradicate homelessness as a whole.**

Last but not least, our **increasing presence on various social media platforms** allowed us to raise awareness and discuss the importance of advocating for homeless individuals. **We are immensely grateful for all the support we have received from our audience from their generous donations, encouraging words and sharing our work with their circles.** Next year, we are persistent in **allowing the voices of homeless individuals to be heard on a greater scale with a larger audience.**