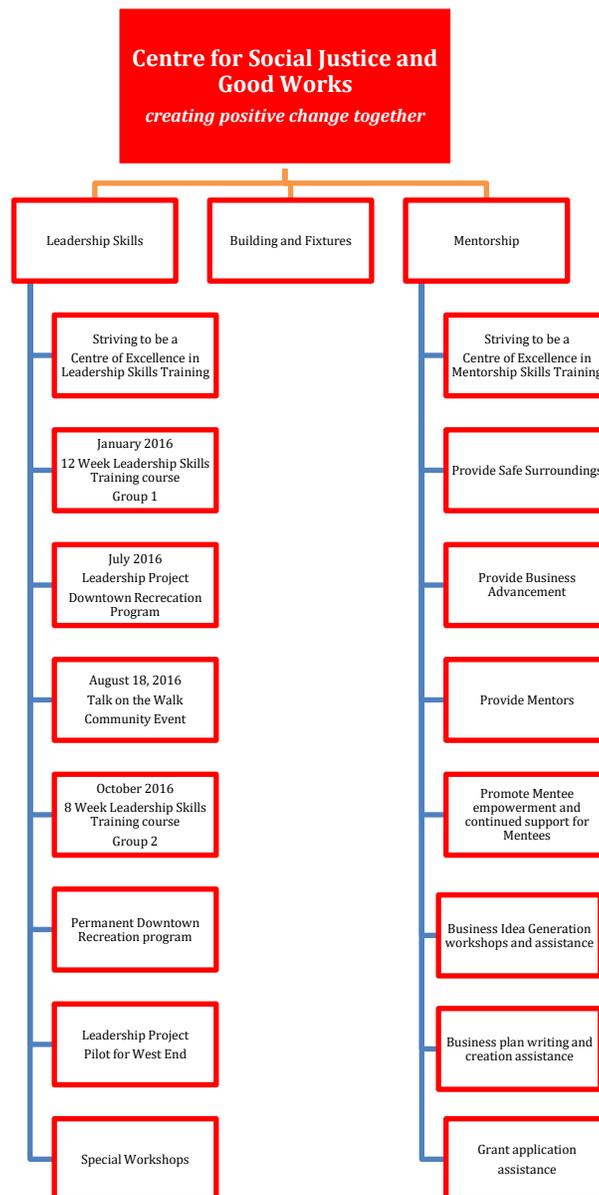


In 2014, a diverse group of community-minded people came together and created the steering committee for what would eventually be called the 'Centre for Social Justice and Good Works'. The needs of the community were studied, especially those of young people. A Terms of Reference was soon created for the Centre and with grant assistance from the Bishop Carter Foundation and the District Sault Ste. Marie Social Services board, the Centre opened the doors in August 2015. Programming focus includes assisting small-business start-ups and assist youth with Leadership Skills Training.



In July 2015, the Centre was incorporated as a not-for-profit and hired Christina Coutu as the executive director, officially opening its doors August 18, 2015. A 9-person diverse board of directors was assembled, including professionals from backgrounds in law, finance, marketing and education. The Centre received funding from the Sault Community Career Centre to hire an office administrator. Lisa Hall was hired through the TIOW program and received training in an office setting which assisted her in the ability to secure full-time employment with the Centre's assistance. The Grand Opening for the Centre was held on December 8, 2015 and a community celebration and reception was held. The Ontario Trillium Foundation approved the Centre's Seed Grant application and was awarded \$75,000 to assist with the start-up of the Centre of Excellence in Mentorship.

January 2016 was a busy time for the Centre. An 8-week Mentorship Training program was presented with the assistance of the Economic Development Corporation and Social Services. The Centre arranged for mentors for each of the five Ontario Works recipients that successfully completed the training and received \$5,000 in grant funding from Social Services.

The pilot project for the Centre of Excellence in Leadership Skills training began on Saturday mornings in January 2016. Eight young people completed the 12-week training program and participated as leaders in the Downtown Recreation Pilot project where they assisted in arranging numerous partnerships and volunteers to carry out the logistics of the project. The Downtown Recreation Program was delivered successfully on a PD Day in May 2016 and for four consecutive Tuesday evenings in July and August, rendering 32 registrants. In addition, 16 children participated in a week-long summer camp program delivered by the YMCA called St. Kateri at no cost to them. Feedback on the program has been extremely positive and encouraging.

This year, the Centre received funding from NOHFC to hire a Community Development Intern, Jessica Emms who is assisting the Centre with projects. Also, in June 2016, the Centre received funding from Canada Summer Jobs and was able to hire three youth, Bradley Senecal, Liliana Bressan and Asheley Cerra who assisted the Centre in hosting an event called 'Talk On The Walk' at the Essar Centre on the concourse. Five topics including entrepreneurship, community mobilization, youth, safety, and employment were discussed. The community was encouraged to provide feedback and over 75 responses about how to create positive change for the community was gathered into a report that has been published to the Centre's website.

Moving forward, the Centre will be delivering the second group of Leadership Skills training, with the project component targeting the west-end of the community. The Centre continues to monitor and assist those participating in the Mentorship skills training program. The Centre has applied for funding to maintain and grow the curriculum of the Leadership Skills training program, as well as for maintenance to the building at 1 Herrick Street.

Centre for Social Justice and Good Works

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