



# Annual Report

May 1, 2016 – April 30, 2017

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## LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER & CHAIR

As Founder, Executive Director and Chair of the Board for Pink Pearl Foundation, it is a great pleasure for me to introduce the 2016-2017 Pink Pearl Foundation Annual Report.

My name is Elise Gasbarrino. I'm a local Niagara resident and I founded Pink Pearl Foundation. The story of Pink Pearl began 12 years ago after I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and has since developed into a community-oriented organization that supports young women between 18-40 years of age facing cancer of any kind.

Pink Pearl Foundation's Annual Report is an opportunity to express our gratitude for your generosity. It is our chance to tell you about the impact the Foundation has made on over 500 women supported and show you the direction in which we are headed.

As 2018 approaches, we are making plans to expand our programming with our winter retreat taking place over two nights in March. We are once again excited to host our 12<sup>th</sup> annual *Black & White with a Touch of Pink* fundraising event in Toronto in April, and even more elated to announce the return of *Black & White* to Niagara on February 3, 2018.

On behalf of our volunteers and the young women who benefit from our programs, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for making all of our successes over this past year possible. I look forward to what we can accomplish together in 2018!

Elise Gasbarrino  
Founder, Executive Director and Chair of the Board  
Pink Pearl Foundation



## OUR STORY

Pink Pearl Foundation was conceived by ovarian cancer survivor Elise Gasbarrino. While undergoing cancer treatment at 21 years old, Elise felt certain elements were missing from her experience—a way to connect with women her age facing the same issues, and a means for them to conquer their issues together. Her vision transformed into Pink Pearl Foundation.

## OUR CAUSE

Pink Pearl Foundation is a registered charitable organization that provides support, facilitates connections and empowers young women who are courageously overcoming the social and emotional challenges of being diagnosed with cancer across southern Ontario. The Foundation has successfully raised more than \$300,000 to date through reputable initiatives, such as *Black & White with a Touch of Pink*, our annual springtime fundraising event in Toronto, and *One Fine Day*, our annual summertime fundraising and awareness-raising initiative. Funds raised provide effective and fully-funded programming for young women facing cancer of any type.

## OUR VALUES

Empowerment inspires well-being and happiness.  
Strong support and meaningful relationships today can create  
hope and strength for tomorrow.  
Everyone has a story. Cancer is only one chapter.  
Authenticity means embracing the true you.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



*Elise Gasbarrino, Founder & Executive Director*

Elise Gasbarrino founded Pink Pearl Foundation after her own battle with cancer. She is an account executive at Burberry where she oversees the wholesale footwear business for the Americas and is a key advisor for the Canadian market. She has been recognized by Burberry as an Icon Award winner for her work in social responsibility.



*Courtney McNamara, Events & Sponsorship*

Courtney McNamara has been involved with Pink Pearl Foundation since its inception, planning and executing the organization's annual fundraising events. Courtney is the Channel Development Director at Cozumo Inc., a Toronto-based retail technology company.



*Amanda Cheng, Finance*

Amanda Cheng joined Pink Pearl in 2015 to oversee the finance and tax function of the organization. She is a Senior Manager in the M&A Tax practice at KPMG LLP where she leads the tax due diligence and structuring elements of transactions. Amanda holds a degree in Business Administration from Wilfrid Laurier University and a CPA, CA designation. She also serves on the board of directors of Melanie's Way, a non-profit organization providing customized experiences to young women facing metastatic cancer.



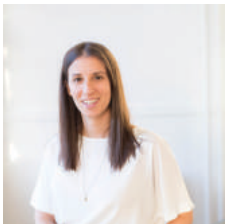
*Terrence Teixeira, Governance*

Terrence Teixeira has been involved with Pink Pearl since 2013, focusing on strategy and organizational governance. He is a sporting event professional whose experience includes the Olympics, Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, Commonwealth Games and the Canadian Olympic Committee. Additionally, Terrence is a published author in the field of sport management and has represented Canada at the World Age-Group Triathlon Championships.



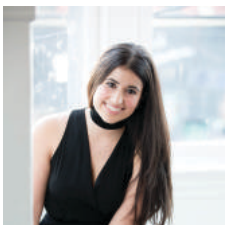
*Bianca Ciccarelli, People*

In addition to being an active member on the BOD, Bianca Ciccarelli is currently VP of the People Committee for the Pink Pearl Foundation. Bianca is a People Manager who recently relocated to Vancouver to work for Labatt Breweries of Canada where she oversees the Western Canadian Sales & Brewery Operations. In this capacity she offers strategic Human Resources support to her various client groups throughout the West.



*Melaina Gasbarrino, Programs & Communications Manager*

Melaina Gasbarrino is the Programs & Communications Manager for Pink Pearl Foundation and has been involved with the organization since its inception. She is the founder of SALT to TREE, a conservation and wellness company. She recently published her first environmental children's book to engage others in positive community change.



*Vittoria Varalli, Strategy*

Vittoria has been with Pink Pearl Foundation since its inception. She has served in a number of roles and currently acts as the Director of Strategy. Vittoria is a consultant at the Boston Consulting Group. She holds a BBA from Wilfrid Laurier University and a JD from Osgoode Hall Law School. She is a member of the New York State bar.

## OUR PROGRAMS

Our programs are developed using experience-based design, taking into consideration the needs of young women between 18-40 years, and building effective programming to fulfill those needs, at no cost to the participants.

*Overnight & Day Retreats* encourage our program participants to connect, self-reflect, and share experiences in a safe and peer-supported environment

*Family Support Day* invites our program participants and their family members to take part in an enjoyable activity, providing an opportunity to grow and learn together

*Pink Pearl Support Packages* contain helpful resources, guided questions, and a symbolic bracelet of hope for young women newly diagnosed with cancer in participating hospitals and wellness centres

*Post-Secondary Scholarships* are awarded to young women with cancer who are enrolled in our programming; involved in their community; and attending a post-secondary institution

*Local Socials* provide a relaxed environment for young women with cancer to connect and to learn more about our support-based programs



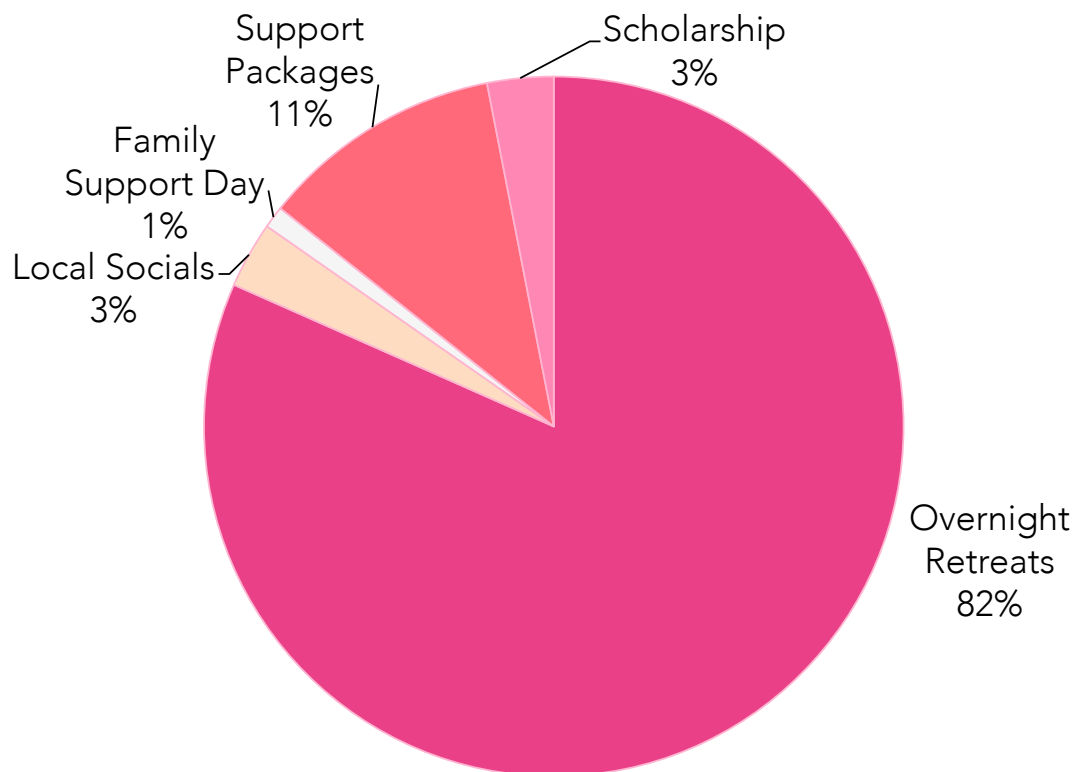
## PROGRAM SUPPORT

When you donate to Pink Pearl Foundation, you are giving young women across southern Ontario the opportunity to gain social and emotional support over the course of their cancer journey.

When you choose to sponsor a specific program, 100% of your donation fuels that program. Thanks to your generosity, we can ensure our participants receive exemplary peer-support services throughout the year.

The figure below breaks down fund allocated by percentage from our FY2016-2017 suite of programs available to young women with cancer.

### FY2016-2017 Suite of Programs



## LYNDSIE'S STORY

Pink Pearl Foundation is structured in a way that provides continual support for young women facing cancer through annual programs and initiatives. Lyndsie's Story is a special example of how a young, strong woman found comfort in Pink Pearl Foundation through her cancer journey, and how she has evolved into our ambassador, volunteer and loyal supporter:

"I never would have thought in my wildest dreams I'd be diagnosed twice during my twenties with cancer. But it happened. Endometrial uterine cancer at age 27. Then, ovarian cancer at age 29. It was challenging, emotional and plain hard to fathom. So much going on both physically and emotionally. But with that said, it was also one of the greatest experiences of my life, all thanks to Pink Pearl.

I became a Pink Pearl participant in November 2015. It was at my first overnight retreat where I met a handful of women experiencing the same thing – and we were all able to joke and laugh at ourselves while comparing stories. So much positivity during such trying times. Art therapy, ask the expert sessions, meditation and so much more fit into two days. I came home feeling as if someone had pushed my reset button. I had found another "family" or as I like to call them "my Pink Pearl sisters".

The following year, I was lucky enough to attend two overnight retreats, accompany my husband to *Black & White with a Touch of Pink*, and take my parents sailing on Family Support Day. After all that Pink Pearl had done for me and my family, I wanted to give by hosting my own One Fine Day event at a local paint bar. The support from my local community was amazing. We raised \$3,500 for the Foundation!

In 2017, I was honoured to speak at *Black & White with a Touch of Pink*, and reminisce about a dear friend whom I met through Pink Pearl that passed away in the winter. I also spoke at the Cancer Care Ontario Human Touch Awards, recognizing Elise Gasbarrino as this year's deserving award recipient. I proudly volunteered this summer as a Pink Pearl Ambassador at Alex & Ani's One Fine Day shopping event, and hosted my second annual One Fine Day event at Loblaw cooking school in Collingwood. Spreading the word about Pink Pearl Foundation and raising funds has become a passion of mine and I hope to help other young women in the same position I was in."

- Lyndsie Smit, Program Participant





## OUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS & INITIATIVES

We have successfully raised more than \$300,000 to date to directly fund our support programs for young women facing cancer through our key annual fundraising initiatives.

*Black & White with a Touch of Pink* is our annual springtime fundraising event generating donations for our suite of support-based programming. On April 7, 2017, more than 350 guests came together at The Great Hall in downtown Toronto for an unforgettable evening, collectively raising \$45,000!

*One Fine Day* is our annual summertime fundraising and awareness-raising initiative, that encourages our supporters to customize and host their own events and celebrate life with loved ones in meaningful ways.

## KEY LEARNINGS

Pink Pearl Foundation is growing organically and continues to exceed growth expectations. With guidance and strategic advice from our board of directors, partners and volunteers, we are continually learning how to run effective support programs for young women facing cancer and adopting best practices in our daily operations. Our key learnings are highlighted below:

### Our Programs

Our young female program participants are seeking a safe place to talk, learn, reflect and feel supported during their cancer journey. Knowing this, we have learned to place value on strengthening connections with our continued partners and building relationships with new partners, including hospitals, treatment centres and other community-oriented organizations in cancer care. We have learned that there is a need for programming in various regions in Ontario, and will gradually work to expand our reach.

### Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are the backbone of our organization. We have learned to attract and retain quality volunteers by implementing a thorough application process. We have realigned our volunteer committee to be cross-functional and efficient in tasks and communication. We are sustaining growth by hiring our first part-time employee based on organizational requirements.

### Our Fundraising

Our annual revenue is mostly generated through our main fundraising event, *Black & White with a Touch of Pink*. We have learned to minimize our event expenses by heightening outreach to donors and soliciting sponsorship. We have learned how effective our supporters can be in generating awareness and funds. We are focusing our efforts on increasing individual donations and engaging third-party fundraising initiatives to be substantial sources of funding.

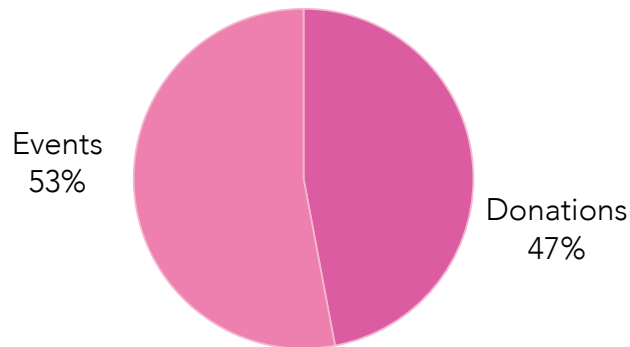
## FINANCIALS

Pink Pearl Foundation relies on the financial support of our community through net funds raised at our annual *Black & White with a Touch of Pink* fundraising event, donations made through our website, and third-party hosted *One Fine Day* events. Our donors and volunteers enable us to provide emotional support to those living with cancer through our programs.

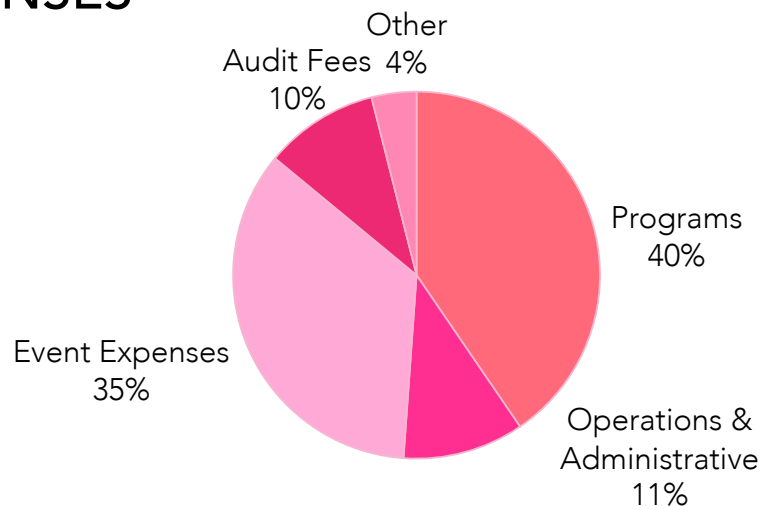
Below is a breakdown of our revenue sources and expenses in FY2016-2017. As we continue our fundraising efforts in FY2017-2018, we shift our focus to increasing personal and corporate donations, while reducing event-related expenses.

The audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2017, including the notes to the financial statements and the auditor's report, are available at [www.pinkpearlfoundation.org](http://www.pinkpearlfoundation.org).

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES



## PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES



"My midwife told me about Pink Pearl and it was nice to finally find a place to belong. The fall retreat was my first time away from my son and it brought me a source of connection, inspiration and of course, a few tears. I could finally find a place to call home."

- Christa, Program Participant



"I am so thankful to Pink Pearl for providing young female survivors with such an incredible community that intersects perfectly with the values I try to convey in life – hope, faith, love, supporting one another, giving back, inspiring change, and true compassion."

- Vinesha, Program Participant

## SUCCESSSES

To date, Pink Pearl Foundation has supported over **500 young women with cancer**



Our retreats have experienced **106% growth** since 2014

We have provided **400 Support Packages** to young women recently diagnosed with cancer

We have supported **over 50 families** at our annual **Family Support Day**

We are entirely **volunteer-run** with **25 dedicated volunteers**



 2014 Retreats  
 2016 Retreats Growth

[pinkpearlfoundation.org](http://pinkpearlfoundation.org)  
[info@pinkpearlfoundation.org](mailto:info@pinkpearlfoundation.org)

   @PinkPearlFdn

## GOALS FOR 2018

To best support young women facing cancer, we are strategically focused on improving our best practices in order to expand our available programming and broaden our funding sources.

Below are listed goals for FY2017-2018:

- Expand retreat, scholarship and support packages to a previously untapped region in Ontario
- Grow total participants impacted to 600 across the Greater Toronto Area, Niagara and the identified region in Ontario with the greatest need
- Launch new programs to better serve young women facing cancer
- Diversify funding sources to obtain revenue of \$150,000
- Launch second *Black & White* fundraising event in the Niagara Region
- Grow to employ three part-time paid employees



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