

These are 40  
moments that  
changed us.

INTERVAL HOUSE GRATITUDE REPORT 2013









# Canada's First "Home for Runaway Wives"

The first moment that changed us happened before we were even "Interval House". A small group of us were looking for a safe place for women leaving bad marriages. We saw women and children lining up for a bar of soap in the "family portion" of a homeless shelter, and we knew what was needed: a home. A few months later, we secured a gift from the government to pay our first and last month's rent on a small rented house, with urging to become a registered charity. We called ourselves Interval House because we were creating an in-between space to give women and children relief and support—a temporary place to regroup, plan and get back to real life. But not everyone understood what we were doing and why: a newspaper ran a story about us in 1973 under the headline "Home for Runaway Wives".

## OUR CHANGE MAKERS:

Darlene Lawson and  
Lynn Zimmer,

## MEMBERS OF OUR FOUNDING COLLECTIVE

*"Decades later, it is deeply disturbing that each year women are abused and murdered, tens of thousands of women and children must flee their homes, schools, and lives to seek safety and support in the now 450 shelters in Canada. That countless more*



*women experience violence—those who escape to places other than shelters or who remain trapped, the 90% of unreported rapes, hundreds of indigenous women who have disappeared." – Darlene*



*"In some ways, being a pioneer is simple. You see something so plainly, and then you do something about it. Real social innovation comes when there is a space, a vacuum, a call to action and a threat. You just figure out where doors can open because you need them to. We felt we didn't have an alternative. We needed to find a safe place for women. You couldn't get welfare without an address. You couldn't get an address without money. At least we were an address." – Lynn*

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# Learning to Listen

Our first gift of confidence. One of the women in our collective had a friend at Toronto General Hospital, and they gave us limited but critical training in trauma and counselling. We learned how to listen—really listen—to the women in our shelter. We learned how hard it is to offer women choices and support their decisions, and empower them to determine their own path. And we learned how to support each other, and our own emotional care. There was no real language for any of this in the early 1970s. We were blown away.

OUR FIRST KINDRED SPIRIT:

## Michele Landsberg

*"I've known Interval House since its very first year of existence and trust its unwavering integrity and its depth of experience. Interval House sets the benchmark in its superb understanding of a woman's experience with escape and rebuilding a life as well as its sensitivity to children's needs during that crisis. What courageous commitment*

*Interval House has shown to confronting and ending the violence that threatens women's equality!"*

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# “Wife Battering”

5 Stories we heard from the women in our home were gut-wrenching. Here we were, the founders of a women’s shelter, horrified and shocked by the extent of violence taking place behind closed doors. We knew women were trapped in marriages with men who weren’t fit to live with. We knew those men were jerks and their wives had to get out. But we didn’t

know how deep it went—our neighbours were being tortured while their children watched. We sat in stunned silence when someone said that the term “wife battering” had been coined in England. It was the first real acknowledgement that this is what we were dealing with.

## PARTNER IN CHANGE: UNION

6 *Domestic violence isn’t like most causes. Just talking about it makes people uncomfortable. And you can’t solve a problem if no one is willing to talk about it. Ultimately, we feel good when the conversations we start help Interval House help more women and children in need.*





## Comfort in Comfort Food

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We thought we should have healthy food. After all, we told ourselves, we were nourishing young families and helping them get their strength back. A local food co-op helped us stock the kitchen and prepare meals with brown rice, lentils...“hippie food”. No one was eating much. And we think they were sneaking up the street for a burger. We realized that food makes where you live feel like a home. So the women were encouraged to participate in meal time, by helping with the grocery list, and taking turns cooking.

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## The Fire

We stood outside and watched our Huron Street home burn. Holding each other, comforting the children, we wept. And wept. That charred smell—you never forget.



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ART AS LANGUAGE:

# When Words Are Too Scary

Kids need to express their feelings in a safe and creative way. Their work tells us so much about how they are healing, and what else they need to feel safe.

PARTNER IN CHANGE:

## Blakes

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For over a decade now, the partners and associates in the Restructuring & Insolvency Group at Blakes have made personal donations to Interval House. We choose to support Interval House because it is a leader in the campaign for women's empowerment, providing innovative, specialized services that help abused women and their children transform their lives and break the cycle of violence. We are grateful for the incredible work that you have done over the past 40 years.





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It was 10pm. The phone rang.  
An angry voice crackled through the line.

**“There’s a bomb in there.  
You’re all going to  
blow up at midnight.”**

We called the police and the desk sergeant told us it was the first night of 9-1-1 service in Toronto. We didn’t know what that was. He explained there was no one left in the station because they were all out on emergency calls, but he would try to send someone soon. We roused everyone from their beds and gathered in the front room. Kids dozed in their mother’s arms while we kept remarkably calm—although we were panicking on the inside. The same desk sergeant was the one who knocked at our door. He inspected the house and lingered until past midnight. He sat with us, talked with us, and was very curious about “what exactly is going on here”. He could see that we were a family. We could see that the police could be an ally, and that gave us hope.

# Magic in our Mailbox



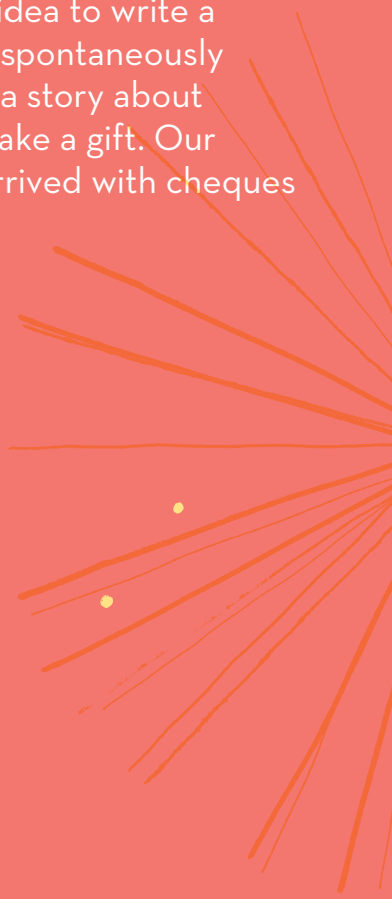
Like many families, we had to be creative to get by on the money we had in our bank account. One day, when the cupboards were particularly bare, we had the inspired idea to write a letter to people in the neighbourhood and our personal contacts who had spontaneously supported Interval House in the past. It was delightfully simple: we shared a story about a woman in our home, we asked our friends to look into their hearts and make a gift. Our letters went in the mailbox. And it was a magical feeling when envelopes arrived with cheques in them. Interval House's fundraising program was born.

## CHANGE TAKES TIME:

### Sylvia McPhee Remembers Interval House in Her Will

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*"I know that more challenges than not at Interval House have a **happy ending** and I feel good knowing that my contributions over the past 26 years, in the future and ongoing, by leaving a gift to Interval House in my Will through the Cornerstone Society, have and will help to bring about many wonderful and exciting **new beginnings**."*



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## Beyond a Pile of Blocks in the Corner

For years, kids at Interval House made do with toys and activities in a quiet spot. We were among the first to recognize that children who witness or experience abuse need care, love and counselling to heal. And we were the first shelter to implement a formal children's program, and create a dedicated play space for kids. This moment changed us, and the kids who have lived here, forever.

## Our First **Male** Children's Counsellor

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It was a slow-burning recognition that there were young children here who desperately need a positive male role model in their lives. We hired our first male children's counsellor.



# It happened in the blink of an eye.

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## CHANGE THROUGH ACTION: Volunteering

*“What makes me feel good about volunteering at Interval House? Knowing that we are taking action to minimize the suffering felt by the abused women and children in our care. That we promote a culture of respect, dignity, self-sufficiency and empowerment. By nurturing a supportive environment, we create a community where women and their children may define their lives for themselves—away from coercion and oppression.” – Andrew*

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A man jumped the fence while the children were playing in the yard. He grabbed a child. His child. The child screamed. He was running for the fence again. Our counsellor raced after him. The man dropped his child and jumped back over the fence. Our safety, our sense of security, was shattered. We got extra bolts for the door, a very early “intercom” system. And a new fence.

## Necessity is the Mother of Invention

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A black woman Santa. A tooth fairy that has a notoriously difficult time finding our shelter. Running out to the store to find a toy in the middle of the night. We discovered—by necessity—many ways to honour the special milestones in a child’s life at Interval House. Every staff member had cooked and carved a turkey or ham at home and brought it in for a holiday meal. Our amazing donors provide toys for women to choose from for their child’s birthday, Christmas or Hanukkah. And a moment that changed us was realizing these milestones were building strong bonds between mother and child.

# Burning the Mortgage

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We are grateful for every single penny we are given. Every gift is precious. But the most precious of all was the first major gift we received—one that allowed us to “burn the mortgage” for our Huron Street home. What a feeling of joy, relief, celebration. **What a moment.**



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# He Promised to Kill Her...

A woman arrived at our doorstep with a 4-year-old child in her arms, bruises all over her face and a visibly crushed spirit. A few weeks later, she started a job in a factory making Christmas tree lights. She left her sleeping child in bed at 5AM every morning, and raced home from work every evening to spend a few precious minutes with him before he went to bed. One morning, minutes after she left for work, we heard screaming. Her husband had found her. And stabbed her repeatedly in the chest. She had open-heart surgery and we took her little boy to visit her in the hospital every day until she was released.



## A CHANGED WOMAN:

### Ritsuko, a Former Resident

*"It was the hardest time in my life. But people there told me I am stronger than I think, they supported me, and very warmly took care of me. It was*

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*just like a family and still I feel it is like a parent's home. I will be forever grateful for what Interval House has done for me."*

# BESS is Born

Truly breaking the cycle of violence means giving women choices and independence. Creating and developing our BESS program meant we could empower women in whole new ways and complete our circle of holistic care. In BESS, women learn to write a resume and cover letter, the latest computer skills, prepare for an interview and develop life skills like balancing work and parenting. And the impact is stunning: we are always overjoyed to get calls from our BESS graduates telling us about their promotion, new job title and other amazing milestones.

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## PARTNER IN CHANGE:

# Dundee Capital Markets

*Dundee Capital Markets is proud to have our Information Technology staff volunteer at Interval House. Their contribution gives them an enhanced connection to the community they live in and pride in helping create a positive experience for the women and children of Interval House.*

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## Our First Open House

We were the first shelter in Canada to welcome our donors into our home. We were terrified and anxious about security, about how the women and children would feel. And we were literally drying the dishes as our first guests were walking through the door.

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She was hysterical.

**“Please...no...please...  
don’t take my child away!  
He’ll kill her!”**

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Panic flashed in her eyes and she was sobbing. The police officer took the screaming newborn out of his mother’s arms. She collapsed and the other women who had rallied around her caught her before she hit the floor. Her abusive partner had won custody—but it was only a few hours until we returned the baby to her mother’s arms. And enhanced our legal and court support programs.



# Inviting Our Donors to Have a Seat — On a Kid's Chair

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It would have been nice to sit at the kitchen table with our donors, but the kitchen is the heart of our home, and there's always a child there chatting over a snack. Or women having a cup of tea. So we made do.

你在我們安全的環境裏,無須憂慮

Ligtas ka na sa anumang

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Women hear “you’re safe now” in their mother tongue. Our connection to interpretive services mean we can speak to women in more than **90 different languages** every single day.

## “Too Upsetting”, they said

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We took the leap and invested in creating a television special called “Journey to Freedom”. We poured our hearts into finding and sharing troubling but inspiring stories. It was powerful. It was brave. And almost no one saw it. “Too upsetting,” the networks said. Running at the very same time was a human rights special showing real prisoners of conscience being shot in the head. Dogs that had been burned with cigarettes. We were more than upset at the double standard. We were outraged.

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# Rebuilding the Home that Rebuilds Lives

We went from being on top of each other to getting lost trying to find each other. Our new centre was everything we needed: bigger, brighter, more secure. And we kept what we cherished most: the feeling of home.

## GAME CHANGERS:

### Michael and David Young

*"Interval House is what I would describe as the perfect combination of enlightened entrepreneurial philanthropy. Smart people with great management skills and financial discipline who have come together to create a scalable, cost effective model that provides a safe harbour and develops long-term solutions for women and children who are victims of domestic abuse. Every time I visit Interval House or meet with the team I feel great and always much better than I did before we met. It's a team I have been extremely proud to be on."*



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# Our Career Boutique...*Dressing for Success*

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In our Career Boutique, a BESS participant finds the perfect suit, shoes and clutch briefcase for her upcoming job interview. When she looks in the mirror, her back straightens and there's a spark of confidence in her eyes. Her transformation on the outside represents what's happening inside. Gently used clothes are donated by professional women in the community, and the women here get a glimpse of their lives beyond Interval House.

PARTNER IN CHANGE:

## Grade 7 Class, Oraynu's B'nai Mitzvah

*"We were thrilled to be able to work with Interval House as part of our tzedakah (social action) project for our group bat and bar mitzvahs—or 'coming of age' ceremonies. Along with Interval House staff, and with the time and effort of our whole class, our teachers and our parents, we were able to purchase and build bookshelves for a library room in Interval House. We collected gently used and new books for children and adults, categorized them, labeled them, inserted library cards and arranged them on the shelves so that the residents could read or borrow books at their leisure. We felt great about giving the residents the opportunity to have access to books, since we love reading and know that literature and education are of great value to all. We continue to feel good about this partnership, imagining that the current and future residents of Interval House might find pleasure, information and hope in the books we have left them."*

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# Making our Home “Homier”

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The vision for our centre becomes a reality. The basement is dedicated to BESS and our housing program. The main floor has our kitchen, living area, playroom and counselling space. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor is bedrooms. And our administrative offices are in the attic.



# Changing Lives, One Bowl at a Time — Soup Sisters

Soup Sisters has the very simple mandate to nurture and nourish women and children whose lives have been affected by domestic abuse and family violence. Our goal is to provide women, children and youth in crisis with some homemade soup to show them we care and to let them know that we stand with them against family violence. Every time a group comes together and makes soup the women and children not only become better nourished but also nurtured by members of their own community. We hear from staff and counsellors that this very simple gesture of homemade and nourishing soup also carries with it a very strong message of concern that reaches the women and children directly.



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PARTNER IN CHANGE:

## Royal LePage Shelter Foundation

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*A home should be a place of safety, security and comfort. Sadly, for thousands of Canadian women and children who live with abuse, this is not the case. Through the generosity and dedication of Royal LePage agents, brokers and staff, the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation is proud to support Interval House. The shelter offers women and children with the opportunity to rebuild their lives, free from violence. As a leader in the field, Interval House provides a high level of professional support, innovative programs, and caring staff. Royal LePage Shelter Foundation donors feel good supporting Interval House because they know they are helping to stop the cycle of violence and giving women, children and teenagers the chance for a brighter future.*

Our first Interval House baby was born in the early 1980s. Two counsellors went to the hospital with mom, and the rest of us were pacing the halls at home waiting for news. Since then, we've had at least 20 beautiful bundles of joy whose first-ever home was Interval House.



# Pioneering Approach to Housing

Women should be able to choose a safe, affordable home, in the neighbourhood they want, when they leave here. Such a perfectly simple idea—but with a very complicated bureaucracy in the way. We pioneered a housing partnership with private landlords to provide rent-geared-to-income for women graduating from our BESS program. Giving women choice is at the heart of rebuilding lives.

TOMORROW'S GAME CHANGER:

## Brand New Interval House Donor, Asad

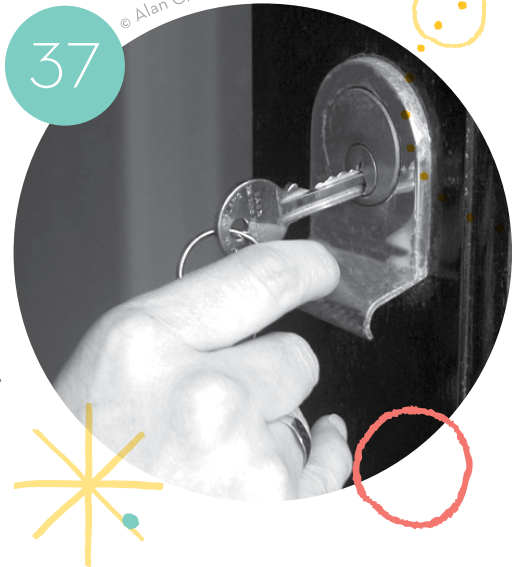
*"I find supporting the Interval House very rewarding as it contributes to the care and support of women and children living in Interval House shelter. I also find it rewarding to know that my contribution is going to the greater ideals of women's empowerment and breaking the cycle of violence."*

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© Alan Cleaver



## Laughing and Crying at the Same Time

When Pamela, a BESS graduate purchased her own home...that was a moment that changed us. She was laughing and crying at the same time when she called to give us the news. Once we understood what she was saying, we were laughing and crying too.

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Reading this. Right now. This is a moment that defines us because we look ahead with you, our caring donors, to the future of Interval House. None of these moments would be possible without you. And as we have done every day since 1973 (that's 14,600 days), with the women who share our home, we will define our future together.



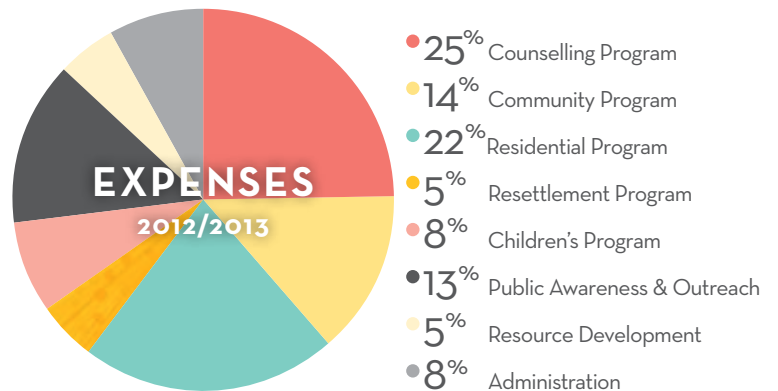
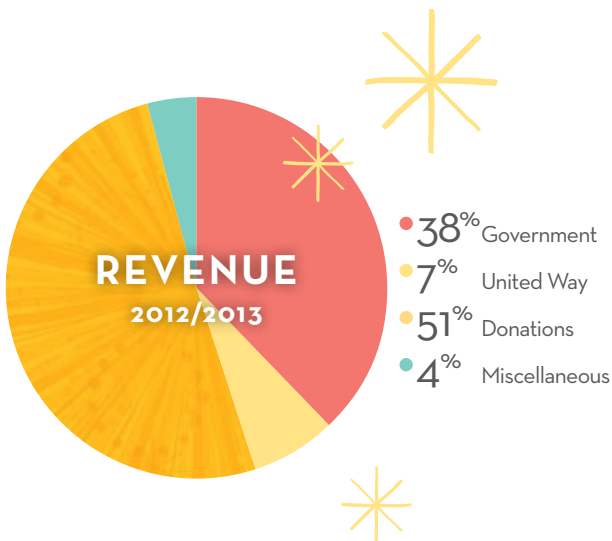
## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

### REVENUE

	CAPITAL FUND	RESERVE FUND	GENERAL FUND	2013 TOTAL	2012 TOTAL
Government	-	-	\$1,035,746	\$1,035,746	\$1,018,704
United Way	-	-	199,671	199,671	192,419
Donations	-	-	1,370,907	1,370,907	1,339,043
Miscellaneous	27,624	73,904	-	101,528	155,392
	<b>\$27,624</b>	<b>\$73,904</b>	<b>\$2,606,324</b>	<b>\$2,707,852</b>	<b>\$2,705,558</b>

### EXPENSES

Programs	1,497	14,369	1,790,880	1,806,746	1,806,402
Public Awareness and Outreach	-	-	534,880	534,880	306,867
Resource Development	-	-	157,991	157,991	144,736
Administration	31,106	26,830	94,768	152,704	146,035
Amortization of Capital Assets	200,410	-	-	200,410	199,263
	<b>\$233,013</b>	<b>\$41,199</b>	<b>\$2,578,519</b>	<b>\$2,852,731</b>	<b>\$2,603,303</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)- CURRENT YEAR</b>	<b>(\$205,389)</b>	<b>\$32,705</b>	<b>\$27,805</b>	<b>(\$144,879)</b>	<b>\$102,255</b>



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS - CURRENT	CAPITAL FUND	RESERVE FUND	GENERAL FUND	2013 TOTAL	2012 TOTAL
Cash and Temporary Investments	\$1,592,922	\$1,153,078	\$214,777	\$2,960,777	\$2,216,912
GST/HST/Sundry Receivable	-	-	51,324	51,324	33,479
Prepaid Expenses	-	-	24,584	24,584	19,837
	<b>\$1,592,922</b>	<b>\$1,153,078</b>	<b>\$290,685</b>	<b>\$3,036,685</b>	<b>\$2,270,228</b>
Long Term Investments	244,992	178,557	-	423,549	1,203,110
Capital Assets	4,241,858	-	-	4,241,858	4,404,493
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$6,079,772</b>	<b>\$1,331,635</b>	<b>\$290,685</b>	<b>\$7,702,092</b>	<b>\$7,877,831</b>

## LIABILITIES - CURRENT

Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	-	-	87,944	87,944	104,326
Current Portion of Mortgage Payable	46,437	-	-	46,437	14,479
	<b>\$46,437</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$87,944</b>	<b>\$134,381</b>	<b>\$118,805</b>
<b>Mortgage Payable</b>	<b>\$243,351</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$243,351</b>	<b>\$289,787</b>

## NET ASSETS

Invested in Capital Assets	3,998,507	-	-	3,998,507	4,114,706
Externally Restricted	-	185,349	-	185,349	182,137
Internally Restricted	-	1,145,196	-	1,145,196	1,115,703
Unrestricted	1,909,979		85,329	1,995,308	2,056,693
	<b>\$5,908,486</b>	<b>\$1,330,545</b>	<b>\$85,329</b>	<b>\$7,324,360</b>	<b>\$7,469,239</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$6,198,274</b>	<b>\$1,330,545</b>	<b>\$173,273</b>	<b>\$7,702,092</b>	<b>\$7,877,831</b>



The summarized statements of financial position and operations are derived from the complete financial statements of Interval House as of September 30, 2013 and for the year then ended. The full audited financial statements are available upon request.



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