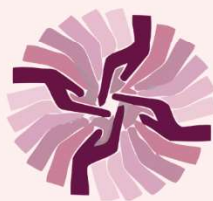
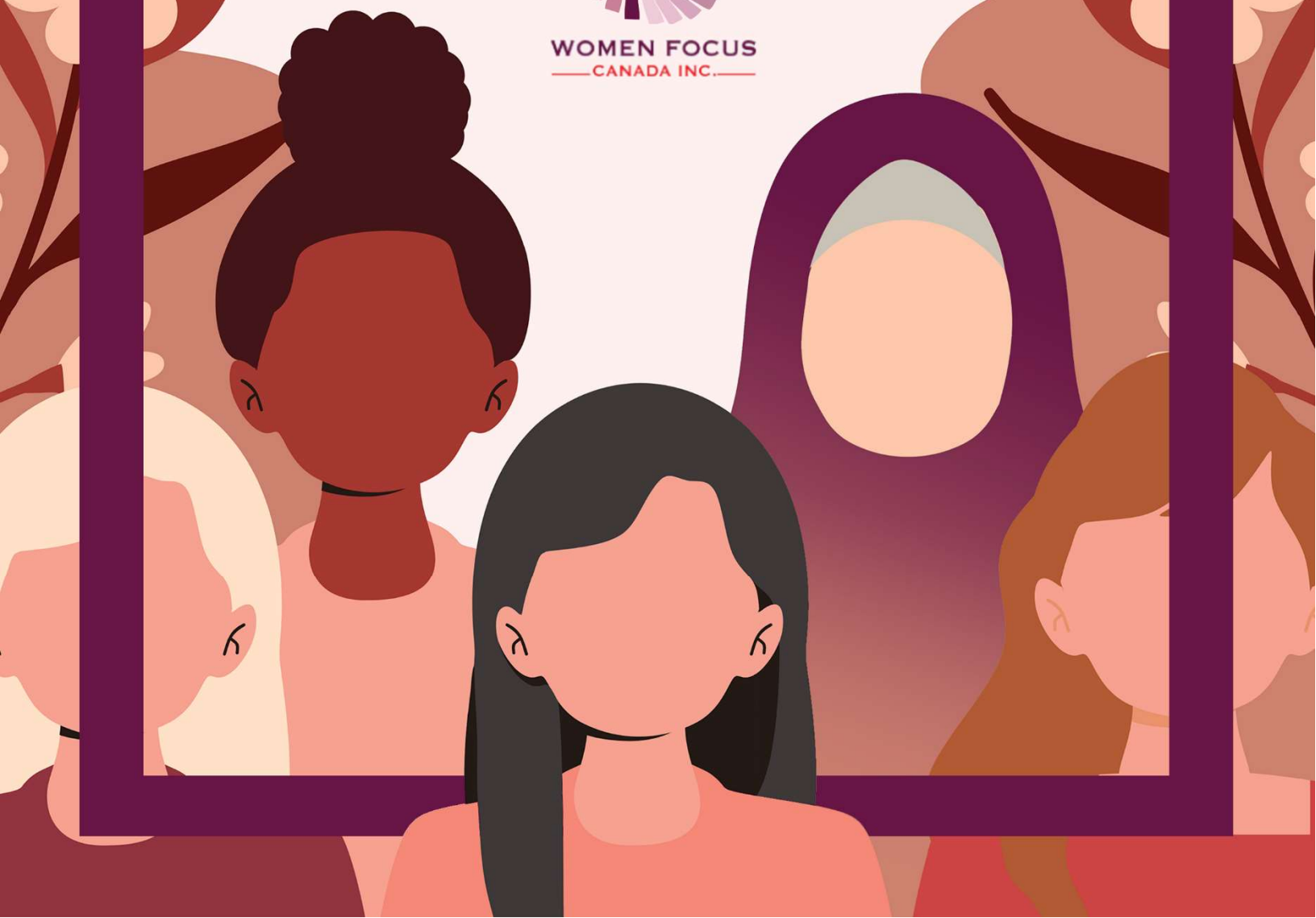


ANNUAL REPORT 2023



WOMEN FOCUS
CANADA INC.





Annual Report

2023

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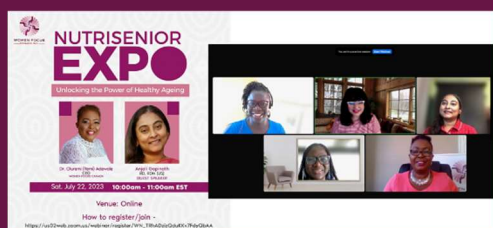
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Message From Women Focus Canada Inc. Board of Trustees Chair



As we draw the curtains on the year 2023, I am compelled to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we have undertaken together at Women Focus Canada. The milestones and achievements we have reached in various crucial areas have been nothing short of remarkable, and I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation for your pivotal role in these successes.

In the realm of IT support and enhancement programs, our dedication has been a driving force behind the transformative changes we've experienced. The strides we've made in leveraging technology to empower individuals and enhance our organizational efficiency have positioned Women Focus Canada as a trailblazer in utilizing innovative solutions for positive change.

The community capacity-building proposal we championed has been instrumental in shaping our approach to empowerment. Our strategic vision and thoughtful planning have laid the groundwork for sustainable growth, resilience, and lasting impact within our community. The achievements realized through this initiative stand as a testament to your foresight and commitment. The insights generated through rigorous research have not only informed our decisions but have also deepened our understanding of the challenges and opportunities we face.

As we look back on the accomplishments of 2023, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering commitment, passion, and exceptional leadership. The impact of your contributions has been felt across every facet of Women Focus Canada, and I am confident that the foundation you've helped build will continue to bear fruit in the years ahead.

Thank you for your tireless efforts and firm dedication to advancing the mission of Women Focus Canada. Here's to another year of collaboration, growth, and making a meaningful difference in the lives of the women and families we serve.

Tinuola A. Akhere (RSSW)

Director-Chair - Women Focus Canada Inc.



Message From Women Focus Canada Inc. CEO



Women Focus Canada Inc (WFC) was incorporated in 2018 just prior to COVID-19, with the mission of developing programs targeted toward women empowerment. Through its initial programming, WFC delivered key programs and community support toward women's overall health and socioeconomic advancement. WFC made progress in addressing the psychological impacts of isolation and lockdown due to COVID-19, building capacity, and encouraging women to improve their lives and contribute to the socioeconomic development of their communities. As the programs gained traction and were deemed successful, it was decided to expand services to youth, so that the organization's mission of poverty reduction could be approached from multiple angles. Women Focus Canada's mandate is to address the disparity in determinants of health for women with a particular emphasis on the barriers for equality most profoundly experienced by women and their families from underprivileged communities, women of lower income who may be newcomers experiencing unemployment, Black and racialized populations, and women with disabilities.

Women Focus Canada aims to foster safe and inviting platforms that promote knowledge exchange, learning, partnership, and opportunities for networking and skill-building, leading ultimately to the improvement in well-being, socioeconomic enrichment, and the capacity of our beneficiaries to uplift themselves and their communities.

Last year has been a significant opportunity where we have experienced growth that has left a long-term impression on our organization and the African communities we serve. WFC has invested and improved its IT support, enhanced its website and cybersecurity awareness, launched the Youth Civic Engagement Readiness Program, and witnessed considerable progress in community capacity building, fundraising, and skill enhancement. For example, WFC participated in fundraising events in Canada including a Partnership with the 2023 TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon with the goal to relieve poverty. Profits from the fundraising helped to support women and children in a community shelter with food items and personal and baby care items.

We thank our participants across all communities, our partners, our consultants, and our volunteers who helped our organization to continue achieving our goals and mandates.

A special thanks to our big donors: the Government of Canada, the Canadian Red Cross Society, and the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative "Africa Centre and Tropicana" for their trust in our organization and their generosity in funding Women Focus Canada Inc. Community Capacity project and Digitalization project.

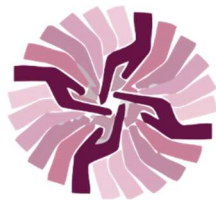
Moving forward, WFC will continue the Youth Civic Engagement Readiness program and socioeconomic and well-being development for women, building on success stories and opportunities while exploring the challenges that face women, youth, families, and communities in Canada.

Dr. Oluremi (Remi) Adewale

Founder & CEO - Women Focus Canada Inc



WHO WE ARE



WOMEN FOCUS
— CANADA INC. —



About Women Focus Canada



Women Focus Canada Inc (WFC) was incorporated in 2018 just prior to COVID-19, with the mission of developing programs targeted toward the reduction of poverty, primarily for women. Through its initial programming, WFC delivered key programs and community support to women.

As the programs gained traction and were deemed successful, it was decided to further expand services to female youth, so that the organization's mission of poverty reduction could be approached from multiple angles. Grounded in values of inclusion, collaboration, and leadership, WFC aims to foster safe and inviting platforms that promote knowledge exchange, learning, and opportunities for networking and skill-building, leading ultimately to health and wellness advancement, socioeconomic enrichment, and the capacity of our beneficiaries to uplift themselves and their communities.

Vision

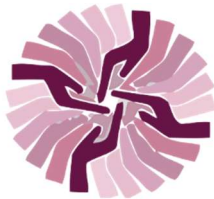
Women Focus Canada (WFC) envisions a country where every woman and girl has the opportunity to achieve her fullest potential and participate in all aspects of life.

Mission

Women Focus Canada (WFC) is a registered not-for-profit and charitable organization. Women Focus Canada's mission is to relieve poverty by meeting the basic needs of those who are most vulnerable in Canada and by removing barriers for basic human necessities that will help improve opportunities and outcomes.



PROGRAM UPDATES



WOMEN FOCUS
— CANADA INC. —



Youth Civic Engagement Readiness Program (YCEP)

YCEP is an initiative designed to encourage young women aged 15 to 29 to learn about Canada's political infrastructure and governance systems. YCEP's key purpose is to foster increased political literacy and youth engagement through the achievement of four major goals:

- Enhance knowledge about Ontario's political system, legislature, governance, and electoral process.
- Develop an understanding of the role of MPPs and Queen's Park in provincial governance.
- Build leadership competencies for community engagement, political advocacy, and careers in public service.
- Encourage networking with the public sector, community leaders, and mentors.



The inaugural program curriculum consisted of three key learning sessions, two networking sessions, a post-program reflection, and a certification ceremony.

Each learning session was between one-and-a-half hours to two hours in length and covered three key subject areas aimed at preparing program participants for adequate civic engagement. These three subject areas were:

- Understanding Civic Engagement - An introductory session to Women Focus Canada, the YCEP, and a shared understanding of civic engagement
- Networking & Personal Branding - An interactive preparatory session aimed at providing participants with effective means of connecting with community leaders during the program's Provincial Legislative Assembly tour and networking event
- Leadership & Career Development - A capacity-building session focused on nurturing leadership and exploring a career in civic-related appointments



The two networking sessions served individual purposes, with one being hosted prior to the workshops of the program and one being hosted halfway through the program. These programs included:

- Virtual Meet & Greet - Aimed at fostering connections between program participants and between facilitators and participants
- Ontario Legislative Assembly Tour and Networking Reception - Aimed at providing program participants with an understanding of the role of MPPs and the Legislative Assembly and at providing participants with the opportunity to learn and gain experience from and connect with key community leaders which included guests, activists, members of provincial Parliament, and community developers.



Participants registered from a total of twelve different academic institutions. All thirteen registrations came from individuals of differing academic programs ranging from advertising to public health.

50%

of registrations were from students in the second year, and 24% of registrations were from students who had recently graduated from high school

48%

of participants joined the program to learn about civic-related career development or opportunities, 16% because they were interested in enhancing leadership skills, and 16% because they wanted to participate in civic engagement

To measure the program's effectiveness, a post-program evaluation was sent to all participants. This evaluation yielded positive results which highlighted that YCEP's goals were achieved as follows:

75%

of respondents said that they have a better understanding of Ontario's political system, civic engagement, networking, and leadership

100%

of respondents indicated that they have a better understanding of how to enhance networking and personal branding skills after attending the Networking and Personal Branding workshop





100%

of respondents indicated that they have a better understanding of leadership and career development after attending the session on Leadership & Career Development

100%

of respondents said that they would recommend the YCEP program to other youth in the future if the program is offered again

Positive Testimonials from Participants:

-  **"I thoroughly enjoyed the program. I got to learn so much and it was really lovely meeting all the workshop facilitators who put in the effort to put this program together."**
-  **"The sessions were very helpful, specifically the Networking and Personal Brand-Building workshop, because this is something I struggled with, but after the session, I had a better understanding of how to approach networking."**
-  **"The Leadership and Career Development session was useful because it highlighted the various ways I could get involved in civic-related appointments. It helped me gain clarity on the different ways I could approach my career path."**
-  **"The program was a great way to create a community of like-minded individuals who aspire to leave an impact on the community. While our interests differed, it was fantastic to come together around a passion for civic engagement."**

Overall, WFC's inaugural YCEP was a success with key objectives of the program being met. The program also translated to immediate civic engagement commitments with three participants getting involved with Women Focus Canada as volunteers.

Digital Transformation Milestones and Achievements



In the fall of 2023, Women Focus Canada embarked on a transformative journey, leveraging digital solutions to propel the organization toward the realization of its five-year strategic goals. This ambitious endeavour was made possible through the generous support of the Africa Centre SBCCI grant.

Strategic Planning and Roadmap Development

A pivotal step in this digital evolution was the commissioning of an internal digital maturity assessment. This comprehensive review delved into the organization's strategic objectives and existing processes, benchmarked against best practices in the non-profit sector. The insights gained paved the way for the formulation of a strategic roadmap that would guide Women Focus Canada through the next six months and beyond.

Vendor Engagement and System Implementation

In November 2023, Women Focus Canada initiated partnerships with system vendors to implement cutting-edge digital solutions in human resources, project management, and communication. After a meticulous selection process, vendors of choice were secured in December, setting the stage for a transformative start to the new year.

Ongoing Implementation and Rollout



As the organization concluded 2023, the implementation of key systems, including the applicant tracking system, performance management process, and project management system, was already underway. The coming months will witness a seamless transition for organizational members, with volunteers and existing consultants undergoing comprehensive training facilitated by robust training guides housed in a centralized learning management system. This strategic approach extends beyond mere adaptation, fostering a digital onboarding experience for new employees.

Enhanced Communication and Connectivity

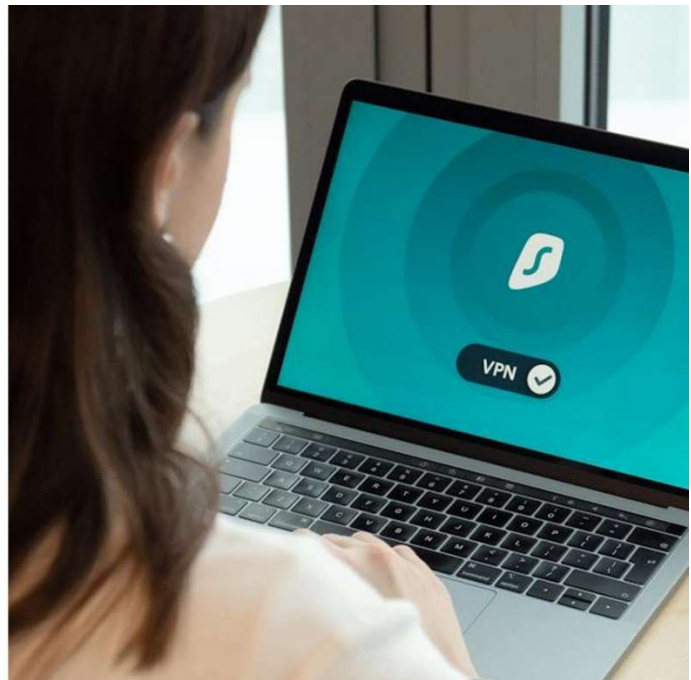
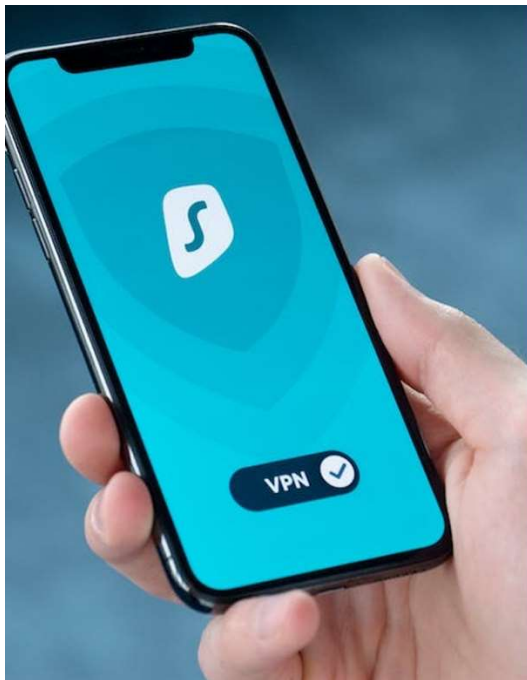
The transition to Microsoft Teams signifies a commitment to optimized and streamlined communication. Initiatives to implement personnel access control in the new year underscore Women Focus Canada's dedication to security and efficiency in its operations.

Progress Toward a Digital Future

With these initiatives in motion, Women Focus Canada is progressing steadily toward a future defined by seamless operations and enhanced connectivity. The digitization efforts not only align with the organization's strategic objectives but also reinforce its commitment to leveraging technology for greater impact in the non-profit space.

Women Focus Canada embarked on **Cybersecurity Awareness Project** through the generous support of the Africa Centre SBCCI grant.

- Security Awareness and Training Policy was created.
- The Annual Employee Cybersecurity Awareness Training program structure was defined to comply with the policy stipulation that all employees must complete an awareness training once every year. Supporting artifacts created include:
 - Cybersecurity awareness training session presentation template
 - Employee online attestation form on Microsoft SharePoint portal
 - Training notification email template
- To support the Security Awareness and Training Policy and general security best practices, a program for a year-long, ongoing cybersecurity awareness campaign was developed. The campaign kit includes:
 - Informational posters
 - Informational email templates
 - Phishing awareness article
 - Working safely remotely article
 - Social engineering and identity theft awareness articles
 - Ransomware awareness article



Partnership and Collaboration Capacity

We've established various partnerships with stakeholders, academic institutions, not-for-profit agencies, experts, and other individuals. This magnificent venture was made possible through the generous support of the Tropicana SBCCI grant.

These partnerships have strengthened our collaborative capacity and expanded our network, which is essential for achieving our community-focused goals. Completed Community Well-Being programs include the following achievements.

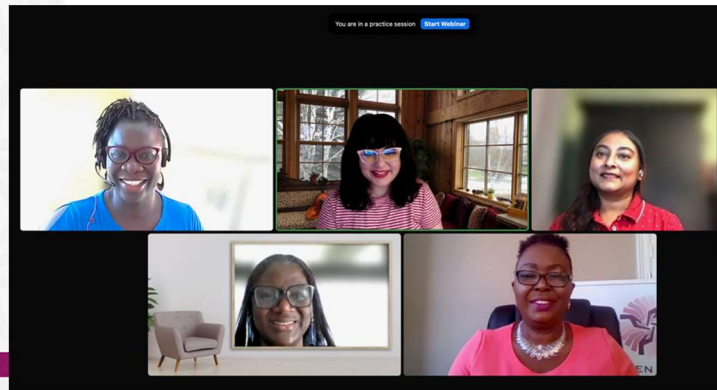
Stress Relief Workshop



The virtual event titled “Stress Management Hour,” held on July 15th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., was thoughtfully crafted to provide participants with practical tools and strategies for effectively handling stress in their daily lives. Led by an experienced speaker alongside facilitators, this one-hour session incorporated engaging discussions and interactive activities aimed at guiding attendees through stress-management techniques to enhance their overall well-being. A total of 81 individuals registered for the event, underscoring a significant interest in stress management. However, the actual attendance during the event numbered 22 participants.

Despite this variance, this turnout reflects meaningful engagement from those who were able to join the session. The impact of the “Stress Management Hour” virtual event was noteworthy. It successfully met its primary objective of arming participants with valuable stress-management tools and strategies. Attendees left the session with actionable takeaways and an enhanced understanding of how to identify and navigate stress for the betterment of their overall well-being.

Seniors Nutrition Hour



The virtual event titled “Senior Nutrition Hour” held on July 29th, 2023 at 10 am was conducted with the primary goal of advocating for healthy eating and nutrition among seniors. Guided by seasoned nutrition experts, this one-hour session provided seniors with invaluable insights, practical tips, and dynamic discussions aimed at empowering them to make informed food choices for their holistic health. A total of 46 individuals registered for the event, indicating a robust interest in senior nutrition. Notably, 14 participants actively engaged in the virtual session.

The impact of the “Senior Nutrition Hour” virtual event was significant. Despite the variance between registration numbers and actual attendance, the session effectively achieved its objective of equipping seniors with practical knowledge and actionable steps for making informed dietary choices, thereby contributing to their health and well-being. The actively-engaged participants left with newfound insights, prepared to adopt healthier dietary habits and enhance their overall quality of life.

Food Drive - Putting Your Generosity into Action



The food drive aimed to raise funds and gather food through various food-related events and activities, supporting essential community initiatives like food banks, community kitchens, and nutrition programs. Women Focus Canada (WFC) collaborated with the Women & Children Precious Shelter in Brampton to identify the specific needs of the families they assist.

Thanks to the community’s dedication and enthusiasm, food items generated and donated were utilized to contribute to impactful initiatives in the community-supported women and children at the

Women & Children Precious Shelter in Brampton. The objective extended beyond mere sustenance; it sought to enhance the overall well-being of the women and children relying on the shelter's services for refuge and support. The collaborative efforts aimed to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those who most need support in our communities.

TCS Toronto Waterfront “Run for Her”



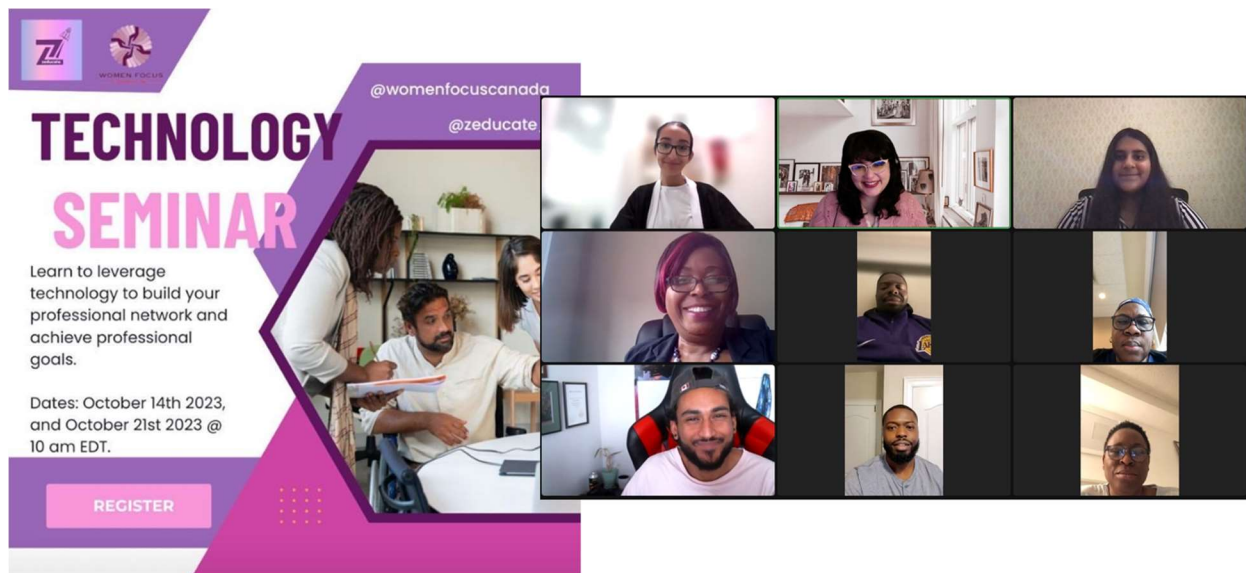
The annual Toronto Waterfront Marathon held every October in Toronto, Canada, serves as a platform for fostering community through running and integrating sports into the fabric of sustainable communities and city development. Women Focus Canada seized this opportunity to engage in the TCS Toronto Waterfront five-kilometre run, leveraging the TCS Charity Challenge fundraising program that contributes to local charities. Participants were empowered to create personalized fundraising pages, sharing them with friends and family.

On Sunday, October 15, 2023, Women Focus Canada enthusiastically participated in the inaugural Run for Her campaign during the TCS Toronto Waterfront marathon, with five dedicated runners registered under the 5K category. The team was comprised of esteemed WFC CEO and members.

Beyond the physical challenge, the 5K charitable run provided a platform for creating a meaningful impact while pushing personal boundaries. The event cultivated a spirit of camaraderie, uniting all participants toward the shared goal of supporting a worthy cause, transforming it into an unforgettable experience.

The impact was substantial, with Women Focus Canada successfully raising \$1500. Thanks to the community's dedication and enthusiasm, your funds helped to make a substantial purchase of nutritious essentials and personal hygiene items for the women and children at the Women & Children Precious Shelter in Brampton.

Technology Seminars



Women Focus Canada was thrilled to host a series of technology seminars in collaboration with Zeducate throughout October, specifically on Saturday, October 14th, 2023 and on Saturday, October 21, 2023. The workshops covered topics such as AI for economic growth, digital marketing, and the journey for individuals to become LinkedIn creators. Tailored for those aged 13 and above, with a specific focus on individuals between 17 and 40 years old, these seminars aimed to broaden participants' knowledge of AI and technology. The workshops were thoughtfully designed to be inclusive and accessible, ensuring that participants from various age groups could benefit from the valuable insights provided.

The profound impact of technology education extends beyond mere skill acquisition, as it plays a pivotal role in narrowing the gender gap, fostering digital inclusion, stimulating critical thinking, and enhancing overall workplace efficiency. Equipping individuals, especially women, with the ability to harness technology not only facilitates their adaptation to a rapidly evolving workforce but also empowers them to leverage their digital presence to achieve professional goals, emphasizing the importance of AI in the workplace.

The results were remarkable, with a substantial turnout for these seminars. Participants emerged from the sessions equipped with adept skills in digital tools and marketing, demonstrating a clear understanding of the significance of AI in their professional endeavours.



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