

Paul Tsaparis
Chair, York University Board of Governors
York University
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Sub: Letter of Transmittal

Dear Mr. Tsaparis,

The following documents contain an analytical report on the charity known as Pathways to Education, and the report will determine whether the charity is a suitable candidate for a partnership with York. Pathways' purpose is to help high school students in low-income communities to graduate, and offers a number of services to students who apply for its programs, such as tutoring and supplies. The analytical report holds research of the charity and their major activities over the last three years, and details the charity's finances, scope, programs, and general progress towards their goal.

I hope you will find the report satisfactory.

Sincerely,

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Charity Analysis and Report

Pathways to Education

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Executive Summary

Pathways to Education is a non-profit organization that assists youth in low-income communities to graduate high school and successfully pursue post-secondary education. The charity has 27 program locations across Canada with the majority operating in Ontario and Quebec. Programs provide students with mentoring, after-school tutoring, and financial assistance for school supplies, food stamps, and other necessities. Pathways collaborates with governments, schools, and numerous diverse organizations, and receives funding from partnerships, donors, and government organizations (Pathways Model).

Since its annual report in 2020, Pathways to Education has recorded up to 6512 students currently enrolled in its programs, with an increased 77% graduation rate in Pathways communities such as Toronto, Ottawa, and Rexdale. Pathways has supported over 19,000 students since 2001, and continues organizing unique projects and programs to tackle the local needs of youth, such as granting accessible learning to students, assistance with post-pandemic schooling, and raising awareness for youth in need (Inc).

Pathways to Education is a recommended choice for the University to pursue a partnership with. Pathways spends heavily on programs, but students who participate benefit in the long term with opportunities for post-secondary education. Pathways' participants are less likely to rely on social assistance in the future and can give back to their communities as more stable members of society. By assisting Pathways, York can enhance its own brand as a community-oriented institution.

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Introduction

Pathways to Education was founded in 2001 out of the Regent Park Community Health Centre in Toronto, where the first program to help high school students took place. Pathways officially formed in 2005 and expanded to other communities since, establishing program locations in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia (Inc). This analytical report will detail some of Pathways' major activities from 2018 to 2021, and will present research on the programs that Pathways offers to students. The report will inspect the issue that the charity faces, students in impoverished communities, and determine to what ends do they contribute to solving the problem.

This report will determine the compatibility of Pathways with York University through several facets, from its goals, to its legitimacy, to the impact and presence the charity has in Canada. The annual report will be investigated, including statistics of graduating high school students and Pathway's finances, which will be compared to news articles and scholarly research to find any inconsistencies or exaggerations of the charity or its achievements. Pathway's network of donors and volunteers will be examined to reflect the quality and values of Pathways, and programming will be explored in further detail to determine the flexibility of Pathways and to understand its approaches to assisting students. All together, this research will help form conclusive evidence of how York should approach this charity in the future.

Discussion

Mission and Goals

Pathways to Education wants to eliminate poverty in low-income communities through giving disadvantaged youth the opportunities for better education. Pathways offers academic, financial, social, and one-on-one supports through its programming to remove barriers to graduating high school, and to foster developments in youth through their high school years. Services and programming are meant to help students set higher aspirations and goals for their futures, and the charity aims to assist low-income communities through educating its youth (Lavecchia, 4-5).

Pathways seeks to expand their supports across Canada to develop sustainability, ensure continued success, and to assist more students. Pathways expands their goals and maintains program flexibility when communities pose new challenges, such as navigating systemic barriers for race, or offering accessible learning during the pandemic (Inc).

Programming

To apply to Pathways programs, students must personally visit one of the program locations in their area. Locations are numerous in Ontario and Quebec, but sparse in other provinces.

Regarding services, Pathways can assist students with writing tailored student plans, finding social support networks, getting on-site tutoring, finding mentors to offer career-related advice and skills, getting financial support such as lunch vouchers, transit passes and scholarships, and seeking help with planning for post-secondary education or training. Program locations have little to no differences in size or resources (Pathways Model).

In written articles, The Toronto Star has recognized Pathways' programming as effective and substantial. One program participant in Kingston, Ontario, Hank Perrin, was diagnosed with

ADHD and lived in a poor community, but joined Pathways and got in contact with the Police Athletic League. Perrin's perspective on local authorities was changed positively, and Perrin was able to graduate high school (Whig). Pathways' web site shares similar stories. More recently, Pathways is trying to remedy the lack of high school graduates in Quebec by expanding their program locations to where COVID-19 has made online learning unaffordable for numerous students. As of 2020, only 64% of Quebec high school students were graduating on time, and many students were taking service sector jobs next to their studies (Newswire).

Finances and Network

Pathways to Education spends an estimated 37% of received donations, where administrative costs take up 7% and fundraising costs take up 30%. The remaining 63% go towards programming. This year, Pathways received roughly \$26 million from the government and \$6.5 million from the public, where program costs are around \$26 million annually (Charity Intelligence). Pathways is partnered with the provincial governments of participating provinces, such as Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Manitoba. Annual donors include corporate organizations such as TD Bank Group and Canada Life Assurance, as well as charitable organizations including United Way and smaller groups across Canada (Pathways Model).

In 2020, Pathways received a \$750,000 pledge from Scotiabank, a long-standing investor, in a collaborative effort to help immigrant youth and newcomers enrolled in Pathways programs. Scotiabank's reasoning for the pledge was that students who completed programs brought an annual increase in Canadian adult earnings by 19%, increased employment by 14%, and reduced the use of social assistance by nearly a third (Education News). This year, Pathways to Education collaborated with Google alongside several other organizations to fund Google career certificates for reskilling immigrant workers. Google's certificate programs are meant to train workers for

entry level positions in the tech industry, and nearly 83% of participants find work shortly after completing the program (DiversityCan).

Presence and Impact

In their 2021 annual report, Pathways has provided services to over 19, 000 students since 2001. Participating students have an average graduation rate of 77%, and of these graduating students 68% transition to post-secondary education or training. In several areas of operation such as Winnipeg, Vancouver, Saint Johns, and Regent Park Ontario, the annual report indicates higher graduate rates for the 2019-2020 school year than before Pathways' involvement. The most densely populated areas in Canada often show the most drastic changes in graduation rates, an example seen where the improved rates are as low as 55% in Shawinigan, and as high as 98% in Vancouver (Pathways Model). Students who are eligible for Pathways programs are averaged to have lower adult earnings from ages 19 to 23, but have higher earnings than their counterparts between ages 26 to 28. Pathways graduates are estimated to make an additional \$3100 per year, with a higher likelihood of employability by up to 10% to 13%. For non-monetary outcomes, Pathways graduates have a reduced chance of having children or getting married as young adults by a third, out of the average 49.7% of young adults in Canada (Lavecchia, 5-6).

In 2019, Pathways to Education began launching its "Build Pathways" campaign to raise awareness for the high school dropout rate in Canada (Canada). Pathways researched that there were nearly 300 000 students annually at risk of dropping out due to poverty, and in 2020 found that the number of young people aged 20-24 without high school diplomas in low-income communities was almost triple the national average. The charity conducted polls on 2000 Canadian adults on the issue, and concluded that few were aware of it (Weekly).

Conclusion

We believe that York University can benefit from entering into a partnership with Pathways to Education. Pathways is a widely established, well funded organization with a network of legitimate and trustworthy supporters. Their goals of providing better education and resources to high school students in need align with the University's mission to provide diverse learning opportunities and assistance for post-secondary students. The University can enhance its brand through association with Pathways and their efforts.

Pathways makes long term changes to low-income communities and continues to show consistent success after expanding beyond Ontario. Before their founding, Regent Park had fewer than 50% of students graduating, and more than half of households had no earnings. Today, the rate has increased to 92%, and other communities in the greater Toronto area show similar results (Lavecchia, 6-7). The statistics used by Pathways are accurate and substantial, and Pathways' methods and programming are recognized in mass media as effective to eliminating poverty in communities. Numerous organizations associate with the charity to contribute towards their cause and to enhance their own public image, adding to the reputation of Pathways as a dedicated charity. Pathways to Education acts accordingly to the needs of students and to new challenges presented in different communities, where they have adjusted programming to assist black youth, aboriginal youth, and to guide students through pandemic learning, indicating flexibility and longevity.

Partnering with Pathways to education will benefit York's public image while staying true to the goals and commitments York is known for. Staff and students will appreciate being part of a community that values social welfare.

Recommendations

We recommend that York University should get in contact with the charity to start exploring the possibility of a relationship. In terms of what we can offer, York University can gather volunteers and become a donor to Pathways to Education in a mutually beneficial relationship that can assist the charity's efforts while offering York good publicity and an opportunity to further its mission.

To begin, York can work with Pathways to create a campus-centered website for university students. On the site, students can learn more about the charity, take polls to understand their mission, and find ways to contribute. Students can volunteer for tutoring or for organizing programs to gain valuable work experience, and can donate directly through the site or find the nearest program locations to visit. Pathways is known for collaborating with local schools to provide some of its mentoring and teaching services, making it the most suitable contribution the university can provide. The charity has no need to collaborate with organizations for creative projects, such as advertising or web design, and Pathways is not known for working with others to host campaigns or raise publicity. This could be possible in the future, but we suggest supporting the charity first through areas that the university can more reliably apply itself.

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