

Annual Report 2011



The
Otesha
Project



OUR MISSION

The Otesha Project is a youth-led charitable organization that mobilizes and equips Canadians to create local and global change through individual and collective choices. Our programs show young people that there are alternatives to our culture of over-consumption, and that every single day each one of us can have a positive impact on the world.

Otesha fulfills its mission through theatre and community building programs that aim to:

PROMOTE a mindset change about our connection with the environment, other species, and people around the world who are impacted by the products and resources we consume;

INCREASE the number of responsible choices made by Canadians in their daily lives;

INCREASE the number of young people who have gained the knowledge, skills and experience to become long-term role models and advocates for sustainability in their communities.

A MESSAGE TO THE OTESHA COMMUNITY



Otesha is a catalyst for change. In 2011 many seeds of change were planted by youth, educators, volunteers, supporters, organizations, farmers and individuals like you. Our community continues to grow and 2011 is a testament to the impacts that are taking root.

At the start of the year, The Otesha Project packed our panniers and moved out of the Manor of Marvelous Mayhem — a charming house in Old Ottawa South — and into The Heartwood House located in downtown Ottawa. Heartwood House is home to over 18 non-profit organizations. The Otesha Project's Headquarters (aka Otesha HQ) feels right at home in this building with "One roof, many voices, and a community model for social change."

After settling into our new home, The Otesha Project's first 2011 tour — The Phenomenal Food Tour — took Otesha's new workshop, A Maze of Maize, exploring bio-diversity and the pervasive role of corn in our food systems, on the road with them. This interactive workshop is now offered by all Otesha Cycling and Performing Tour teams.

The summer months saw the launch of Otesha's first ever all ages tour, which explored the ups and downs of agriculture in the Ottawa region. With a focus on Ontario in the first half of the year, the two Fall tours on the West coast kept our wheels in motion, as the premiere of the new Otesha play, "Action For Change", was featured in schools and communities across British Columbia and Alberta.

Coming to the end of the year, The Otesha Project website was redesigned for user ease, accessibility and fun! Our new website was introduced to the world just as the snow met our bike lanes.

Across the country, The Otesha Project's 2011 work is being rooted in schools, communities, and organizations. We are building partnerships and shaping curriculum that will prevail now and into the future. It is with the ongoing commitment of our donors, volunteers, and supporters that we are able to continue to nourish these seeds of change.



Bike tubes and gratitude,

The Otesha Team



"It's been a year since I've done my Otesha tour, but there wasn't one day that I didn't think about it. The experience has changed my life. My Otesha tour helped me to understand myself and the environment so much more than I had ever expected. Above all, I have learned the power of determination!" - 2011 Phenomenal Food Tour Member

PROGRAMS IN 2011

Cycling and Performing Tours

Phenomenal Food: May 1, 2011 - June 22, 2011

Pedal to Plate: July 9, 2011 - July 17, 2011

Kootenay Mountain: September 3, 2011- October 25, 2011

Sunshine Coast: September 3, 2011 - October 25, 2011

Community Performance Teams

University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON

Applewood Heights Secondary School, Mississauga, ON

Ottawa Otesha Play Team, Ottawa, ON

YEAR IN REVIEW

9 Day Shift Tours

In July of 2011, ten curious cyclists got an inside look at the Eastern Ontario food system through the Pedal to Plate Tour. Riders from across Ontario (60% from Ottawa) observed the inner workings of a large-scale dairy operation, gave sustainable transportation workshops to summer campers, pulled weeds in the veggie patches of a Community Shared Agriculture Farm, and rode their bikes through sun showers, hail and blue skies. To wind down, the group met with advocates for financially accessible food in the city and presented locally-sourced treats to patrons of Ottawa's Bluesfest.

Meals were cooked and shared, fingernails grew dark with soil and bike grease, and new friendships were formed. As Otesha's first ever 9-day tour, this pilot project provided rich feedback that will result in an agri-education tour de force when the 2012 Pedal to Plate Tour hits the road! Thank you to the inaugural tour members and our hosts:

Blackburn Community Association
Petrie Island Conservation
Tucker House Renewal Centre
Covenant Farm
Belanger Family
Hamilton Family
Roots and Shoots Farm
Riverdown Holsteins

The many generous donations of fresh local food and hospitality are too numerous to list here, but know that many Ottawa area farmers helped to make this trip possible.

"My Otesha tour opened my eyes to the relationships I have with cities, farms and people. It made me aware of my right to eat, play and live well, and my responsibility to ensure that I protect that for myself and others"

- 2011 Pedal to Plate Tour Member





LAUNCHING THE CHANGELINK PROGRAM

In 2010, The Otesha Project conducted a long-term impact assessment that indicated that program alumni (fondly referred to as “O-lumni”) were inspired by their Otesha experience to start their own sustainability project or business. The findings were used to develop a program to support O-lumni to incorporate more sustainable choices into their lives and communities. With this support, O-lumni will be better equipped to deepen the impact of their Otesha experience.

In November 2011, we announced the launch of ChangeLink: Otesha’s newest program to support our O-lumni in pursuing social ventures. We are focusing on more post-tour engagement, providing training and funding to aid O-lumni in starting new projects, and building on their feelings of empowerment so that they can continue to be integral leaders in their communities. ChangeLink takes the focus of our tours from a volunteer experience to that of a training experience to prepare bike tour members to start a new project after their Otesha tour.

In line with our mission to mainstream conscious consumption, Otesha will spur social ventures, enterprises, and other change-making activities that will improve access in our communities and marketplaces to sustainable consumer and lifestyle choices. By supporting O-lumni as they set off into new ventures, ChangeLink will broaden and deepen the impact that Otesha has and will support our O-lumni to build a more sustainable world.

SETTING THE STAGE: ACTION FOR CHANGE

This autumn, The Otesha Project added “Action for Change” to our performing repertoire. Written by Otesha O-lumnus, Ottawa actor and playwright, Guy Marsan, with the generous and creative inspiration of theatre-maker Jennifer Boyes-Manseau, the 40-minute play premiered on the 2011 Sunshine Coast and Kootenay Mountain fall tours. The characters and the audience explore issues of nuclear energy, aquatic pollution, consumer electronics, and a variety of viewpoints on how social change is best pursued. A Director’s Guide and Play Development Toolkit help support the play’s production and development by future directors and teams.



ANDREW WOLF MEMORIAL BURSARY PROGRAM

Responding to the loss of their son, Andrew Wolf, in a 2010 cycling accident, the Wolf family established a bursary in Andrew’s name. The Andrew Wolf Memorial Bursary helps remove the financial barriers to the transformative Otesha experience, allowing for Otesha bike tours to be filled with the broadest possible group of changemakers.

In 2011, the first recipient of the Andrew Wolf Memorial Bursary, Jenn Rouselle, brought her passion for food, athletics and healthy living to the Pedal to Plate Tour.



LOOKING FORWARD

10 years, 25 bike tours, 500+ O-lumni, and 150,000 audience members — that is what The Otesha Project is looking forward to celebrating in 2012! Hailing from Ottawa, Jessica Lax and Jocelyn Land-Murphy sat under a tree on February 16th, 2002, on a beautiful sunny day in Kitale, Kenya, and dreamt of a positive future. A future where everyone was conscious of the impacts of their choices and took small actions in their everyday lives to reflect the change they wanted to see in the world. Using the Kiswahili word for reason to dream, Jess and Joss created The Otesha Project.

We are excited to celebrate our 10th anniversary and look forward to another 10 years as a change-making organization — building partnerships with allied organizations in diverse sectors and supporting program alumni as they set off into new ventures that will build a more sustainable world.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

2011 in Numbers

12,418 audience members inspired by an Otesha presentation

85 tour performances of the Otesha play, *Reason to Dream*

4,250 kilometers cycled

56 communities visited

15 number of farm partners visited on food tours

32 off-season workshops and keynote speeches delivered

41 number of cycling and performing tour members

9,800 dollars in general bursaries awarded to tour members

780 dollars in Andrew Wolf Memorial Bursary awarded to tour members

478 Otesha alumni across Canada enacting positive change in their communities.

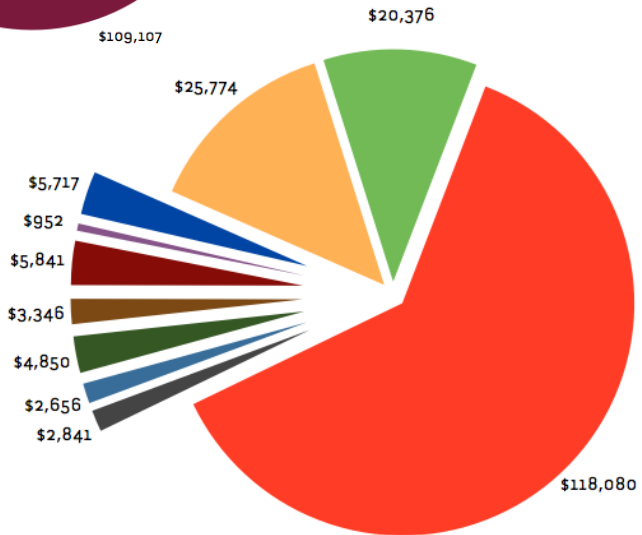
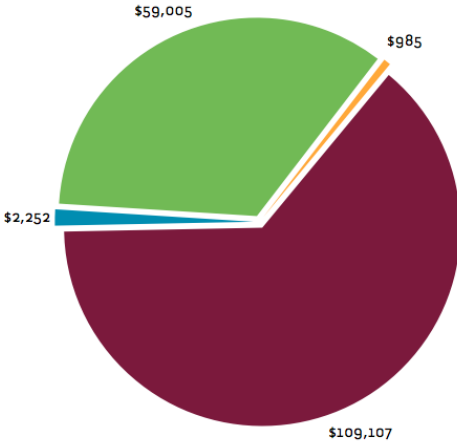
2011 FINANCES

Financial statements audited by Andrea Poole, Chartered Accountant.
For our full audit report, please contact info@otesha.ca

- Cycling and Performing Tours Fundraising and Honoraria
- Interest
- General Fundraising and Honoraria
- Grants

Revenue

Total: \$171,349



Expenses

Total: \$190,433

- Contract Labour
- Insurance
- Other
- Program Expenses
- Salaries & Wages
- Fundraising
- Office
- Professional Fees
- Occupancy Costs
- Telephone & Internet



Board of Directors

Richard Allen
Katherine Boyes
Tania Cheng
Elizabeth Fraser
Jessica Lax
Michelle MacCormack
Lauren Malach
Fahad Sami

Staff

Elly Adeland
Kira Burger
Julia D'Costa
Darrell Harvey
Genevieve Legal-Leblanc
Shirley Manh
Guy Marsan
Matt Schaaf
Katrina Siks
Kayla Siefried
Jennifer Valberg

OUR SUPPORTERS

The Otesha Project exists thanks to the generosity and support of a vibrant community of supporters. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our community of sustaining donors, the Fraser family, the hundreds of people across Canada who donated their time and money to Otesha this year, hosts who opened their homes and hearts to our cycling teams, the farms and organizations that supported the first Pedal to Plate Tour, and all of this year's volunteers, cycling and performing tour and Triple-H team members who gave their time, love and energy to our programs.

Each of these individuals and organizations provides vital support that enables The Otesha Project to offer innovative programming that empowers youth across Canada and invests in a movement that is creating a more just and sustainable world.

Thank you for being a part of the Otesha community. Thank you for joining our movement. Thank you for all this and more; we are thrilled to be a part of the positive future we are building together.



"By the end of my Otesha tour, I had developed a strong belief in the power of an individual's decisions to shape their social and environmental impact. It's been a long time since then, but I've never made decisions the same, my world view has changed."

- O-lumnus, Coast to Capital Tour 2003

GET INVOLVED!

Join a cycling and performing tour.

Host a performance in your school or community

Volunteer with us.

Become a sustaining donor.

For more information

Visit www.otesha.ca

Email us at info@otesha.ca

Call us at 613 237 6065

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