



GREENING our communities

through Live Green Toronto Grants



PROJECT:

Green Access: a Rooftop Garden

Access Alliance's commitment to addressing the social determinants of health is based on the understanding that a person's health is greatly affected by their social and physical environment.

Access Alliance

Access Alliance improves the health outcomes of vulnerable immigrants, refugees and their communities in Toronto. They offer a wide range of programs and services including interpretation in more than 50 languages, community-based research and advocacy.

Access Alliance's goal was to create a space that would promote community health, environmental awareness, food sustainability and urban agriculture. A multi-purpose rooftop garden on their Community Health Centre would fulfill their vision, act as a hub to engage the community and provide food to support nutrition and cooking programs. Along with the construction of their 6,700 sq. ft. green roof, solar hot water collectors, rain barrels and compost bins were installed.

Access Alliance received additional capital funding from United Way Toronto and future program funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

“Does Mother Nature live here?”

7-year-old visitor to the rooftop garden



For information about
the project, visit
accessalliance.ca, or email
mail@accessalliance.ca.



Call **3 1 1**



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The green roof improves local air quality, provides habitat for birds and insects and provides environmental and educational benefits to the community. New educational programs include gardening and ecology, environmental health, composting, and cooking with local ingredients. Access Alliance puts a special focus on connecting youth with seniors to facilitate knowledge sharing and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the initiative.

The garden required the installation of structural supports for the roof, a guard rail and a new roof membrane to help manage storm water. An innovative addition was the installation of solar collector panels that supply hot water to the entire building.

Along with reducing the building's operational costs, the project's two solar hot water panels reduce carbon emissions by more than 2,200 kg of per year. Inspired by their green roof, Access Alliance is taking steps to green other aspects of their operations, including becoming a paperless organization.

2009 Capital Grant (\$44,100)



The green rooftop garden includes decks, paths, filter material and lots of soil.

Did you know?

Solar hot water panels are an innovative way to heat domestic water. The water is circulated from a tank to solar collector panels that heat the water using energy from the sun. The panels used in this project provide all of the hot water needs for the entire 14,500 sq. ft. building.

What's next

Volunteers continue to play a prominent role in the promotion, maintenance and development of the green roof. The neighbourhood includes people from a variety of ethnic and agricultural backgrounds and the garden will reflect their tastes and preferences for specific perennial, vegetable and food plants.

Access Alliance has set the stage for a vibrant environmental hub. Volunteers will now carry it forward for the benefit of the community.

“A lot of kids are inspired by the garden and love to take vegetables home to cook.”

Nahom Berhane, Access Alliance

