



# 2015

## Report to Funders

**235 New requests for help**  
From over 70 countries

**29 Individuals funded**  
27 from Jamaica  
1 from Uganda  
1 from Cameroon

**48 others helped with info**  
as they prepare their journey

**3 Settlement Teams**  
For private sponsorship

In 2015 an explosion in new requests from new regions lead us to recruit new volunteers, form new regional teams, experiment with new routes and tools, and start to develop new regional expertise.

### Emergency Travel Support

2015 was another year of growth and change for Rainbow Railroad as increased awareness of our organization led to a big jump in the number of requests for help we received and the regions from which they came.

In 2015 we received 235 new requests for help from over 70 countries. To help develop expertise, we created a number of regional casework teams and recruited new volunteers with regional knowledge and connections.

In total, we funded travel for 29 individuals and provided information and connections to 48 others.

Unfortunately, the methods that work well in one region often don't work in others and we are investing significant time in research and training to investigate new routes to safety for cases from the Middle East & North Africa and South-Central Asia.

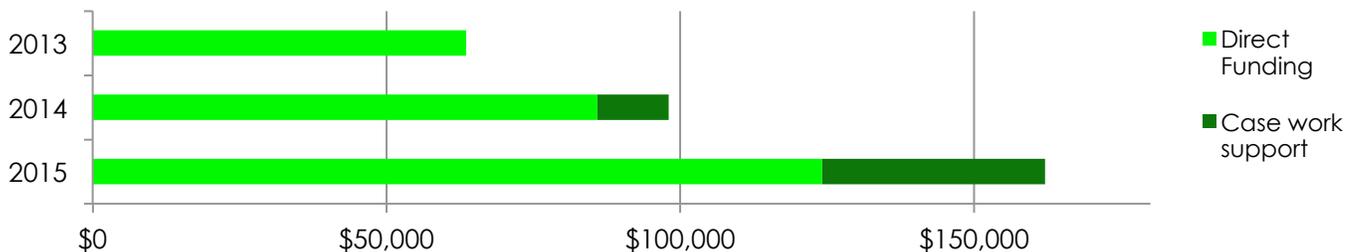
### Syrian Private Sponsorship Pilot Project

In 2015, Rainbow Railroad received an unprecedented number of requests for help from displaced LGBT Syrians for whom private sponsorship was the only option to get to safety. In response, our Board of Directors approved a pilot project to privately sponsor five (5) LGBT Syrian refugees to be resettled in Canada.

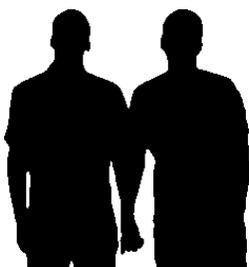
By December 2015 we had recruited three settlement teams and signed an agreement with the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto to be the Sponsorship Agreement Holder for this project.

Through 2016, Rainbow Railroad will resettle five LGBT Syrian refugees to Canada and will develop recommendations on how to best support private sponsorship for LGBT refugees for whom this is the best and most workable option.

## Growing our Emergency Travel Support



### Success story: Cameroon



In June, Rainbow Railroad was contacted by a young gay Cameroonian who ran a safe-house for LGBT youth with his boyfriend. Police had raided their home and arrested his boyfriend, who later escaped and made it to the USA. However, the young man did not have the funds to join him and was living in hiding, fearing the police would arrest him.

Rainbow Railroad's summer intern, Giancarlo, continued to volunteer on this case through the fall and worked to help him develop a route to the USA.

In October 2015, we were able to assist the young man to be reunited with his partner in the USA.

Thanks to the generous donations of Aeroplan points throughout the year, Rainbow Railroad was able to secure a flight that would have been beyond our financial resources for the time.

The young man is now in the USA with his partner and they are working together on their asylum request.

## We've Got American Friends Too

Currency risk is an important concern for us since a majority of our case expenses are in USD. In summer 2015, Joel Cohen of New Jersey approached Rainbow Railroad with the idea of establishing an entity in the USA to help build our American supporter base. American Friends of Rainbow Railroad, Inc. was established in fall 2015 as an arms length 501(c)(3) organization that funds Rainbow Railroad projects and can issue US tax receipts. And as the Canadian dollar reached a low of USD 0.71 in December, we sure were happy to have our American Friends!

## 7,000,000 Aeroplan miles from TD

During Toronto Pride, TD committed to donating Aeroplan miles to three LGBT charities for every dollar spent on a TD Aeroplan Visa card in the GTA. In total we received a whopping 7,000,000 Aeroplan miles from TD through this initiative!

## New Grants

Following a December fundraiser in Winnipeg, the Upside Down Tree Foundation pledged \$405,000 to Rainbow Railroad – our largest donation ever! These funds will be received and recognized in 2016. We also received the second \$50,000 installment of the TD Grant and the Elton John Aids Foundation pledged USD 40,000, to be recognized in 2016, to support case-work in Jamaica. The Unifor Social Justice Fund continued its support and the Foundation of Hope provided funds for

Emergency Travel Support and the Lifeline Syria private sponsorship pilot. We also received support from the KM Hunter Foundation, the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative, BCGEU, and Toronto East Rotary Club.

The Heart of the Flag Federation again supported us in 2015 with a silent auction raising just over \$8,000 and the Cleveland Leather Appreciation Weekend donated USD 5,000 in 2015.

## 2016 - A big year ahead

With rapid growth and change in our case work as well as the major pledge of support from the Upside Down Tree Foundation, Rainbow Railroad launched a 3 year Strategic Plan in Q1 2016. The plan is still in development, but our Board has committed to a responsible plan for growth and sustainability focused on:

1. Building organizational capacity
2. Deepening and broadening current services
3. Extending our reach to help new people with new tools

In the first 4 months of 2016, Rainbow Railroad has already provided over \$150,000 in financial support and helped over 30 individuals travel to safety. We are well on our way to developing a plan to help even more individuals than ever before while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organization.

## 2015 Statement of Operations (unaudited)

Revenue		Expenses	
General Donations	\$105,273	Direct Funding	\$124,108
Major Gifts	\$79,687	Case Support	\$37,988
Grants	\$94,080	Fundraising	\$55,035
Events	\$43,721	Operating & Admin.	\$28,277
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$322,763</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$245,408</b>

## ALL: ABOARD

In summer 2015, we launched All Aboard to recognize and build a community of major supporters and ambassadors. Platinum and Gold members who pledged support in 2015 are listed below and the full list of current members is on our website.

### Platinum (\$20,000 +)

Camryn Aleshka &  
Greg Fettes  
(Winnipeg, MB)

Brian Cartwright  
(Toronto, ON)

Jeff Fettes &  
Chris Wallace  
(Winnipeg, MB)

### Gold (\$5,000 +)

Michael Battista & Keith Maidment  
(Toronto, ON)

Guy Beaudin  
(Toronto, ON)

Robert Brews  
(Toronto, ON)

Joel Cohen  
(New Jersey, USA)

Jim Johnson & Mark Robert  
(Toronto, ON)

Karim Ladak  
(Toronto, ON)

Greg Lichti & Garth Norbraten  
(Toronto, ON)

Robert Maisey & Jean-Marc Gervais  
(Toronto, ON)

Martha McCain  
(Toronto, ON)

Tim Moseley  
(Toronto, ON)

Michael Murphy & Shane Small  
(Toronto, ON)

Ian Nordheimer  
(Toronto, ON)

Ron Rosell  
(Vancouver, BC)

Ann Rosenfield  
(Toronto, ON)

Alan Rowe & Bryan Blenkin  
(Toronto, ON)

Barry Trentham  
(Toronto, ON)