



# Embracing our Community

2011 Annual Report



Celebrating 25 years of service in Weston

## OUR PURPOSE

Established in 1987, Frontlines, a charitable organization, exists to offer services to the people and groups of the Weston community. We have focused our efforts on high-risk youth from the beginning, and believe in a community approach to make Weston a better and safer place.

Frontlines offers a holistic approach to community service and welcomes people of all faiths and backgrounds and encourages positive dialogue and communication in a safe space. Benefits of Frontlines' programs are two-fold: we meet a variety of needs, and we partner with existing organizations to prevent duplication and build on each other's strengths.




**Top:** Frontlines senior team – (from left) Felix Opoku, Sherwayne Morgan, Denise Gillard, Kristy Opoku and Richard Graham.

**Bottom:** Denise Gillard with some Frontlines participants

## OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS



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## OUR VISION

The Weston community is a place of peace and wholeness, where children and youth experience safety and true value.

## OUR MISSION

Frontlines addresses the pressing needs of Weston's children and youth, engaging them with a Christian presence. We foster and restore wellness and respect among our diverse neighbours by building relationships and providing programs that address the whole child.

**25**

Years of service in  
Weston Community

**3,000+**

Volunteer hours a  
year

**1,200**

Program hours a  
year, serving the  
children and youth

## OUR VALUES

We believe that **RELATIONSHIPS** enable us to address the deeper needs of our children, youth and their families and are based on our Christian principles, demonstrating grace and promoting mercy.

We believe that **SERVING THE WHOLE CHILD** means meeting the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of each child and youth.

We believe that **BUILDING COMMUNITY** means encouraging a safe, peaceful neighbourhood, inviting in volunteers to be a vital part of the ministry. We believe this enriches Frontlines as well as their lives.

We believe that **STEWARDSHIP** means that we are committed to managing all financial and other resources (including partnerships faithfully, ethically and with integrity).

We believe **RESPONSIVENESS** is central to meeting the needs of our community. We commit to being sensitive, aware and responsive to the needs of our children and youth; having the eyes to see opportunities to serve.

We embrace **JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION** to create reconciliation in our community and bring justice to the lives of our children and youth.

**3,500+**

Children and youth  
assisted at Frontlines  
over the years



## FROM THE CHAIR

As we reflect on the last year, we note that it has been one of changes – positive changes – in staffing, partnerships and financial resources.



We deepened our relationship with a number of partners including a formal partnership with HopeWorks Connections which brought a closer linkage with the Toronto Children's Concert Choir (TC3). This resulted in multiple benefits: increased capacity to fundraise, more full-time staff, and new artistic and youth development programming.

We strengthened our financial base, successfully securing grants from The Grocery Foundation, Forzani Group and World Vision Canada among others. We also saw an increase from individual donors, especially from the local Weston community. These monies assisted in bringing our programs to the next level – launching the Front Burner Soul Food program and affording us the opportunity to introduce a new program for girls this year.

This funding also enabled us to expand our staffing support for programs, increasing hours and responsibilities.

We look forward to celebrating our 25 years of service in the Weston community, starting with a concert this October featuring TC3 and artistes from Weston and the Toronto area, and concluding with our anniversary dinner in April 2013. We hope that you will join us in our celebrations.

Sincerely,

*Abigail Moriah*

## The Partnership Team

**Abigail Moriah:** Joined in 2011

Abigail recently took over the role of Chair of the Team. She works in the public sector.



**Alan Davey** – Joined in 2005

Alan has been the Pastor of Weston Park Baptist Church for the past 20 years.



**Natalie Davey** – Joined in 2007

Natalie is the immediate past Chair of the Team and a high school teacher by profession.



**Matthew Eubank** – Joined in 2008

Matthew, a chef, became involved with Frontlines 18 years ago as a participant.



**Sari Jn Francois** – Joined in 2008

A social worker, Sari currently assists with the record-keeping for the Team.



**Mieke Geldart** – Joined in 2001

The longest serving member on the Team, Mieke held the position of Chair and sits on the Finance Committee.



**Linda Skala** – Joined in 2008

A retired teacher, Linda runs the ESL program at Frontlines twice a week.



**Diana Stapleton** – Joined in 2004

Diana is Chair of the Weston Area Emergency Support food bank. She also sits on the Fundraising Committee.



**Wendy Struve** – Joined in 2010

Wendy, a stay-at-home mom of 3 children, answered the call for a Treasurer for the Team.



**Dave Watkins** – Joined in 2008

Dave is a teacher by profession and winner of a Governor General award.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**2011** was a very busy year for Frontlines! We saw the number of children and youth who access our programs increase dramatically as well as our programming hours and staff numbers. It has been a year of bounty and we have been truly blessed.

The bounty was a great surprise given that it seemed the year was going to be one of want and instability. The effects of the recession were delayed for us but were felt in the spring of 2011. Frontlines individual donations dropped significantly during the first months of the year, leaving us on the verge of a financial crisis by May.

However, in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour God (as always) met our needs and surprised us with his amazing bounty. Rev. Denise Gillard moved into the role of director of programming and we have felt the benefits of her direction. Our programming has reached a new level of excellence and impact. Felix Opoku continues to head up our Strong Man program which has been expanded to include younger children.

We also welcomed Chef Sherwayne Morgan to our team. Sherwayne is leading up our Front Burner programming. Richard Graham was hired in November to provide programming for youth aged 13 to 17. We are also excited to announce that Sondra Langille (a former participant) is now one of our Jr. staff!

God continues to bless his ministry and we are privileged to serve Weston's children and youth in this capacity.

Blessings

*Kristy Opoku*

## Our Staff

**Kristy Opoku:** Executive Director  
Joined in 2005 on a mission program to Frontlines. She became ED in 2007.

**Angela Carter:** Interim Executive Director  
Joined in 2012, to relieve Kristy who is on maternity leave



**Rev Denise Gillard:** Director of Programming  
Joined Frontlines in 2010  
Responsible for ensuring programs offered meet the needs of the community



**Felix Opoku:** Sr. Youth Program Coordinator; Maintenance Supervisor  
Started at Frontlines as a participant in the 1990s and joined the staff in 2004; responsible for the fitness programs.



**Sherwayne Morgan:** Chef, Program Coordinator  
Joined Frontlines in 2011  
Responsible for Soul Food and Front Burner programs as well as for all meals prepared at Frontlines



**Richard Graham:** Youth Program Coordinator  
Joined Frontlines in 2011  
Responsible for CrossRoads Boys, Youth on the Move and junior drop-in program



Our junior staff comprise: Joel Reid, Sondra Langille, Cheyanne Smith, Steffi Mensah and Jacob Coy

## 2011 IN REVIEW

The year 2011 was one of expansion and growth; it was a year when new programs took shape and were solidified and relationships deepened – this despite the dismal financial start, a lingering effect of the economic recession which resulted in a decrease in funding.

The positive ending was a result of the work done by the newly-appointed Director of Programming, Rev Denise Gillard, who worked alongside Executive Director, Kristy Opoku, to redesign the programs to meet the changing needs of the children and youth in the community.

A few years ago, Frontlines implemented a cooking program in which children learned the rudiments of healthy eating and how to make simple meals. This program was expanded in 2011 to include the youth with funding from World Vision Canada.

A full-time chef, Sherwayne Morgan, was brought on board to expand the cooking programs, Richard Graham was hired as youth program coordinator, joining Felix Opoku, the senior coordinator responsible for the fitness and sports programs.

Stronger relationships were forged with parents, volunteers and partners. An agreement with HopeWorks Connections, which manages the Toronto Children's Concert Choir and

Performing Arts Company, brought a new focus on the arts, primarily music, dancing and theatre.

During 2011, a number of policies and procedures, such as the Child Safety Policy, were updated by the HR Committee and ratified by the Partnership Team, ensuring the organization remained compliant with mandatory regulations.

Two new committees – facilities and fundraising – comprising volunteers from the community were formed to help the organization to plan and execute activities in these vital areas.

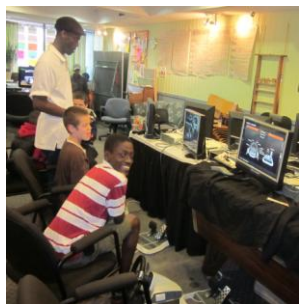
In addition, we entered into agreement with

Metrolinx and the Weston Village Business Improvement Area to provide cleaning services at their offices and Farmers' Market respectively.

The financial setback provided the impetus for us to restructure our staff and programs and to look for new initiatives, giving us the opportunity to build stronger, more efficient and effective systems.

"The year 2011 was one of excellent achievements," says Denise. "We grew, not just in terms of numbers but in our scope and expertise. I feel great about what we have accomplished."

***"Frontlines is about the community, friends, hard work, helping others and giving back."***  
- Jermaine





## OUR STORY...

### *Bringing People Together for 25 years*

He was just eight years old when he first walked through the doors at Frontlines. He saw a number of children going in and out of the building, playing and having fun, and he wanted to join them.

His mom left very early for work, leaving him and his younger brother home alone. He found the courage to speak to someone at Frontlines and, soon, he was one of those children participating in the activities. Now at age 22, he is still walking through the doors, albeit to give back to the organization that has helped to shape the person he is.

Ahmed is typical of hundreds of children that have participated in programs at Frontlines since it opened its doors in 1987. Started as a drop-in centre that focused primarily on music, Frontlines has been a haven for many children and youth from the Weston community – many of whom had lost their way.

Weston in the late 1980s was very different demographically from what it is now but many of the problems that currently exist, such as a high poverty rate, low income household and high unemployment, existed back then.

A young man, Tim Huff, aged 22, approached his church, Weston Baptist Church (now the Weston Park Baptist Church), and Youth For Christ (now Youth Unlimited Toronto) to partner in establishing the drop-in centre. They rented a place at 1754 Weston Road where Yum Yum Restaurant is currently located.



The Beginning: Tim Huff (right) and volunteers at Frontlines in the early days

Tim was a musician and therefore the programs were centred around music. There was a concert every week and the local kids flocked there to play in a band. As Tim wrote in his book "Dancing with Dynamite", it was all a guessing game in those early days.

Through all this, relationships were being built, children and youth came in off the streets because they felt safe and respected. This became the hallmark of Frontlines.

***"I made new friends, learned new recipes and went places I never thought I would go...I recommend that people come to Frontlines." - Deshon***

In 1991, Frontlines was forced to look for a new home as the owners needed the space for themselves and the Church took the

opportunity to purchase the building at 1844 Weston Road, which was a restaurant and night club. This was an ideal spot for the musicians, even though it needed renovating, as the building came with a ready-made stage and spot lighting.

The Weston Area Emergency Services (WAES) food bank, which was supported by a number of churches in the area, was also looking for a home.

## ...OUR STORY



Youngsters relaxing at Frontlines

Canada each year changing the cultural landscape of major cities. It was becoming more racially, economically and socially diverse and Weston was not immune.

As these changes occurred, so did the focus at Frontlines. The drop-in concept was still very much a part of life at Frontlines but programs became more structured and the need for donations and grants to fund the programs became a necessity.

Five years ago, Kristy Grisdale (now Opoku), who had started working at the organization in 2005, took over the executive director's position from Bonnie, continuing to build and deepen relationship within the community and among

supporters.

The Church made the decision to allocate some space to the food bank, which was being used by the families of many of Frontline's participants. That partnership still exists today.

Tim moved on and John Cassels took over the reins, carrying the organization to another level. By 1999/2000, Frontlines was at another crossroad. Funding from Youth Unlimited was being decreased and it was left to the Church to decide whether or not to close the centre.

Bonnie Parsons, a Church member with a burning passion for this ministry, resigned from her job and took up the gauntlet. She earnestly went about raising support and funding for the organization to keep the doors open.

Major changes were occurring in the City of Toronto which had swallowed up nearby cities and boroughs into one mega city in the late 1990s. New immigrants were flocking to

Over the years, Frontlines has become well-respected in the community. It is known as a safe place – a haven – for children and youth, and a place that welcomes all.

One of the most important aspects of programming at Frontlines is giving the youth opportunities and opening up possibilities for them. They are encouraged to participate in projects within the community such as picking up garbage and beautifying their surroundings by removing graffiti, and many of them embraced the opportunity, demonstrating a willingness to be involved.

They see themselves as contributors – not as being forced to do volunteer work – and these experiences are helping in their personal development as well as opening doors to employment.



## OUR PROGRAMS

**Front Burner Boys:** A cooking class that builds on peer mentorship and healthy living.

**Objective:** To feed children a healthy meal; to teach basic nutrition and cooking skills.

**Ages:** 8-13

**Front Burner Soul Food:** A cooking class that builds on peer mentorship and positive social interactions.

**Objective:** To engage youth in skill building to increase self-confidence and prevent criminal activities. **Ages:** 14-16

**Strong Man:** Uses fitness to build relationships with young men, mentor them and build tomorrow's role models.

**Objective:** Expose young men to fitness and build a foundation for being strong men, good fathers, sons and students, and to create stability in their lives. **Ages:** 13-20

**CrossRoads Boys:** Youth are offered a variety of positive experiences in order to develop the skill sets needed to support them as they navigate a positive journey into manhood.

**Objective:** To build on the strengths of participants in the areas of physical and emotional self and teach methods to improve on or develop weak areas. **Ages:** 9-13

**Youth On The Move:** A group mentoring program focusing on youth development, encouraging participants to grow in self awareness and self knowledge.

**Objective:** To enable youth to grow in self awareness and self knowledge by utilizing resources and strategies for success.

**Ages:** 14-19



Working out at Fitness 365



Frontlines ensures children and youth have healthy meals

**Girls' Club:** A program for girls offering enriching experiences in the areas of food, fun, fitness and friendship.

**Objective:** To empower young girls to live up to their full potential while maintaining a healthy balance. **Ages:** 8-13

## OUR PROGRAMS

**The Journey:** A program for youth who want to understand better the Bible and grow deeper in their Christian faith.

**Objective:** To provide a forum where youth can discuss what it means to be a Christian and explore Christianity amidst other religions and faiths. **Ages:** 8-13

**Homework Club:** In partnership with the Macaulay Child Development Centre offer free academic help in an accessible after-school program twice a week.

**Objective:** To provide homework assistance to the children in the Lawrence and Weston neighbourhood. **Ages:** 8-13

**ESL Classes:** A partnership with the Toronto Intercultural Services providing a place for newcomers to meet and develop friendship while learning English.

**Objective:** To provide access to introductory English language education to new arrivals and those without status who do not qualify for LINC programming. **Ages:** Adults

**March Break and Summer Day Camps:** A structured four-day-a-week free day camp offered during March break and the summer vacation for children and youth. **Ages:** 6-13 and 14-21



Deep in concentration

## OUR SERVICES

**Newcomer Volunteers:** Weston is home to many new immigrants, most of whom do not speak English. In keeping with our community outreach, we work with social service agencies to help integrate newcomers into the neighbourhood through offering them volunteer positions within our organization.

**Objective:** To provide the volunteers with the ability to practice their English skills, increasing their opportunity to find jobs. **Ages:** Adults

**CSO Volunteers:** A program working with youth who have been charged with a criminal offence, helping to build relationships and offering positive community service opportunities.

**Objective:** To offer constructive and life changing volunteer opportunities for youth assigned by the courts to do volunteer work. **Ages:** 13 and up



Chef Chuck Hughes (centre) having dinner with Frontlines youth



ESL Class with Linda Skala (in white)



## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers have been the mainstay of Frontlines from its inception. For many years, there was only one paid staffer – everything else was done through volunteers.

Although today, the staff complement has grown, volunteers are still an integral part of the operations at Frontlines. The organization could not have succeeded for the last 25 years without dedicated volunteers on board.

Volunteers have come from various sources: from the immediate community; placement students from schools, colleges and universities; church groups locally, other cities and overseas; other organizations, and individuals who believe in the mission of Frontlines.

As we celebrate this milestone, we sincerely thank everyone who has in anyway given of their time or resources to help build Frontlines.



Staff and volunteers from the summer camp sharing a moment together

## OUR PARTNERS

Over the years we have formed partnerships with other organizations that have similar objectives to better serve our clients. These include:

- **HopeWorks Connections and the Toronto Children's Concert Choir & Performing Arts Company** which provides artistic and youth development support to the youth in Weston
- the **Toronto Intercultural Services** in the delivery of ESL classes
- **Macaulay Child Development Centre** to offer homework club
- **Weston Area Emergency Services** food bank
- **Fitness 365** which offers special discounts for youth to attend fitness classes at the gym
- **Arrow Leadership Program** for supporting the development of Frontlines' leaders
- **Urban Arts**, our partner in graffiti removal and the painting of murals
- The **Uxbridge Baptist church** which hosts a number of our fundraising activities
- The **Toronto Police Department** at 12 Division





## OUR FUNDERS

Frontlines acknowledges the generous support we received during 2011. From the many individuals who regularly give to help us meet our operational expenses, to the funders of our many programs who afford us the stability that ensures a meaningful relationship with our participants.

Many people answered our call when we faced financial difficulties ensuring our doors remained opened and our community continued to have a safe place to come.

We therefore thank the many individuals, organizations, foundations, Government agencies and businesses whose continuing commitment and support make our work possible. Without you, we cannot carry on our work here in Weston.

We cannot list all our supporters but there are a few that we would like to recognize:

- Our various elected officials and Government representatives who acknowledge the value of the contribution we make to the community in Weston and Ward 11
- The many small businesses in Weston such as Squibbs and Annette's Donuts who have supported with in-kind gifts
- To the residents of Weston who rallied around us when we needed help and to the donors outside of Weston
- To the monthly donors whose regular contributions we look forward to
- The church community in Weston, the Greater Toronto Area, and farther afield
- The Rotary Clubs and Lions Clubs in Weston and the surrounding areas
- Green Shield Canada, one of our first funders
- World Vision Canada, partners to end child poverty
- The Stronger Together group, who have been supporting us for many years
- Forzani Group Ltd (FGL Sports) through Sports Chek and Sports4Kids
- Weston Park Baptist Church
- George Weston Ltd. – Wonder+ Cares
- United Way of Toronto
- Youth Challenge Fund
- Community Access Program
- The Grocery Foundation



Visiting mission group with summer camp participants in the early days of Frontlines

# CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## Statement of Financial Position

| As at December 31                      | 2011                    | 2010                    |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                          |                         |                         |
| General Fund                           |                         |                         |
| Cash and short-term investments        | \$ 73,818               | \$ 58,370               |
| Accounts receivables                   | 4,638                   | 3,241                   |
| Prepaid expenses                       | 948                     | 1,500                   |
|  | <u>79,404</u>           | <u>63,111</u>           |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>                     |                         |                         |
| General Fund                           |                         |                         |
| Current                                |                         |                         |
| Accounts payable & accrued liabilities | \$ 8,798                | \$ 8,506                |
| Deferred revenue                       | 60,162                  | 21,557                  |
|  | <u>68,960</u>           | <u>30,063</u>           |
| <b>FUND BALANCES</b>                   |                         |                         |
| General Fund                           | <u>10,444</u>           | <u>33,048</u>           |
|  | <b><u>\$ 79,404</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 63,111</u></b> |

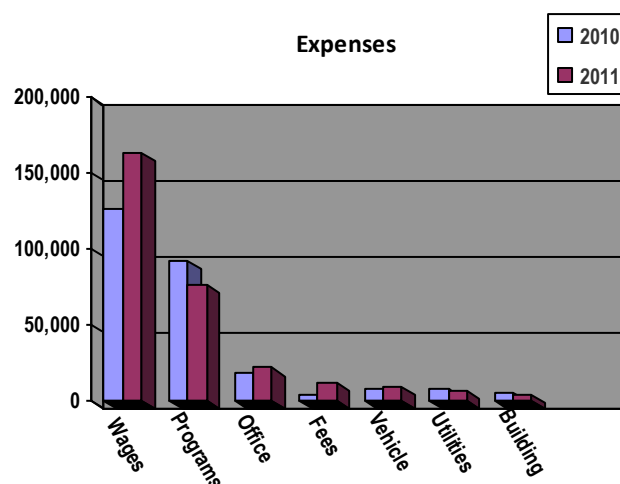
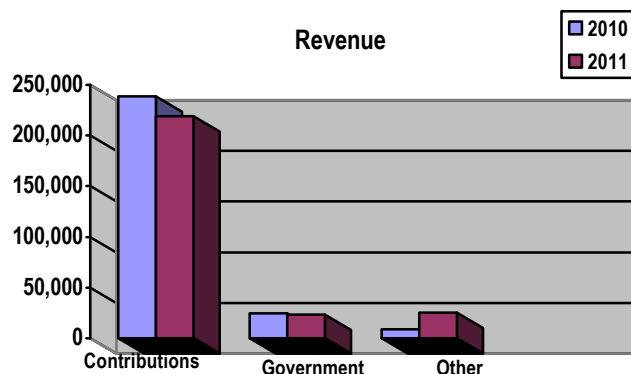
## Statement of Cash Flows

| For the year ended December 31               | 2011                    | 2010                    |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>                  |                         |                         |
| Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses | \$ (22,604)             | \$ 13,744               |
| Items not involving cash:                    |                         |                         |
| Amortization                                 | -                       | -                       |
|  | <u>(22,604)</u>         | <u>13,744</u>           |
| Net change in non-cash working capital       |                         |                         |
| Accounts receivable                          | (1,397)                 | (2,458)                 |
| Prepaid expenses                             | 552                     | (1,500)                 |
| Accounts payable & accrued liabilities       | 292                     | 1,857                   |
| Deferred revenue                             | 30,605                  | (52,084)                |
|  | <u>38,052</u>           | <u>54,185</u>           |
| <b>NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH</b>       | <b>15,448</b>           | <b>(40,441)</b>         |
| Cash – Beginning                             | <u>58,370</u>           | <u>98,811</u>           |
| Cash – Ending                                | <b><u>\$ 73,818</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 58,370</u></b> |
| <b>CONSISTING OF:</b>                        |                         |                         |
| Cash   | \$ 73,355               | \$ 57,920               |
| Short-term investments                       | 463                     | 450                     |
|  | <u>\$ 73,818</u>        | <u>\$ 58,370</u>        |

## Statement of Operations and Changes in Fund Balance

For the year ended  
December 31

|  | 2011                    | 2010                    |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>   |                         |                         |
| Contributions  | \$ 219,185              | \$ 238,537              |
| Government Grants<br>(see note)                                | 23,367                  | 24,861                  |
| Other  | 25,466                  | 8,759                   |
|  | <u>268,018</u>          | <u>272,157</u>          |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>  |                         |                         |
| Wages and benefits   | 163,343                 | 126,573                 |
| Programs   | 76,057                  | 91,493                  |
| Office and general   | 21,242                  | 18,407                  |
| Professional fees  | 11,413                  | 3,421                   |
| Vehicle costs  | 8,539                   | 7,531                   |
| Utilities  | 6,600                   | 6,690                   |
| Building costs   | 3,428                   | 4,398                   |
|  | <u>290,622</u>          | <u>258,413</u>          |
| <b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF<br/>REVENUE<br/>OVER EXPENDITURE</b> | (22,604)                | 13,744                  |
| Balance – Beginning  | 33,048                  | 19,304                  |
| Balance – Ending   | <u><b>\$ 10,444</b></u> | <u><b>\$ 33,048</b></u> |



**Note:** Government Grants – The organization received a total of \$23,366 (2010-\$24,861) in government grants of which \$19,366 (2010-\$20,861) was from the Government of Canada and \$4,000 (2010-\$4,000) was from the City of Toronto. These grants were to help offset salary and program costs.



## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Our dream is to continue to offer services to the Weston community and provide a safe haven to the children and youth.

We are currently bursting at the seams unable to expand the programs as we would like, primarily because of limited space and resources.

Stable funding is critical to our continued operations. However, with the recent reports of the possibility of a recession within the next two years, it will be our priority to work with partners, funders and donors to ensure that our participants and clients continue to receive quality service.

We will press on as before, with God's guidance and with your prayers, toward the next 25 years – healthy, strong and fit.





**1844 Weston Road  
Toronto, ON  
M9N 1V8**

**T: 416.244.7017  
E: [info@frontlines.to](mailto:info@frontlines.to)  
W: [www.frontlines.to](http://www.frontlines.to)**

