

# Help Us Help You Round-up

## *A Year in Review*

Dear Help Us Help Family,

We hope that the first few days of 2022 find you and your loved ones safe and healthy. As we move into another year of the pandemic prevalent, we know that everyone is doing their utmost to support one another and their community. Here at Help Us Help, we are focusing on doing our part while still safely delivering valuable programs and services.

We cannot begin to express how grateful we are for your continued support over the last year. Your generosity has allowed our programming to continue throughout these difficult times. We are so thankful and proud of how Help Us Help staff, donors and volunteers rallied together to fund and deliver alternative programming.

This newsletter is a summary of all that we have accomplished this year. We never lose sight of the fact that our work would not be possible without the backing and generosity of our Help Us Help community. Please accept our heartfelt thanks for all of your support.

*- Help Us Help Team*

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## **Christmas Wish Campaign**

This winter season, we are granting Christmas wishes through this campaign for Ukraine's children, scholars, and veterans!

While disappointed that the pandemic continues to prevent us from being able to host an in-person Winter Camp in Ukraine, as an alternative, we are excited to run Help Us Help's Christmas Wish Campaign!

## With your help, we will...

1. grant **NASHI** with the wish of a transport vehicle and educational materials for at-risk girls living in the NASHI safe-house.
2. support **Vitaliy and Olena** to grant the wish of a safe and functional home to foster a group of Ukraine's vulnerable children.
3. grant the wish of a **Winter Camp 2022 Replacement Program** for children living in Ukraine's residential institutions, which will be implemented by our Scholars.
4. grant the wish of a third "**Mobile Support Services for Veterans**" vehicle!



It is still not too late to donate! Help Us Help's Christmas Wish Campaign is set to run into the New Year. Follow our social media pages for more updates on what we have accomplished in the upcoming month!

[DONATE NOW!](#)

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## Temerty Endowment Fund

We are honoured to announce that in 2021, The Temerty Foundation, established by James and Louise Temerty, has become Help Us Help's first benefactor!



TEMERTY  
FOUNDATION

The \$10 Million Temerty Endowment Fund will provide funds for administering humanitarian aid, anti-human trafficking initiatives, educational projects, mental health supports and life-skills development workshops delivered primarily to children in Ukraine.

In honour of Ruslana Wrzesnewskyj's years of dedication to the children of Ukraine, the Temerty Foundation is pleased to highlight that, as part of their donation, the annual Help Us Help Summer Camp Program will now be known as **Ruslana's Summer Camp**.

To read more, click the link below:

[LEARN MORE!](#)

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## CHILDREN

### 2021 Winter Camp Replacement Program

To help keep everyone safe during the holiday season, Help Us Help replaced its in-person 2021 Winter Camp with an alternative program: "The Spirit of an Unusual Christmas". Help Us Help's scholars, alumni, volunteers, and staff worked together to provide support to 1000 children who spent the winter holidays in institutional care. In addition, the alternative program provided support to 100 families previously assisted by the COVID-19 Children's Relief Initiative.



Help Us Help is very grateful to everyone who contributed to making this Christmas special for over 1000 deserving children in Ukraine!

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### Virtual Kolyada

To keep our community safe, Help Us Help's scholars and volunteers created a Virtual Vertep and Kolyada! Click the photo below to watch the video!



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## COVID-19 Children's Relief Initiative

Help Us Help, along with its partners *Meest Corporation, Canada Ukraine Foundation, Ukrainian Canadian Congress* together with *Ombudsman for Children's Rights with the President of Ukraine*, implemented a COVID-19 Children's Relief Initiative in Zhytomyr, Ukraine that took place between June 2020 and February 2021. Notably, as of March 1st 2021, after the termination of the initiative, 147 children assisted by the initiative remain at home with their biological families and out of institutional care.



To learn more about the COVID-19 Children's Relief Initiative and the results we were able to achieve thanks to the efforts of our partners and generosity of our donors, check out our Annual Report here:

[LEARN MORE!](#)

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## Humanitarian Aid Delivery



From **November 2020 to April 2021**, our volunteer team and staff members packaged **149 boxes (2,713 kg)** of humanitarian aid donated by our supporters in Canada and, with the support of Meest Corporation Inc., delivered the aid to vulnerable groups in Ukraine. These boxes were delivered to eleven United Territorial Communities of the Zhytomyr Region; past and present Help Us Help program participants; as well as the Charitable Fund "I am the Future of Ukraine - City of Kindness" - Charity Centre for Mother

and Children. In total, **89** families and **219** children have benefited from our 2021 humanitarian aid delivery.

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## 2021 Second Independent Move-A-Thon

In 2021, to prioritize the safety of the children, volunteers and staff, we replaced our Annual Ruslana's Summer Camp with the 2021 Second Independent Move-A-Thon. Five teams of community members from Canada and Ukraine participated in the Move-A-Thon!

Over the course of two weeks, they participated in a variety of activities to fundraise for Help Us Help's programming.



In addition, children who would normally attend our Summer Camp, from the Khoruzhivka Centre located in the Sumy oblast, and from the Ternopil Residential School, took part in this initiative and participated in a day full of fun activities and sports organized by Help Us Help volunteers. This was a wonderful opportunity for children to keep fit, active, and healthy during the pandemic.

With your support, and the admirable dedication of our volunteers, we raised **\$16,003** for our programming to support these, and other children living in Ukraine's residential institutions!

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## Baby Care Initiative

The Baby Care Initiative, launched in 2014 and officially being named in 2020, is a project run by Help Us Help that delivers new and gently-used baby items to expecting families—in-need in Ukraine. These parcels contain humanitarian aid, clothing, educational materials as well as any additional items that can help curb the costs that are associated with having a child. In 2021, a total of **65 parcels** weighing over **1500kg** have been delivered to past and present program participants.

Moving forward, Help Us Help plans to launch an online forum where individuals who have received aid can ask questions, exchange clothing, and communicate with one

another privately and securely.

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## SCHOLARS

### 2020-2021 Scholars



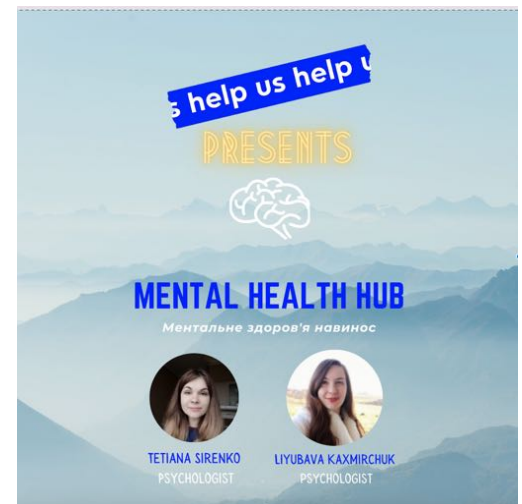
Help Us Help welcomed 33 Scholars in the 2020-2021 school year. Over the course of their studies, our scholars participated in a variety of virtual activities and workshops, including our 2021 Winter Camp Replacement Program, Virtual Kolyada, and Mental Health Hub!

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### Mental Health Hub

Mental Health Hub is an initiative that teaches Scholars the importance of mental health and provides necessary support as required. This initiative is run by two professionally trained psychologists in Ukraine, Tetiana Sirenko and Lyubava Kazmirchuk. In addition to group workshops, all past and present Help Us Help participants have access to schedule individual sessions with Tetiana or Liyubava whenever they need additional mental health support, or simply someone to speak to.

The Mental Health Hub is up and running once again for the 2021-2022 academic year, and current scholars have started taking part in online workshops!



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### Online Seminars

In the 2020-2021 school year, Help Us Help hosted 11 online seminars with Scholars that enthusiastically engaged with the speakers. Several of the online seminars were interactive and focused on team-work and communication. Seminar topics ranged from health and wellness, to job searching, resume building, and career guidance.

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## New Scholars

In October 2021, Help Us Help and Help Us Help UA staff along with two guests - Psychologist Tetianna Sirenko and John Smorhun - conducted interviews to select incoming scholars. After completing the interviews, a total of 56 individuals have been selected to participate in the 2021-2022 Scholars Program! We will be welcoming 28 new Scholars to join the 28 continuing in the program.

This includes project participants of Kostiantyn Halak's new initiative, "We are Capable" (see below). Help Us Help is honoured to be able to support so many young Ukrainian students in their educational career and professional development thanks to our donors. We wish all of our new students a successful school year!



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## We Are Capable

As part of our Scholars Program, Kostiantyn (Kostya) Halak (Director of Help Us Help UA's Educational and Social Programs for Persons with Disabilities) has launched an essential program that supports individuals with disability status in Ukraine in their continued education. The purpose of the initiative is to create equitable opportunities for this group of vulnerable individuals.



In the weeks leading up to the launch, Kostya and the team at Help Us Help UA led a seminar titled "Everyone is Capable" at various universities across Ukraine to raise awareness about the Scholars Program and the new "We are Capable" initiative. We are excited to welcome 10 post-secondary students into the Scholars program under this initiative!

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## Scholars Retreat

To kick off this year's Scholars Program, the students attended their first retreat in Kyiv, where they participated in workshops, got acquainted with the program and its participants, and went on various tours around the city. This was a great opportunity for past and present scholars to meet and to discuss their experiences with the Help Us Help community.

Notably, after over a year of virtual gatherings, the students were able to meet each other, the Help Us Help staff and volunteers in-person!



## Lumos Conference

Three of our Scholars - Kyrlyo Nevdoha, Alina Hiba, and Volodymyr Stepanov - have joined the Lumos Research Committee founded by J.K. Rowling. In October 2021, they participated in a conference where they spoke about their research on the current state of children growing up within Ukraine's residential institution system. This was an amazing learning opportunity for Scholars, and allowed them to network with various research committees around the world.



## Buddy Program



Launched May 2020, Help Us Help's Buddy Program was developed in an effort to provide a reliable point of social connection during a time of "social isolation". The Buddy Program involved 42 of the charity's past and present scholarship students from Ukraine and 32 Help Us Help volunteers from across North America. The Buddy Program continued until the summer of 2021, under the leadership of volunteers Taisa Mysakowec and Lily Potoczny.



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## VETERANS

### PTSD Awareness Solo Cycle

Help Us Help's Board Member and Veterans' Program Director, **Andrew Potichnyj**, cycled solo for **12 hours non-stop** in support of **PTSD Awareness**. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Day is recognized annually on June 27. In the week leading up to his 12-hour cycle on June 27th, Andrew raised funds for Help Us Help Programming that supports veterans and other vulnerable populations in Ukraine, many of whom are living with PTSD.

A huge thank you to all of our supporters who helped us raise **\$48,205!** Help Us Help is extremely grateful to our top donors, Dr. Marie Bountrogianni and The Ihnatowycz Family Foundation.



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## Research Project

This Summer, Help Us Help conducted a research project evaluating the programming that we support through Veteran Hub. The research project, currently in its final phase, consisted of a literature review, evaluating global trends in veteran support, and interviews with veterans and support staff at Veteran Hub. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the programming we support in Ukraine and to identify areas of improvement. A huge thank you to Darian Scherbluk, our Canada Summer Jobs youth who worked on this project throughout the summer, and to Zoriana Jacyla who conducted virtual interviews with the veterans in Ukraine. We are also grateful for our collaboration with Veteran Hub on Veterans' programming as well as this research project.



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## 2021 Veterans Forum

Help Us Help Board Member and Veteran Committee Chair, Andrew Potichnyj, travelled to Ukraine to represent Help Us Help, as a Veteran Hub partner, in the 2021 Veterans Forum hosted by the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of Ukraine. The two-day conference discussed the current needs of Ukrainian veterans, and focused on the following key themes:

- Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Social Adaptation
- Veteran Business
- Veterans' role in the case of possible future conflict escalation
- Emphasis on acknowledging the 26,000 female veterans on an equal plane with their male counterparts
- How can we unify the thousands of current veteran organizations in Ukraine
- Value of peer to peer services and service providers
- How can the ministry best serve and collaborate with veterans



Although not an official theme of the forum, many veterans voiced their concerns on difficulties with follow through on their entitlement to land under Ukrainian law.

This was an enlightening experience that will contribute to our charity's understanding of the current and evolving needs of veterans in Ukraine. We would like to thank Veteran Hub and the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of Ukraine for inviting Andrew to take part in this educational conference.

To continue supporting our veterans programming in Ukraine, donate to our Christmas Wish Campaign using this link:

[DONATE NOW!](#)

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## Two Mobile Support Service Vehicles

In 2021, it was our privilege to present Veteran Hub with the keys to **two Mobile Support Service Vehicles** that will be used as an integral part of the Veteran Reintegration Program in the Vinnytsia and Dnipropetrovsk Oblasts.

Help Us Help would like to thank all our Canadian donors and supporters, who continuously motivate us and financially support our efforts to improve the lives of Ukraine's children and war veterans. Ivona Kostyna and everyone from Veteran Hub, thank you for all your hard work, dedication, and sacrifice. You are truly making a difference.



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## OTHER

### Balaklava Blues Collaboration

This year, prominent Ukrainian

duo Mark and Marichka Marczyk, known as Baklava Blues, released their most recent music video for “Green”, a track featured on their debut album Fly. The video featured images of activities from the newly named Ruslana’s Summer Camp, and stars Vova and his younger friend Andriy, an individual who has directly benefited from Help Us Help programming and is a Temerty Scholarship Fund recipient.



To learn more, and to watch the video, click the link below:

[LEARN MORE!](#)

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## BWV Ukrainian Festival - First place Prize



This September, Help Us Help participated in the window decorating competition in honour of the 25th Anniversary of the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival! We are excited to announce that we won **first place** and received a **\$500 prize** that will be applied towards our programming. We would like to thank Bloor West Village BIA for organizing the competition, **JC Salons** for offering their window, and our volunteers for helping us decorate the window!

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## Volunteer Service Award

Much of *Help Us Help's* work would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our wonderful volunteers. This year, we are happy to have been able to honour some of our amazing volunteers with the Ontario Volunteer Service Award:

Mark Keller - 25  
 years  
 Anka Wrzesnewskij-  
 Cottrell - 15 years  
 Andrew Potichnyj -  
 10 years  
 Roman Kalyniuk - 10  
 years  
 Danusia  
 Wysochanskyj - 5  
 years  
 Martin Lebed - 5  
 years  
 Alexa Chartchenko -  
 5 years  
 Lilijana Potoczny -  
 Youth  
 Taisa Mysakowec -  
 Youth

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## Thank you to our Volunteers!

We would like to thank all the volunteers for the invaluable contributions to Help Us Help. It is because of you - our devoted volunteers - that we are able to continue to have a positive impact on the lives of the disadvantaged youth and veterans in Ukraine. Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for your hard work and dedication!

Throughout 2021, we had the opportunity to take on some volunteers to help run some of our projects! We would like to extend a special thank our Website Manager - Danylo Centore, our Buddy Program Managers - Lily Potoczny and Taisa Mysakowec, our eTapestry Officer - Sofia Maruschak-Love, and our Non-Monetary Donations Coordinator - Danusia Wysochanskyj!



***THANK YOU!***

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## **Volunteer Survey**

Help Us Help is constantly working to improve its programming and volunteer services. This fall, we conducted a Volunteer Survey, where we got feedback from you, our volunteers and donors, on how we can improve. Results from the survey have been compiled and will be presented to the Children and Scholars Committee in the upcoming months. The committee will use the data collected to help inform our future programming and volunteer initiatives.

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## **OUR PEOPLE**

### **Annual General Meeting**

Help Us Help held a successful 2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in June 2021! At this meeting, the Board of Directors approved Help Us Help's 2020 Annual Report and 2020 Audited Financials

To view our 2020 Annual Report, click the link below:



[LEARN MORE!](#)

At the AGM, our 2020-2021 Treasurer, Gregory Ciupka, resigned from his position on the Board of Directors. We would like to extend a huge thank you to Gregory for his dedication and hard work. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours!

We are excited to announce that, at the AGM, **Kadie Ward** and **Tatiana Tonkovich** were elected to serve as Help Us Help's **Vice Chair** and **Treasurer**, respectively, on our Board of Directors!

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## Committees

In 2021, Help Us Help formed four additional committees that will help steer our charity in accordance with Help Us Help's values and mission.

- Investment committee (2020)
- Finance committee (2021)
- Fundraising committee (2021)
- Children and Scholars committee (2021)
- Veterans committee (2021)

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## Canada Summer Jobs

This Summer, Help Us Help had the pleasure of hiring three qualified students through the Canada Summer Jobs Program! Over the course of 10 weeks, these students took on

various roles and responsibilities that helped establish a foundation for the upcoming year. Darian Sherbluk acted as the Public Relations Officer for the Veteran's Program, Taisa Mysakowec acted as the Project Administration Officer, and Zoriana Jacyla acted as the Administrative Assistant. We also had the opportunity to hire another student for the summer. Mickenna Ward joined the team as a Public Relations Officer. We are extremely grateful for Canada Summer Jobs, and most importantly these talented students for helping us grow the Help Us Help family.



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## Staff Changes

### Farewell to Help Us Help's Tanya Bednarczyk

It is with a heavy heart that we said goodbye to our staff member, Tanya Bednarczyk in 2021.

Tanya Bednarczyk has been a part of the Help Us Help family since 2009! For over four years Tanya worked as Help Us Help's Country Director in Ukraine. She played a vital role coordinating efforts between Canada and Ukraine to ensure successful programming for vulnerable populations in Ukraine. Her passion for helping children, scholars and veterans was evident in every Help Us Help endeavour she undertook. She consistently brought laughter and spirit to Help Us Help camps, scholars retreats, and "The Return" veterans' retreats.

Please join us in congratulating Tanya in the progression of her professional career and in thanking her for the years of dedication to Help Us Help!





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## Welcoming Zoriana Jacyla to Help Us Help

In September 2021, we had the pleasure of welcoming Zoriana Jacyla as our new Administrative Assistant, following her Canada Summer Jobs placement. Zoriana is an active member of the Ukrainian community, and recent graduate from York University - Glendon Campus. She is excited to begin her journey with Help Us Help!

Stay tuned for more information regarding our staffing changes in the next upcoming months!

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## Welcoming Kostiantyn Halak to Help Us Help UA



Our agency in Ukraine, Help Us Help UA, opened its doors to Kostiantyn Halak, as the Director of Educational and Social Programs for Persons with Disabilities. Read more about the “We are Capable” Scholars Branch, with which Kostiantyn works, under “SCHOLARS” above.

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## Thank You and Веселих Свят!



Help Us Help is incredibly grateful to you for your unwavering support of our projects and initiatives throughout these uncertain times! This year of growth for Help Us Help would not have been possible without your continued generosity!

Help Us Help wishes you and your family a very Safe, Healthy and Happy Holiday Season!

***Веселих Свят і з Новим Роком!***

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# Monthly Giving

Did you know... you can sign up for monthly giving?

**GIVE MONTHLY!**

You can use monthly giving to donate **any amount to any Project!** No amount is too little! **Give \$5 monthly now!**

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*Help Us Help* believes that there is no place for racism or intolerance of any kind in society. On a daily basis, we work to strengthen human rights but we can always do better. We will continue to listen and adapt our programming to respond to the needs of the Black Community, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups across Canada and Ukraine.

*Help Us Help* вважає, що у сучасному суспільстві немає місця расизму чи будь-якої дискримінації людини. Наша команда працює над тим, щоб захищати права людей і ми намагаємось робити все для цього кожного дня. Ми будемо продовжувати прислухатися до потреб усіх громад та маргіналізованих груп, щоб адаптовувати наші програми згідно з їхніми потребами як у Канаді так і в Україні.



## Contact Information

Executive Director: [executivedirector@helpushelp.charity](mailto:executivedirector@helpushelp.charity)

Senior Program Coordinator: [anka@helpushelp.charity](mailto:anka@helpushelp.charity)

Director of Operations: [kira@helpushelp.charity](mailto:kira@helpushelp.charity)

Administrative Assistant: [zoriana@helpushelp.charity](mailto:zoriana@helpushelp.charity)

Volunteer Information: [volunteer@helpushelp.charity](mailto:volunteer@helpushelp.charity)

## Monetary Donations:

- Online: [CLICK HERE](#)
- Offline: Cheque made out to "Help Us Help"
  - Please specify in Memo what initiative you wish to support with your donation
  - PO BOX 84600 Bloor West PO, Toronto, ON., M6S 47Z

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