

GENERATION | squeeze

Thank You for Backing Gen Squeeze!

Dear [first_name],

We're sending you this package to **properly welcome you to Generation Squeeze's team of Backers** (our team of financial contributors).

Whether you signed up online, or on the phone with myself, Ashleigh or Veronica, we'd like to **sincerely thank you helping us speak up for younger Canadians.**

We want all Canadians to have the chance to afford to start a family, find a good job, pay off student debt, attain suitable housing, save for retirement and leave at least as much as we inherited.

When you're too busy (with school, work, kids, life) we'll lobby for you; when you do have time, we'll lobby with you.

Your package includes:

- A **Briefing** on Gen Squeeze's progress, failures and the path ahead.
- A **Spyglass**, for you and to share with others (we'll explain).
- Our **Business Cards**, so you can contact us directly (and a bit about us).
- **Your own Gen Squeeze business card**, because you're part of our team.

Thank you so much for being on this journey with us,

Eric Swanson,
Executive Director, Generation Squeeze

P.S. Our work is shaped by our values. At Gen Squeeze, we value **the evidence**, wherever it may lead. We have the utmost **respect for public and elected officials** and are resolutely non-partisan. As we chase our vision of **A Canada That Works for All Generations**, we seek to **unite, not divide**, to be **collaborative and transparent.**

#NotJustYou

gensqueeze.ca



YOUR FIRST TOOL: THE SPYGLASS

Our mission is to help each other **ease the squeeze**, in our own lives and collectively. On that journey, we'll be equipping you with powerful tools: the first is the **Spyglass**.

The Spyglass represents the entirety of Gen Squeeze's research, facts and evidence, including our online resources. Use it to see that **you're not alone, and it's not that you (or your kids/grandkids) are doing something wrong. Something bigger is going on.**

Many younger Canadians **harbour shame or guilt** if we find ourselves struggling to meet expectations of adulthood (like moving out, owning a home, starting a family, finding stable work, etc.). Use the Spyglass to combat these feelings.

We've included three copies of a Spyglass sticker in your package. Consider keeping one for yourself, and **slip the other two to a squeezed friend or family member.**

You might be surprised by just how much the Spyglass can help.

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Shannon Jamison, Founding Backer
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phone: 250 857 5024 | twitter: @sjamison
Electoral Districts
prov: Victoria-Beacon Hill local: Victoria
fed: Victoria

YOUR GEN SQUEEZE BUSINESS CARD

You're a critical part of the Gen Squeeze team. So we'd like you to have your own Gen Squeeze business card.

Use the card in conversations with elected officials, influencers and others to show you're part of a larger, powerful community. If you'd like to order a batch of cards, let us know:

- If you'd like your own @GSbackers.ca email address. It would be a forwarding address, meaning you could use it to receive mail, but not send it. If so, we'll put that on the card instead of your regular email.
- If the other info on the sample card is correct.

Then contact me at eric@gensqueeze.ca with your preferences and I'll send you a design file you can use to print a batch (we'll have to rely on you to cover the printing costs unfortunately).

BRIEFING

Progress

Over the past year Gen Squeeze:

- Helped **tens of thousands of squeezed Canadians feel a little less alone.**¹
- Helped nudge **all federal political parties to propose the single largest annual increase in spending on families in over a decade.**²
- **Grew from a few thousand supporters to ~ 25,000 nationally.**³
- Did **hundreds of media interviews across Canada**, from local papers to national TV news.⁴
- Ran the first-ever **Squeeze Back Video Contest.**⁵
- **Welcomed our newest full-time staff member:** Erin Robinson. We've since launched a **new Benefits program for Gen Squeeze allies (that's you)!⁶**
- We're slowly (but surely) **welcoming more Backers like you to the team**, pursuing our long-term goal of funding a full-time organizer.⁷

Your Contribution

Until we're able to welcome sufficient Backers to fund a **full-time** organizer, your contribution has been/will be used to pay for:

- **Part-time** help from organizers and support professionals.

As we grow our capacity we'll be able to provide you with more sophisticated annual reporting. In the meantime, if you have questions please don't hesitate to contact us directly.

Failures

We believe in publicly acknowledging and learning from our failures. One big failure this past year: **we tried to do too much, too soon.**

The Backstory: Gen Squeeze is striking a chord, such that we're constantly receiving offers of help from across Canada and internationally.

The catch is there are only so many places we can be and things we can do with 1.5 people (our average daily staff capacity through 2015). Nonetheless, we decided to try to maintain momentum – across multiple cities and across the many aspects of the squeeze – long enough for significant new funding to come in. When it didn't, we were caught trying to keep too many balls in the air.

The End Result: we lost time we could have been using in a more focused way. Put another way, we spent too much time anticipating *new* funding, instead of focusing on maximizing the impact of our current, modest resources.

The Path Ahead: Two Flagship Campaigns

We're responding to the lessons of 2015 by zeroing in on **two flagship campaigns.**

Squeezing Back on Housing – We believe all Canadians should be able to afford suitable housing (renting or owning). Right now, housing prices squeeze Canadians from coast to coast. The market is especially broken in places like Vancouver and Toronto. Starting in those two cities, we'll bring people together around some common principles, and push for governments to take bold action (rather than merely tweaking the status quo).

Decoder – We believe provincial and federal governments should have to show how much they spend on different age groups – not to incite some kind of conflict, but to better face reality. Our own analysis points to chronic under-investment in younger Canadians (20s, 30s and 40s), who also face mounting public and private debts. Our Decoder campaign represents a critical first step to ensuring Canada works for all generations.⁸

In Our Corner

In addition to our team of 130 or so Backers (that's you!), we're proud to recognize our organizational funding partners: the **Vancouver Foundation**, the **United Way of the Lower Mainland**, and **Vancity Credit Union**. We couldn't be more grateful for their belief in us.

vancouver
foundation



Vancity

¹Given the many ways in which we get our message out, it's hard to get an exact number. Share a Spyglass sticker (included) with someone you know, and you'll be helping them feel a little less alone.

²You can read more here: www.gensqueeze.ca/elxn42_recap

³This includes all email and social media followers.

⁴We've done so many interviews and placed so many Op-Eds that it's been a bit difficult to track.

⁵51 Canadians shared their heart, humour and wit in 60 awesome videos. The message: many of us are doing what we can to ease the squeeze, and it's time our politicians did more, too. We'll be showcasing these videos through 2016 and beyond.

⁶Erin's job is to build a benefits program for Gen Squeeze allies (that's you!). You can learn more at <http://www.gensqueeze.ca/benefits>

⁷We're closing in on \$1,000 / mo. raised. We'll be ramping up efforts this Spring to march closer to our long-term goal of \$6,000 / mo.

⁸You can read more about the case for generational budget comparisons here: http://www.gensqueeze.ca/why_we_make_generational_comparisons

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YOUR STAFF TEAM

Paul Kershaw

"I'm a policy Professor in the School of Population and Public Health at the University of British Columbia. My research has zeroed in on two major findings: (1) the generations raising young children – including Canadians in their 20s, 30s, and 40s – are being increasingly "squeezed" by a combination of high costs, stagnant incomes, less time, mounting debts and a deteriorating environment; (2) provincial and federal government have been slow to adapt, releasing budgets that routinely under-invest in younger Canadians by comparison with others."

Role: Paul is Gen Squeeze's lead policy researcher, spokesperson and advocate. He focuses on squeezing back in the world of politics.

Erin Robinson

"I'm delighted to be "on loan" to Gen Squeeze from Vancity Credit Union, where my background includes managing Business Operations, the Small Business Specialist team and contributions to Vancity's award winning programs in Diversity, Microfinance and Financial Literacy. Fundamental to my work has been the notion of access; removing barriers to help people thrive and prosper in their work and life. I'm also a faculty member at Capilano University's School of Business and a board member with the Canadian Cooperative Association."

Role: Erin is building a benefits program for Gen Squeeze allies (including you)! Her focus is on squeezing back in the marketplace.

Eric Swanson

"Spurred on by climate change and what I perceived as a fundamentally unsustainable economy, I made the switch from science (geomicrobiology) to the non-profit sector in 2005. My background is in non-profit leadership, strategy, communications, lobbying, and political and corporate campaigning. I'm guided by an overarching lesson that our democracy belongs to those who organize and show up. I'm dedicated to working with younger Canadians to develop a more powerful voice in policy and politics."

Role: Eric's mission is to grow and coordinate the Gen Squeeze network, to squeeze back in the world of politics and the marketplace, together.