



OCH FOUNDATION
FONDATION LCO

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



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Our Mission

The Ottawa Community Housing Foundation (OCH Foundation) is dedicated to empowering individuals and families living in Ottawa Community Housing (OCH)—the city’s largest social housing provider. Guided by our three pillars—education, employment, and community engagement—we develop innovative programs that break down barriers, strengthen communities, and address the challenges of poverty and inequity. As a charitable organization, the OCH Foundation thrives on its unique and collaborative relationship with the OCH Corporation. This partnership enables us to deliver impactful initiatives that foster brighter futures, stronger communities, and more inclusive neighborhoods. Together, we are creating opportunities that transform lives.

Transforming Lives



Our Vision

The OCH Foundation is a catalyst for empowering, inspiring, and equipping OCH tenants with access to programs that enhance their quality of life and well-being. By fostering resilience and supporting personal growth, we aim to create a brighter future for all OCH residents.

Partnerships

Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. The OCH Foundation works closely with tenants, community partners, corporate supporters, governments, nonprofits, and other organizations to address the unique needs of the 33,000+ tenants living in OCH communities. These invaluable partnerships amplify our efforts, enabling us to create meaningful, lasting change in OCH neighborhoods.

Tenants of OCH

OCH Foundation provides safe and affordable homes to over 33,000 tenants in approximately 15,000 homes across 155 communities in Ottawa. These communities are rich in diversity, representing a wide range of languages, ethnicities, and cultures. Our tenants include seniors, parents, children, couples, singles, and individuals living with disabilities—each with unique stories and contributions that make our communities vibrant and dynamic.

Reflecting on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for all we've achieved together at the OCH Foundation. Our mission to build stronger, healthier communities where everyone can thrive has been at the core of our work, and this year, every program expanded to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

Food insecurity remains a major challenge for OCH tenants. In partnership with Italfoods Ottawa, Khalsa Aid Ottawa, the Ottawa Food Bank, and others, we organized Ottawa's largest one-day food drive, collecting and distributing 210,000 pounds of food. Our Tomorrow Ready program also delivered 18 aid drops to OCH communities, with more planned for 2025.

Our programs have evolved in exciting ways this year. The reCLINK program, which connects children and youth to sports, arts, and recreation, expanded to include senior painting events. Hop on Bikes launched adult programming, providing 50 bikes, helmets, and locks to adults and seniors, fostering greater mobility. Additionally, our Inspired by Learning Bursary program supported 32 students with \$1,000 each, a significant increase from last year.

This year's growth wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our board, team, partners, donors, and volunteers. Your support—whether through our golf tournament, raising over \$117,000, or our Annual Giving Campaign makes a real impact on OCH tenants.

As we look ahead, our commitment to building stronger, healthier communities remains steadfast, ensuring every resident feels empowered, supported, and connected.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Reeves". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Melissa Reeves
OCH Foundation Board Chair



Our Programs

reLINK

In 2024, the OCH Foundation's reLINK program continued to connect children and youth aged 6-18 residing in OCH communities with arts, sports, and camp. This year, reLINK supported **837 children and youth**, offering them opportunities to thrive through recreation.

This year, reLINK expanded its reach with two Pop-In & Play events for seniors. These events brought the joy of recreation to **45 seniors**, marking the program's first effort to serve an older demographic.



In total, we organized **17 engaging Pop-In & Play events** throughout the year. Activities ranged from STEM workshops and paint parties to physical activities. The success of reLINK and its initiatives would not have been possible without the generous support of our partners and donors.

Pack-a-Sack

In 2024, the Pack-a-Sack program admirably rose to meet the growing need within our communities. The Pack-a-Sack program packed over **2,000 backpacks** filled with school supplies to children and youth living in OCH communities. This program ensures that students are well-equipped and ready to start the school year with confidence.



Hop on Bikes

In 2024 we distributed **365 bikes**—a bike for every day of the year—along with locks, lights and helmets. Additionally, we extended the program to adults and seniors for the first time ever by distributing **50 adult-sized bikes**. This provided seniors and adults with newfound mobility, while community events fostered pride, connection, and belonging.





Inspired-by-Learning

In 2024, the Inspired by Learning bursary program provided financial assistance to **32 students**, expanding its support at a time of rising costs. These bursaries help tenants living in OCH communities pursue their educational goals. We thank Desjardins for their generous support for this program.



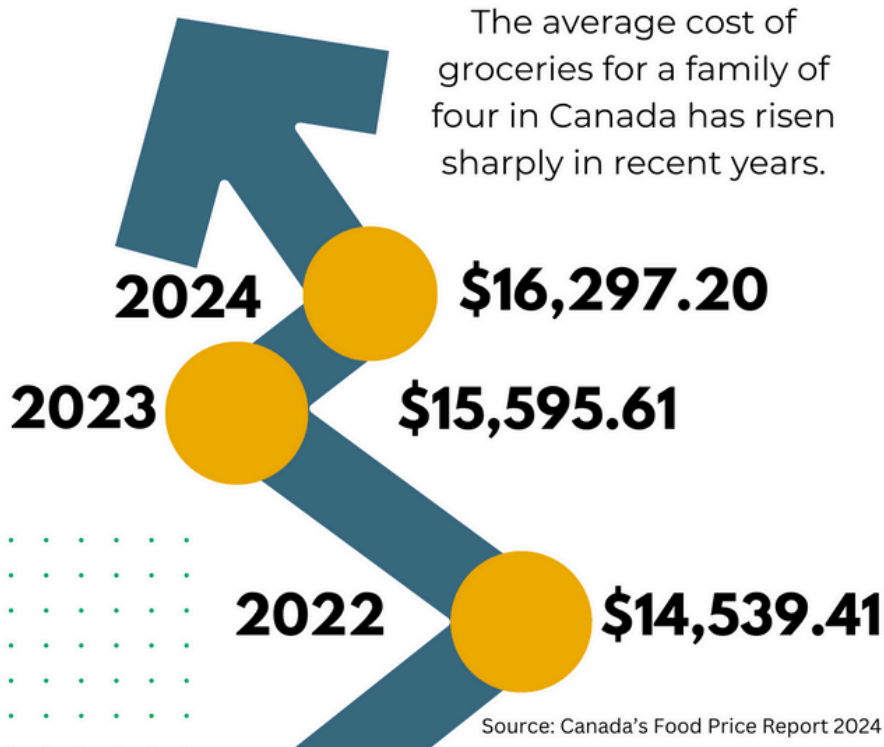
Youth Futures

In 2024, we celebrated **135 graduates**, bringing the total number of Youth Futures graduates to over 1,400. In collaboration with the City of Ottawa and BGC, Youth Futures prepares students for the current workplace and positions them for long-term success through mentorship, workshops, and hands-on experience. We thank the RBC Foundation, the Rideau Hall Foundation, and Carleton University for their generous contributions.

Tomorrow Ready

In 2024, the Tomorrow Ready program made a significant impact by conducting **18 aid drops that served 920 tenants**. With an average annual income of \$21,300, food prices are a major concern for OCH tenants. Tomorrow Ready ensures families have access to essentials and support for a brighter future. It bridges the gap between food banks and other community organizations, ensuring no one is left without essential support.

RISING FOOD PRICES



Tomorrow Ready's success is a testament to the power of collaboration, with Khalsa Aid and community developers playing a vital role in coordinating these efforts.





On June 15, 2024, the OCH Foundation partnered with **Italfoods, Khalsa Aid Ottawa Chapter, the Ottawa Food Bank, and the Ottawa District School Board** to tackle a growing and urgent issue—child hunger during the summer months. Together, we organized the largest food drive in Ottawa’s history, collecting and distributing an unprecedented **210,000 pounds of food**, marking one of the largest initiatives of its kind in Canada.

A portion of these donations directly supported OCH communities, with the OCH Foundation as one of two recipients. For many children, school meal programs provide vital nutrition, and summer break increases food insecurity for families already struggling. This food drive helped bridge that gap, ensuring thousands of children had access to healthy meals.

By prioritizing children’s needs, the OCH Foundation and its partners reinforced their commitment to fighting hunger. This effort showcased the power of community collaboration in tackling systemic issues and supporting vulnerable families year-round.



Pack-a-Thon

On August 8-9, the OCH Foundation hosted its inaugural Pack-a-Thon event. This two-day initiative brought together over 100 volunteers who assembled more than 2,000 backpacks filled with essential school supplies for children and youth living in OCH communities.

This success was made possible through the generous support of 17 community partners, including Khalsa Aid Ottawa, Ottawa Community Housing Corporation, Kiwanis Ottawa, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Hydro Ottawa, Bridgehead, Moxies, RBC Foundation, Active Youth Ottawa, Giant Tiger, Régimbal, the Coalition of Community Houses, Caring & Sharing Exchange, West Village Church, EBC, The Met, 1-800-GOT-JUNK?, and TEKsystems. Their collective efforts underscored the power of collaboration in fostering a stronger, more equitable community.

Our team of volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure that every backpack met the diverse needs of students from Kindergarten to Grade 10. Their dedication reflected a shared commitment to empowering young learners and easing the back-to-school transition for families in need.



Golf Tournament

On September 13, 2024, the OCH Foundation held its 11th Annual Charity Golf Tournament presented by **Brigil**, raising an unprecedented \$117,065. This milestone marks the highest total in the event's history and pushes the cumulative funds raised over the years to more than \$700,000. This remarkable achievement enhances the Foundation's ability to meet the growing needs of the community, creating more opportunities for residents to thrive. "The record-breaking support we received this year will allow us to further empower our tenants through education, recreation, and essential aid," said Melissa Reeves, Chair of the OCH Foundation. "Each family and individual we support has their own dreams and challenges, and it's our mission to stand beside them, providing the tools they need to succeed." The OCH Foundation extends its deepest gratitude to its dedicated Board members, whose ongoing involvement has been instrumental in the tournament's success. Special thanks also go to the generous sponsors, partners, and the Ottawa community for their unwavering support.



Morrisson Gardens

The Morrison Gardens Portable Project is a collaborative effort to revitalize the community space at Morrison Gardens, involving the Pinecrest Queensway Health Centre, Morrison Gardens Community House, OCHC, OCH Foundation, and Carleton University. Guided by input from residents, the project upgrades the facility to better meet the community's needs. Support from **United Way's PCL Hard Hats Heroes Grant, Carleton University, and the Ministry of Seniors** is making this upgrade possible, creating a space for connection, growth, and support. This project highlights the power of partnerships and community-driven change.

Annual Giving Campaign

The OCH Foundation's 2024 Annual Giving Campaign, Stories That Matter, raised an incredible **\$61,010** thanks to our generous supporters. This campaign showcased how our programs transform lives through education, employment, and community engagement in OCH communities. Your support helps us continue vital programs like Inspired by Learning, reLINK, Tomorrow Ready, and Hop on Bikes in 2025. Together, we're building a stronger, more vibrant community. Thank you for being part of this journey!

Our Impact

2024 Highlights

- 1 Participated in the largest one-day food drive in Ottawa's history.
- 2 Successfully piloted 2 Pop-in & Play events for seniors in OCH communities (reCLINK).
- 3 Expanded the Pack-a-Sack program to pack and deliver 2000+ backpacks for children and youth in OCH communities!
- 4 Expanded the Inspired-by-Learning Bursary to support 32 individuals pursuing post-secondary education.

Priorities for 2025

- 1 Complete Tenant Surveys: Gather feedback to improve programs and services that address tenants' most pressing needs.
- 2 Strategic Plan: Develop and implement a clear roadmap to guide the Foundation's work for the next two years.
- 3 Broaden Support for Adults and Seniors: Provide 150 bikes to adults and seniors through Hop on Bikes and host more Pop-in & Play events for seniors.
- 4 Strengthen Partnerships: Collaborate with new and existing partners to extend the reach and impact of programs and initiatives like the Summer Food Drive.



Our Partners



Khalsa Aid

Khalsa Aid powers the Tomorrow Ready program, ensuring essential support reaches OCH residents. Their dedication extends beyond funding—they volunteer tirelessly at events like the Pack-a-Thon and holiday meals. As a driving force behind the Summer Food Drive, they embody the spirit of community care and generosity.

RBC

RBC is a valued partner supporting Hop on Bikes, Pack-a-Sack, and Youth Futures. Their commitment goes beyond funding, with volunteers actively participating in the Pack-a-Thon to drive meaningful change for OCH communities.



TEKsystems

TEKsystems is a committed supporter of Hop on Bikes and Pack-a-Sack, donating and volunteering at Hop on Bikes, Pack-a-Thon and Holiday Meals. Their generous contributions and active involvement are crucial to creating positive change in OCH communities.

Dovercourt

Dovercourt has been a steadfast partner in making camps accessible for OCH families. They subsidize reLINK registrations, provide free one-on-one support, and ensure all children receive the support they need to participate fully. Their commitment to removing barriers is creating brighter futures for our community.

Kina Forney

Kina Forney, an artist and teacher, brings creativity and excitement to OCH communities through her Pop-in & Play events. She hosted 6 Paint Parties, impacting 160 tenants and providing a fun, creative experience that might not have been accessible otherwise.





Board of Directors



Melissa Reeves
Chair



Wayne French
Past-Chair



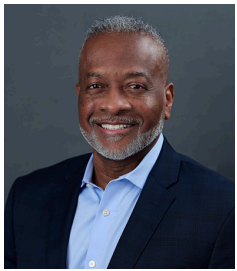
Nick Ethier
Vice Chair



Stéphane Giguère
Ex-Officio



Emily Moyo
Treasurer



Rohan Bansie
Director



Sam Bhalesar
Director Fund Development



Heather Dawson
Director



Jim Watson
Director



Tara Lapointe
Director



Barbara Spanton
Director



Sharon Coward
Director



Han Wang
Finance Support



Adham Al-Rachidi
OCH Liaison



David Mason
Director



Our Team



Angela Bégin
Executive Director



Traci Spour-Lafrance
Senior Manager,
Partnerships & Innovation



Lindsey Ziebell
Manager, Programs &
Operations



Taha Tariq
Senior Program
Coordinator



Jennifer Poll
Administrative Assistant



Pranav Kohli
Communications and
Resource Development
Coordinator



Saeed Babalola
Program Coordinator



Bradley Minni
Program Support Worker

Get in Touch

As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited to expand our programs and initiatives with ambitious goals in mind. Your support will play a pivotal role in driving these efforts, allowing us to broaden our reach and make a lasting, meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.



Ways to Contribute:

- 1** Make a donation by visiting our website: ochfoundation.ca
- 2** Set up a recurring donation to provide ongoing support.
- 3** Explore corporate partnership opportunities.
- 4** Encourage your network to support our work.

DONATE TODAY!



www.ochfoundation.ca



info@ochfoundation.ca

