



OCH FOUNDATION  
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# Annual Report 2023





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# OUR MISSION

The Ottawa Community Housing Foundation (OCH Foundation) delivers education, employment and community engagement programs that break down barriers, build resilience and alleviate the effects of poverty and inequities faced by the individuals living in Ottawa Community Housing (OCH); Ottawa's largest social housing provider.

The OCH Foundation, a charitable organization has a unique and strong relationship with our partners at the OCH Corporation.



# TENANTS OF OCH

OCH provides approximately 15,000 homes to about 32,000 tenants, including seniors, parents, children, couples, singles and people living with disabilities, within 153 communities across the City of Ottawa. This includes a diverse population of varying languages, ethnicity and cultures.

# PARTNERSHIPS

The OCH Foundation works with tenants, partners, companies, governments, nonprofits and other organizations to support the needs of the 32,000 tenants living with the OCH Communities. These partnerships play a crucial role in the success of the OCH Foundation and the impact we have within Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) communities.

# OUR VISION

OCH Foundation is a catalyst for empowering, inspiring and equipping tenants of OCH with access to programs that enhance their quality of life and well-being.





# A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we reflect on the past year, I am proud to share the remarkable achievements and successes that have defined the journey of the OCH Foundation. It is with immense pride and gratitude that I express my sincere appreciation to each and every one of you who has contributed to our joint victories.

Throughout the year, the OCH Foundation has continued to make a positive impact in the OCH community, driven by the commitment and dedication of our team and the unwavering support of our board of Directors, partners and stakeholders. Together, we have achieved significant milestones that have not only transformed lives of tenants living within OCH but have also reinforced our mission to create lasting impact.

Some of the highlights from the past year include introducing the Tomorrow Ready program where we had a chance to impact over 1,165 tenants, expand our recLINK program to include Pop-In & Play events, a record breaking year for our OCH Foundation Annual Golf Tournament and Annual Giving Campaign and much more. These accomplishments are a testament to the passion, hard work, and collaboration that define the OCH Foundation.

As we celebrate these successes, let us also acknowledge the challenges we faced and overcame such as the rapid rise of the cost of living and the ever changing grant landscape. Each obstacle presented an opportunity for growth and resilience, showcasing the strength of our organization and its ability to adapt in the face of adversity.

Looking ahead, I am confident that the OCH Foundation will continue to build upon this foundation of success. Together, we will explore new avenues for positive change, strengthen existing partnerships, and explore innovative ways to address the evolving needs of our community.

I extend my deepest gratitude to every member of the OCH Foundation family – our team, board of Directors, partners, supporters, and volunteers. Your passion and commitment have been instrumental in making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Here's to another year of inspiring accomplishments and shared success.



**Angela Bégin**  
Executive Director





# OUR PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

## RECLINK

In 2023 the OCH Foundation continued to connect youth aged 6–18 residing in OCH communities with high-quality arts, sports, and camp programs. Through our reCLINK program, we also launched a new initiative called Pop-In & Play.

Throughout the year, we organized 25 engaging Pop-In events, featuring varied activities such as STEM workshops and paint parties. The primary goal of Pop-in & Play was to provide children and youth with the opportunity to explore and experience new activities. If a participant expressed interest in a particular activity, we would then sign them up for on-going programming with reCLINK.

We want to give a special thank you to the **Kiwanis Club of Ottawa** for their financial support towards reCLINK and Pop-In & Play initiative.



## INSPIRED BY LEARNING

The OCH Foundation proudly awarded 25 post-secondary bursaries in 2023. The Inspired by Learning Bursary can be applied towards tuition fees, books, transportation, childcare, equipment, living expenses and/or other costs directly associated with the academic or training program.

This was made possible through a valuable partnership with **Desjardins**. This collaboration exemplifies our commitment to empowering students and fostering educational opportunities within our community.



## PACK-A-SACK

The OCH Foundation remained committed to the Pack-a-Sack program in 2023 which purchases supplies and backpacks for children living in OCH Communities. This year the OCH Foundation delivered 1,463 backpacks. This program continues to ensure that children and youth in our community are well-equipped and ready for the school year.

This program is possible thanks to our community partners and sponsors; **The Caring and Sharing Exchange, Khalsa Aid Ottawa, Hydro Ottawa, Ottawa Community Housing Corporation, Tasico Hospitality, Active Youth Ottawa, Giant Tiger, Ottawa Police Service, St. Laurent Centre, Régimbal Group and The Coalition of Community Houses.**





# OUR PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

## HOP ON BIKES

In 2023, the OCH Foundation celebrated the successful distribution of 387 bikes, locks, and helmets to children and youth, contributing to a grand total of 707 since 2020.

Thank you to our partners at **re-Cycles Ottawa** and the **Ottawa Community Housing Corporation** for helping us to continue to surpass our goals and make this program possible. We would also like to thank **Canada Post** for their financial support during our 2023 Hop on Bikes season.



**387 BIKES**

## YOUTH FUTURES

Celebrating 15 years of success, Youth Futures has positively impacted nearly 1,300 students by breaking down barriers to employment and equipping them with a diverse set of skills. This program not only prepares them for the current workplace but also positions them for success in the future. Here's to continued growth, empowerment, and educational success for our youth!

We extend our sincere appreciation to the **RBC Foundation**, the **Rideau Hall Foundation** and the **University of Carleton** for their generous contributions. Your support is instrumental in advancing youth employment and skills development, making a lasting impact on the lives of OCH youth. Thank you for investing in the future of our community.



**143 GRADUATES**

## TOMORROW READY

Tomorrow Ready is the newest program of the OCH Foundation. While speaking with partners during the pandemic, the number one priority for our OCH communities was food security. Khalsa Aid Ottawa offered their help to support this cause. Tomorrow Ready supports tenants of OCH with perishable, non-perishable and hygiene products through our partnership with Khalsa Aid Ottawa.

Thank you, **Khalsa Aid Ottawa**, for your invaluable support to our Tomorrow Ready Program. Your generosity has made a significant impact, reaching 1,165 tenants in Ottawa Community Housing.



**1,165 TENANTS**



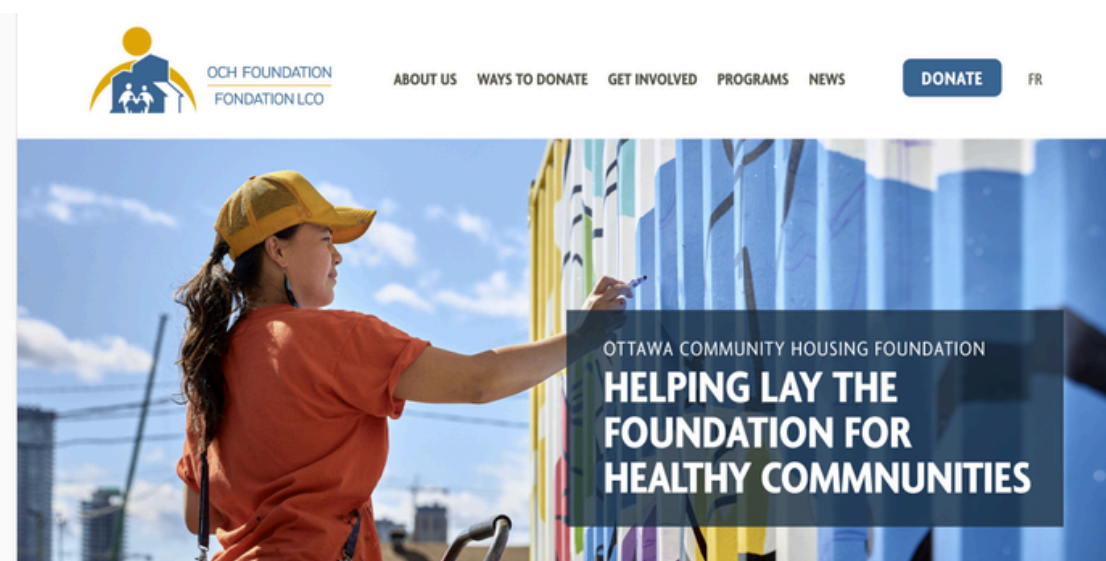
# OUR IMPACT

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Doubled impact within most of our programs to respond to the needs within OCH communities such as the request for backpacks
- ★ Developed a NEW program called *Tomorrow Ready* to respond to the needs and the rapid increase in the cost of living impacting tenants living within OCH
- ★ Created a video with Prezidential highlighting the impact of the Youth Futures program

## PRIORITIES FOR 2024

- ! Expand the Hop on Bikes Program to refurbish adult sized bikes and distribute them in OCH Communities
- ! Increase program capacity and meet the increasing need for our 6 core programs in OCH Communities
- ! Pilot 2 recreation activities for seniors (reclINK events)



This year marked a significant milestone for the OCH Foundation as we unveiled our brand new website.  
[www.ochfoundation.ca](http://www.ochfoundation.ca)



# MEET CINDY & ARMIN

In a boardroom filled with anticipation, Cindy and Armin, both integral members of the Ottawa Community Housing People and Culture team, shared their heartfelt stories about the profound impact the Youth Futures program has had on their lives.

Cindy, with her years of experience in human resources, couldn't help but beam with enthusiasm as she shared her Youth Futures journey. Introduced to the program by her previous employer, Cindy saw an opportunity to bring about significant change within her organization. Her passion stemmed from a personal connection—having left home at a young age and experiencing life in social housing in her youth, she felt a calling to make a difference in the lives of youth in her community.

Recalling the pivotal moment when she met Armin, the trajectory of Cindy's life shifted. Despite her initial time constraints, she decided to take on the responsibility of mentoring a Youth Futures student. Armin, a young man in grade 11 at the time, was the first in his family to pursue post-secondary education.

Armin, a newcomer to Canada with limited English proficiency, initially hesitated when Youth Futures came to his school. However, as he navigated the program, he found a support system that went beyond expectations. Mentors guided him, providing not just career insights but also crucial life skills. The program's exposure to various educational institutions, including Carleton University, ignited Armin's passion for education.

With a background in psychology, Armin's journey unfolded uniquely. The program not only equipped him with leadership skills but also inspired him to pursue post-secondary education and ultimately a career in human resources. His dedication and contribution to a significant recruitment project showcased his ability to emotionally connect with individuals, reflecting the program's emphasis on holistic development.



Cindy's decision to bring Armin into her organization proved transformative. Since having joined the OCH, Armin has embraced every learning opportunity, including recently moving into a new role. He's been a wonderful asset to the team. Cindy recalled a vivid memory from the graduation that year where Armin's mother rushed to embrace her with an incredible hug and tears of joy in her eyes, underscoring the program's success in not only shaping careers but also fostering a commitment to community impact.

As Cindy and Armin concluded their narratives, the boardroom filled with applause and admiration. Their stories echoed the essence of the Youth Futures program—a catalyst for personal growth, professional development, and a shared commitment to creating positive change in the community. The impact of Youth Futures, embodied in these two individuals, served as a testament to the program's enduring success.





# ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

During the 10th year of the OCH Foundation's Annual Charity Golf Tournament, we successfully raised a total of \$104,247.

A special thank you goes out to the players, sponsors, donors, staff, and OCH volunteers whose collective efforts made our event a tremendous success.



# ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

The OCH Foundation's Annual Giving Campaign raised \$54,758.37 with the support of close to 200 donors.

These funds will play a pivotal role in advancing our programs and initiatives, making a direct and positive impact in our communities. Thank you to all who contributed to this meaningful cause.





# OUR TEAM



**Wayne French**  
Chair



**Melissa Reeves**  
Vice Chair



**Nick Ethier**  
Vice Chair & Treasurer



**Stéphane Giguère**  
Ex-Officio



**Stephane Tanner**  
Secretary



**Rohan Bansie**  
Director



**Sharon Coward**  
Director



**Heather Dawson**  
Director



**David Mason**  
Director



**Tara Lapointe**  
Director



**Barbara Spanton**  
Director



**Sam Bhalesar**  
Director Fund Development



**Jim Watson**  
Director



**Han Wang**  
Finance Support



**Adham Al-Rachidi**  
OCH Liaison

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Angela Bégin**  
Executive Director



**Traci Spour-Lafrance**  
Senior Manager,  
Programs & Operations



**Lindsey Ziebell**  
Senior Program  
Coordinator



**Taha Tariq**  
Program Coordinator



**Emmanuel Antonin**  
Program Support



**Briar Gornall**  
Community & Engagement  
Coordinator



**Jennifer Poll**  
Administrative Assistant

## OCH FOUNDATION STAFF



# OUR PARTNERS



Thanks to our collaboration with **Kids Up Front**, we've facilitated memorable experiences for **94 children and youth and their families** living in Ottawa Community Housing. These experiences were valued at over \$1,686.00.

**Kids Up Front** actively fosters social inclusion by granting children access to a diverse range of events, including sporting events, concerts, theatre performances, art exhibitions, camps, and more.



In collaboration with the **City of Ottawa**, we linked **116 girls** aged between 9 and 14 to community-based sports summer camps in 5 distinct locations within OCH. These camps focused on skills, drills and strategy development for multiple sports.

We would like to extend our extreme gratitude to **Ottawa TFC Academy coach Raz El-Asmar**. Throughout the summer, Raz dedicated his time as a volunteer, conducting weekly soccer sessions in three OCH communities.



After weekly sessions throughout the summer in their own communities, players came together for a season-ending festival celebrating their success.



On May 13th, **Khalsa Aid**, in collaboration with over 300 volunteers, organized one of the most extensive one-day food drives Ottawa has ever witnessed. Khalsa Aid successfully distributed more than 41,000 pounds of food, equivalent to over 80,000 meals, to 22 locations across Ottawa, including **several communities** within OCH.



Through a continued partnership with **Prezidential Basketball**, the OCH Foundation facilitated the attendance of over 80 youth at an Ottawa BlackJacks basketball game this Summer. Participants were provided with game tickets, popcorn, t-shirts, and had the special opportunity to stand at center court during the national anthem.



# OUR SUPPORTERS

## OCH FOUNDATION ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

4 Office Automation Ltd.	DWS Roofing and Waterproofing	HUB International	Preston Hardware
Adjeleian Allen Rubeli Limited	Emond Harnden LLP	KOTT Group	PuroClean
All Signs	EXP Services Inc.	Lacasse Building Solutions	Respect Rx Pharmacy
Cooper Equipment Rentals	GC Construction	McDonald Brothers Construction Inc.	Sense Engineering
CSV Architects	Giant Wholesale Distributors Ltd.	NEC Software Solutions	Stantec
Diamond Schmitt	Groupe Régimbal Group	Plan Group	Trottier
Dumouchel Meat and Deli	Hobin Architecture Inc.	Pomerleau	Wet Basement Solutions

## ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

All Signs	Dumouchel Deli & Meat	Kelly Hastings	Seyfullah Fidan
Angela Bégin	EnviroCentre	LRI Engineering Inc	Sharon Coward
Anonymous	Girum Simmie	Luke Lopers	SME Strategy Consulting
Arrow	Jim Watson	Mile2Marathon	Tara Lapointe
Bansie Dispute Resolutions Services Inc	Jo-Anne Poirier	Nick Ethier	TEKSystems
Christian Eanga-Selenge	JP2G Consultants Inc	PuroClean Ottawa West	Traci Spour-Lafrance
Desjardins Caisse Ontario Credit Union	Lindsey Ziebell	Roof Maintenance Solutions	The Hair Cove
		Sam Bhalesar	Wayne French

## FUNDERS / THIRD PARTY FUNDRAISERS

Asssocation of Fundraising Professionals Ottawa Chapter	Carleton University	In Memory of Dana Chenette	Ottawa Community Foundation
Barbara McInnes	Cité Collegiale	Jack Meadows Memorial Fund	Ottawa Community Housing
Bridgehead	City of Ottawa	Jumpstart	Ottawa Sports Pages
Canada Post Foundation	Days In Ottawa West	Khalsa Aid Ottawa	Our Lady of Victory Catholic School
Canada Summer Jobs	Desjardins Caisse Ontario Credit Union	Kids Up Front	Orleans United Church
Canadian Parks and Recreation Association	Elizabeth A. Mundell Fund	Kiwanis Foundation	re-Cycles Ottawa
	Ellen Elizabeth Heath Fund	Moxies	RBC Foundation
	Hydro Ottawa	Ontario Trillium Foundation	Rideau Hall Foundation
		Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG)	Rob Cook Memorial Fund
			Taggart Parkes Foundation

## SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT: DESJARDINS

Thank you to **Desjardins Caisse Ontario Credit Union** for their generous support during our 2023 Inspired by Learning Bursary Program. Their three-year commitment totaling \$75,000 will make a significant impact on the students pursuing their post-secondary dreams. In 2023, Desjardins also graciously hosted a cheque distribution event, providing a wonderful platform for bursary recipients to celebrate their academic achievements with their family and friends. Your support is truly inspiring and contributes to the success of these deserving students.





# GET IN TOUCH



As we prepare for the upcoming year, we have ambitious plans to grow our programs and initiatives. Your support will directly contribute to these initiatives, enabling us to expand our reach and create a lasting impact on the lives of those we serve.

## Ways to Contribute:

- ☆ Make a one-time donation by visiting our website at [ochfoundation.ca](https://ochfoundation.ca)
- ☆ Set up a [recurring donation](#) to provide ongoing support
- ☆ Explore corporate [partnership opportunities](#)
- ☆ Encourage your network to get involved and support our cause

## DONATE TODAY!



[www.ochfoundation.ca](https://www.ochfoundation.ca)



[info@ochfoundation.ca](mailto:info@ochfoundation.ca)