

THE FACES OF HOME SUITE HOPE

2022 Industry Council & Mentorship Edition

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Part Four: Industry Council and Mentorship

The Faces of HSH series launched in 2020 to give the community a glimpse of the faces behind Home Suite Hope. It is a four-part series, in which you will be introduced to: the staff, the board, participants, and mentors and industry council members.

In this booklet, you will meet some of the current **Home Suite Hope mentors and Industry Council members**. Mentorship and networking are one of the vital supports that contribute to the success of Home Suite Hope participants.

Each participant who enters into one of our Homeward Bound programs is directly aligned with a mentor from Sheridan College. The President and Vice Chancellor of Sheridan college, female executives, faculty and administration across programming and campuses have partnered with Home Suite Hope to help our participants navigate post-secondary school, day-to-day life, employment searches and everything in between. In addition, we have interested community members who attended our community socials where organic mentor-mentee were fostered.

The industry council plays a critical role in the development and success of the Homeward Bound Halton program. The industry council is a group of senior executives with decision-making authority from a variety of fields who meet in an effort to support the professional advancement of participants in the program. The industry council is made up of representatives from organizations including private sector businesses, non-profit and public sector employers, community champions with influence in the local community and representatives from employment services at the local college, municipality or community services.

A key success factor for Homeward Bound Halton participants is that the college programs available through the program are aligned to the local labour market opportunities with the organizations that sit on the industry council.

We have some amazing volunteers who give their time to the organization and our participants, offering them a hand and guidance on their paths to self-sufficiency. We are very pleased to highlight some of these individuals today.

With deep gratitude for all of the time that is volunteered,

~ Sara Cumming, Executive Director



MARK MCLAUGHLIN

Industry Council

I am a recently retired CPA, CA that finished my career as a self-employed business, CFO To Go. My services and experience assisted small- to medium-sized businesses with an array of financial needs including training, hiring, financing, accounting, up-to-business acquisition and selling. I initially started my professional career with Henderson Partners in Oakville and was a partner there until I left for the private industry.

My life partner and I have lived in Oakville since 2002 following a brief three-year period in Calgary. We have one adult daughter that is currently living with us while she expands her career. We are very active tennis players and snow boarders among other sports. I was an avid whitewater kayaker travelling extensively through Canada and the U.S. in search of bigger challenges. Having a child meant taking less risk!

FUN FACT

“*My first place I rented during my first year of university- I just thought most amenities were included when I arrived. Kleenex, toilet paper, toothpaste, etc., all that stuff just magically appeared when I was living at home! Huh? It's not?*”

SYDNEY WESTON

Industry Council

I currently live in Guelph with my partner & step daughter and work at the Ian Martin Group as an Account Manager. I have been working there for almost 5 years and have been lucky to have made some great connections. Because my own employment background varies from Risk Assessment, to Finance, to Trades and Client Partnering, I truly understand the transferrable skill and how to use these to reach career goals.

Ian Martin Group (IMG) is a recruitment agency. Its mission is to connect people with meaningful work. It is also a certified B Corporation and has been in the “Top 3 places to work in Canada” for three years, as well as being voted Best for the World in Governance for our B Corp Efforts. IMG and I truly hold business in a place of accountability. We take our pledge of giving back seriously and walk the talk.

FUN FACT

“*I went to Culinary School and enjoy cooking and baking for my family and my dog!*”

JOHN FLEMING

Industry Council

I started my career as a social worker but rapidly rose through the management ranks of local and provincial governments as well as not-for-profits achieving senior leadership positions in several organizations, including service as a municipal CAO, Deputy Minister in Ontario and as CEO of a national health charity. After completing my full-time career I continued my leadership work by achieving the Chartered Director designation and opening my ‘occasional’ consulting practice, located in Oakville.

Since 2008, I have focused my work around governance teaching and advice, executive mentoring and coaching and group facilitation, especially emphasizing my ability to help boards and teams to work effectively to identify and achieve common goals. I am the Integrity Commissioner for the Town of Caledon and Past Chair of the Board of Governors of Sheridan College. I have served on numerous boards and committees and I am a past Chair of the Board of Directors of Halton Healthcare Services and of Ovarian Cancer Canada. I am currently a member of the Council of the College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, a regulatory body in Ontario. In the past, I served as a Director of OMERS Sponsors Corporation, the governing board of one of Canada's largest pension plans.

FUN FACT

“*On my first night in residence at Queen's, I drove to Kingston on my own, and arrived after dark, in the rain. I had never been there before...*”

HUGO BRETON

Industry Council

I am a Business Coach and the Founder of Action COACH Halton. My experience includes business consulting, operations, project management and the technology, entertainment and services sectors. I moved from Mexico City to Burlington with Gaby, my wife, and our two teenagers, Mateo and Amélie. I love writing, reading, movies, music and video games!

My firm works with entrepreneurs, business owners and executives. We help them grow their companies with purpose, become inspiring leaders to high-performing teams and be more effective with their time. We help them with business knowledge through proven strategies and tools, focus (which is all about setting goals and specific actions) and accountability.

FUN FACT

“*The first time I cooked on my own, I almost ate both raw chicken and potatoes*”



KAREN GRANT

Industry Council

I currently live in Etobicoke with my husband, two children and black lab, Finn. We lived in Oakville for 20 years and moved to Etobicoke when our youngest went to university. I am currently the Vice President of Operations at Teladoc Health. I have been with Teladoc for eight years in a few positions. My previous role was building and delivering products globally particularly focused on mental health and telemedicine offerings.

Teladoc Health is a global virtual healthcare provider. Our mission is to empower people live their healthiest lives through the full spectrum of health and wellbeing. We are proud to be included in the inaugural TIME100 Most Influential Companies list.

FUN FACT

“ *I am a Christmas nut. I collect Advent Calendars and have about 25 across my house each year.*

JACINDA FRAZER

Mentor

I am an Accessible Learning Advisor at Sheridan’s Mississauga campus. In my role, I support students who experience functional limitations to their studies by arranging academic accommodations and helping advocate for barrier-free education.

I moved to Canada at a young age from Guyana and although I moved here young, my Caribbean roots will always be a strong part of my identity and culture. My parents instilled the importance of work ethic, pursuing higher education, contributing to society and giving back. All these values aligned perfectly with a challenge I received at a webinar I had attended at the time. I was praying for an opportunity to be able to invest in others and the opportunity to volunteer as a HSH mentor was presented. The social justice values of HSH resonated within me and I want to support the courageous women stepping forward to take the Home Suite Hope journey.

FUN FACT

When I first moved out on my own, one thing I would have benefited from is starting a good filing system to keep track of expenses and important paperwork. Having grown up with a mom who worked as an administrative assistant for the president of a company, I should have known better! Now that we live in a technological age, I’m told the Mint App is a great resource for budgeting and tracking expenses.

MELISSA MITCHELL

Mentor

I grew up on the beautiful Island of Jamaica. I migrated to Canada six years ago as part of my campaign to live an extraordinary life. About a decade earlier I stepped out of my little Island to complete my first degree at Temple University in Philadelphia PA. I later completed my Master’s degree in Human Resources at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica.

Prior to joining Sheridan’s Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences as an Academic Portfolio Administrator, I’ve held various roles in the Insurance and Financial sectors. Through my professional roles, I developed a passion for motivating others. I currently serve in my local church as a Youth Leader and most recently became a mentor with Home Suite Hope. The mentorship program at HSH is such a blessing to the participants they serve and has become quite special to me. I just hope that even half of what has been poured into me, I’m able to pour into this beautiful community of women.

FUN FACT

“ *I always tell people that I could not cook and my mom cooked for me. Until I moved out and had to cook for myself and realized she was teaching by modelling the entire time.*

ANDREA DAVIS

Mentor

I am a mom of four adult daughters and two dogs. I have been married to my husband for 29 years. I have worked in the childcare field for over 30 years and have worked at Sheridan College since 2004, as a part time professor, the Manager of the Sheridan Child Care Centres and a full time professor/academic advisor. Actually, any job I have ever had has involved working with children & families or teaching people who are going to work with children & families. I really enjoy teaching and advising college students. I also enjoy being part of mentorship programs and started with Big Sisters when I was 20 years old. Mentoring has been a part of my professional career ever since. Sometimes I am the mentee and sometimes I am the mentor, either informally or formally. I enjoy walking my dogs, hiking, camping and reading. I also love connecting with friends and family, over dinner or a walk in the neighborhood or lounging on the patio. I still see my girlfriends from high school on a regular basis!

FUN FACT

The first time I lived on my own, I got a kitten. I was so excited and felt like such an adult. Well, it escaped outside one day, shortly after we moved in. It climbed a tree and could not get down. I had to climb after it, and I was much more traumatized than he was!





JESSICA PULLIS

Mentor

I was raised by a single, working mom, along with my two sisters. My family immigrated to Canada from Malta in the 1960s, which makes me a first-generation Canadian. I am the second person in my family to go to university and have really found a love for higher education. I have a PhD in Sociology and Legal Studies and am a Professor of Criminology at Sheridan College. I am also a working mom of three young children.

I never really thought of myself as someone who would be a mentor, but I have supported and mentored students for many years. So, when Home Suite Hope's Executive Director, Dr. Sara Cumming, asked me to become a mentor, I eventually became excited to share my lived experience and skills with the parents at Home Suite Hope. Mentorship has such a large impact in my life. I struggled in high school and I did not feel like there was anyone to support me beyond my family and friends. I found lifelong mentors amongst the several faculty members I worked with at Brock University, who believed and supported me. I am so happy to be given the opportunity to be a part of someone else's personal journey.

FUN FACT
learned ketchup and mustard sandwiches go a long way on a tight budget.

LINDSAY ANDERSON

Mentor

At Sheridan I have the privilege of being the Associate Dean for the School of Nursing. I feel incredibly blessed and honoured to be able to work in a position that allows me to walk in my purpose each day; however, I also believe that no matter what we do and who we interact with, we can walk in our purpose in everything that we do. I am also a mother of two beautiful children, who teach me about the person I want to strive to become tomorrow.

FUN FACT
I recently went on a solo trip to Sedona, Arizona where I hiked over 36kms in Red Rock country in 3.5 days!

JANET MORRISON

Mentor

I am the President & Vice Chancellor of Sheridan – this means I'm accountable to our students, faculty and staff for executive leadership across all three of our campuses, five faculties and Continuing and Professional Studies. The success of students relies on the effectiveness of the institution's ability to provide supportive programs as they navigate through their academic journey (i.e., tutoring, academic advising, counseling, financial aid, etc.). The mentorship program done in partnership with Home Suite Hope is a perfect example of one of the ways Sheridan works with our community partners to ensure not just the success of our students, but their growth and confidence building.

Outside my role at Sheridan, I live in west Etobicoke with my partner and two kids. I self-identify as a partner, mom, educator, community leader and volunteer. I'm committed to physical fitness and rejuvenate by spending time outside in nature (although I loathe the cold!).

FUN FACT
I have an enormous dog – a Great Dane named Cooper

RESHMA BANU

Mentor

Sheridan has been my home ever since I moved to Canada as an international student in 2014. At present, my role is the Student Success Officer in the Student Advisement team. As a student I was a Peer Mentor with the International Centre. I loved being on campus so much that I never left!

I enjoy interacting with students, supporting their success and learning something new everyday! When I look at my journey, I credit my success to some amazing mentors who helped me find my way and help make Canada my home. I have learned and experienced so much that I feel it is important to share this with others and pay it forward. Being a mentor for Home Suite Hope, for me, is a salute to all my past and present mentors!

FUN FACT
Something I learned when I started living on my own was how important it is to budget meticulously. Whether you do it old school on paper or use an app, learning the art of budgeting and tracking different expense categories is a skill I utilize to this day to keep me on track with my finances.



SUPPORTS PROVIDED



PARTICIPANT THOUGHTS



“Love my mentor – amazing, sweet, kind individual. Super supportive, super helpful.”

“We have a wonderful relationship that I will treasure.... She is amazing and so helpful. Very inspirational.”

“She’s a very kind lady. We understand each other we’ve lived a lot of the same experience in life. I love listening to her stories as much as she wants to hear about mine. I feel like I can really relate to her and how she grows as a person when she talks about things ... I feel like we have built a very strong bond.”

“She is helpful and always willing to go the extra mile with anything I need academically.”

“We get along great! I am so happy that we were matched! I really enjoy meeting with her.”





DEANDRA EMILY CHRISTOPHER

Mentor

I currently work in Accessibility at the post secondary-level. In my role, I strongly advocate for inclusion and accessibility. I love to learn and recently completed my master's in education & tech in 2021. I am currently learning more about inclusive design.

In my spare time, I love to travel and hike with my husky through best GTA trails.

FUN FACT
“Something I wish I knew when I moved out is that you can find great options for your home space on Facebook Marketplace, be open and you can find some great treasures!”

FARZANA JIWANI

Mentor

I'm part of the Enterprise Architecture and Innovation team at Sheridan. In my role as a Business Architect, I seek to understand the key capabilities that are important for Sheridan to fulfill its mandate. It's an opportunity to reflect and engage with stakeholders on where Sheridan is now and where Sheridan needs to be in the future. I have a background in policy, research, strategy, technology and education. This allows me to bring a broad-based perspective to my work. I come from a family of entrepreneurs, so I bring that mindset to the challenges I encounter. I love that I work with committed individuals who want to ensure Sheridan nurtures an environment that fosters the growth and development of students, faculty and staff.

Outside of Sheridan, I enjoy outdoor activities like hiking, kayaking and bike riding. When I'm out on the lake in a kayak, it's meditative and it puts things in perspective.

FUN FACT
“I wrote a children's book for my nephew about a grandfather teaching his grandson to fly a kite.”

LYNN PETRUSKAVICH

Mentor

I have always been an active member of the community. This year marks three years of mentoring a Home Suite Hope participant and the excitement of now supporting her move into this new phase of employment searching is exciting. It is a privilege to see her grow.

I've lived in North Oakville for over 20 years with my family. I spent the first decade of my career putting my McMaster Kinesiology Degree to work at the YMCA of Greater Toronto as a Program Director and later, in Marketing & Communications. I switched gears to be a full-time caregiver in 2005 and remained active in the health and fitness industry on a part-time basis. Currently, I work collaboratively with my husband to run our small Tech resourcing business, Thinkstream Inc.

FUN FACT
“I love to swim in cold water, and I will jump into Lake Ontario in October... even November sometimes. Exhilarating!”

KARA MACKIE

Mentor

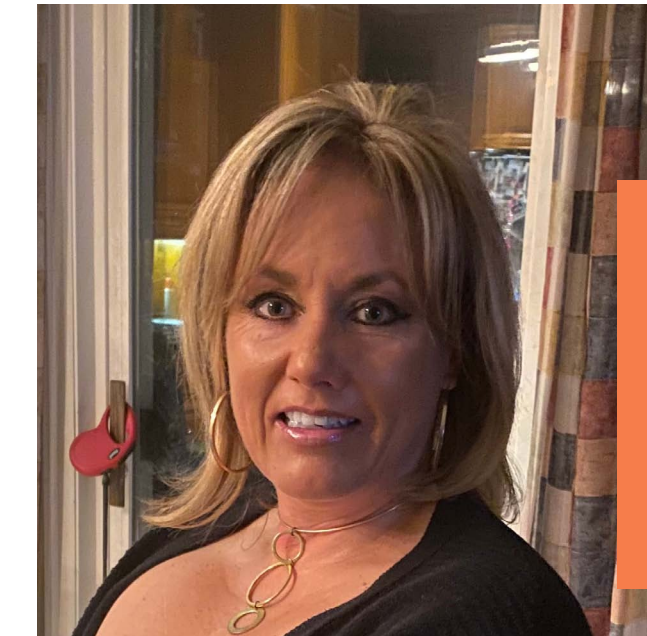
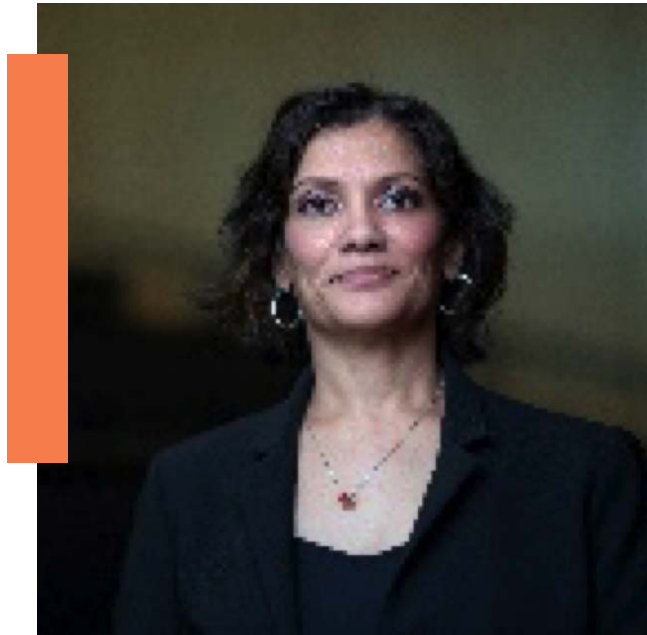
I am married (20 years this year), and have 2 teenage sons. We are the boys biggest fans in their sports, and we "try" to have a well balanced life. We took on a big challenge of completely renovating an old School House (1905), and has been the labor of our love for the past 11 years. We are almost there...

I am currently on Sheridan's Human Resources team supporting the Workplace Abilities Office, and managing disability files. I have been doing similar roles for the past 20 years. I believe that my non-professional jobs / roles are the building blocks that have allowed me to be successful in my line of work. Working in a children's group home, long-term care facility, parks dept collecting garbage, and working in the restaurant / service industry (this was my life line and got me through some difficult times).

I am looking forward to learning how I can support, with my knowledge as a Sheridan Bruin, or by using my life skills, ability to navigate the health system, or by just listening. I hope to be supportive, helpful and aid in the Mentee's success.

FUN FACT
I moved out own my own when I went to university. I shared a very small room with another person, had a cot, small desk, and small closet, with a washroom across the hall that was shared with at least 20 others. I met this stranger and knew from the moment we met that we were soul sisters. I remember the sense of freedom, living by my own rules, and learning to set boundaries. The best!!!





NAZLIN HIRJI

Mentor

I obtained my Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Toronto Metropolitan University, and two Masters degrees, both from the University of Toronto, one in Nursing Administration and the other a Master of Science from The Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation.

I have a varied clinical background ranging from pediatrics to geriatrics that spans the continuum of care including the community, acute care, rehab and long-term care sectors. I spent 10+ years as a front-line nurse before becoming a nursing administrator. After, I transitioned to academia, first as a professor in Practical Nursing and then leadership and administration in Continuing and Professional Studies.

I am a leader and coach, and I enjoy guiding people to problem-solve, maximize their personal and professional potential, and achieve their goals. I am also committed to life-long learning and continuous development as a means of empowerment and expansion for self and others.

FUN FACT

The cat of one of my patients had kittens and he begged me take the last one. She was beautiful and soft and so cute so I agreed. And it ended up being a comedy of errors. The kitten would hop around and leave a trail of broken things in her path!

TAMMY DATARS

Mentor

I am a single parent of a 20 year old and an 17 year old. I have been a single parent since my kids were four and one and a half. My life has gone through many challenges being a single parent including managing mental health issues, alcoholism and addiction in the family. Trying to make ends meet financially while still providing an enriching life for your kids is not an easy thing to do. Education has fuelled my capacity to do all of that. I am a 30 year veteran Emergency nurse and currently a Manager at Sheridan College for the health Centres. I have a degree in biology, a diploma in nursing, and a masters in health administration. I am very physically active with hiking, triathlons, golf and many other outdoors activities. I am a lover of pets and have a 5 year old wolf dog.

FUN FACT

I remember when I first moved out on my own I was headed to University and did not get into residence. My dad and I went for a weekend to scour places for me to live. We contacted the housing department and they told us of a place that was not yet open for rent yet but that we may like it. We went and peered in through the window and it looked nice enough, so we put my name forward for it. When I moved in I found out I was living in a house with 9 other people of various ages but all students. It turned out to be fantastic and a huge learning curve for this small town chick.

KINDA JAZEH

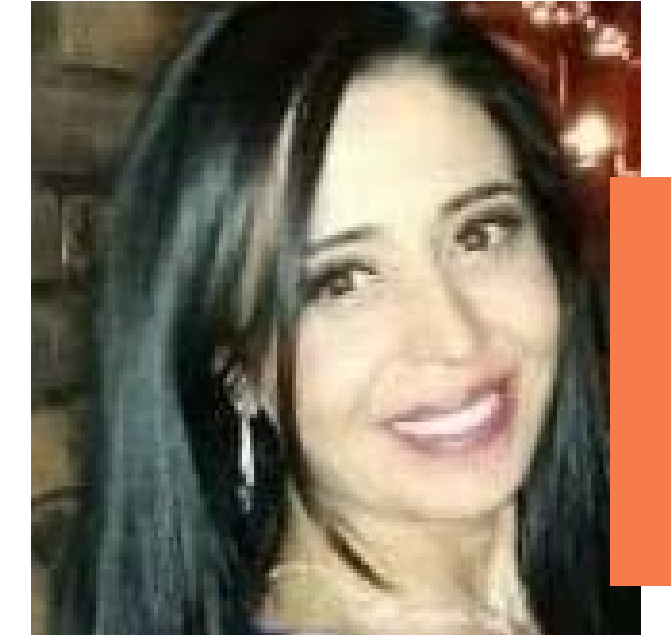
Volunteer Coordinator (On Leave)

I grew up in Aleppo, Syria before moving to Oakville, Canada. I had been studying business management, so once we moved, I decided to continue my education at Sheridan College. I now work as an Administrative Assistant at Golf Canada.

I learned about Home Suite Hope through France Fournier, when I had met her at an event the Oakville Chamber of Commerce was hosting. Home Suite Hope was in need of a new volunteer coordinator, and I was asked to take over the role. I happily accepted and have held the role ever since!

FUN FACT

I recently signed up for golf lessons and trying to improve my golfing skills.



THANK YOU!

The Home Suite Hope Team would like to offer their sincerest gratitude for all of the hard work that the Industry Council members and Mentors put in, to support our participants. We could not do this important work without you!

~ The HSH Team



MELISSA FILICE

Volunteer Coordinator

Hello, my name is Melissa Filice, and I am happy to introduce myself to you as the Volunteer Coordinator for this year's annual HSH (Home Suite Hope) fundraiser, Empty Bowls.

I am a recent graduate of the HSH program myself and I do not know where my son and I would be today if it were not for the support and guidance I have received from HSH over these past few years. I joined HSH in August 2019, almost three months after I had given birth to my son. I remember then not knowing how I was going to sufficiently support my son alone; it was a very isolating and uncertain time for me, but my son gave me every reason I needed to want to find an answer. Home Suite Hope was our answer.

Since joining HSH my son and I quickly found our own apartment, I learned of community supports we could access, and I attended various life skill workshops, as well as was granted a full scholarship to Sheridan College for the Human Resources diploma program. I graduated with Honors in April and completed extra courses this past summer to qualify to write the CHRP exam. I have now also graduated from being a participant of HSH and recently secured employment in my field. I am also currently working as the HSH Volunteer coordinator. Moving forward I hope to obtain my CHRP designation and secure a full-time HR entry level job, perhaps in an HR generalist or recruitment position as I am passionate about the areas of organizational behavior and total rewards.

If it was not for HSH and all its supports, I would have never been in a position to financially support my son and go back to school, as it is just us, we have no other outside support.

HSH gave us the chance at a fresh start, which is why I could not have been happier to accept this position with them now as the volunteer coordinator for Empty Bowls. It allows me to use some skills I have developed through my studies, such as managing the data for all volunteers, and to give back to a program that has given my son and I so much. I plan to always give back to HSH moving forward and help other single moms get their fresh start as we work hard to overcome intergenerational hardships and give our children the best possible future that they deserve.

FUN FACT



I never realized the cost of condiments and cleaning supplies until moving out on my own.

JOIN US

AND BE AN INDUSTRY COUNCIL MEMBER

JOIN US

AND BECOME A MENTOR

