

APRIL 2023

- April 2 – World Autism Awareness Day (UN); Palm Sunday (Christian)
- April 4 – Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
- April 5 – Pesach (Passover – to April 13) (Judaism)
- April 6 – Passover (Judaism)
- April 7 – World Health Day (UN)
- April 7 – Good Friday (Christian)
- April 9 – Easter (Christian);
- April 10 – Easter Monday
- April 12 – International Day of Pink
- April 14 – Baisakhi (New Year) (Sikh)
- April 18 – Yom HaShoah (Judaism)
- April 20 – Eid al Fitr (sunset to April 21) (Islam)
- April 22 – Eid ul Fitr (Islam)
- April 26 – Yom HaAtzmaut (Judaism)
- April 28 – National Day of Mourning (Gov't of Canada) - World Day for Safety and Health at Work

CELEBRATING IWD



Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming and the entire HSH team were busy throughout March... celebrating **International Women’s Day**, headlining as well as attending IWD events... and spreading the word about HSH and how its programs, Stabilizing First Halton and Homeward Bound Halton help single-parent families journey from homelessness and poverty to stability through wrap-around support and education.
Please see inside for more.

WOMEN, WELLNESS & WINE MARCH 15



PARTICIPANTS: GET INVOLVED



ATTENDING WOMEN WELLNESS & WINE

HSH saw a number of its participants get involved in the wrap-around support and networking opportunities that are part-and-parcel of HSH's Homeward Bound Halton program.

Some of the hallmarks of the four-year program that combines stabilization, education and employment search are the wrap-around support, mentoring and networking support that are so important to participants' success.

Many participants attended the recent **Women Wellness & Wine** event. As they participated in the activities, they met and got to know the presenters, other attendees and supporters.

While it was an opportunity to focus on things other than family and school obligations, HSH staff also stepped up with support for transportation and child care at the event to allow participants even with young children to participate.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

HSH HOSTS INAUGURAL WOMEN, WELLNESS & WINE

Thank you to all who attended **Women, Wellness & Wine** presented by **Bell Canada!** This new event for HSH was hosted March 15 at **The Oakville Club**.

There are no words to express how thankful Home Suite Hope is to have a community of supporters such as yourselves who rally behind us and support our work, including this affordable housing campaign with [Flight For Hope](#).

We hope you all left the event with some new knowledge, whether it was how to go from 'Sad to Happy' with **Rossana Gorys** of [Balanced Path](#), or how to silence your 'Inner Saboteur' with **Elissa Lansdell** of [Rockstar Communications](#).

A massive thank-you to our wonderful speakers, and our amazing emcee, **Kimberly Calderbank** for keeping it real. Thanks also to [Tre Amici Wines](#), our wine sponsor for the evening.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

WOMEN, WELLNESS & WINE



Thanks to all of you, we were able to raise over \$1,100 for our affordable housing campaign, but most importantly, bring awareness to the severity of the affordable housing issue in Halton.

As **HSH's Executive Director Dr. Sara Cumming** mentioned in her closing remarks, we are all so fortunate to be able to afford the luxury of focusing on our wellness because we are housed. Those who are not housed, however, do not have this luxury. Your help in spreading awareness of our affordable housing campaign and how intrinsically it's tied to wellness is invaluable.

Should you be able to donate, and feel moved to share **Home Suite Hope** and **Flight For Hope's** campaign, please visit and [DONATE HERE](#).

Find out more about [Home Suite Hope and our affordable housing campaign](#) and learn more about [Flight for Hope](#) and Callum Wallace's flight.

One last big thank you goes out to all those who donated groceries and grocery gift cards at the event. HSH single mothers were very thankful to be doing some "grocery shopping" in our offices in the days following the event. Thank you all for your continued support!

Katelyn and the HSH team



SARA: A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION



Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming was nominated in the **YWCA Hamilton's 2023 Women of Distinction Awards**.

The awards shine a light on the women and girls who build Hamilton & Halton and the awards gala, attended by HSH staff and Board members, was held March 2 at the **Hamilton Convention Centre**.

"...I had the privilege of standing on stage with incredibly talented, motivated, fierce, empathetic, trailblazing women of distinction nominees. I was in awe of the amazing work being done by so many women, many of whom spent their lives hearing "you can't". We can. We do. We will continue," said Sara.

"Thank you to my colleagues at HSH and Sheridan College, who nominated me and wrote such lovely letters of support, to the YWCA for the event and for the incredible work you do, to all the incredible sponsors who make events like this possible, and to all my fellow nominees who humbled me in so many ways," Sara said.

Sara brings an abundance of life experience and two decades of research on lone mothers, social policy and precarious employment to her position as the Executive Director at Home Suite Hope. She completed a PhD in Sociology from the University of Waterloo and has been a full-time professor of Sociology at Sheridan College since 2013. She has had a profoundly meaningful impact on her students, colleagues, and community. Sara is a well-known and respected advocate for women across Halton Region - and leading an eight-woman team at HSH successfully negotiated for HSH to become Halton's inaugural non-profit and social sector Living Wage Employer.

Sara is the second Canadian to receive the designation of Clinical Sociologist from the Association of Applied and Clinical Sociology and authored Oxford University Press' student-centered Introduction to sociology textbook, *Sociology Unlocked*, whose second edition launches this year. She sits on Sheridan's Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee, joined Sheridan College's Research Ethics Board (REB) and was elected in 2021 to a three-year term as the faculty representative governor on Sheridan College's Board of Governors.



MIIX ANALYTICS SUPPORTS HSH

*“Imagine a gender-equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that’s diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women’s equality. Collectively we can all **#EmbraceEquity**”*



On Thursday, March 9, Sara delivered the closing address at Oakville-based **Miix Analytics IWD 2023 #embraceequity** event in Toronto.

The event was attended by HSH staff - and supported HSH.

The **Second Annual Miix Analytics International Women’s Day** event featured a networking breakfast, a welcome by Hilary Borndahl, Founder and CEO of Miix Analytics and her daughters, followed by a keynote address by Canadian television personality, Sangita Patel, of Entertainment Tonight Canada. There was also a Youth Panel, EDI defined, Equity Research presented by Ethnicity Matters and an Embracing Equity Panel discussion featuring Jennifer Lo, Vice President of Marketing, Irving Consumer Products, Vaishali Mohan-Hollands, Digital Delivery and Transformation, Equitable Bank, and Paul Gaudette, CEO and Co-Founder, Dig Insights.

WITH HALTON WOMEN'S PLACE



After recently touring **Halton Women's Place** - Halton's emergency shelter for women experiencing abuse - to determine how HSH and the shelter can improve the ways they work together, Sara also attended the **Halton Women's Place IWD 2023 Luncheon** that featured speaker **Amy Kaufman**, who shared her harrowing experience of abuse at the hands of her now ex-husband, a media personality.

Jonah Keri, formerly a prominent Canadian sports journalist, pleaded guilty to charges of assault, criminal harassment and uttering death threats, dating from July 2018 to January 2019. In the spring of 2022, he was sentenced to 21 months in jail.



The ruling has been hailed for recognizing patterns of coercive control within intimate partner violence.



AT SHERIDAN COLLEGE



Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming was among many who attended an International Women's Day event featuring **Canada's Minister of National Defence and Oakville MP Anita Anand** at **Sheridan College**. The minister is an accomplished lawyer and educator who previously served as Canada's Minister of Procurement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sara is not only the executive director of HSH, but also a Professor of Sociology at Sheridan and led the recent **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Social Construction Workshop Series** presentation of The Stories that Change Communities: An International Women's Day Workshop with Dr. Sara Cumming.

Sara discussed her work as Executive Director for HSH, and ways we can apply specific skills to enact social change for equity-deserving groups in our local communities. The workshop was held Friday, March 24 at Sheridan's **Hazel McCallion Campus** in Mississauga.

The Stories that Change Communities:

An International Women's Day Workshop with Sara Cumming

March 24, 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
A145 (A-Wing, 1st Floor)
Hazel McCallion Campus

Join us for a workshop on using strong storytelling to raise awareness about the needs of vulnerable populations.



INSPIRING ALLIES

In celebrating International Women's Day 2023, Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming also celebrates male allyship. **Mohamed Banda** is one of the many researchers from **Sheridan College** with whom Sara partners to do work in the community.

Mohamed is a professor in Sheridan's Faculty of Social Science and the Humanities. He has a BA (Combined Honors in Sociology and Political Science from York University), a B.Ed. in Intermediate/Senior high school (in Social Science and Politics), and a registered Ontario certified teacher (OCT) with teaching experience in the public school system. He has a MA in International Development Studies, and MES in Environmental and Urban Studies from York University.

Mohamed's MA/MES research focused on sustainable development in the contexts of climate change, environmental politics, and socio-economic development.

His current PhD research focuses on globalization, higher education, and sustainable development in the global south – exploring the complex decision-making process by international students (and academic diaspora in Canada) to stay in host country or return to country of origin after studies, and the impact of such decisions on national development in their native homelands.

Mohamed's teaching experience includes a variety of courses and topics in Sociology, Human Rights and Equity, Diversity in Canadian Society, Politics and Society, Global Issues, and Environmental Sustainability. He is a counsellor, psychosocial educator, and facilitator in Partner Assault Response (PAR) program, working with men who are charged with domestic violence and abusive towards intimate partners, to better understand domestic violence and abuse, and learn non-violent strategies and skills to engage in healthy relationships.

He works with students identified as at-risk, disengaged and/or learners with various challenges in alternative (nontraditional) way, supporting their successful transition to postsecondary education.

HSH highlighted inspirational individuals and groups throughout February, but the dedication, commitment and stories of professionals and volunteers, deserves to be celebrated every day of the year.



STAFF NEWS

HSH DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR TRANSITIONS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONSULTANCY ROLE

Home Suite Hope announces that as of April, Director of Development **Krystal Valencia** is transitioning to a **part-time affordable housing consultancy role** for the remainder of 2023 as HSH builds on its Affordable Housing Campaign to increase family-suitable affordable housing stock in Halton.

All of HSH's major donors, granters, key stakeholders, and Foundation fund-holders will deal directly with **HSH Executive Director Sara Cumming** (sarac@homesuitehope.org) – so they will be in very capable hands!

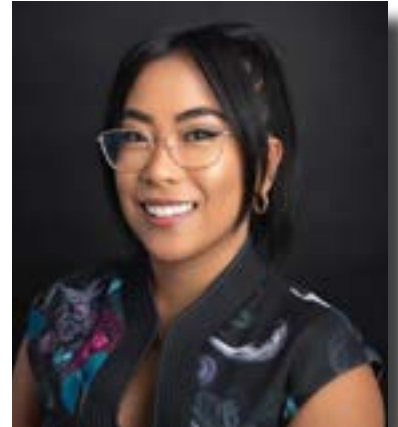
“Thank you for fostering an environment of collaboration, learning, and growth. I have been absolutely privileged to work with you over the last four years. From in-person to transitioning to virtual as we navigated the global pandemic, and back to a new post-pandemic world -- what you have offered to HSH's families as consistent support through some of their most difficult times has been exceptional, and for that we are extremely grateful,” said Krystal.

HSH program-related matters will be overseen by **HSH Interim Program Manager Nikkian Hanson** (nikkianh@homesuitehope.org) while all marketing and events will be handled by **HSH Marketing & Events Coordinator Katelyn Zaoral** (katelynz@homesuitehope.org).

Please refer any communications issues to **HSH Administrative Assistant Angela Blackburn** (info@homesuitehope.org).

Krystal was one of 20 delegates for Zonta International as an NGO-accredited representative at the UN Headquarters in New York in March.

Krystal attended the **67th Commission on the Status of Women** led by UN Women.



SAVE THE DATE: AGM & GRADUATION

JUNE 15, 2023 AT SHERIDAN COLLEGE

HSH will hold its **Annual General Meeting & Graduation June 15**. Celebrate at **Sheridan College** with the graduates from this year and those who had only virtual celebrations during the pandemic. HSH staff will be joined by Board members, Industry Council representatives, mentors

AGM & *Graduation*



HOME SUITE
HOPE

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
a special celebration of the

GRADUATES OF
2020-2023

June
15th
4:45pm-7:45pm

Sheridan Conference
Centre
1400 Trafalgar Rd
Oakville, ON

RSVP by May 22nd to
events@homesuitehope.org

MUDGIRL

JOIN HOME SUITE HOPE HEROINES

Home Suite Hope hopes you are excited as we are to participate in **MUDGIRL Hamilton 2023!** Whether you are facing the muddy conditions with us, cheering us on, or supporting our fundraising efforts, your support is very much appreciated!

We encourage you to [Donate to Home Suite Hope's MUDGIRL Campaign](#) here. You can opt to create a personal fundraising page by selecting "Create a Team" or "Join as an Individual" and you can share it with friends and family for supporting your personal participation in the campaign or you can join someone else's team if someone else has created one by selecting "Join a Team".



If you haven't already and want to face the mud and obstacles with us on Sunday, June 11th, click here - [See the Event and Join the Team!](#) or follow the instructions below to join our "Home Suite Hope Heroines" team

1. Follow this [link](#).
2. Scroll and click on "Sunday/Sign Up Now"
3. Select the quantity of tickets you would like to purchase.
4. Click "Checkout"
5. Enter your email and click "Get Started"
6. Enter your first and last name and click "Continue to Attendees"
7. Under each attendee, you must select "Join a Team" and search for "Home Suite Hope Heroines"
8. Select your wave time (11 a.m. or the closest time available to 11 a.m.) and enter the other required information, sign the waiver and click "Continue"
9. Enter your card information and place order

This year we are asking you to join us in offering your support and well wishes to one of our own warriors - Izabel Rader. Izabel has been busy conquering her own diagnosis of cancer over the past couple of months making this year's Mudgirl especially important to our staff and participants. Come out and join us.

We hope to see you there!

Katelyn
HSH Marketing & Events Coordinator

VOLUNTEER IN OUR GARDEN

BLUEBERRY FIELDS



As we gear up to celebrate April as Volunteer Appreciation month, **Home Suite Hope**, reminds interested volunteers that, in conjunction with the **Upper Oakville Shopping Centre**, HSH operates a community garden, **Blueberry Fields**, every growing season.

Founded and managed by the Ken Stockstill of the shopping centre, the garden is a great place for

those who wish to volunteer with HSH.

The garden's preparation, planting, maintenance and harvesting is all done by volunteers, who are managed by a veteran garden volunteer herself, Ruth Borst. Ruth coordinates the work schedules of corporate groups and individuals as well as schools and service clubs - anyone who wants to help out.

While Blueberry Fields was put to bed for the winter, it will be coming to life soon. There has even been lots of garlic growing there over the winter. Its harvest is made available to HSH families and those from the wider community through Kerr Street Mission.

Last year the garden produced approximately 300 kg of vegetables.

As Blueberry Fields comes to life again, previous volunteers will be hearing from Ruth as she checks to see if they want to continue volunteering this year.

For anyone new who would like to lend a hand, please email volunteers@homesuitehope.org and we'll connect you with Ruth when the time comes.



Sheridan



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CHANGING THE PATTERNS OF POVERTY TO A LEGACY OF PROSPERITY