

Newsletter

MARCH 2024

March 1 – Zero Discrimination Day (UNAIDS)

March 8 – International Women’s Day (UN)

March 10 – Ramadan Begins (Islam)

March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day

March 18 – Lent (Orthodox)

March 20 – French Language Day (UN)

March 21 – Naw Ruz (Baha’i) ; International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN)

March 22 – World Water Day

March 24 – International Day for Truth Regarding Gross Human Rights Violations and Dignity of Victims (UN)

March 24 – Palm Sunday (Christian)

March 25 – International Day of Remembrance to Victims of Slavery and Transatlantic Slave Trade (UN)

March 29 – Good Friday (Christian)

March 31 – Trans Day of Visibility; Easter (Christian)

HSH CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Home Suite Hope attended the **Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton (CCAH)** kickoff event in the celebration of **Black History Month**. See more inside.

A CALL FOR DONATIONS!

HSH is seeking donations of new luxury accessories, experiences, and items for an upcoming Bingo fundraising event (items such as purses, wallets, jewelry, luggage, housewares). Items must be new, with proof of purchase receipt. In-kind donations are eligible for a full tax receipt.

If you are interested in donating and item or sponsoring the event, please contact KatelynZ@HomeSuiteHope.org



CELEBRATE HSH'S 20TH WITH \$20

Home Suite Hope is marking its **20th anniversary** in 2024. HSH has been helping change the trajectory of poverty and homelessness for 20 years. Thank you for your support and trust in our services for the many single parent families who have walked through our doors.

The community has played a pivotal role in ensuring HSH has the means to grow its services. This would not be possible without your support. We send a heartfelt thank-you to all those who have supported us throughout the years and we are committed to continuing to serve the community as long as there is the need.

We are asking our supporters to make a donation of \$20 (\$1 for each year HSH has been operating).



[DONATE](#)

TWO WAYS TO BECOME A PARTNER IN CHANGE WITH HSH



HSH now has two **Partners in Change** programs - **Partners in Change** and **Partners in Change for Housing**. While the first sees a supporter support the annual funding gap (\$9,595) to support a family, the new **Partners in Change for Housing** can see a supporter (or team of supporters) fund the annual gap for rental housing costs (\$14,400) for a family.

PLEASE CONSIDER SPONSORING A HOME SUITE HOPE FAMILY

To become a Partner in Change or for more information, please contact Sara at SaraC@HomeSuiteHope.org or 289.213.5787 (direct line)

PARTICIPANT UPDATE

LIKE MOTHER, LIKE SON



IN THE NEWS - AGAIN! UPDATE:

Shannon, a **Homeward Bound Halton** participant, will be graduating from the Office Administration Executive program at **Sheridan College** in June 2024. While it's a great reason to celebrate, Shannon is just as proud that her teenage son Nicholas will also be starting university in the Fall 2024. Nicholas was accepted into the **University of Toronto's** Business program and has already been offered multiple bursaries and scholarships.

Shannon and her family were featured in **The Toronto Star** last fall (Oct. 7, 2023) in a story, *What does a single mom need to become self-sufficient, support her three kids?* by Carola Vynhak about Home Suite Hope and local realtor **Callum Wallace's Flight for Hope**. The flight set the stage for HSH's inaugural **Home For Good Gala** held in Burlington on Nov. 10, 2023.



WAYS OF GIVING 2024

Home Suite Hope helps move single parents and their families from homelessness and poverty to stability through education and employment.

Please find out more about HSH and how you can get involved through

[Ways of Giving 2024](#)

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY



Each February, people across Canada participate in **Black History Month** events and festivities that honour the legacy of Black people in Canada and their communities.



The 2024 theme for Black History Month celebrations is “Black Excellence: A Heritage to Celebrate; a Future to Build.”

We celebrate the rich contributions and accomplishments of Black people in Canada, past and present, while aspiring to embrace new opportunities in the future.

HSH joins the **Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton (CCAH)** celebrating Black History Month

Home Suite Hope works closely with the CCAH year-round and proudly took part in its annual Black History Month Celebration kickoff.

This year’s kick-off event was held February 1 at the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts. **HSH Executive Director Sara Cumming** attended (centre right in photo above) with (from left) **HSH Case Worker Temisha Jacques, Program Manager Nikkian Hanson-Daley** and **Program Coordinator Jovelle Reid**. The event introduced a host of events celebrating local Black history and culture locally throughout February.

“We need to remember Black individuals do amazing things EVERY month not just in February,” said Sara. Nowhere is that more apparent than at HSH. The staff who attended the celebration are accomplished Black women who give their time and talent to HSH working alongside Sara, a professor of sociology at Sheridan College and a strong ally.

WITH THE CCAH



Staff at HSH work with HSH Mentors and Industry Council representatives, as well as community agencies, volunteers and supporters to assist HSH single parents and their families as they journey from poverty to self-reliance. Many of these people are accomplished Black individuals. And many of HSH's single parents are Black women, who need support to pursue their dreams.

HSH is grateful to the CCAH for the work it does in the community and for the lead it takes on championing Black history and

inclusion and diversity. The CCAH was established in 1977 and promotes awareness that unity in diversity, full and active participation, unbiased inclusion, and the capacity to value differences equally are essential to the social, cultural, and economic growth of Halton. Membership is open to anyone who shares those interests and objectives and there are lots of opportunities for youths to get involved.

Led today by Andrew Tyrrell, the CCAH was championed over many years by the late Veronica Tyrrell, for whom the Town of Oakville named Veronica Tyrrell Park at 3183 Buttonbush Trail, Oakville and declared August 27 to be Veronica Tyrrell Day. The CCAH works closely with Halton Region schools, operates a community steel band and offers many community programs. It participates in events throughout the year, including: Black History Month, Emancipation Day, Culture Days and the Carousel of Nations. The February 1 event at the Oakville Centre kicked off a series of special events and celebrations across Halton.

Guest speaker Anthony Sherwood spoke about his passion for shedding light on Oakville's Black history. The celebration also included performances by Juno Award-winner Jully Black, singer Geri Defoe, Arthouse Children's Choir, Girl Power'd dancers, the CCAH Steel Band and a reading of the original poem Precipitation and Storm Water by Jane Asante Tutu and Fara Olawale. For more about the CCAH and Black History Month events, visit CCAHA.ca



SMLS PARTNERS WITH HSH



ST. MILDRED'S-LIGHTBOURN SCHOOL
INSPIRED GIRLS. EMPOWERED WOMEN.

FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School's Grads Giving Back was excited to run an initiative, with the 'Self-love' theme for Valentine's Day and then extended the drive in order to collect many more donations.

The group, working in conjunction with **SMLS' Jack.org Club**, has been collecting women's hygiene and make-up items to donate to Home Suite Hope's single parents. The initiative took place the week of Valentine's Day - and was extended for good measure.

To kick off the drive, SMLS and its Grads Giving Back invited HSH's Executive Director Dr. Sara Cumming to speak to their senior classes about Home Suite Hope. In her address, Sara highlighted the importance of community supporters and advocates saying, "People who care are what changes life trajectories." On Feb. 23, Sydney Durrant, co-chair of Grads Giving Back dropped off the items collected to HSH Director of Operations Catherine Villasenor. Thank you SMLS and Grads Giving Back for being a great supporter of Home Suite Hope!



COMING IN MARCH



A 'FRESH' FUNDRAISER FOR HOME SUITE HOPE

Visit **Fresh Kitchen and Juice Bar** in March and try out their 'Hello Gorgeous' power shake!

For every 'Hello Gorgeous' power shake purchased, Fresh Kitchen and Juice Bar Oakville will donate \$1 towards local women's housing programs to help drive awareness and financial support.

Home Suite Hope is honoured and very grateful to have been chosen as the official donation recipient from Fresh's Oakville location.

Visit Fresh Oakville at 215 Lakeshore Rd. E., Oakville

fresh
kitchen + juice bar

HomeSuiteHope.org

Mailing Address
1-200 North Service Rd. W. #424
Oakville, ON L6M 2Y1

NON-PROFITS TALK BUDGET

WITH TREASURY PRESIDENT & OAKVILLE MP ANITA ANAND

Many local non-profit agencies - including HSH - attended a Federal Pre-Budget 2024 consultation with **Oakville MP and Treasury Board President Anita Anand** Feb. 2.

It was a full house for the meeting hosted at the **YMCA of Oakville** and moderated by its **CEO Kyle Barber**. HSH Executive Director Sara Cumming, Director of Operations Catherine Villasenor and Angela Blackburn, Administrative Assistant, were there to bring HSH concerns to the spotlight.

Myriad non-profits raised funding and other issues about housing, mental health, food security, healthcare, childcare, women's issues and more.

While the MP praised the non-profits and their leaders and workers as the unsung heroes who are the advocates who help get the help out the door to those in need, Anita Anand, who is also the President of the federal Treasury Board, vowed to take the concerns raised back to the appropriate Cabinet ministers for consideration in the upcoming federal budget.

In what was lauded as a gathering that brought many non-profit agencies together at one time, there was no time wasted by the agencies to do networking, not just with the federal representative, but also with one another.



Neither was the list short of concerns raised. These included a more timely funding of the Canada Summer Jobs program; the combating of gender-based violence shelters for the homeless; the need for co-op housing; the affordable housing crisis; improved mental health supports, digitization of services, child care challenges, investment in skills training recruitment, environmental concerns, ensuring the practice of matching funds for specific charities doesn't disadvantage other charities; potential income tax breaks for charities and their women staff, socio economic issues, racial barriers and social inequities.

The budget is expected to be released later this spring.



HSH VISITS QUEEN'S PARK



ATTENDS MPPS' RECEPTION WITH TORONTO'S WOODGREEN COMMUNITY SERVICES

On Tuesday, February 27, Oakville North–Burlington MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos was among a host of MPPs who joined a reception of WoodGreen Community Services Toronto to learn more about its Homeward Bound programs.

Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming and Director of Operations Catherine Villasenor also attended as HSH's Homeward Bound Halton program is the local replica program of WoodGreen's.

All 124 Ontario MPPs were invited to the event sponsored by Effie and held at the Legislative Dining Hall at Queen's Park in Toronto.

Up for discussion was the importance of addressing homelessness in Ontario and how the Homeward Bound program empowers women-led families.



QUEEN'S PARK RECEPTION



CELEBRATING SUCCESS OF HOMEWARD BOUND PROGRAMS IN TORONTO - AND HALTON

A keynote address was delivered by **Ontario Minister of Children, Community, and Social Services Michael Parsa**.

Developed by WoodGreen and launched in 2004, Homeward Bound is an award-winning program that supports homeless or inadequately housed single mothers to earn college diplomas, start careers and achieve financial stability for their families. The results are impressive: higher employment rates, stable housing, and significant savings in social assistance.

Effie sent a special thank-you to Sara and Catherine for the dedicated work of HSH in the Halton community and all of its community and private sector partners.

"It's clear that initiatives like Homeward Bound are transforming the lives of women and their children," said the MPP.

Burlington MPP Natalie Pierre also attended and noted, "Homeward Bound is revolutionizing support for single mothers, offering a four-year program that provides education, career opportunities, and vital wrap-around services. Let's break barriers and empower single mothers."

MEET HSH'S BLACK STAFF



NIKKIAN HANSON-DALEY

Nikkian Hanson-Daley is Home Suite Hope's **Program Manager**.

Nikkian shares that her desire to break barriers and create equitable opportunity for marginalized and vulnerable individuals through policy put her on the path to being a leader of change.

A veteran case worker with a strong background in the social services, and working non-profit sector Nikkian has a Bachelor of Arts in Human Rights and Equity Studies, Law & Society, and a Diploma in Community and Justice Services.

HSH participants are quick to praise Nikkian, including many Black single parents, who Nikkian has not only supported on their own inspirational journeys, but done so as a Black woman helping other Black women.

Nikkian was raised with strong Caribbean roots and encouraged to pursue a career that would build generational wealth and create change for individuals of colour. Nikkian's mom was an inspirational role model of a strong, independent, and hard-working woman, who raised her children as a single-mother working full-time in the health profession.

Nikkian's interest in politics and law was sparked by her dad's work in immigration and the entertainment industry.

After working with at-risk youths and adults as an Autism Consultant, Nikkian joined HSH in 2018 as the lead Case Manager with outstanding service delivery outcomes. "HSH is working on change now, in real-time, providing much-needed support to single parents," said Nikkian.



TEMISHA JACQUES

Temisha Jacques, is HSH's Lead Case Worker and shared her background and insights. Temisha

completed her eight-month practicum in Sheridan College's Social Service Worker (SSW) program with Home Suite Hope – and then was hired full-time.

Temisha also has a Support Worker (PSW) Certificate and Child and Youth Care (CYC) Diploma. She has over five years of experience working with the vulnerable population, including children, youths, adults and seniors. During the pandemic, Temisha, a mother of two, decided to change careers. With a strong-rooted passion for advocacy, her own lived experiences and an anti-oppressive lens, she fits the HSH team dynamic well and hopes to obtain a Bachelor's degree in social work.

"I acknowledge and have overcome many of the struggles single mothers endure. I understand the importance of having a network of vital support services for single parents and their children," said Temisha, who, in her role at HSH, puts theories into practice and gains insight into how to best support clients transitioning from poverty to stability.

JOVELLE REID

Jovelle Reid holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Social Service Worker diploma from George Brown College. Jovelle is a registered Social Service Worker and joined the Home Suite Hope team as **Program Coordinator** in late 2023. In her role, Jovelle assists the team with Life Skills program delivery and development, program intake, and case management support. Jovelle has experience in community outreach and supporting individuals experiencing mental health discord, homelessness as well as food insecurity.



"As a Black woman and dedicated advocate, I realize the importance of highlighting the ways in which intersectionality deeply influence the experiences and treatment of Black individuals in the social world. The effects of this intersectionality are highlighted daily at HSH for our Black single mothers who live far below the poverty line," said Jovelle. She is committed to creating space to amplify the voices of our participants and all Black people during Black History Month and every day. With a strong dedication to establishing a safe and open environment for those she supports, Jovelle remains devoted to aiding in the empowerment of HSH participants and her community to achieve their goals and reach a place of stability in their lives.



HSH STAFF NEWS

NIKKIAN'S EXPECTING - A GIRL!

HSH Program Manager Nikkian Hanson-Daley hosted a gender reveal baby shower and shared the news that she and her husband **Oshane** are expecting a girl as they prepare for their newborn in early summer.



SARA SPEAKS IN NIAGARA REGION

Sara Cumming, HSH Executive Director, joined **Boldt Realty's** monthly brokerage meeting on February 20 to share her inspiring story and to explain more about the Home Suite Hope initiative.



The Niagara-based firm was extremely interested in HSH. Many of its members also serve on a variety of housing boards in Niagara and connected Sara with the Niagara Region's Community and Social Services.

HSH IN THE COMMUNITY

THANK YOU ST. ANDREW'S HOUSE TOUR



Sara Cumming, HSH Executive Director, left, and **Board Member Emma Jarratt**, right, accept a cheque from **Frances Mantle** – proceeds from the St. Andrew's Christmas House Tour in support of HSH and its work with single parent families.

Oakville's 21st Biennial St. Andrew's Christmas House Tour held last December 1 & 2 featured tours of eight beautifully-decorated Oakville homes and was a popular, sold-out event. HSH is grateful to have been selected a recipient of the funds raised.
Thank you!

SARA ADDRESSES ROTARY

Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming represented HSH in a speaking engagement at the **Oakville Rotary Club** recently.



Sara spoke to club members about the importance of programs like those offered by Home Suite Hope and access to affordable housing.

Long-time Rotarian Norma Gamble of Oakville was in fact instrumental in the founding of Home Suite Hope. Stay tuned for more on this HSH history as HSH celebrates its 20th anniversary throughout 2024.

IN THE COMMUNITY

HSH LIFE SKILLS ESSENTIALS



HOME SUITE HOPE

DEBT & CREDIT WORKSHOP

Learn ways to resolve your debt and how to improve your credit!

Led by Senior Education Facilitator, Richard Haggins from Credit Canada

Attendees will get the chance to learn:

- § The importance of credit scores and credit history
- § Good and bad usage of credit
- § How to deal with collection agents
- § Debt problems and how to resolve them
- § How to get connected with Credit Canada's credit counsellors

Monday, March 4th, 2024

9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Kerr Street Mission Gymnasium, 485 Kerr St, Oakville, ON

To register, please email joveller@homesuitehope.org by **March 1st, 2024**

Light refreshments will be provided!

Visit our Social Media for more information:
• @homesuitehope | @_homesuitehope
• Home Suite Hope
• Home Suite Hope Shared Living Corp.

Credit Canada | KSM Kerr Street Mission

DEBT & CREDIT WORKSHOP

Do you need help resolving your debt and improving your credit score? Come join us for our **Debt and Credit Life Skills Workshop** facilitated by **Richard Haggins from Credit Canada** on Monday, March 4th, 2024, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM at the Kerr Street Mission Gymnasium.

This Debt and Credit workshop will cover:

- The importance of credit scores and credit history
 - Good and bad usage of credit
 - How to deal with collection agents
- Debt issues and how to resolve problems on your credit history
- How to get connected with Credit Canada's credit counsellors

To register, please email joveller@homesuitehope.org today.



Sheridan



SAGEN™

CHANGING THE PATTERNS OF POVERTY TO A LEGACY OF PROSPERITY