

## FEBRUARY 2023

Black History Month

February 3 – Setsubun-sai  
(Shinto)  
February 14 – Valentine’s Day  
February 15- National Flag of  
Canada Day  
February 20 – Family Day  
February 20 – World Day of  
Social Justice  
February 21 – Shrove  
Tuesday (Christian)  
February 21 – International  
Mother Language Day (UN)  
February 22 – Ash  
Wednesday (Lent Begins)  
(Christian)  
February 27 – Lent  
(Orthodox)

## A NEW YEAR

We hope you are as enthusiastic as we are about the opportunities of 2023. We have carefully considered what we’ve heard and learned from our incredible community support network over the past year.

There are a lot of new events and initiatives arriving in 2023, informed by our invaluable and generous contributors and we are looking forward to sharing them with you.

This is going to be a pivotal year in our growth and we are working hard to be strategic about next steps in order that our families and organization have the best possible opportunities to achieve their full potential.

***Please see inside for Sara’s full message.***



## MARK THE DATE: UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 9 - International Women Day.** Join Miix Analytics as it celebrates in Toronto with a special event that will benefit Home Suite Hope. <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/miix-analytics-international-womens-day-embraceequity-event-tickets-506797102777>

**March 15 - Join HSH’s Women, Wellness & Wine Event** at the Oakville Club. Visit [www.homesuitehope.org](http://www.homesuitehope.org).

**June 15 - HSH’s Annual General Meeting & Graduation.** Celebrate at Sheridan College with the 2023 graduates as well as those who had only virtual celebrations during the pandemic.

# HSH CHALLENGES OTHERS TO BE A LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER

This is going to be a pivotal year in our growth and we are working hard to be strategic about next steps in order that our families and organization have the best possible opportunities to achieve their full potential.

The first development we were proud to announce and with thanks to every individual affiliated with HSH is that we are, officially, as of Jan. 1, 2023, a living wage employer in Halton.

This is such an important milestone for us to reach and has real world and symbolic significance that extends far beyond our doors.

First, we could not have made this leap without the support of our donors, who are not only champions of supporting single-parent families, but who are also vocal and passionate about us setting the example we want to see in the rest of the world.

We heard your challenge and we have risen to it.

As we all know, Halton Region is one of the most expensive places to live in Canada. By committing to be a living wage employer we are strengthening and stabilizing the workforce of our community.

We are also signalling to the community that HSH is a leader in best practices. We aren't holding others to any standard that we ourselves aren't willing to also meet and that is a mission-critical message to send.

Breaking the cycle of poverty can often feel like an overwhelming goal — sometimes the challenges appear insurmountable. If our community knows they have a true partner in Home Suite Hope — that we are working just as hard as they are to make a difference inside and outside of our organization — then the big asks we make for their support, advocacy and mentorship for our families are less daunting.



# HSH TRANSFORMING POVERTY TO EMPOWERED PROSPERITY

**W**e can now say to every person we ask for help, "This is our rallying cry. We are blazing the trail in Halton for how to be an ethical, fair and community-minded force for good. Come join us and see how we will leverage our expertise and experience to make your contributions have the biggest impact possible."

And we are doing the right thing by our employees. They are the beating heart of Home Suite Hope. There would be no programming, no outreach, no growth and no success stories without our staff who go above and beyond for each of our families.

Every day they navigate the challenges, heartbreaks and small victories that come with breaking the cycle of poverty; wearing hats of all different shapes and colour to do it and using every tool in the kit to help our single parents.

It is our responsibility as an organization built on a mission to "transform the patterns of poverty to a legacy of empowered prosperity" to ensure our employees are fairly compensated for the essential work they do in the Halton region.

Finally, on a personal level, I am so honoured to be surrounded by colleagues, contributors and a community that is unequivocal in their belief that being a living wage employer is not only the right step for HSH, but the only step.

The work we do is rewarding, but it is indescribably difficult at times. Knowing that we have the support of our dedicated network in our corner who supports and encourages us to do the right thing makes all the difference.

So, thank you for continuing to hold us to the highest standards. We look forward to continuing to be known as Halton's not-for-profit to emulate and can't wait to share all the big news for 2023.



*Sara*

# 2022 PROGRAM OUTCOMES

HOME SUITE  
HOPE

## Home Suite Hope 2022 Program Outcomes

**29**

families were served across HSH Programs



3 participants obtained their post-secondary education through the HBH Program



9 additional participants were enrolled in post-secondary school

**17**

Sheridan Mentors were providing mentorship to HSH participants

**12**

New families were served in HSH programming

**38**

children were served throughout 2022



**67%**

of participants required ongoing financial housing supports, upon exiting from HSH programming due to the limited affordable housing rental inventory.



**5**

HSH participants secured employment in 2022

**104**

self-paced modules were available on the Life Skills Learning Management System (LMS) online

**\$1976.67**

is the average income participants receives while in programming (including Ontario Works and Child Tax Credit)



**\$1818.33**

is the average cost participants pay in rent for a 2 bedroom apartment

**33**

is the average age of HSH participants in 2022

With the average income of \$1976.67/month,

**92%**

of a participant's monthly income is allocated to rental costs if they reside in a 2-bedroom unit.



# PARTICIPANT MILESTONES

## ON THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

**H**omeward Bound Halton graduate **Sasha Gay Hanson**, stepped up to serve on the HSH Board of Directors where she brought a lived experience lens. Sasha Gay is now pursuing other opportunities with great experience to her credit.



HSH graduate **Melissa Felice** stepped into the role of HSH's volunteer Volunteer Coordinator - and lent a hand particularly for last fall's return to an in-person Empty Bowls fundraising event. Melissa is now is full-time employment.

HSH graduate **Nicole Solty** gained valuable experience in a contract position with Sheridan College and is now hoping to secure a long-term position in the administration field.



HSH graduate **Diamond Bailey** graduated from the Personal Support Worker program at Sheridan College, completed a field placement and is now working in her field as she prepares to become an alumnus of HSH and its programming.

# HSH NEWS



## SARA NOMINATED AS A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION

Congratulations to Home Suite Hope **Executive Director Sara Cumming** for being 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. The Awards Gala will be Thursday, March 2, 2023 at the Hamilton Convention Centre.

Dr. Sara Cumming is an award-winning applied sociologist with a PhD in Sociology from the University of Waterloo. Sara's doctoral work focused on the intersections of gender, social policy, and work for lone-mother families across Canada.

Sara has expanded her work to focus specifically on collaborative and participatory approaches to solving community-based issues for vulnerable populations. Sara is a Professor at Sheridan College, in addition to being the Executive Director of Home Suite Hope, that works to support single-parent families as they move from poverty to potential. Sara leads with years of lived experience as a single parent who exited social assistance through a personal education and employment pathway.

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## HSH SHARING BLACK INSPIRATION DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Please watch HSH's social media across February as HSH recognizes Black History Month by sharing the stories of Black women and men in the community and at HSH who inspire us and others.

We will recognize HSH Board members, staff, participants, mentors and community partners to highlight their hard work and positive influence inspiring others as they share their time and expertise with Home Suite Hope and its single-parent families.

# BOARD UPDATES

## THE BOARD TEAM FOR 2023

**France Fournier** continues in the role of **HSH Chair** while Board Member **Ted Ecclestone** is the role of **Vice Chair**.

**Past Chair Barrie Carlyle** continues as Chair of the Human Resources Committee while HSH bid farewell to long-time Treasurer **Lisa Garland** and heartily welcomed **Kevin Farrell** as the new **Treasurer**. Lisa, however, remains on HSH's Housing Committee.



The Board bid farewell to **Troy McLean** last fall as well as to former Board Member then Secretary **Catherine Meagher**. **Lisa Tracey** is now in the role of **Board Secretary** and HSH welcomed a trio of new Board members who will head into 2023.

Milton **Chef Melani Bastians** (left), who had already been sitting on HSH's Housing Committee and has personal history with HSH, was welcomed to the Board. **Emma Jarratt** (centre), a media professional and single parent also joined as did Burlington family law lawyer **Rachael Pulis** (right).



HSH's Finance Committee welcomed a new face, too, for 2023 as **Julianna Varpalotai-Xavier** joined that team.

# 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 and local politicians at the gala.

# 2021 STAFF NEWS

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STEERS CHANGE

**Executive Director Sara Cumming** continued to lead HSH through the challenges and successes of 2022 - a highlight of which was her work with the HSH Board to establish HSH as a Living Wage Employer in Halton as of January 1, 2023.



**Catherine Villasenor** became a new mom as she and her husband Danier welcomed the arrival of their son Caidan, born in July 2022.

Case Worker **Nikkian Hanson** stepped up as HSH's **Interim Program Manager** during Catherine's maternity leave.



**Katelyn Zaoral** joined the HSH team early in 2022 and this year - after leading a successful return to an in-person Empty Bowls event - is now the **Marketing & Events Coordinator**.

Katelyn's arrival at HSH also meant that **Director of Development Krystal Valencia** was able to devote her efforts more fully to the issue of Affordable Housing and development of an HSH strategy that will evolve in 2023.



**Sarah Gillen** managed HSH's Life Skills and a Cabin Retreat for participants in 2022 and HSH will miss her efforts as she steps away to focus on her private counselling practice.

**Case Worker Leah Burton-Saliba** has been with HSH in several capacities since 2018, however she will be stepping away from her case manager position to pursue a career in counselling.



HSH welcomed **Nancie Wismayer**, a graduate of Sheridan College's Social Service Worker program, and former HSH placement student, as HSH's new caseworker.



# DONORS & FUNDRAISING

## PARTNERS IN CHANGE

**H**ome Suite Hope now has more than a dozen Partners in Change. These partners are corporations, agencies and individuals, who donate the approximate \$10,000 annual shortfall of the \$50,000 annual cost of supporting a single-parent family whose parent is in HSH programming.

Currently, HSH's Partners in Change include: Mark McLaughlin, St. Jude's Anglican Church, Oakville Community Foundation, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Sagen and FCT, among others.



## CORPORATE PARTNERS

Major corporate donors - of funding and employee volunteer time - include **Ian Martin Group** and the **Greater Toronto Apartments Association (GTAA)**, a sponsor of a property management training program for HSH participants.

**FCT** continues to sponsor HSH and award the **William G. Davis Scholarship** to the child of an HSH participant. In 2022 the scholarship was awarded to **Aaliyah Gordon**, during a ceremony attended by FCT and HSH officials, and Aaliyah and her family.



**Bell Canada** supported Home Suite Hope in 2022, not only supporting our Empty Bowls event, but by providing summer kits and back-to-school backpacks for the single parents and their children in HSH programming. Sagen helped fill the backpacks with supplies while Ian Martin Group helped with packing.

**Ontario** entered a new partnership with HSH through its Life Skills programming. It provided video content shared with our participants during CAA's Car Care month in May and created a self-paced Life Skills course.



The **SOS: Running on Empty** campaign launched last spring as an immediate emergency

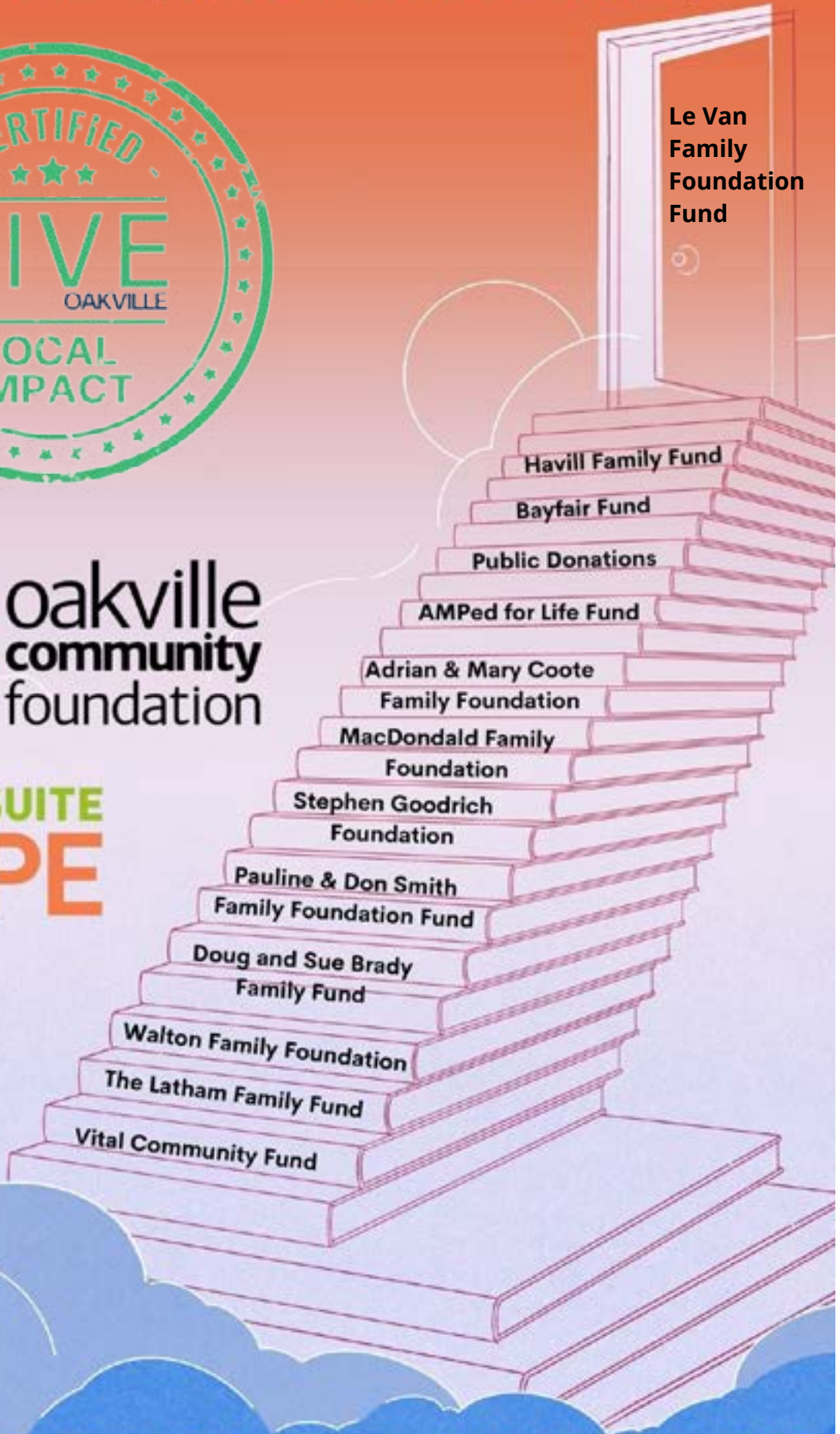
Stabilizing First Halton (SFH) & Homeward Bound Halton (HBH)



Le Van  
Family  
Foundation  
Fund



HOME SUITE  
HOPE



- Havill Family Fund
- Bayfair Fund
- Public Donations
- AMPed for Life Fund
- Adrian & Mary Coote Family Foundation
- MacDonald Family Foundation
- Stephen Goodrich Foundation
- Pauline & Don Smith Family Foundation Fund
- Doug and Sue Brady Family Fund
- Walton Family Foundation
- The Latham Family Fund
- Vital Community Fund

HOME SUITE HOPE 2022

# DONORS & FUNDRAISING

## SUPPORT IN TOUGH TIMES

The **SOS: Running on Empty** campaign launched last spring as an immediate emergency transportation campaign to help HSH single-parent families with rising gas and transportation costs.

An **anonymous supporter**, provided \$5,000 in matching funds while **Bonnie and Terry Jackson** also provided matching funds. The campaign continued in the fall with an inaugural mail-out campaign featuring the story of our single parent participant Robin and her daughter. The campaign was fundraising for our programming and to give Robin the boost she needs to access funds and community support to obtain an accessible vehicle for her daughter who is quadriplegic.



HSH thanks everyone who sponsored a Home Suite Hope Heroine as HSH took part in the **MUDGIRL Run Hamilton** for the first time in June.

The **Burlington Welsh Male Chorus** raised funds for Flight for Hope & Home Suite Hope with a May 4 concert at 7:30 p.m. at the Oakville Performing Arts Centre.

Home Suite Hope celebrated **Eid and Mother's Day** by delivering gifts to the moms of our single-parent families - thanks to the **Purse Project Network - Gayla Matos & Jill MacKellar** - and the **Halton Shoebox Project led by Stacey Sinclair**. Thanks to The

Purse Project Network increasing inclusion by including in the purses hair care products catering to our BIPOC families!

Home Suite Hope offered its single-parent families a **Cabin Retreat** in late June. It was hosted by **Penbrook Resort** in Emsdale, Ontario. Anonymous donors stepped up to help pay transportation costs and for accessible transportation for one family while resort owners **Bill and Debbie McAlpine** were gracious hosts and also the parents of HSH's Sarah Gillen's fiance Taylor McAlpine.

A shout-out to **Central Baptist Church of Oakville** for its generous donation to Home Suite Hope just before the holidays when **Ian Hallford** dropped off a substantial cheque for HSH.



# DONORS & FUNDRAISING

Another shout-out to Burlington-based **Precision Record Pressing Inc.** and **Ernie Addezi, Senior Vice President,** and **Diandra Giannattasio, Human Resources Manager,** who dropped in to deliver a sizable donation.

The **Oakville Community Foundation's (OCF) GIVEOakville** campaign resulted in \$25,000 donated from the community to HSH. The OCF Le Van Family Fund also contributed to support HSH's single-parent families.

## EMPTY BOWLS

**Empty Bowls 2022**, sponsored once again by The Taylor Group, returned as an in-person event hosted by **St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School** and featuring HSH Executive Director Sara Cumming as a guest speaker. The event was sold-out with more than 250 tickets sold and raised nearly \$55,000.



## HOPE 4 HOLIDAYS

Once again the community rallied around HSH's annual Hope 4 Holidays campaign, sponsoring more than two dozen families with gifts and gift cards. We thank each of the individuals and corporations who sponsored a family.

Others, of note **F45 gym** in Glen Abbey and **Engel & Volk's Oakville** joined individuals in the community in support of the Hope 4 Holidays campaign by donating gift cards and personal hygiene and household cleaning products.



Another shout-out to **Mondelez Canada Inc.'s GTA team** that saw 18 employees arrive over two days to help wrap the donated holiday gifts!

## TECH FOR 2023

In 2023, **Appleby College** alumni Jasmine Rocci, founder of the charity **Care Through Tech**, and Appleby communications lead Steve Jang are working with Appleby College students to collect tech devices that can be donated or refurbished for HSH participants and their families.

# GET TO KNOW HSH

## HSH PUBLICATIONS

**The Faces of Home Suite Hope**, a four-part series launched in 2020 is updated annually in to give the community a glimpse of the faces behind Home Suite Hope in order to provide donors and supporters information about the agency they are investing it - who we are and what we do.

[Faces of Home Suite Hope 2022: The Staff Edition](#)

[Faces of Home Suite Hope 2022: The Participants Edition](#)

[Faces of Home Suite Hope 2022: The Board of Directors Edition](#)

[Faces of Homes Suite Hope 2022: The Industry Council & Mentors Edition](#)

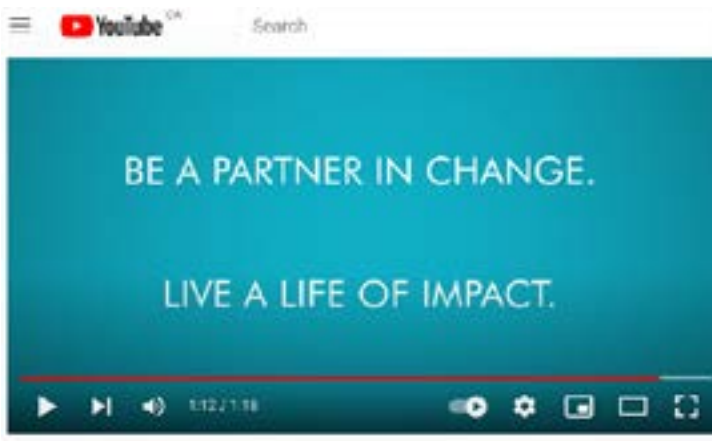


**Ways of Giving 2023 Edition** launched near the end of the year to highlight the many ways in which individuals, groups and corporates can get involved with HSH in 2023.

[Ways of Giving to Home Suite Hope 2023](#)

Watch for this information to be shared via our social media in 2023!

## HSH VIDEOS



**Virtual Life Skills:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFFsKHd6sa0&t=3s>

**Partners in Change**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jf16plBKT7w>

**Empty Bowls**

<https://youtu.be/cXZTOc9vXjo>

**HSH's Affordable Housing Campaign**

<https://youtu.be/-DV7fSjefwc>



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*CHANGING THE PATTERNS OF POVERTY TO A LEGACY OF PROSPERITY*