



harmonyhousews.com

Annual Report

2022 - 2023

Inspire. Empower. Rise

Board of Directors



Loriann Garden
President

Catherine James-McGuinty
Vice-Chair

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Secretary

Andree Beaupre
Director

Karla Rahn
Director

***Teresa Craig**

Julianna Coderre
Director

Pragya Dubey
Director

Tamara Taub
Director

*Deceased



We pay tribute to Teresa Craig, also known as Poh Choo Low, after her passing on January 11th, 2023. For nearly 20 years, Teresa was an important member of the Harmony House community, serving as the resident liaison on the board for 14 of those years. She was a strong advocate for the women residing there, always speaking the truth to those in power. Her dedication to

the community and her willingness to support individuals through one-on-one interactions were remarkable.

Her memory will always be cherished, as she was known for her honesty, kindness, and love for others. Teresa's spirit lives on as her legacy will inspire us to work towards a world without abuse – a world where Teresa could have continued living. Although she's no longer with us, her love and influence will continue to inspire us to protect women and children in Ottawa.

Report from the President and Executive Director

As newcomers to Harmony House, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and share why we have made this important commitment to the organization.

Lorena: I am truly honoured to join the team at Harmony House as the President of the Board of Directors. While I may be new to the organization, I am not new to the mission of empowering women. Whether it be coaching and mentoring aspiring female entrepreneurs or advocating for and supporting women to be elected to political positions, I am passionate about supporting women as they strive to achieve their goals.

For me, the cornerstone of a thriving and successful life rests upon the fundamental right to safety – a principle firmly embedded in Harmony House's core values, mission and vision. Witnessing firsthand the transformative power of safe and stable housing, I am acutely aware of the profound impact it has on women and their families. The absence of this stability leaves women and their families significantly more vulnerable, emphasizing the critical importance of the programs and support provided by Harmony House.

I look forward to contributing my experience and dedication to the mission and vision of Harmony House, as we collectively work towards ensuring every woman who enters our doors receives the support needed to rebuild her life. Together, we will continue to serve the Ottawa community and create lasting and positive change in the lives of women in need.

Marilyn: I served on the board of Harmony House many years ago, having been recruited by the late Jean Pigott. Seeing the difference the organization made in the lives of the women and children living at the shelter was and still is, heart warming. The shelter residents are some of the most courageous people I have ever met. It takes a brave person to flee from their abuser, not knowing where they will end up, or how they will support

themselves and their children. It takes strong women to recover from the traumas they have endured. And it takes special people to help the women and children transition to their new life. Special people like the frontline staff at Harmony House, who do everything from accompanying women to court, helping them make financial plans for their future, and finding suitable housing when they are ready to leave the shelter. It is my privilege to return to Harmony House as the Executive Director to help ensure that the programs and service are available when needed.

It is unfortunate that violence against women and girls continues in our society, with two in five women in Canada experiencing physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. We must continue to fight for gender equality and the empowerment of women in order to end the abuse. This is the only way our families and society will prosper.

Moving forward, the board and staff of Harmony House are working together to find innovative and solutions-focused ways to improve the outcomes for women and children escaping domestic and family violence. We will continue to form partnerships and collaborate with other like-minded community organization to increase community understanding of the situations faced by women. We need to be aware of, and remain responsive to the changes in societal attitudes. We need to have a presence in the educational system of our youth, in order to halt domestic abuse.

To do this, and to ensure the shelter, programs and services continue, we need to future proof the organization. We can't do it alone. We need the continued support of our volunteers, funders, and donors to help ensure a safe place for all.

Thank you for your support!

Lorena Caputo, President
Marilyn Matheson, Executive Director

Housing Advocate Report



We all need a home a place to call home, where we can live, love create, thrive. “Women and gender-diverse people disproportionately live in core housing need, head single-parent households, and bear the burden of childcare, putting them at risk of eviction when faced with the impossible choice of paying the rent or putting food on the table. There is a severe lack of affordable and appropriate housing that meets the diverse needs of women and gender-diverse people, exacerbated by systemic issues that keep many trapped in poverty and struggling to access adequate housing in overheated rental markets.”¹

Marie-Josée Houle was appointed as Canada's first Federal Housing Advocate in February 2022, as such my involvement with local housing alliances has been active in finding ways to demonstrate the on going need for safe affordable housing for women and gender diverse folks and their children whose lives have been impacted by violence. We are hopeful that this new appointment will see the need and provide the government with the information needed to end homelessness.

At Harmony House we have a 1 year residency policy, meaning that we provide women and children with supports needed to assist them to rebuild their lives and move on to more permanent safe affordable housing. In the last few years the wait time for rent geared to income housing has quadrupled. When I share the numbers of how many women and children we have been able to assist to secure affordable housing this year, the number is quite low. In addition to the women and children residing with us at HH I support many women and families to maintain their housing and assist women who are looking for housing to complete housing provide applications, I take women on housing tours so they can see areas of the City that they are not familiar with so that they may make an informed decision about where they want to live.

As always it is a privilege to play a small role in the life of a family to rebuild their lives to be able to live a life free of violence.

Lee-Anne Lee

Housing Advocate

Harmony House Women's Shelter

Outreach Worker Report



Whilst there are numerous headline achievements that happened in 2023, the quieter ones are reflected in our core work – more than 58 women and children were kept safe through our outreach program. That's 58 lives that have been improved forever with caring support and social connection.

Our outreach program provides women and children who's lives have been impacted by violence with on-going support as they move to independent living. Providing continued care and guidance through outreach with staff is critical to a persons recovery and resilience. When you're getting back on your feet, what might seem like simple everyday tasks can be overwhelming. Navigating services, booking and attending appointments, connecting to your local community- all of this can seem insurmountable.

We also know that outreach works. It is the resource that we use to be able to provide continued wrap-around support services for women that also have reached out to us from the community. Being able to provide women and children from our surrounding communities with

crisis support is integral to our mission and values. Assisting families by connecting and accompanying them through court support, is something that we inherently believe is important to their overall wellness.

Our long-term goal, of course, is a world where an agency like HH doesn't need to exist. Until that happens, we need to do everything within our capacity to assist women and children to leave violent situations and work our community to educate, empower, and take concrete action to eliminate violence against women and children and support those affected by it.

We couldn't do what we do without you. You are our "village", and we are enormously grateful.

Respectively Submitted,

Trysh Smith

¹Alliance to end Homelessness.

Mental Health Worker Report



In March of this year I had the privilege of starting in a new role at Harmony House as the Mental Health Worker. I am a Registered Psychotherapist with 7 years of experience supporting clients with trauma, family and relationship issues, anxiety and depression, chronic illness and stress. The vision for this position was to offer women a free, accessible and totally confidential place to share about their personal struggles, fears, hopes and goals. In keeping with this vision, I offer counselling sessions to both residents and ex-residents of Harmony House, and these sessions are conducted either in-person at the Outreach Office or via phone or video.

The cost of counselling has increased along with inflation, and paying \$150-\$200 for a session is simply not affordable for many people. The pandemic caused a huge increase in the waitlists for free or lower cost counselling, so someone could wait months or even years to access free counselling in the community, and those services are typically limited to 10 or 12 sessions. In my role as the Mental Health Worker I am able to offer counselling services that are free, flexible and

as low-barrier as possible. I can support a resident throughout the course of their time at Harmony House and even into their transition into the community. One of my goals for the coming year is to expand the reach of the counselling services to be able to support more former residents as well as future residents. I also look forward to working alongside front-line staff to offer resources, programming and groups that will support residents' mental health. I've already learned so much in my time here and look forward to continuing to tailor my services to best fit the needs of our population.

Jessica Breault, MA, RP



“You made me feel safe. I really appreciate the way you guide our conversations and listen so respectfully.”

– Client Feedback

Fundraising & Brand Development Report



Dear donors, friends and community partners,

Over the past year, we have attained significant achievements in our continual efforts to fundraise to provide a secure environment for women and children fleeing abuse. Thanks to your partnership with Harmony House, we were able to promptly adapt, embrace change, and devise new strategies to help, support, and save lives! We deeply appreciate your collaborative approach, which has allowed Harmony House to reconnect, return to in-person events and maintain its resilience.

Your generous contributions have profoundly impacted the lives of the individuals we serve. With the help of a dedicated board, volunteers and staff, we have implemented innovative initiatives and events that help to create more awareness and raise funds to address the unique challenges faced by those experiencing abuse situations. Through counselling services and safe transitional housing, we have empowered countless women and children to break free from the cycle of abuse and build brighter futures.

Moreover, your ongoing commitment to our cause has allowed us to foster partnerships with other organizations and community leaders. As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, we are filled with gratitude for your unwavering support. Your financial contributions, volunteer efforts, and belief in our mission have made a tangible difference in the lives of vulnerable individuals. Without you, none of this would have been possible.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to our mission of providing a safe haven for those in need. With your continued support, we are confident that we can not only touch but save even more lives, offering hope and a path toward healing.

Together, we can create a world where every woman and child feels safe and protected, regardless of the circumstances they may face.

Francesca Davila

Fundraising and Brand Development Manager



Improved and Expanded Branding

- **NEW Website with sign-up forms and applications** with many benefits, including increased accessibility, efficient communication, and a streamlined process.
- **NEW Brochures and new QR code** stickers with the new branding **5%**
- Created a **NEW YouTube Channel** with different videos, including an awareness and prevention video, "How to spot the warning signs of coercive control and abuse in a relationship".
- **Spring, Summer, Fall and Holiday Newsletters 2020 and 2023.**
- In the media and promotion for events and fundraising initiatives, we had **three radio interviews, two articles in the Ottawa Citizen, and a special article in the Ottawa Business Journal about the Blooming** success of our Red and White She Flourishes Gala.
- **Created landing pages and donation forms for different campaigns and events.** Targeting the audience and making sure the message was cohesive on every brand channel.
- **Radio Station Partnership with 89.9** - Public Service Announcement.

45% ↑

Facebook and Instagram reach:
9,750

65% ↑

Instagram visits to page and stories: **12,000**

50% ↑

New engagement in Instagram through menu Linktr.ee option
Double the audience on Instagram from 2020 with **370** followers to **841** in 2023

"Thanks to the improved communications through the Newsletters, I can donate more efficiently and with great reminders!"

– Donor: Dominic

Events

- **International Women's Day IWD 2023:** an event organized by 8 Women's Service Organizations in Ottawa. We came together to connect and celebrate how far we have come!
- **35 Anniversary Celebration, Recognition and Awards**
- **Red & White:** She Flourishes for Harmony House a blooming success! Sold out event with **320 guests**, more than **\$72,000** in donations, sponsorships, auctions and ticket sales.

Red and White She
Flourishes: Video



In 2022 – 2023 your support made this happen:

1. Shoppers Love You Campaign raised more than 2021 for a total of **\$47,135.00**
2. Mother's Day Appeal Letter, e-blast and Newsletter raised **\$2,575.75**
3. Ottawa Community Horticultural Grant Approval **\$9.975**
4. The GivingTuesday Campaign has raised \$55,000 for Basement Makeover. We met and exceeded our goal of raising **\$40,000**
5. Home Depot Foundation grant for units repairs - **\$10,000**
6. The Hot Women's Open Golf Tournament 3rd Party Event - **\$25,000**
7. NEW Matching donor campaign **\$35,000** – Hands of Hope, Boys Program at the 35th Anniversary Celebration
8. NEW partnership with Ottawa Community Foundation
9. The fundraising effort through the Epting Simmerling Foundation matching pledge and the 2022 Holiday Appeal Letter, has raised **\$38,643** for a total of **\$73,643**
10. Successful event International Women's Day 2023
11. IWD Online donations **\$800**
12. Blooming success - Red and White: She Flourishes more than **\$72,000** in donations, sponsorships, auctions and tickets sales
 - **Sponsorship: \$32,920**
 - **Ticket Sales: \$18,988.74**
 - **Auctions: \$5,927.00**
 - **Donations: \$14,165+**
13. Other 3rd Party Fundraising events: Society for Neuroscience Brain and Mental Health Art Show 2023 \$12,308 and Nepean Knights Junior B Lacrosse \$785 – **Total \$13,096.25**

3rd Party Sponsorship & Partnership

- **Ottawa Academy of Martial Arts** Successful fundraising events!
- **Rudbeckia** launched **GRACE campaign** and partnership with Harmony House
- Partnership with **Scotiabank**
- Confirmation of the **Ottawa Community Foundation** fund.
- **Alpha Auto Group and all their BMW dealerships** have come together to collect gift cards, household items, toiletries, and food bank items for the month of March.
- **Brain and Mental Health Art Show**



Publications



Newsletter
Summer-Fall 2023



Newsletter
Spring 2023



Newsletter
Fall-Winter 2022



Newsletter
Summer 2022

Partners





Thank you

Thank you for standing alongside survivors of domestic violence!
Your grater and consistent support are at the heart of everything we are able to accomplish.

Gifts Over \$10,000

Roslyn Bern
Dominion City Brewing Company
Joe Gerard
DOCS - Dentistry on Catherine Street
Happy Roots Foundation
Diane Hayes
Sharron T Kavanagh
Rade Kovacevic
Mark Lacroix
The Matt Foundation
NRML Clothing
Ontario Realtors Care Foundation
Marc Ouellet
Josie Porto
Wayne Ryan
Royal LePage Shelter Foundation
Joel Sachs
Gordon Schwartz
Shoppers Drug Mart Life Foundation
Simmerling Epting Family Foundation
Dan & Jeanne Vollebakk
Philip Whittall
Michael M. Wilson
Leacross Foundation
Mierins Family Foundation

Gifts from \$5,000.00 to \$9,999.00

Ethan Aspler
Patricia Bilodeau
Dwight Cheff
Dalhouse Lodge
Ryan Dawe
Lenore Fahrig
Valerie Genereux
Stephen Gurman
Madeline Hall
Terri Hamway
Amy E Heron
Jennifer Hicks
Graham Hicks
Dominic Laska
Lacross Foundation
Shereen Miller
Minto Foundation

Ottawa Academy of Martial Arts
Stacey Patenaude
Don Patterson
Simmerling Mary
Kathryn Sabo
Delta Psi Delta Sorority
St. Matthew's Anglican Church
Taggart Parkes Foundation
TD Waterhouse Private Investment Counsel
Telus Corporation
United Way East Ontario
Clementine Van Veen

Gifts from \$1,000.00 to \$4,999.00

4te INC
Deborah M Acres
Tomohiko Adachi
Jane Alexander
Susan Alter
Arlington Woods Free Methodist Church
Gourmet Events Bon Appetit
Jim Armour
Dan Baird
Barranco Consulting Inc
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Rachelle Brisebois
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Heidi Bisch
Bruce Blackman
Sharon Blackman
BluMetric Environmental Inc.
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Carole Whittall
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mi Carkner
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Michael Denhoff
Rakhi Dhawan
Jerry Dias
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Elysia Drost
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Alexandra Ekstrom
Keller Engineering
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Felicis Holdings Inc
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Alexandra Fichera
Fidelity Investments Canada ULC Donna
Floyd
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 Gilles et Denise Grenier
 Glenn Grignon
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 Anne Herriotts
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 blacks Limited Partnership Ottawa Region
 Masonry Contract. Assoc. John Andrew
 Patterson
 Carolyn Mann
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 Margaret Pippy
 Tammy Poirier
 Jacqueline Pothier
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 Louise Richard
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 Rideau Park United Church Women Judith
 and Peter Rinfret
 Peter Rinfret
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 Catherine Woodgold
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