

GRATITUDE REPORT



Cornerstone
Housing for Women

 An Anglican
Community Ministry

2023-2024

OUR IMPACT: A TESTAMENT TO YOUR SUPPORT IN 2023!

As we reflect on 2023, we acknowledge the profound impact of your generosity. The numbers speak volumes to the difference you've made in the lives of vulnerable women and gender-diverse individuals.



Our shelter provided refuge to 326 people, offering a safe haven for those experiencing homelessness.



We serve a diverse community across our housing residences comprised of 38% LGBTQQIA2S+ individuals, 20% indigenous, and 14% racialized women.



We served nearly 110,000 meals to our women.

As we turn the page to 2024, we know that more needs to be done.



Each month, we have had to turn away 60 women seeking refuge at our shelter.



We have seen a significant number of overdoses reduced, but the opioid crisis continues to take lives.

With you by our side, hope remains alive. Throughout the year, you generously gave your time, skills, and support. Thank you!



We will be opening our 5th supportive housing residence on Eccles Street, providing a home for 46 women and gender-diverse individuals.



During the holidays, we received over 600 gift cards.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Cornerstone Housing for Women could not have gotten through this past year without our donors, our neighbours, our staff, our volunteers, and our residents.

The community came together in a big way!

Cornerstone has always been adaptive in the face of any obstacle and that's what we've done this year. When there was water damage to Princeton's kitchen, our food services team stepped in to support with meals; when our MacLaren House experienced mold damage, we worked with the city and our emergency shelter team to find alternative housing solutions to the renovation work.

Cornerstone has successfully met many milestones in our strategic framework for 2022-2025. We have many things to be grateful for going into 2024!

Due to the generosity of many funders we have been able to hire a Harm Reduction Peer Worker from Ottawa Inner City Health for our emergency shelter for 2 years.

Our 44 Eccles Housing Residence is well on its way to opening its doors in the Spring of 2024. The walls are painted, the flooring is in, and the cabinets are being installed. Our fifth housing residence is close to becoming a home for 46 women and gender-diverse people.

We have been able to think of innovative strategies for retaining staff during the social service staffing crisis. We are taking key steps to strengthen our culture and communication across the organization. Amongst many steps, we have created a new position, Integration and Education Manager, who provides on-the-ground training to all front-line staff. This position and training have been key to retaining our staff.

Thank you for continuing on this journey with us as Cornerstone reaches a major milestone in our herstory - our 40th anniversary!

For forty years Cornerstone has been empowering women through its housing, healing programs, and fostering hope. We look forward to our next forty years of supporting women and gender-diverse people.

Yours Truly,

Senior Leadership Team

Kate Jackson, Martine Dore, Amber Bramer, Emily Laroque, Peter John Hobbes

Volunteer Spotlight

OTTAWA WOLVES RUGBY CLUB'S DAY OF GIVING

We were overwhelmed by the spirit of community and teamwork demonstrated by the Ottawa Wolves Rugby Club. Their volunteers spent time preparing our Princeton gardens for spring planting, bringing vitality to the outdoor spaces that residents cherished. Inside the Princeton Community Kitchen, another group from the Wolves deep-cleaned the spaces. The day culminated in a delightful BBQ, generously hosted by the Wolves, fostering a sense of camaraderie and joy among residents, staff, and volunteers alike.

Their commitment to service and the vibrant atmosphere they created made it a truly memorable and uplifting day for everyone involved. Kudos to the Ottawa Wolves for spreading warmth and community spirit at Princeton!

CROSSPOINT FINANCIAL SHINES IN PRINCETON YARD CLEAN-UP

Crosspoint Financial, a leader in financial planning, showcased its dedication to community service through a well-organized yard clean-up at Princeton. The clean-up happened in November and included clearing debris, pruning plants, and collecting yard waste. This resulted in an impressive haul of over 20-yard waste bags by the end of the day, a testament to the team's hard work and dedication to the cause.

"Don't ever doubt how much the little things matter to our residents," echoed the Princeton team. Our residents commented on how businesses "really care about us enough to clean up our yard" - a shining example of how corporate entities can make a meaningful difference in the lives of the vulnerable in society.



Community Spotlight

2023 was a year of hope and connections. Cornerstone is going into its 40th anniversary and we wouldn't have reached this milestone without all of you - without our community.

There were many things to celebrate in 2023. Programming came back, events came back and stayed, and more connections than ever were made in our community. From our cherished funders to business owners, and our neighbors who hosted countless community events - we could not have successfully raised \$ 1.3 million for our emergency shelter and housing residences. For that, we are grateful.

Thank you for being the Cornerstone of hope for us!

Breaking Bread for a Cause with Beckta Ottawa

We are grateful for our community's support in the Breaking Bread for a Cause initiative by Beckta Ottawa, Play Food Wine and Gezellig Westboro. Through your delightful orders of bread, you have made a positive impact, one heartfelt bite at a time. You helped us raise an incredible \$5,257, empowering and supporting women and gender-diverse individuals in need.



Pearl of Hope with Howard Jewellers

We are overjoyed to share the incredible success of the Pearl of Hope Bracelet initiative, a collaboration between Howard Fine Jewellers, True Bijoux, and Boutique Cornerstone. With your support, we set out to sell 1000 bracelets, each one representing the stark reality faced by 1000 homeless women in Ottawa, and we accomplished our goal! We raised \$25,000 for Cornerstone!



Rotary Club of West Ottawa

Thank you to the incredible members of the Rotary Club of West Ottawa. Their thoughtful donation of \$1,000 provides support, allowing us to steadfastly pursue our mission of providing shelter, assistance, and a pathway to a brighter future for women in need. We appreciate the unwavering commitment to our cause.

Grants Highlight

Indigenous Cultural Services Program

Designed to reintroduce or introduce Indigenous women to their cultural identity and traditions, the Indigenous Cultural Services Program addresses the impact of intergenerational trauma caused by colonization. It creates a safe space for healing, focus on wellness, and self-discovery. It offers housing and cultural support to facilitate growth and stability. We are grateful for the partnership with Minwaashin Lodge that provides Traditional Support Workers, trauma referral counseling, addiction support, a COVID-19 grocery program, case management, and Elder Services.



Harm Reduction Support from Bell Let's Talk

We received a generous grant from Bell Let's Talk through the 2023 Bell Let's Talk Community Fund. This fund supports charities working to improve access to mental health services and will help Cornerstone expand upon our harm reduction peer program to support the mental well-being of women and gender-diverse people experiencing homelessness.



DH Gordon Supports our Giving Tuesday

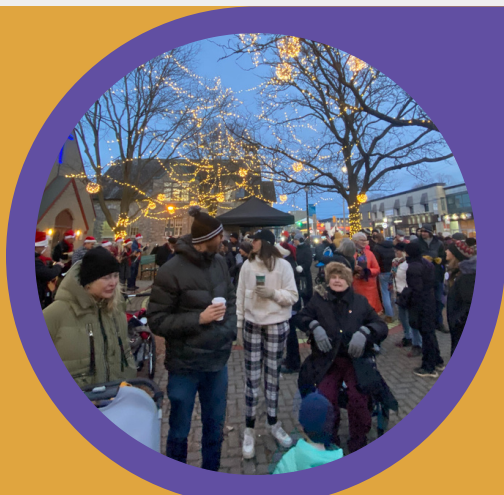
We appreciate the support of the D.H. Gordon Foundation during our Giving Tuesday campaign. With the foundation's matching gift and contributions from more than 438 donors, we not only met but surpassed the ambitious goal of \$40,000! This will go a long way in closing the funding gap for our food program, guaranteeing warm and nutritious meals for over 300 women in the community.



Shining Bright:

Light Up the Village Campaign Illuminates Hope

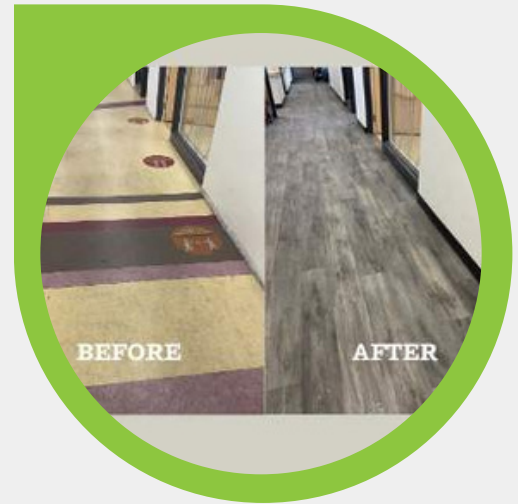
On Saturday, November 25th, the community gathered at 347 Richmond Rd to witness the transformation of the church and its surroundings into a luminous spectacle. The annual tradition took a green turn this year, with a commitment to sustainability and environmental consciousness. The tree canopy was adorned with thousands of energy-efficient LED lights, illuminating the night sky in a dazzling display of holiday spirit.



Capital Funding

Throughout 2023 Cornerstone was able to make some significant investments into our buildings. Our Princeton Housing Residence opened in 2018, and there were a few key capital upgrades needed to make the residence a warm, inviting home. These upgrades included making repairs to our only Elevator and redecorate it with laminate tiles that are more durable than the carpet previously in there. We also replaced all of our windows at Princeton to create proper airflow for the building year-round.

At Booth Street, we were in desperate need of pest control throughout the building, and replace all of the flooring on the main floor to create a more cleanly and accessible flooring for our residents and visitors.



44 ECCLES

Our construction of 44 Eccles, our fifth supportive housing residence continued throughout this past year as we prepare to open the doors for residents in the spring of 2024.

The construction team has made considerable movement on making this building into a home.

In 2023, we were grateful to receive a grant for our community kitchen from Google Canada, and a grant from the Anglican Foundation of Canada for one of the units.



Resident Spotlight

Kris was born and raised in Ottawa. Her journey through life has been marked by hardships and resilience. Kris's childhood was marred by the separation of her parents, loss, and the challenges of foster care.

At the tender age of 8, she lost her father to cancer, her mother took to drugs which led to her abandoning her family.

Left in the custody of her grandmother who had dementia and soon after was put in a nursing home.

Kris had nowhere else to go but to a foster home at 9 years old.

Since then, she was moved around between many foster homes. From a foster family that treated her as an outsider to another where she faced racism and neglect, Kris's early experiences were far from nurturing. She navigated through different homes, each with its own set of demands, challenges, and struggles. From washing dishes for an entire household to enduring emotional abuse, Kris's resilience was tested repeatedly.

Despite enduring these hardships, Kris carried on, grappling with her identity, weight issues, and a struggle to belong.

At the age of 11, Kris's world took another turn when she found herself in a group home for those with behavioral challenges. Here, she encountered the harsh realities of drugs, alcohol, suicidal thoughts, physical restraints, and mental illness. She went back to two other foster homes until she was 15 years old. Yet, through it all, Kris emerged as a survivor, bravely confronting the demons that sought to consume her.

After five foster homes and two group homes, she tried to reconnect with her mom who lived at a supportive housing residence but unfortunately, she was unable to live with her. As the months passed, Kris battled addiction, homelessness, and the weight of emotional scars.

Her journey led her to Cornerstone's shelter at 16 years old - it offered her a chance at healing and the encouragement she needed to rebuild her life.

She got a job, completed her Grade 12, and went on to get her college diploma in Legal Office Administration. Kris got involved with various top law firms with a desire to make a positive impact on others who have faced similar struggles. As an advocate for change within the system, Kris speaks up against injustices, racism, and the neglect that she witnessed in the foster care system.

Life's twists and turns led Kris through different jobs and experiences, from working in civil law firms to investigating fraud at a bank.

However, life took a wrong turn and she struggled with the loss of her job, wound up back into the cycle of homelessness, and serious health issues which led her back to Cornerstone's supportive housing.

Kris has found comfort in the staff that care for her at Cornerstone. The dedicated team at Cornerstone provides Kris with the resources and support necessary for her to regain her independence.

She enjoys the craft nights, playing bingo with others, chair exercises, the kitchen staff who prioritize her dietary needs, and the positive presence of volunteers who put a smile on her face.

Kris's story invites us to challenge our stereotypes, empathize, and understand that each individual facing homelessness has a unique story, filled with both triumphs and tribulations. Kris would like to call on the community, our neighbours to support initiatives and organizations like Cornerstone that provide not just safe shelter and housing, but also a pathway to renewed hope and stability.

*Kris's name has been changed for anonymity.

The Young Professional Advisory Board

In 2023, the Young Professionals Advisory Board (YPAB) continued its dedicated support for Cornerstone, passionately engaging in volunteer activities, fundraising initiatives, and awareness campaigns.

One of the highlights of the year was the YPAB's participation in the Coldest Night of the Year, a fundraising event that not only generated financial support but also heightened awareness for Cornerstone's mission.



Another successful endeavor was the Poinsettia Drive in collaboration with Richmond Nurseries, and Myers Cadillac where stunning flowers were delivered across Ottawa during the holidays, spreading joy and supporting a worthy cause.



The YPAB welcomed the holiday season with a Holiday Mixer. This networking event served as both a delightful occasion and a means to raise funds and awareness for Cornerstone, marking a significant milestone for the enthusiastic team.



Beyond fundraising, YPAB members dedicated their time and energy to volunteer activities, supporting events such as the Purple Tie Gala, expressing gratitude to donors through heartfelt calls, and representing Cornerstone at various community events. September brought a wave of fresh perspectives and new ideas as several new members joined the YPAB, further enriching the dynamic team.



Future Events

Helping Hands Driven by Youth Gala: A Night of Impact!

Join us for an unforgettable evening at a Fundraising Gala for our Emergency Shelter, organized by Helping Hands Driven by Youth. On Sunday, January 28th, from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm, the Mosaic Convention Centre (3750 N Bowesville Rd, Ottawa) will be filled with elegance, compassion, and entertainment. Indulge in an East Asian dining experience, enjoy captivating Indian and Chinese performances, and dance the night away.



Join our Coldest Night of the Year Walk 2024!

Bundle up, Ottawa! Our Coldest Night of the Year charity walk is back in Westboro Village on February 24, 2024. After raising over \$86,000 in 2023, we are gearing up for another chilly but impactful night to raise awareness about homelessness. Starting a team with co-workers, family, or friends is easy! Sign up to walk either 2km or 5km in your team bubbles! Corporate sponsorship is also available. [Check our website to register and for sponsorship packages.](#)



Women's Comedy Night & Buffet at Yuk Yuks

Brighten up your January with an evening of laughter, delicious food, and great company at the Women's Comedy Night & Buffet at Yuk Yuks, hosted by Karen Clark of Women's Friday Night Dinners. Save the date - Friday, January 26, 2024 by 7:30 PM at the Yuk Yuks at Biagios Italian Kitchen, Britannia Area. Grab your tickets on our website and get ready for comedy, a scrumptious Italian-themed buffet dinner and even karaoke afterwards!

Our Legacy Gift Workshop is back!

Ever wondered about the true meaning of life and leaving a lasting impact? Join us this February for our Legacy Workshop, where we'll guide you through the art of leaving a charitable gift in your will.

Discover the transformative power of legacy gifts and how you can make a lasting impact on women at Cornerstone and the community. The workshop will provide an overview of what a legacy gift is, how to leave one, the benefits, powers of attorney, and stock donations. Check our website for more updates.



2023 Highlights



THANK YOU!



Thank You

In the spirit of gratitude, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the incredible community of donors, volunteers, and friends whose support have been a cornerstone of our success, enabling us to continue our mission of providing safe and supportive housing for women in need.



Thanks to our monthly donors, who serve as our backbone, providing resources for essential programs and safe housing for our women.

A warm welcome to new donors, whose decision to join us on our mission embodies compassion and belief in the transformative power of supportive housing.



We appreciate the invaluable time of all our volunteers, their passion inspires positive change and makes a difference in the lives of everyone at Cornerstone.

To the anonymous donors, though your names may remain unknown, the profound impact of your selfless contributions echoes loudly, offering a beacon of hope to all of us.



Together, these pillars of strength, along with all supporters, are instrumental in creating a meaningful difference in the lives of the women under the care of Cornerstone

YOU can continue to make an impact on women's lives. Please consider making a donation this winter to bring someone in from the cold, or help someone get a home.

DONATE

In-person or by mail:

Cornerstone Housing for Women

Attn: Amber Bramer

314 Booth St., Ottawa, ON K1R7K2

**Donate Online or by Phone: make a
secure online or telephone
donation**

www.cornerstonewomen.ca

613-254-6584, Ext. 514



**Our Charitable Registration
Number**

83725-8854-RR0001

Please Contact Our Development Team for donations.

Thank you!

314 Booth Street, Ottawa

613-254-6584 EXT. 521

donate@cornerstonewomen.ca


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