



the Caring
and Sharing
Exchange

ANNUAL REPORT | 2023-2024





the Caring
and Sharing
Exchange

People helping people since 1915

Échange
cœur
et partage

L'aide et l'entraide depuis 1915

OUR MISSION

To provide our neighbours in need with relief and dignity during difficult times of the year in the most fair and efficient way possible.

OUR VISION

A caring and sharing community where individuals and families receive the coordinated support they need at Christmas and other times of the year.

OUR PROGRAMS

- The Christmas Exchange
- Sharing in Student Success
- Coordination Service

Board of Directors 2023-2024

Executive Committee

Megan O'Meara, President
Lily Grudzien, Vice President
Kurt Anderson, Treasurer
Keith Archer, Secretary

Cindy Smith, Executive Director (ex-officio)

Board of Directors

Kelly Adkin
Jill Bouchier
Derek Dedman
Roxane Deschênes
Erin Dowe
Garth Teskey (Deceased January 2024)
Bianca Vodden
Tracey White



With heavy hearts, we bid farewell to Garth Teskey, a beloved member of our Board of Directors, who graced the Caring and Sharing Exchange with his wisdom, kindness, and unwavering commitment.



Staff

Cindy Smith, Executive Director
Heather Fraser, Director of Resource Development
Rebecca Nagrodski, Program Manager
Rita Casasanta, Program Assistant (Oct - Dec)
Emily Kuo Lee, Program Assistant (Nov - Dec)

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Megan O'Meara, President of the Board

The past year—my first as Board president—saw the latest in a series of dramatic increases in the cost of living. But even in these turbulent times, the community's spirit and compassion did not waver, ensuring the work of the Caring and Sharing Exchange continued to have a positive impact.

In 2023, the Sharing in Student Success Program provided nearly 4,200 backpacks filled with grade-appropriate school supplies, helping lighten families' financial burden and enabling children to start school with confidence. Expanding the program to Grade 9 students meant young people had more resources to help them make the critical transition to high school.

Through the Christmas Exchange Program, we supplied a record 26,921 individuals with a holiday hamper or redeemable gift voucher. For more than a century, this program has provided joy and a sense of belonging, as well as much needed food, during what can be a challenging time of year.

By eliminating duplications in services, the Coordination Service saved the community nearly \$170,000 in 2023, allowing us to help even more people in need.

These successes would not have been possible without the support of our donors, sponsors, volunteers and partners.

Their generosity and commitment made it possible for our small (but mighty!) staff to have massive impact in the community. Thank you, all!

As we wrap up another year, I'd like to thank Jill Bouchier, Derek Dedman and Tracey White, who are leaving the Board, having served with dedication and passion for a number of years. Derek, in particular, was a big help to me as I succeeded him as president.

Finally, I note with sadness the passing of Garth Teskey in January 2024. He was a loyal volunteer, who joined the Board in 2021. He will be much missed.

Stepping into the role of president has been very rewarding. I was a staff member for four years before joining the Board in 2017 and am proud to bring that perspective to the table to benefit those the Caring and Sharing Exchange supports.

A big thank you to the incredible staff for all their hard work this past year, and to all Board members for your contributions and enthusiasm. Here's to another incredible year!

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Cindy Smith, Executive Director

This year, the Caring and Sharing Exchange saw a significant surge in registrations for both of our assistance programs. We are delighted to announce that, despite this growth, every applicant received the assistance they needed! Through our Christmas Exchange and Sharing in Student Success Programs, we were able to positively impact 31,119 individuals in need across Ottawa in the past year. This marks an impressive 18.4% increase from the year before. Our commitment to maximizing the impact of every dollar continued through our innovative coordination service.

Due to the kindness of individuals, groups, and businesses throughout Ottawa, our in-kind donation program totaled an astounding \$369,090 in value. Whether providing hampers for families in need or donating school supplies, their generosity greatly enhanced our programs.

The Caring and Sharing Exchange experienced an exciting phase of expansion. To address the rising cost of living, we regularly reassess the value of the Christmas Exchange Program assistance. This past year, we were delighted to expand our Sharing in Student Success Program, offering support to Grade 9 students, ensuring they enter high school equipped with all the tools for success.

Ottawa embodies a deeply caring community spirit; our work wouldn't be possible without the dedication of our donors, partner agencies, and remarkable volunteers! Heartfelt thanks to each of you for your commitment to assisting our neighbours in times of need.

I also want to thank my colleagues, whose devotion ensures that no one is overlooked. Their passion for our mission, vision, and the continual advancement of our organization is truly inspiring.

I want to offer my sincere gratitude to the Board of Directors of the Caring and Sharing Exchange. Your tireless dedication, insightful guidance, and unwavering support are the cornerstones of our organization's success. Through your leadership, you have helped us navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

THE CHRISTMAS EXCHANGE PROGRAM



Once again, thanks to our incredible donors, sponsors, and volunteers, the Caring and Sharing Exchange was able to provide holiday cheer, and alleviate financial strain during the holiday season, a time of year that can be particularly challenging for many Ottawa individuals and families in need.

Despite a 19% increase in the registration for assistance, we were able to provide all 26,921 individuals on our list with means to enjoy a warm festive meal, by delivering a food hamper or a redeemable gift voucher. Thanks to the community for helping to ensure that all our neighbours in need were able to experience the joy and warmth of the holiday season.

2023 Christmas Exchange by the numbers	# of families	# of individuals
Assisted through the Sponsor-a-Hamper Program	1,664	6,418
Assisted through a redeemable gift voucher	7,225	20,503
Total assisted through the Caring & Sharing Exchange	8,889	26,921





I can't begin to tell you what it means to us to get these gifts at Christmas. It's like all the gold in the world fell on us to lighten our burdens.



Last year was a very difficult year. I was in a hospital from November till February treating a hip infection and then reimplanting my prosthesis. I made a promise that if I made it, I would spend the following Christmas making it up to my son and granddaughter. It was hard on them, as they both depend on me for my strength. I was feeling kind of not so good lately and hoping that I could provide gifts and food this year.

There are no words to tell you how your gift elevated my mood. That's what Christmas has always meant to me Seeing those I love with happy faces. I am happy with very little in my life, as I have learned that there is nothing more valuable than having good health and being present with loved ones.

Keep up the good work. You have no idea what this does for those in need. ””

- 2023 Christmas Exchange Recipient

THE SHARING IN STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAM



Through the Sharing in Student Success Program, the Caring and Sharing Exchange was able to provide 4,198 students with a backpack full of all the grade appropriate school supplies necessary to thrive in school, regardless of their financial circumstances. In addition, through the innovative Coordination Service, the Caring and Sharing Exchange was able to eliminate 420 duplicate applications, saving the community \$27,022, which was then reinvested to help even more children in need.

We are so grateful to our generous donors and volunteers who directly impacted the lives of students by reducing barriers to education and allowing children from families in need to return to school on an equal footing with their peers. In fact, in 2023, we expanded the program to include Grade 9 students, allowing them to begin high school with their heads held high and ready to learn.



“As a newly landed immigrant, currently **savings** unemployed and a single mother of 2 boys, the backpacks and school supplies would go a very long way!

I would like to use this opportunity to say a big "thank you" to the selfless donors. As my kids excitedly look forward to their very first day at school in Canada next week, I will always remember how the contributors through The Caring and Sharing Exchange, played a big role in making their school experience a success. ”

- Parent of 2023 Backpack Recipient

THE COORDINATION SERVICE



Overall, the coordination service of the Caring and Sharing Exchange plays a crucial role in ensuring that their programs run smoothly, efficiently, and effectively, ultimately making a positive impact on the lives of those it serves. Through this service, the Caring and Sharing Exchange works with almost 200 community partners to eliminate any duplications in assistance at back-to-school and Christmas time, saving the community \$169,922 in 2023 which was reinvested to help even more people in need! Over the past five years, this service has saved the community \$645,310.

2023 COORDINATION SERVICE RESULTS

PROGRAM	DUPLICATES	SAVINGS
CHRISTMAS EXCHANGE PROGRAM	1,429	\$142,900
SHARING IN STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAM	420	\$27,022
TOTAL DUPLICATES ELIMINATED	1,849	\$169,922



Thank you to our Agency Partners

OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE:

OUR HEART & SOUL

Your commitment to making a difference in our community is what drives the Caring and Sharing Exchange forward!

OUR SUPPORT

Your hands-on involvement ensures that we can efficiently carry out our programs.



OUR RESOURCE MULTIPLIERS

Your contribution extends our reach and effectiveness, enabling us to help even more individuals and families in need.

OUR INSPIRATION AND EMPOWERMENT

You are role models of compassion and generosity. You inspire others to get involved and make a difference.

WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO THE 338 VOLUNTEERS THAT DONATED 776 HOURS TO THE CARING AND SHARING EXCHANGE THIS YEAR!

Thank you!



EVENTS

36th ANNUAL RUNNING ON EMPTIES FUNDRAISER

Since 1987, the Caring and Sharing Exchange has partnered with the Beer Store to raise funds for the Christmas Exchange program by running a City-wide bottle drive. Following a three-year in person event hiatus due to Covid, we were absolutely delighted to have been able to staff volunteers at locations across the City on Saturday, December 16, 2023. In addition, for the month of December, Beer Store employees kindly asked customers at the cash to consider donating their empties

in support of our Christmas Exchange program! Prominent community figures and Caring & Sharing Exchange followers helped spread the word, making the event a tremendous success. Thanks to many joint efforts, we were able to raise an incredible \$17,273!

In the last 36 years, Running on Empties has raised over \$442,000 and has helped provide thousands of individuals and families in need with much-needed support at Christmas time. Thank you to the Beer Store and our amazing supporters for making this event so successful!



CHRISTMAS CHEER 2023

The annual Christmas Cheer Breakfast, a festive fundraising event that supports numerous charities across Ottawa at Christmas time, was held for the first time at the beautiful Infinity Convention Center on Friday, December 1, 2023. The event boasted incredible musical guests, inspiring speakers, and special surprises along the way, including the famous "Heads and Tails" game. This event is always a wonderful way to kick-off the Christmas season! We are sincerely thankful to the Christmas Cheer Foundation, its' partners and supporters, and to the generous attendees who donated during the event.



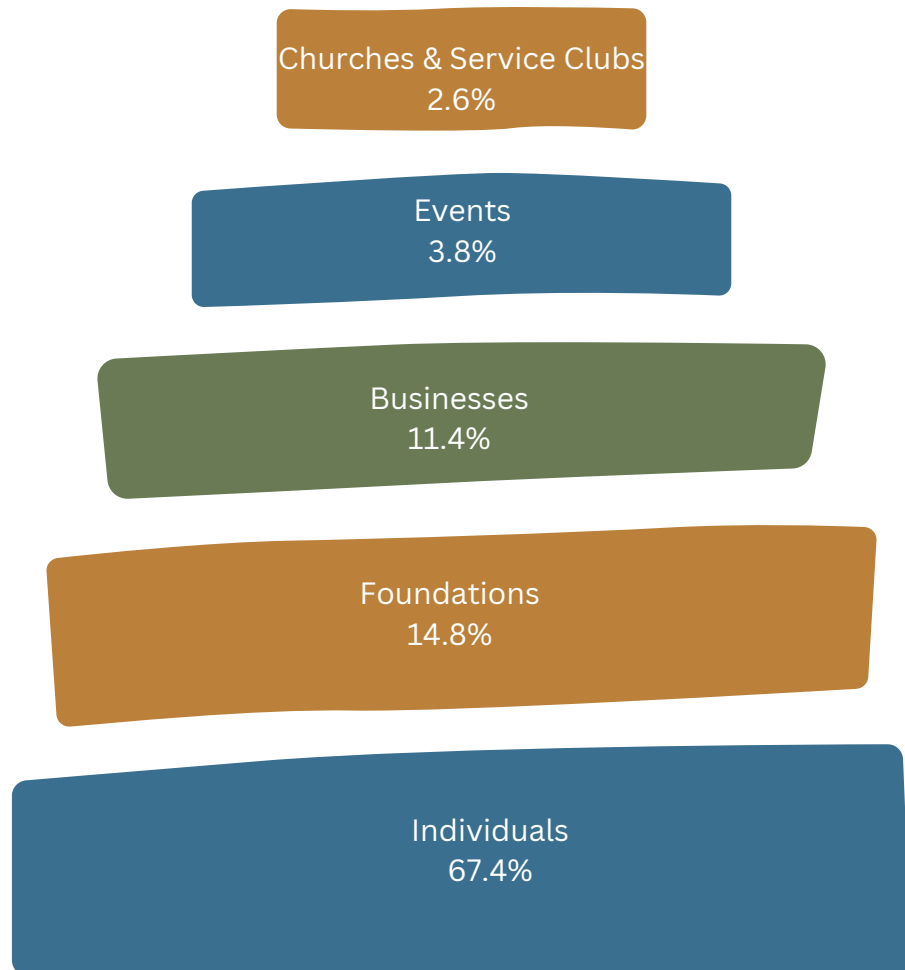
FUNDRAISING

As we reflect on the past year, we are overwhelmed with gratitude for the unwavering support and generosity of our donors. Their commitment to our mission has been the cornerstone of our success, enabling us to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Their kindness knows no bounds. It's through their caring hearts and willingness to share that we are able to bring hope, comfort, and joy to individuals and families facing adversity. Whether it's providing a festive Christmas meal to our neighbours in need or ensuring all children can return to school in September well-equipped to learn and on an equal footing with their peers, our donors are creating opportunities for empowerment and their contributions have touched countless lives and inspired positive change in our community. Thank you!

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

The Caring and Sharing Exchange is not government or United Way funded. We rely on the generosity of individuals, businesses, foundations, service clubs, churches and schools to operate.



IN-KIND GIVING

TO OUR HAMPER SPONSORS AND SCHOOL SUPPLY DONORS

Our sincerest thanks to all our Christmas Exchange program Hamper Sponsors and to those who have donated school supplies and backpacks for our Sharing in Student Success Program. By taking the time to drop off your school supply donations, and/or by delivering hampers to families in need, you play a vital role in helping us meet the growing need. Your support fuels our passion and strengthens our resolve to continue making a difference.



IN-KIND DONORS

This list contains the following types of In-Kind donors:

- Sharing in Student Success: Companies that made an in-kind donation
- Christmas Exchange: Companies that sponsored 15+ hampers or donated to the Silent Auction
- Other: Companies that donate their skills/systems to the Caring and Sharing Exchange

4Imprint	Landscape Ontario
Asten Martin	Marriott Bonvoy
Bell	Milo's Pastry
Calypso Waterpark	OLA Bamboo
Carlingwood Shopping Centre	Ottawa 67's
Coldwell Banker First Ottawa Realty, Brokerage	Ottawa Community Housing Foundation
Cosmic Adventures	Ottawa Little Theatre
Dollarama	Ottawa Swordplay
Dominion City Brewing Co.	Parent Resource Centre
Ed Stevens, RPM Creative	St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church
Elevate Yoga	St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church
exhālō spa	Staples
Giant Tiger	TD Bank Group
GlobalMedic	Telus Ambassadors
Haunted Walk Ottawa	The Keg
Innovapost	The Ottawa Titans
Kanata Theatre	The Wreck Room
Kiwanis Club of Ottawa	Twice Upon A Time
Kiwanis Ottawa West	Wheelhouse Cycle
Ladies Who Hamper	Winners/Marshalls/HomeSense
	Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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The following individuals and organizations made contributions of \$500 and above to the Caring and Sharing Exchange during the fiscal period of March 1, 2023 to February 29, 2024. To all of our supporters, we express our sincere gratitude.

\$10,000+

Bell Canada
The Beer Store
Community Foundation of Ottawa

Dan & Penny Dodge
Kiwanis Club of Ottawa Foundation -TV Bingo

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Philip Boivin Foundation
Christmas Cheer Foundation
Geraldine Cooney
Danbe Foundation Inc.
Hallmark Giving
Innovapost Inc.
Garth Jones

Edelyi Karpati Memorial Fund
Lunan Foundation
K.M. Morrison
TD Bank Group
Waste Connections of Canada Inc.
Woodroffe United Church
Plus 1 Anonymous Donor

\$2,500 to \$4,999

Graham Dattels
Davis Agency, Hallmark Stores
Donna Cona Inc.
Andrew & Heather Fraser
Emond Harnden
Barry & Debbie Mersereau
Miller Waste Systems Inc.

Osgoode Properties
Dean Shaikh
The Sharbot Group
St. John The Apostle Parish
Catherine Swimmings
Harry P. Ward Foundation
Plus 1 Anonymous Donor

\$1,000 to \$2,499

1702463 Ontario Inc.
A & M Shaw Foundation
Denise Allan
Don & Sheila Bayne
Thomas Bonner
Jennifer Brigandi
Elinore and Vince Calzonetti Trust Fund
Anne Churchill
Patricia Cocker
Malcolm Collins
Conlin Bedard LLP
Department of Justice- Civil Litigation
Branch
District Realty Corporation
Mary K. Fyfe
Victoria Godfrey
Mary Gowan
Jake Harding
Porter Heffernan

Josee Helie
T.J. Hicks
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Robert Humphreys
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George Ireland
Katie Black Professional Corporation
Audrey Kenny
Maureen Kidd
Kiwanis Club of Nepean
KOTT Inc.
Kim Kruk
Leah Lepage
Elizabeth Margeson
Kenneth Medland
Michael Munroe
Ann Nagrodski
N.A.R. Foundation
Ben Nyveld

Valerie Parker
Claire Pike
Nancy Porter-Cathcart
Q4 Architects Inc.
Stephen Quick
Elaine Rainboth
Jan Schuurman
Jouliette Semaan
Ian & Linda Shugart
Laurie & Greg Singleton
Cindy Smith
St. Andrew's Church Women's Guild
Lori Steefker
SW2 Sales Training and Coaching Inc.
Stacey Tzavelas
Patricia Ulch
David Wood
Plus 3 Anonymous Donors

\$500 to \$999

Robert Boyd Aitkin
Susan Anson
Kim Barnhardt
Wayne Barry
Bob Beiersdorfer
Alexa Biscaro
Sharon Blakeman
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP
Vivian Brazeau
Tony & Carol Brigandi
D. Beverley Brock
Sheena Brooks
Betty Brousse
Jean Brunton
Kim Cabana
Harold Campbell
Robert Cassidy
Bruce & Heather Caswell
Joan Catterson
Garry Chase

Andrea Clarke
John Comba
Bruce Connery
Nancy Corbett
Betty E. Crawford
Helen Creighton
Christine Crossman
Wayne Crutchlow
Catherine D'Amico
James DeWolf
Elsa Dinis
Karen Doherty
Robin Doner
Colleen Edwards
Margaret Fontana
Lee Fournier
Ann & Andrew Fraser
Celeste Fung
Andrea Gibson
Susannah Goshko

Elizabeth Herweyer
Hoopla Systems
Thomas A. Houston
Janice Iffe
Bill Jack
Heidi Jackson
Alison Jette
Joel M Dubois Professional
Corporation
Lorraine Kerr
Wally & Gwen Kozar
Graham Ladner
Linda Laframboise
Richard Lane
Peter Lauch
Anne Lawson
Alexandra Lazarescu
Karen Legasy
Jean Liberty
Roland L. Locas

\$500 to \$999 (continued)

John MacLatchy
Myrna & Robert Mallett
Wenda Martinho
Bob McCaw
Gregg McCooeye
James F. McGregor
Shawn McKnight
Sheila Meggs
Donald Messier
J David Miller
Kathleen Mitchell
Jane P. Morris
Vincent Muolo
Rebecca Nagrodski
Barbara Newbegin

Ken & Christine Newport
Megan O'Meara
Tracy O'Meara
Adrienne Pearl
Peter Ploegman
Deborah Prescott
Iola Price
RBC Dominion Securities- Preston Branch
David Robertson
Richard H. Robillard
Nick Sala
Joanne Scully
Louise Seveny
Claudette Simoneau
David & Evelyn Smith

Pauline M. St Jean
Catherine Stiletto
Lori Streefkerk
Derek Street
Lola Sykes
David Tobin
Martin & Mary Anne Van Gaal
John vanderWerf
Marie Weerasooriya-Epps
Maxine & Edward Whelan
L. D. Whillans
Carole Workman
Bill & Ferne Wyman
John Zarecky
Plus 10 Anonymous Donors



GET INVOLVED

DONATE

Choose to make a monetary donation to help us make a difference in the lives of Ottawa's individuals and families in need. You can donate by calling our office at 343-803-0708 or by visiting our website at www.CaringandSharing.ca.

When donating, you can choose to make your gift to the Christmas Exchange Program, the Sharing in Student Success Program, or to the umbrella organization, where funds will be allocated where they are most needed. To help even further, please consider becoming a monthly donor.

FUNDRAISE

Why not turn your next event into a Caring and Sharing Exchange fundraiser? We are grateful to the numerous individuals and organizations who host third-party fundraising events for our cause throughout the year. If you are interested in hosting an event, please contact our office at 343-803-0708 to discuss your great ideas with us!

Sponsor-a-Hamper is a great way to support a local family in need during the holidays. Get matched with a family and go shopping for their holiday meal—you put it together and deliver it directly to the family! To learn more, please visit our website at www.CaringandSharing.ca or email info@CaringandSharing.ca.

VOLUNTEER

We have a wide range of volunteer opportunities for those looking to contribute their valuable time to help further our cause.

Some of the opportunities available to motivated and engaged community members include: computer data entry; helping out at special events; making phone calls; and so much more!

Please contact us at 343-803-0876 or email info@caringandsharing.ca to discuss available volunteering opportunities with us.

STAY CONNECTED!

Connect with us on Social Media to stay up-to-date on current events



@CaringSharingExchange



@CS_Exchange



@CS_Exchange



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Charitable Registration Number 13097 9172 RR0001