

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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**Banff Avenue  
Community  
House**

# Pandemic Acknowledgment



For many 2020 was one of the most challenging years. The pandemic touched everyone's life, one way or another and our thoughts go out to anyone whose life was greatly impacted as a result of the pandemic.

During the 2021 Virtual AGM the Executive Director, Sylvie Manser asked attendees to describe their year in one word, 'challenging, rollercoaster, isolating, scary' were among some of the answers shared. These words describe the harsh reality of the pandemic. These words are very telling and helped guide us when answering to the needs of the community.

We immediately developed internal health & safety protocols to seamlessly continue to provide Essential Services during lockdowns and keep staff, and community members safe and informed.

In collaboration with the Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses, we implemented a phased approach to our program delivery model, which continues to guide us through these unprecedented times.

**Phase 1 : Restrictive** - Essential Services Only/Stay Home model: Connection by phone and/or virtually, conduct door-to-door drop-off activities and provide only essential services (Wellness Checks, & access to basics such as food, devices and clothing).

**Phase 2: Convening** -Conduct doorstep programming and outreach and virtual activities with participants.

**Phase 3: Modifications:** Return to in-person programming with limited group capacity. And continuing essential services.

# BOARD MEMBERS

Working together has always been how we address challenges, and celebrate successes in the community and 2020 was no different. The leadership of the Board of Directors and Senior Staff worked tirelessly to develop operational protocols to ensure the supports, programs and services continued to be available even if the service delivery model was different this year. We are proud of the resilience within the community despite the great impact this Global crisis was having on marginalized people. Together through perseverance and supports, families came together while staying a part. This great community spirit in the Banff/Ledbury neighbourhood rose above the challenges and set the foundation for change in addressing the inequities within our systems. Thank you stakeholders, neighbours and leaders for making this an actionable plan for years to come. *Peter Tobin*

## **Board Members:**

Peter Tobin (Chair), Maliha Hamidi (Vice Chair), Crystal Dion (Secretary), Joe Templin (Treasurer)

**Com Reps:** Denis Moyneur, Erly Relucio, Asma Hagi

**Area Rep :** Janet Stratton, Eric Collard, Greg Bender



# COMMUNITY HOUSE TEAM



The definition of a team is a group of individuals working together to achieve a common goal and this is what the Staff Team did. They worked tirelessly to be a caring supportive neighbour that is responsive and available to the people in the community. Always leading with their hearts, adapting, and taking the time & necessary measures to deliver on our mandate.



## STAFF:

Sylvie Manser (Executive Director), Gwendy Herring (Senior Program Administrator), Sahar Mirzayee (Child & Youth Coordinator), Carina Della Valle (Administrative Assistant)

**Foodbank Assistants :** Mery Cuadros, Sara Ali (Hodman), Aisha Idris

**Program Leaders :** Abbas Mohamed, Allie Frizzell, Vilda Simpaya, Liza Barthelemy, Andrew Otis, Jeff St-Louis

**New Program Leaders:** Daniel Moses, Stephanie Hadjari

# COMMUNITY HOUSE REPORT

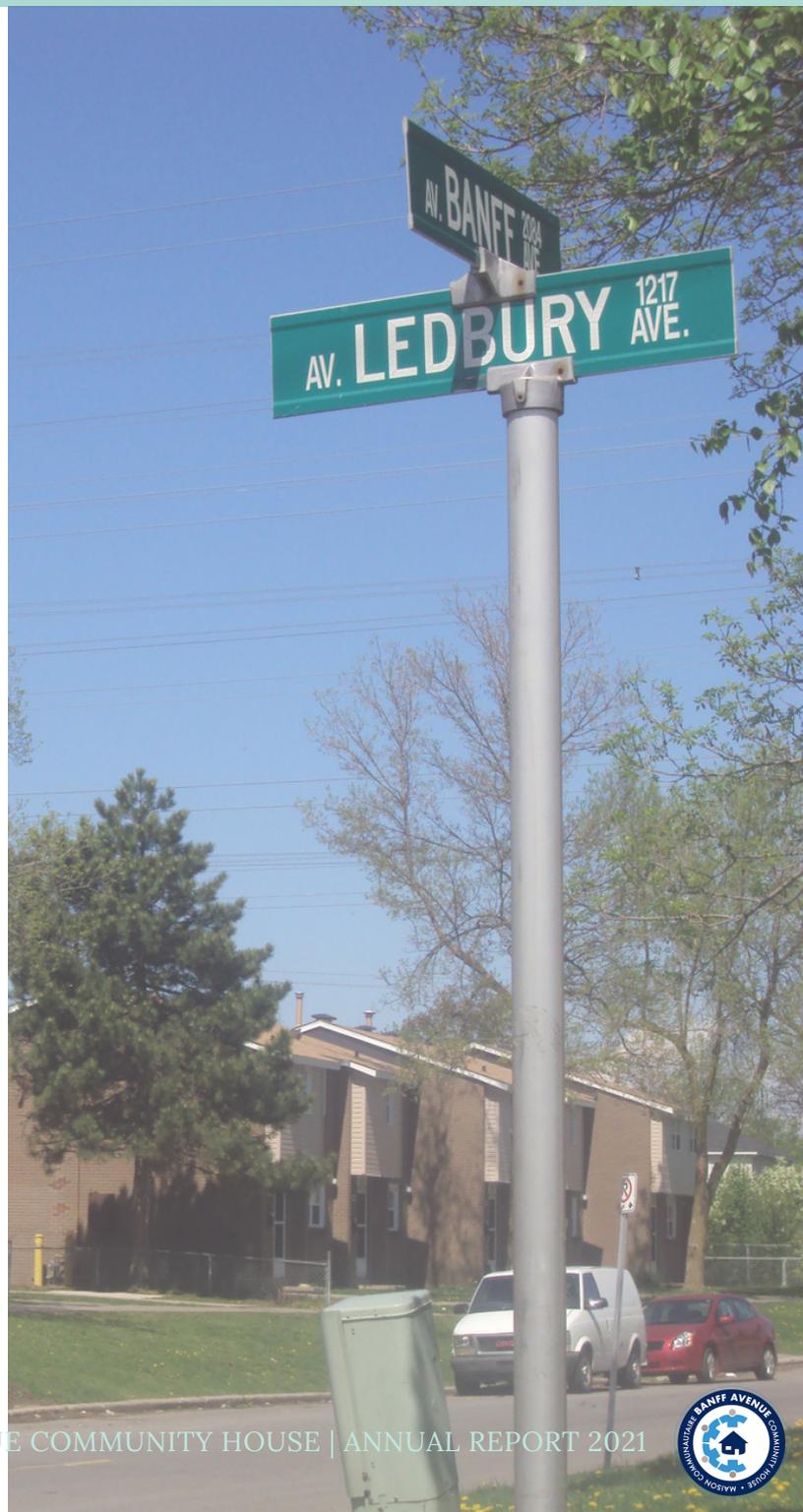
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## **Our Vision:**

Our vision is to build a community in which every person has equal opportunities to achieve personal success.

## **Our Mission:**

Banff Avenue Community House aims to alleviate the effects of poverty by providing a safe, supportive and inclusive place where children, youth and families can have equitable access programs, services and opportunities that are important to them.



# SIMPLIFIED CORE FUNCTIONS

## OUR 3 MAIN AREAS OF FOCUS



Staying Connected



Access to Basics



Supports for  
Children & Youth

Given the pandemic, we had to adapt and change our programs and services to align provincial protocols & ensure the safety of our community. That meant identifying the essential services of the community house and narrowing our focuses in order to continue providing safe programs and services without jeopardizing the support & presence in the community. Although we believe all of our core focuses are critical, this year we prioritized staying connected, access to basics, and supports for children & youths.

***"When a crisis hits, we don't turn against each other, we listen to each other. We lean on each other. We are always stronger together" - Michelle Obama***

# STAYING CONNECTED

Staying connected at the Community House looked a little different this year for us. The Community House can often be seen filled with different faces, laughter, events, and much more. In the beginning of 2020, prior to the pandemic, the Community House hosted several community events. Including Family Game Nights, Cooking Demo Evenings, and a Welcome Party for new neighbours to the community. However, in March when the pandemic hit, the Community House shifted to providing essential services. This of course affected our drop ins, in-person programs, fund-raising plans and gatherings.

Together we learn new ways to connect. Community Newsletters, email notes, door-knocking connections, social media posts, and virtual programming became the new norm. Staying connected to community will always be essential to us.

## FAST FACTS:

**9950+ flyers were distributed**

**160 hours of door knocks were conducted**

**47000 contacts were made**



# ACCESS TO BASICS

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## FOOD SECURITY #1

Food Security has always been one of our main priorities. As a result of the pandemic, our food security programs had to drastically change. We pivoted to pre-packing food baskets and other essentials and turn our service into an appointment system and delivered when needed to limit close contact with each other. The Ottawa Foodbank responded quickly by increasing supplies from 3-days to 5 days. With over 3214 foodbank encounters, and the growing need for healthy, dietary and cultural appropriate foods, we are honored to be a neighbour in the community that is consistent, reliable and available when it is most needed.

## DISTRIBUTION OF PPE

The Staff Team quickly adapted to the ever-changing circumstances of the pandemic and disseminated Public Health information and PPE into the community as a regular part of the day to day operations of the Community House. Within a few months into the pandemic, we distributed over 200 face masks, 281 hygiene and cleaning kits, and provided handwashing stations in the heart of the community. Being responsive to the needs of our neighbours always comes first.

## DEVICE/INTERNET ACCESS

In collaboration with partners, we were able to provide a mobile hotspots and device loaning service to local families in need of this to maintain connections with others and to support students virtual learning.

# CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAMS

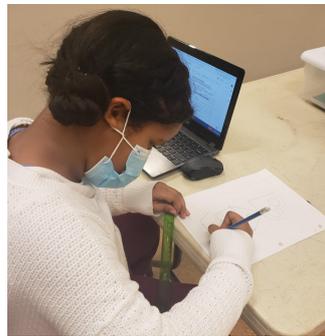
## Program changes:

As for many, our child & youth programs also had to adapt and operate differently. In fact, 2020 was the first year Banff Avenue offered an Outdoor Summer Camp and virtual programs in the community. During Provincial lockdowns, meant we had to prioritize and keep our essential services and supports going.



This past year we had gone through many changes to our program delivery model due to COVID-19 yet the following remained the same; offering a safe and supportive environment for children and youth to socialize, play and learn. Although this was conducted virtually or outdoors, we were able to reach out and connect with people on doorsteps, in the circle in the community and in online forums.

# ACADEMIC SUPPORT



## Learn From Home Kits:

We wanted to keep kids engaged in different ways through various learning methods, so we developed both learning and activity kits. Through the help of the Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses and Kids Up Front, we distributed over 300 Learn from home kits to children who were not attending in person programs and who decided to do online school instead of attending school in person. (Aged 6-12) These kits were stocked with many STEM related activities for continued learning in a fun enjoyable way.

We also created preschool kits to engage our preschoolers in the neighbourhood. Due to Covid we took the program out of the Community House and onto doorsteps instead. (Aged 3-6)

Despite all the challenges our wonderful staff have worked very hard to ensure that all of our participants knew we were there for them and the supports were available if or when they needed it.

## Academic Supports:

One thing that has always remained a priority to us is providing quality academic support to children and youth. In the fall we offered in-person homework club as well as in-person and virtual one-on-one tutoring.



## Banff/Ledbury Bursary:

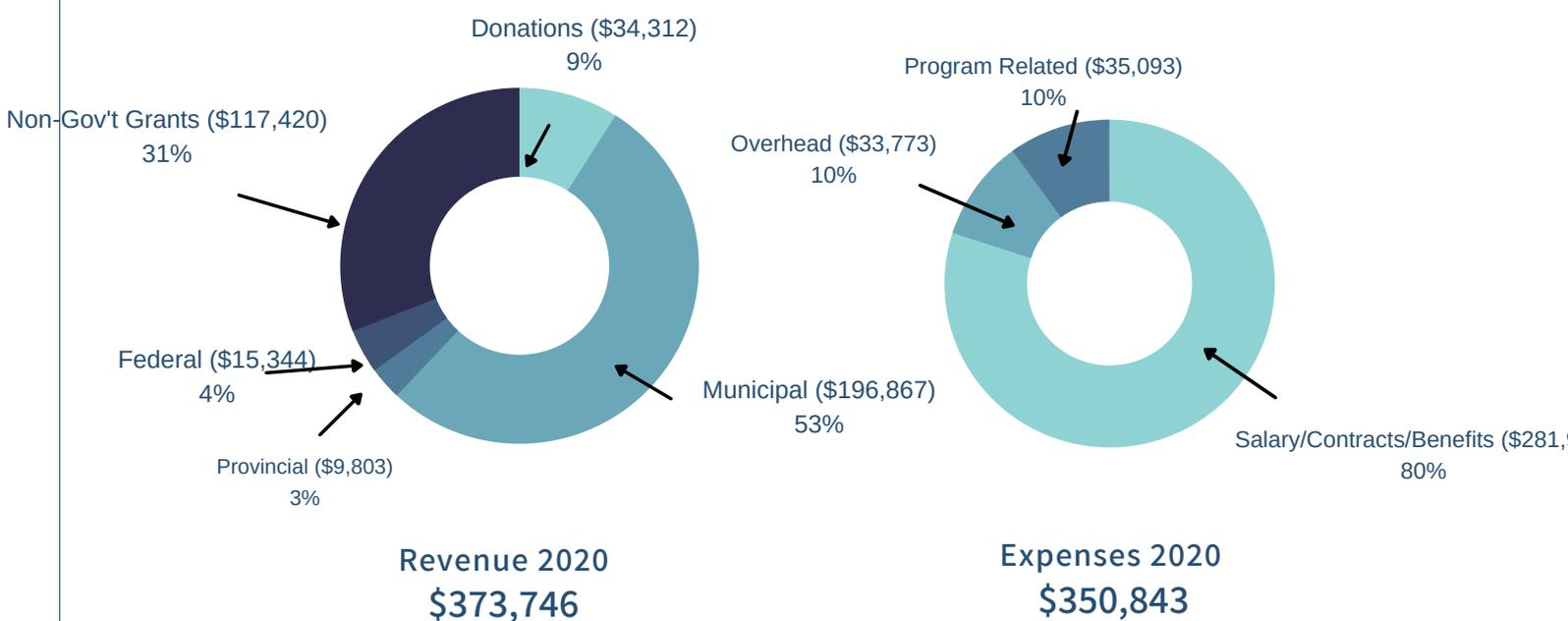
Another academic support we offer is a \$1000 Bursary for local students attending their first year of post-secondary education

Thanks to IODE and individual donors, we awarded 2 \$1000 bursaries in 2020.

Recipients for the 2020 Bursary award;  
Ayak Akeg and Abbas Mohamed

# FINANCIAL REPORTING

## 2020 Audited Financial Statement



## Statement of Operations and Net Assets

Net Assets End of Year: 124,530



# THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Despite the challenges faced in 2020, with the collaboration of all our donors, contributors, staff, volunteers, together we are amazed with the resilience and strength in the community for remaining positive and working together towards some common goals. All the joined efforts enabled us to better adapt and shift our priorities to better respond to the urgent needs while staying safe during these unprecedented times.

