



# 613 COM HOUSES

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COALITION OF COMMUNITY HOUSES



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## HOUSE FEATURE: ROCHESTER HEIGHTS

NAVIGATING CHANGE: HOUSE COORDINATOR, CHRISTIAN FLORES DISCUSSES THE CHALLENGES OF THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF LOW INCOME HOUSING

Rochester Heights Community House once sat on the corner of Gladstone Avenue and Rochester Street in Ottawa's downtown core. The red brick row houses that once lined the block have since been demolished to make way for improved affordable housing.

Christian Flores, the coordinator of the Rochester Heights Community House explained that the development is now in its' second stage of a three-phase redevelopment plan.

Christian has been in his role as coordinator since 2018 and brought with him seasoned experience from his previous role as house coordinator at the Michele Heights Community House in the west end.

By Fall 2021 the demolition process had reached the community house at 299 Rochester Street. Christian and his team have since been relocated to a temporary location in an apartment building at 280 Rochester Street.

Christian expressed that the redevelopment of the Rochester Heights, although making way for improvement, did result in the displacement of the community.

In communities like Rochester Heights, 'community' is not simply comprised of bricks and mortar, it is created by the residents though the non-tangibles such as culture, and sense of belonging through lived experiences.

This is particularly important in low-income, priority neighborhoods as the residents may not have the ability to readily access services across the city but are able to turn to their community for support, expertise and guidance.

Redevelopment of Rochester Heights will result in greener, cleaner living spaces for those who will return once the project is completed. Gentrification is not a new phenomenon for Ottawa, especially for neighbourhoods with superior walkability and desirable locations. With gentrification, there is an inevitable rise in housing costs. Christian highlighted the importance of developing deeper affordability when neighbourhoods like Rochester Heights undergo the revitalization process. He stressed the need to work and think creatively to make ‘affordability’ an earnest reality.

When looking at the challenges in relation to affordability, we need to look at the National Housing Strategy as well as the province, as markets do not respond to social need on a voluntary basis. Changes to the provincial Rent-Geared-to-Income legislation, and subsequent increase in rental calculations are significant contributors to the challenges of returning to neighbourhoods where residents have experienced displacement. When combined with the current housing crisis and spike in inflation, the reality of affordability seems bleak without digging deeper for creative, sustainable solutions.

With the clearing of the old Rochester Heights community, the community house now serves a much larger catchment from their temporary location, including the Lebreton and Mechanicsville pockets. This new expansion of service area has kept Christian and his team busy with outreach – a necessary step to understand the needs of these communities. Of course, with expansion there has been a staggering increase in clients, growing from 200 individual clients in 2018 to 900 in 2020.



Street view of the Rochester Heights Community House in July 2021 prior to demolition



Street view of the Rochester Heights Community House and rowhouses (2015)

The most prevalent needs in the community have been identified as food security, after-school programming, and mental health supports. Currently, programming is operated out of the lounge at the temporary community house location at 280 Rochester Street, with child and youth programming running 5 days a week.

Reflecting on fond memories of Michele Heights like movies in the park, fairs, and free-flowing community engagement, Christian expressed that he longs for a return of the simple, but impactful aspects of his work, such as walking into the community and experiencing the sense of belonging and connection. It would be remiss not to consider the stunted growth COVID -19 has put on rebuilding a new sense of community across the service pockets that Rochester Heights Community House now serves. One thing is for certain, the need for community house services beyond Rochester Heights is evident and Christian and his team will continue to think creatively and deliver services to meet these needs.



An overview of the Rochester Heights Community (photo credit: CDF)



# ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS

## A LOOK AT CHILD AND YOUTH ART PROGRAMMING IN MICHELE HEIGHTS

Michele Heights Community House partnered with the Ottawa School of Art this fall to bring creative and artistic programming to the children and youth in the Michele Heights community every Wednesday evening from 6pm-8pm. Susan Ragheb from the Ottawa School of Art planned and led a creative activity each week, teaching different techniques and approaches to painting as well as other simple, but innovated crafts.

The art program was very well attended by children and youth in the community, and even had a waiting list (due to the COVID restrictions, classes were limited in size).



The evening that I attended was one of the last weeks of programming and there was a painting activity underway where many different learned techniques were applied.

It was quite refreshing to see how engaged and excited the program participants were, most of them completing more than one project that evening and proudly exhibiting their work to their parents upon pick-up.

As the province plans its reopening on January 31, 2022 we look forward to experiencing more of these wonderful bright points again with our communities.



A glance at some of the creativity inside the Michele Heights and Ottawa Art School program.





# BEHIND THE BUZZ WORDS

## COOKIE-CUTTER DOESN'T CUT IT: WRAP AROUND SERVICES IN COMMUNITY HOUSES

Community houses pride themselves on their implementation and delivery of wraparound services – but what exactly is meant by this term? To get a full understanding of what wraparound services are, let's start by looking at the principles behind them.

Generally, 'wraparound service' is a fluid term, one which adapts to individual community needs. Needs are determined by our community members, as we consider them to be the experts of their individual lives and subsequent needs.

Wraparound services are community based; services and support are built

around principles of inclusion, are safe and accessible.

When developing a component of wraparound services, community houses ensure that they are culturally competent, and exude a deep respect for principles, values, beliefs, and identities of the community.

Wraparound services in community houses are not rooted in a one size fits all philosophy. Although standardization of services across houses may be a less complicated approach, it is not one that would appropriately meet the needs of our individual communities. When developing wraparound services, community houses couple needs with strengths in their approach and not only provide support where it is needed, but also foster the enhancement of services and programs that community members enjoy and engage in.

In community houses, wraparound services typically consist of six elements: child and youth programs, food security programming, resources & basic needs, information & referral

services, community outreach & engagement and front-line and crisis intervention. Depending on the makeup of an individual community, the weights of each of these elements will vary. For example, if a community does not have a large population of children and youth, there may not be a need for this type of programming.

Over the past two years particular elements of our wraparound services have been weighed more heavily across community houses in response to the ongoing pandemic. Food security has been one where demand has spiked and has not shown any signs of weaning. Like each element of wraparound services, delivery and implementation will vary across our communities. Food security services may come in the form of food banks, meal programming, emergency lunches, breakfast programs or community gardens.

It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list; wraparound services are constantly pivoting and evolving to meet the needs of our communities. For more information on wraparound services, please visit our website.



# PARTNERSHIP & SUPPORTS SPOTLIGHT

## THANK YOU, KRACKER'S KATERING!

In December of 2021, the OCCH was contacted by one of Causeway's social enterprise businesses, Kracker's Katering with the offer of supplying our community houses with some frozen meals.

Houses happily received delivery of over 200 meals in the last week of January and are looking forward to handing them out to their respective communities.

On behalf of the OCCH, we extend our sincere gratitude to Kracker's Katering for connecting with us to help us work towards addressing food security in our neighborhoods.

You may find out more about the Kracker's Katering by visiting [www.krackerskatering.org](http://www.krackerskatering.org)



# FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN CARSON'S

## R.I.S.E ACADEMY BRINGS SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS TO CARSON'S COMMUNITY

Incubator13 was pleased to kickstart a pilot program with R.I.S.E Academy that would fully embrace what it means to educate youth in a way that prepares them for our ever-evolving world. The program would ensure that youth, in grade 9-12, would become more aware of the world we live in and how best they can foster entrepreneurial skills that could solve common everyday problems. This 4-week, from July 5 - July 30, intense course would require dedication as well as a desire to learn and make a difference in the world because of its nature of being centered around each individual's normal schedule. Holding no prerequisites, an opportunity to apply for financial aid if needed and a business credit. This pilot program was built for the community with no barriers so that any child or youth can gain experience through it and at the same time they would also earn credits towards their OSSD.

This course was centered around the guiding principles used at R.I.S.E Academy under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Social Change Maker Model. Both foundational principles equip students by helping them discover what they are passionate about, their strengths and their weaknesses as well as how to truly highlight their strengths. The vision behind this project was the idea of seeing students learn about different models of entrepreneurship, have them introspect about how they want to make a difference in the community and support them as they aim to start a business. The business that each individual chose to create would be generated from these young minds and how they see the world as well as their desire to become a social change maker.

With the support and expertise of our program leaders, instructors, and young entrepreneur role models, each student participated in a virtual session to work and develop their ideas and skills. These sessions would ultimately prepare the students to be able to start their business and generate some revenue for themselves as well. The goal in mind being "how can we find ways to solve the problems that we are passionate about?"

At the end of the program, each student was assured with the additional support from incubator13's as a platform to teach and help them how to grow and sustain their business. Thanks to the efforts of the incubator13 team and R.I.S.E. Academy, led by Rebecca Chambers, our first successful group of youth completed the program, earned their credits, developed their entrepreneurial mind set and started their business ideas this summer.

Thank you for your support, sponsors, donors, community members, and youth; this program would not have been possible without you.

We look forward to our next entrepreneurial course and we cannot wait to meet the brilliant minds that will be joining us as we continue to initiate change in our community.





# COMMUNITY HOUSE CONTACTS

WANT TO GET IN TOUCH?

**Banff Avenue Community House**  
 Phone : 613-739-5702  
 Email : sylviem@banffcomhouse.ca  
 Address : 2084A&B Banff Avenue, K1V 7X9  
 Website : banffcommunityhouse.ca

**Blair Court Community House**  
 Phone : 613-736-5058  
 Email : blaircourt@rogers.com  
 Address : 1566 Station Boulevard, K1G 0M1  
 Website : blaircourt.ca

**Lowertown Good Neighbours Community House**  
 Phone : 613-562-2925  
 Email : amvaz@crccbv.ca  
 Address : 145 Beausoleil Drive, K1N 8W3

**Michele Heights Community House**  
 Phone : 613-829-4353  
 Email : l.selvendren@pqchc.com  
 Address : 102-2950 Penny Drive, K2B 6H6

**Britannia Woods Community House**  
 Phone : 613-820-0853  
 Email : f.yusuf@britanniawoods.com  
 Address : 9-115 Richie Street, K2B 6E8  
 Website : britanniawoods.com

**Caldwell Family Centre**  
 Phone : 613-728-1800  
 Email : director@caldwellcentre.ca  
 Address : 20/22-1100 Medford Street, K1Z 8L5  
 Website : caldwelfamilycentre.ca

**Morrison Gardens Community House**  
 Phone : 613-596-6229  
 Email : m.clark@pqchc.com  
 Address : 985A Morrison Drive, K2H 7L1

**Pinecrest Terrace Community House**  
 Phone : 613-596-6703  
 Email : y.jones@pqchc.com  
 Address : 2483B Iris Street, K2C 1C7

**Carson's Community House**  
 Phone : 613-745-0073 x 105  
 Email : aline.abdulnour@crccr.org  
 Address : 102-710 Carson Road, K1K 2H3

**Confederation Court Community House**  
 Phone : 613-521-6807  
 Email : confederationcourt@hotmail.com  
 Address : 2483A Walkley Road, K1G 3H2  
 Website : confederationcourt.com

**Rochester Heights Community House**  
 Phone : 613-237-6529  
 Email : cflores@swchc.on.ca  
 Address : 299 Rochester Street, K1R 7N3

**Russell Heights Community House**  
 Phone : 613-736-9855  
 Email : housecoordinator@russellheights.ca  
 Address : 1799E7D Russell Road, K1G 0N1  
 Website : russellheights.ca

**Debra Dynes Family House**  
 Phone : 613-224-3824  
 Email : info@debradynes.com  
 Address : 85-955 Debra Avenue, K2C 0J5  
 Website : debradynesfamilyhouse.com

**Foster Farm Family House**  
 Phone : 613-596-4866  
 Email : m.knight@pqchc.com  
 Address : 334-1085 Ramsey Crescent, K2B 7Z9

**Strathcona Heights Family House**  
 Phone : 613-233-5075  
 Email : agisanza@sandyhillchc.on.ca  
 Address : 221 Nelson Street, K1N 1C7

**Winthrop Court Community House**  
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