



Welcome Inn
Community Centre

Annual Report

April 2022 - March 2023

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www.welcomeinn.ca | Charitable #107690992RR0001

Living WELL Together

Welcome Inn's Vision

Living WELL Together

Welcome Inn is a dynamic community centre that dares to imagine that there is a different and more vibrant path forward for ALL members of our community. Together with the community, Welcome Inn works to alleviate poverty, loneliness and marginalization - challenges that our community members face on a daily basis - by offering supportive relationships, promoting wellness and providing capacity-building opportunities. Our five program areas include: Children's Programs, Seniors' Programs, Community Programs, and Food Access Initiatives. All four program areas are designed to improve the **eight dimensions of wellness**.



Our Wellness Areas

For us, it's not about creating another program; it's about empowering members of the community so that ALL might be well. **Welcome Inn promotes wellness in eight key areas:**



Social

Supported, connected, engaged



Physical

Healthy, safe, well-fed



Intellectual

Creative, articulate, skilled



Spiritual

Peaceful, mindful, compassionate



Emotional

Self-aware, reflective, grounded



Environmental

Attentive, active, safe



Occupational

Purpose-driven, fulfilled, self-directed

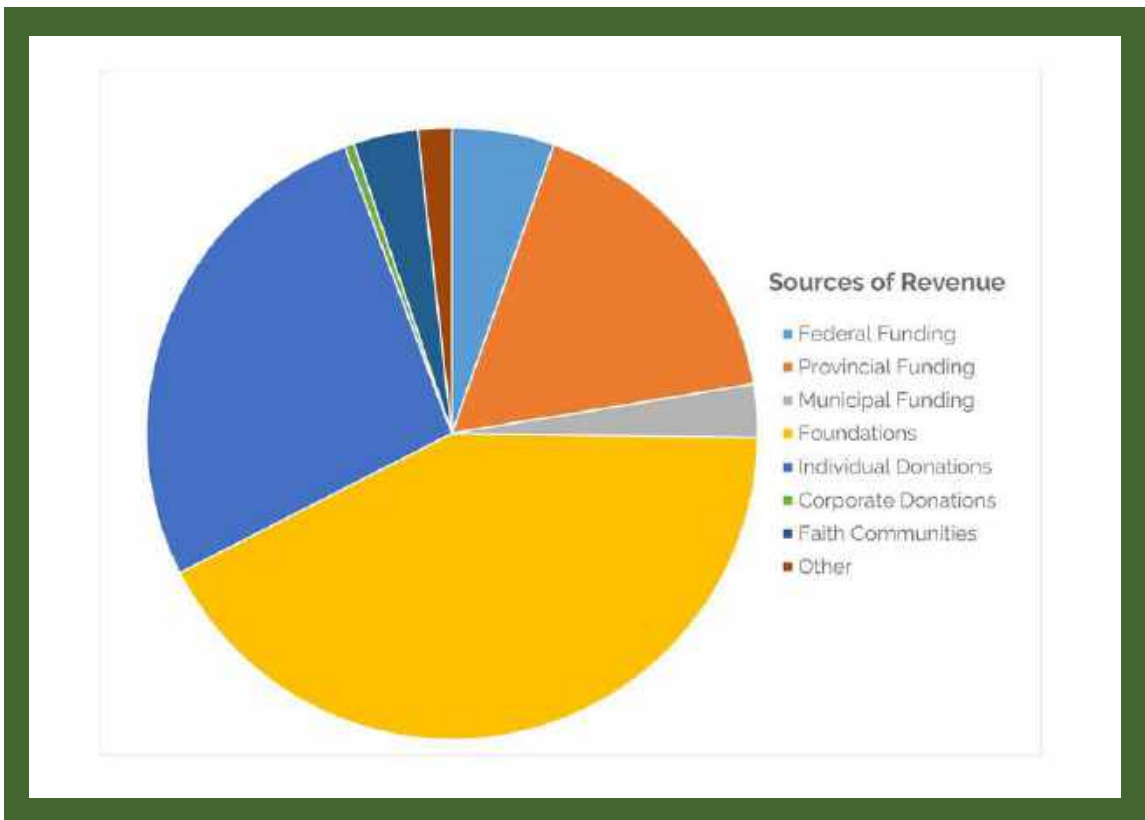
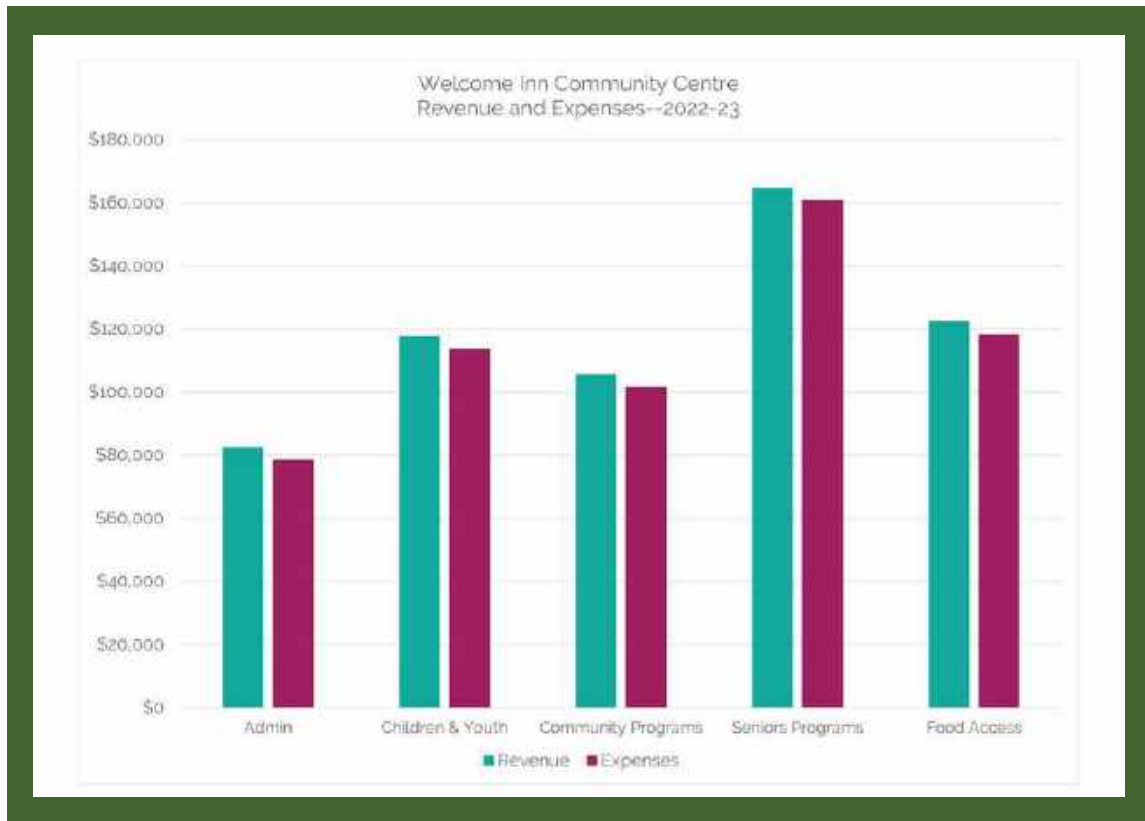


Financial

Stable, interdependent, housed



Financial Report





Children's Programs

Striving to create safe and inclusive spaces for children and youth to further their academics, practice their leadership skills and become more resilient...

Learning and Fun Afterschool Program (LAF)

Our Learning and Fun Afterschool Program, otherwise known as LAF, is a colourful program full of creative crafts and vibrant group activities. For the children that come from the neighbouring elementary schools, Bennetto and St. Lawrence, LAF provides significant academic and social supports through their mentors. The McMaster students that volunteer at LAF also gain valuable experience and hands-on learning. For one volunteer in particular, who grew up in Toronto's infamous Jane and Finch area, LAF helped her "reconnect with [her] inner child and supported [her] healing journey".



Youth Resiliency Team

Affectionately known as "Teen Talks", this youth-empowerment program was launched in September 2022, engaging adolescent youth in mental health-related conversations. The youth were encouraged to collaborate and share some of their learning with others, including through the creation of a zine. "Roses and Thorns" was a favourite activity facilitated over the dinner hour by the staff. Throughout the two ten-week sessions, "Roses and Thorns" helped create a bond of trust and friendship between group members and between the group and our staff.



Summer Day Camp

2022 marked a very special moment for our Summer Day Camp and the Welcome Inn community. For the first time ever, our summer day camp was expanded to six weeks. We had some great adventures and a multitude of memorable moments at the Bennetto Recreation Centre. One of the best experiences was at the end-of-the-year talent show. Every camper, including those who were known to be shy, participated and performed with enthusiastic smiles while on stage!





Seniors' Programs

Gathering together to reduce social isolation, offer peer support and encouragement, and improve overall wellness in the later years of life...

Diners Club

With many of the COVID restrictions lifted, Diners Club is in full swing with lots of new faces and referrals to the program. Many of the seniors who attend say that the club provides them with "a great meal, activity and friendship", and others talk about how it "helps relieve isolation". Some of our seniors struggle with depression and have trouble leaving their house because of it. One of these seniors was prompted by their doctor to attend, and they have mentioned that the club has helped them to "start enjoying their life again".

"Food is love. Love is here. This group saved my life."

- A Senior at Welcome Inn

Community Visitation Program

With thanks to the Government of Ontario, through the Ontario Trillium Foundation and its Resilient Communities Fund, we have been able to add a Life Navigation component to our Community Visitation efforts. The goal of the Life Navigation component is to increase the depth of support offered to seniors with more complex situations, by assisting them to navigate health care, food security, safe housing, healthy relationships, and mental health supports.

We are excited to now be able to offer increased training to our volunteer team, which in turn increases our capacity and skill base to respond to the needs of the seniors in our community.

133

Diners Club participants



2925

community visits



2267

meals served at Diners Club





Food Bank Program

Working towards justice for all, recognizing that access to nutritious food is a basic human right (and a great social connector)...

Before the pandemic, we had just over 11,000 visits to our food bank during the year. Now, that number has more than doubled. Many people in our community lost their jobs, had their health decline, or began to experience food insecurity as the cost of living has increased. In spite of those things, the function of our food bank extends past that of supporting those without something to eat. It has given our community members an opportunity to socialize, gain friendships, have "a good conversation and always a good laugh". 42% of those who access our food bank are recent immigrants who also utilize our translation services.

"The day I arrived at Welcome Inn, I arrived to ask for food help, but then I met Yaima. She is a wonderful human being. When I told her about my situation and my desire to give back to this beautiful country all the help she has given to me and my family, she opened the doors for me, so I can be here giving a little of my time volunteering. To my surprise, the people here are extremely wonderful from Yaima, Barbie, the English teacher, the reception and the others who are here, who in one way or another make you feel loved, appreciated and above all protected. Thank you, thank you very much, thank you Welcome Inn." - A Community Member at our Food Bank

24,353

individuals served



260,542 lbs

food distributed



73,059

days of food distributed



Welcome Inn
Community Centre



Community Programs & Supports for Recent Immigrants

Aiming to provide quality community programs, accessible to everyone, improving financial stability and supporting recent immigrants to Canada...

Tax Clinics

This year, our tax clinic was again offered to community members to help file their annual returns. Volunteers helped complete 131 returns and, along the way, made sure that community members were made aware of any potential government support programs. For those of whom English is not their first language, translation supports were offered, opening up the door for 59 community members who would have otherwise struggled to submit their returns.

131
tax returns completed

Peer-to-Peer Support Groups

Two languages at our community centre - Arabic and Spanish - are almost as common as English. Our Spanish and Arab support groups give those who have recently arrived in Canada, and our North End Community, a chance to explore resources together in the city of Hamilton. In giving recent immigrants a chance to share their personal experience with each other, the Peer-to-Peer Support group creates a safe space for our community members to seek comfort and friendship during this period of transition.

59
tax returns completed with newcomers

ESL Conversation Circles

For those looking to improve their language skills, Welcome Inn has queued up several ESL conversation circles over the past year. The sessions have been run have been geared towards our Arabic and Spanish speaking community.

77
direct supports for recent immigrants

Settlement Support

Our Settlement Supports provide newly immigrated families with assistance with their documents, hearing advocacy and settlement supports, all of which are connected to our ESL conversation circles and Peer-to-Peer Support Groups.

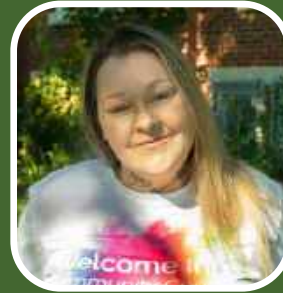
36
peer-to-peer group participants

Meet the Team

With a passion for community development, our staff and Board of Directors propel us forward...



James VanderBerg
Executive Director



Barb Brow
Food Bank Manager



Rome Lim
Program Advancement
Specialist



Krista Rao
Community Programs
Coordinator



Michelle Urbanek
Children's Program
Coordinator



Yaima Frosseard
Community
Programs Staff



Ruth Kaulback
Seniors Program &
Volunteer Coordinator



Salma Adam
Community
Programs Staff



Kari Dengerink
Community
Visitation Manager



Christiane Cain
Office
Administration

Board of Directors

Tom Geiger
Chair of the Board

Leah Schwenger
Vice Chair

David Dutchak
Treasurer

Joanne Roth
Director

Peggy Savage
Director

Carolynn Reid
Director

Harvey Bremer
Director

18,547
Volunteer
Hours

29
Partners

318
Volunteers



Partnerships

Our community development efforts would be nothing without the leadership of our dedicated staff team, the financial support of our various partners and the significant commitment of our volunteers.



An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



ArcelorMittal



COMPASS
COMMUNITY HEALTH

