



Annual Report

2025-2026



Welcome Inn
Community Centre

Living WELL Together

Our focus is clear: Welcome Inn wants to see everyone *Living WELL Together*. After 60 years of addressing systemic injustice, we continue to believe that everyone has something to offer, and that we're all better when we are sharing what we have with those around us. It's how community is built; it's how we sustain it.

Celebrating our 60th Anniversary has given us the chance to celebrate the past and look ahead to our future. We have expanded our seniors programs and added additional health and wellness sessions; we've fostered emotional wellness through art therapy in our afterschool program; and we've created new sessions for families who have recently immigrated. It's been a year of significant growth.

As a leadership team, we are grateful for the support the entire community offers, as we continue to promote wellness and provide people with supportive relationships.

Dimensions of Wellness

 supported, connected, engaged	Social
 healthy, safe, well-fed	Physical
 self-aware, reflective, grounded	Emotional
 stable, interdependent, housed	Financial
 creative, articulate, skilled	Intellectual
 attentive, active, safe	Environmental
 peaceful, mindful, compassionate	Spiritual
 purpose-driven, fulfilled, self-directed	Occupational



JAMIE VANDERBERG
Interim Executive Director

Board of Directors 2025-26

Tom Geiger, Chair
Leah Schwenger, Vice-Chair
David Dutchak, Treasurer
Jennifer Roth, Secretary
Peggy Savage, Member
Harvey Bremer, Member
Gladys Flores, Member
Lyndsy Baillie, Member
Doug Sider, Member
Cassandra Allen, Member

Staff Corner: THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM



KRISTINA SANTONE
Executive Director
(currently on leave)



CHRISTIANE CAIN
Financial Administrator

Our Volunteers

326 volunteers



23,735 hours



Welcome Inn would like to acknowledge and celebrate all 326 volunteers that have given so much of their time to support our efforts to develop a stronger and more resilient community. Our programs are all flourishing, and this would not be possible without our volunteers! Together, they have amplified the efforts of our staff team and worked toward addressing systemic injustice in Hamilton's central core. We are grateful for their immense contribution!

Volunteer-Driven Community Development

**Here is how the
volunteer hours
are split between
program areas:**

- Children's Programs
- Seniors' Programs
- Food Bank
- Settlement Supports
- Administration



Seniors' Programs



Diners Club Statistics

3,039 meals served to 195 seniors

Visitation Program Statistics

3,261 visits to 140 seniors

"I arrived at Welcome Inn after a traumatic event in my life. My husband had recently passed away from a fatal brain tumour. Before his passing, my focus had been entirely on him and, because of that, I rarely left the house. After he passed, I was filled with grief and was very isolated. I knew that I needed to find connection and community.

I chose Welcome Inn, because I loved the name. It sounded warm and inviting. I loved the meals and the place quickly started to feel like

mine. One Tuesday, I was introduced to Mary, and we have become wonderful friends.

A few months after I arrived, I was also paired with a friendly visitor. We fit perfectly. We do activities together every week, and I find myself laughing often. Welcome Inn has given me more than just a place to go, it has given me comfort, routine, and friendship. Little by little, Welcome Inn has helped me take my first steps back into the world."

--Irene Poaps

Wellness Session Topics:

- Health and wellness resource exchange
- Healthy eating with cooking demo and recipes
- Money management and budgeting (fixed income)
- Safety in the City, Hamilton Police Services
- Dental health
- Fall prevention
- Brain health and dementia awareness
- Nutrition as it relates to chronic disease

Staff Corner: THE SENIORS' PROGRAMS TEAM



RUTH KAULBACK
Seniors' Program &
Volunteer Coordinator



KARI DENERINK
Community Visitation
Manager



Children's Programs

Learning and Fun Statistics

66 LAF
participants

Summer Camp Stats

264 summer
camp
registrants



Summer Camp Highlights:

- “Summer-ween” dress-up day with trick or treating
- Peregrine Falcon visit
- Outer Space Day
- Multicultural celebrations, including henna art, Portuguese tarts, rangoli-making, fan decorating, and more
- Water Olympics
- Chef Day, including the painting of aprons and chef hats
- Puppet-making and show

Learning and Fun Reflection:

“As a newcomer to Canada, attending LAF as a child meant the most to me. It's where I met my life-long friends, whom I now call my sisters. Coming back to volunteer was a full circle moment for me. I immediately connected with the students and wanted to make them feel welcome. It brings me joy to see the smiles on their faces when they arrive. I learned that I enjoy working

with children. By spending more time with them, an interest was sparked in childhood development. I look forward to seeing them grow and become adults, and I'm happy that I got to be a part of it all.”

--LAF Mentor



Staff Corner: THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS TEAM



MICHELLE URBANEK
Children's Program
Coordinator



CANADA SUMMER JOBS
Student Employees

Food Bank



Food Bank Statistics

41,087 visits in
2025-26

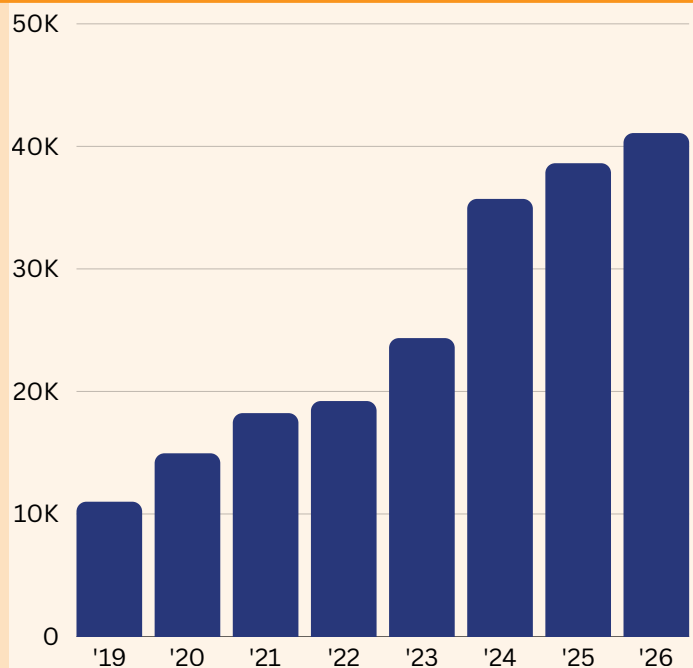
volunteer
hours **10,597**

503,357 lbs of food
distributed

unique
individuals
served **9,473**

Food Bank Usage

2019-26



Staff Corner: THE FOOD BANK TEAM

EMILY ZIMMERMAN
Food Bank Coordinator



Settlement Supports

Settlement Support Statistics

243 peer support group participants

628 direct supports

175 information session participants



"My son and I were living in a shelter when we found Welcome Inn. Our souls were exposed by displacement and our hands completely empty. Welcome Inn opened its doors to me. Without asking me anything other than my name, they handed me a box of food.

The box contained more than physical sustenance; it was an invisible embrace that restored my dignity and ignited a glimmer of hope. Upon receiving that help, something left a deep impression: seeing that the

hands holding me up belonged to senior volunteers. Watching those grandparents give their energy to a stranger was a significant life lesson.

Sometime later, my son came to Welcome Inn as a volunteer, finding there a sacred refuge, a genuine love, and a community. I met Yaima and found someone who spoke my language. It gave me back my voice and opened the door for me to become a volunteer.

Today, I continue to travel a complex path. I am not

speaking from a place of material comfort. I am still without formal employment, but my spirit remains bright. Recently, I was informed that I was awarded a scholarship for the MELD Program at McMaster University. I continue to give of myself to others and am rooted in love."

-- Zukamoto Sojimo



Zukamoto went on to create "Roots of Love", a song about Welcome Inn



Staff Corner: THE SETTLEMENT SUPPORTS TEAM



YAIMA FROSSEARD
Settlement Supports Coordinator



AHMAD ALBADDAH
Settlement Supports Staff

Partners and Supporters

Canada

Accerta Health
Access Foundation

HOPA | HAMILTON
PORTS OSHAWA
PORT AUTHORITY

Ontario
Health

THE ALLEN & MILLI GOULD
FAMILY FOUNDATION

COMPASS
COMMUNITY HEALTH

Ontario Trillium
Foundation

KAREN AND PETER
TURKSTRA FAMILY
FOUNDATION

TURKSTRA
ALWAYS ON THE LEVEL



\$799,864

total revenue from grants,
foundations, and donations, used
to offset \$764,811 in expenses

Ontario
Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility

redleaf
foundation



\$2,129,200

total value of food donated to our
food bank,

Hamilton

AEO BETTER
WORLD
FOUNDATION

CYCLING
WITHOUT
AGE

\$579,134

total donated by our volunteers, if
we would have paid them for all
their work!

HAMILTON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



Student
Open Circles

United Way
Halton & Hamilton

THE MUTUAL FIRE
INSURANCE COMPANY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Hamilton
Mennonite
Church

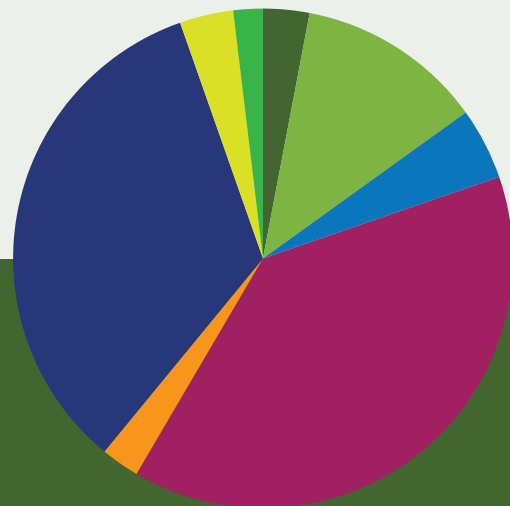
HAMILTON
Food Share

Ontario
REALTORS Care®
Foundation

Additional Foundations:

- Bernard and Johnson Fund
- Bob & Peggy Savage Foundation
- Edith H. Turner Foundation
- Foundation for Human Development
- George Lunan Foundation
- Hamilton Spectator Summer Camp Fund
- Mayberry Family Fund
- McCallum, McBride Fund
- Moffat Family Fund

- Federal
- Provincial
- Municipal
- Foundations
- Corporations
- Donations
- Community Groups
- Other



Ways to Give

- Donate to Welcome Inn at www.canadahelps.com;
- Become a monthly donor, ensuring consistent support;
- Volunteer with us, because it's a great way to give!

Charitable # 107690992RR0001