

HSH TEAM TAKES THE IWD PLEDGE



International Women's Day



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...#ChooseToChallenge

Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming is joined by staff and board members - and her four daughters - in taking the **IWD 2021 #ChooseToChallenge** pledge in choosing to challenge inequality, call out bias, question stereotypes, and address all forms of gender inequity. Watch HSH social media on **International Women's Day, Monday, March 8**, as HSH's women and men make their pledge. Stay tuned throughout March as HSH shares the stories of its staff and participants in celebrating women and their accomplishments.

We Want to Hear From You!

COMMUNICATING WITH OUR COMMUNITY:

GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK!

In this month's newsletter we are including a **link to a survey**:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D92VW2L>

We would appreciate it if you would all help us to improve our communications. This newsletter was re-designed under my tenure as a way to keep our community informed of upcoming events, fundraisers, etc., to provide transparency about who we are, who we serve and what we do, and to provide a platform where we recognize all of our amazing supporters. We want to hear from you if this is working.

What do you like or dislike about our outward facing communications (newsletters, social media platforms, campaign booklets, blogs)? Are there things you wish we would tell our audience/do more or less of? Please collaborate with us to help us continue to grow and improve.

Sincerely, Sara



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Sara".



HSH Board News

WELCOME: Home Suite Hope welcomes **Burhana Bello** to its Board of Directors.

Burhana has been an Oakville resident for many years. The town is the only home her children truly know. Burhana and her husband have three grown children with ages ranging from 15 to 21 years.

For Burhana and her husband, when it came to choosing a place to settle about two decades ago, Oakville felt like the right fit. They have never looked back.

Burhana is a commercial lawyer and after years of working in-house and in larger firms, she started her own practice west of Toronto about 10 years ago.

"I have always believed that one has not truly lived unless one helps others and it is in that spirit that I strive to find opportunities to give back not just locally in Oakville, the Greater Toronto Area, but also beyond our borders.

"I have had the opportunity to serve on various local and international charities and with each experience I feel honoured anew as I learn from the experiences of those we serve," says Burhana.

THANK YOU: Home Suite Hope sincerely thanks **Catherine Meagher** for her time on the HSH board and is excited to announce that she is staying on as Board Secretary and on our Governance Committee.

Catherine is a lawyer with experience working at a large law firm in Toronto. Catherine's practice areas included government relations, trade law, professional regulation, and corporate law. Catherine received her law degree from Dalhousie University, and clerked at the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

Catherine lives in Oakville with her family; and, has volunteered with a number of organizations over the years – most recently at her daughter's local school.

Thanks for all your hard work, Catherine, and for your continued commitment to HSH.



HSH Staff News

CONGRATULATIONS & INVITATIONS:



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SARA CUMMING EARNs A DIPLOMA

While Home Suite Hope Executive Director Sara Cumming has extensive expertise in gender, inequality, work and evidence-based outcomes, her role at HSH as the Executive Director also demands excellence in leadership. A life-long learner with a passion for education, Sara spent the pandemic upgrading her credentials with a five-course certificate program from Cornell University called Women in Leadership. Sara has already incorporated many of the learnings into staff evaluations and brainstorming sessions, and in her

relationship with the Board of Directors. As a person who rarely sits still, Sara is already exploring her options to continue to grow in her role at Home Suite Hope.

CASE MANAGER NIKKIAN HANSON GETS ENGAGED

The team at Home Suite Hope congratulates **HSH Case Manager Nikkian Hanson and her fiancé Oshane Daley** on their recent engagement. Congratulations!

“After six and a half years of adulting together, Oshane and I are getting married, and I am so excited. Whatever I had planned or thought my reaction would be, changed the moment he asked me to be his wife,” said Nikkian.



HSH Updates

NEW AT HSH:

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Home Suite Hope is proud to include a **Land Acknowledgement** statement to its business signatures and website to honour and respect the rich history of many **First Nations and the Métis** on whose traditional and treaty lands we work and to thank the **Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation** for being stewards of this traditional territory. You will see the following on all our business signatures and our website at www.homesuitehope.org.



Halton, as we know it today, is rich in the history and modern traditions of many First Nations and the Métis. From the lands of the Anishinabe to the Attawandaron, the Haudenosaunee, and the Métis, these lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in Indigenous history. As we work on these treaty lands, we are in solidarity with our Indigenous brothers and sisters to honour and respect the four directions, lands, waters, plants, animals and ancestors that walked before us, and all of the wonderful elements of creation that exist. We acknowledge and thank the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation for being stewards of this traditional territory.

HOMEWORK TUTORING AVAILABLE: Thanks Sarah Gillen!

Virtual Tutoring - Homework Help

Sarah Gillen

2nd Year Bachelor of Education Student

Bachelor of Social Work, RSW
Educational Assistant Diploma
7+ years classroom experience



LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/sarahgillen07

Email: sarahgillen@outlook.com

Text/Call: (905) 741-3932



Celebrating Women

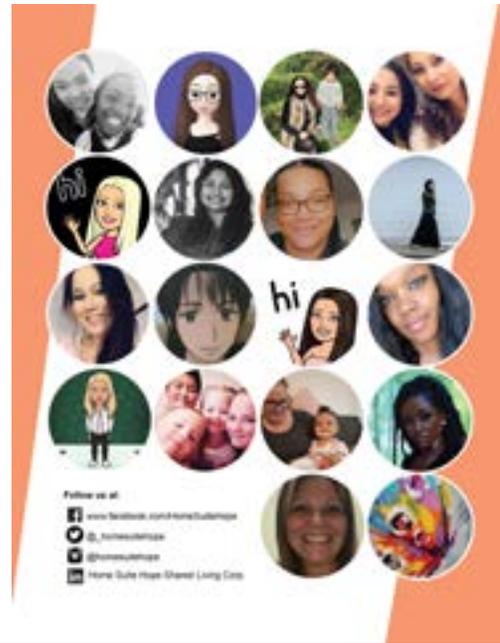
MARCH SALUTE TO WOMEN'S STORIES

PARTICIPANTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

While Monday, March 8 is International Women's Day, Home Suite Hope is saluting the accomplishments of the women associated with it throughout the month of March.

Please stay tuned to HSH's social media as most every day will feature a new story from a Stabilizing First/Homeward Bound Halton/Homeward Bound Halton Youth participant.

Each post will tell a little about them and will link to their full story as published in the *Faces of HSH Participants' Edition* available on our website: https://homesuitehope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Faces-of-HSH_PP.pdf



These stories will provide a glimpse into the lives HSH programming is helping to transform and the meaning that work has in the lives of the single parents and their families.

STAFF IN BLOG POSTS

HSH's weekly blog will feature a Special Edition post on HSH Executive Director Sara Cumming on Monday, March 8.

Every Friday in March, the regular weekly blog posts will tell the story of an HSH staff member. Each will provide a look at the HSH staff as published in the recent *Faces of HSH Staff Edition*: https://homesuitehope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Faces-of-HSH_Staff.pdf

Watch for social media posts and see the blog posts at www.homesuitehope.org.



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HSH ED Leads by Example



SARA CUMMING

Lifelong role model

I have been choosing to challenge inequality for as long as I can remember.

I choose to challenge gendered assumptions, biases and stereotypes in everything that I do.



Whether it's pushing through glass ceilings, crushing weights at the gym, or raising four strong, independent and self-sufficient daughters, I refuse to allow others to determine the outcome of any of our lives based on our biological sex.

Home Suite Hope is an organization that continues to extend our supports to women who may need a hand to help them reach their full potential.

We hope our community continues to choose to challenge with us.

Sara has raised four daughters and was a single parent. She moved from poverty to stability throughout her life raising her family, obtaining her PhD, becoming a professor at Sheridan College and the Executive Director at Home Suite Hope.

A **Special Edition blog post** at www.homesuitehope.org on Monday, March 8 will share Sara's story - as well as the reflections of her four daughters on growing up with a mom whose passion for everything IWD and this year's #ChoosetoChallenge theme stands for - and beyond - has been passed on through the generations.

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Sharing HSH's Story

VOLUNTEERS, SUPPORTERS, FUNDERS THE RICHARDSONS FEATURED ON HSH BLOG

Home Suite Hope – and its unique and successful Homeward Bound Halton program – is a good story that's easy to share.

And that's just what retired Oakville residents **Sharon and Blair Richardson** do. They've been spreading the word for a long while – through actions as well as words – and they show no signs of slowing down.



Married for 48 years, he with a background in healthcare management and she in human resources, this couple has helped propel HSH to where it is today – a successful and growing resource that helps move single-parent families from homelessness and poverty to stability. The Richardsons believe in that.

BLAIR'S STORY

Blair looks back over his retirement to a time when he volunteered with Food for Life as a weekend volunteer relief driver – and when one of the food delivery stops was for HSH.

Later, as chair of the Food for Life board, Blair teamed up with several people, including John Ghent and Michael Shaen, being instrumental in bringing Toronto's WoodGreen Homeward Bound program to Halton. The program had caught his attention and despite some need to sell the idea, Blair saw the program take hold in Halton when a previous plan to set it up in Peel fell through. After putting it to the HSH board, then chaired by Glen Herring, and some negotiations, Home Suite Hope was selected and agreed upon as the delivery agency for Halton's replica of the Homeward Bound program.

Blair is a familiar face at HSH where, most recently he helped organize St. Jude's Anglican Church furniture drive to help new pilot program Homeward Bound Halton Youth participants furnish their housing. He was also instrumental behind St. Jude's providing a \$500 bursary in support of HSH's annual scholarship program for the children of program participants, as well as St. Jude's sponsorship as a Partner in Change, to pay the almost \$10,000 annual funding shortfall of the \$48,000 needed annually to support a family in the program.

A Story Worth Telling

SHARON'S STORY

"It solves poverty, one family at a time. You can't do everything, but you can do something. You can help one family at a time," said Sharon, noting "It's a good story so it isn't hard to share."

Together, Blair and Sharon have also supported HSH financially – Gold Level Sponsors for two Empty Bowls fundraising events - and most recently, making provision through their wills such that their estate could support HSH through the Oakville Community Foundation.

Sharon has also joined the HSH board and its human resources committee, but sitting at the board table didn't mean she wasn't out delivering Empty Bowls at Home flyers to her neighbours.



Indeed Sharon's support of Home Suite Hope began with the same hands-on approach. She recalls being in the audience when the Homeward Bound program was announced at Sheridan College. As a mother, who commuted to her full-time job, she said she recalls thinking about all the program participants had in front of them (never mind the experiences they'd left behind) in obtaining education, securing employment, working full-time and raising their family. That empathy led her to rounding up her bridge team members to assemble every other week in her kitchen to cook – and then deliver – meals for each of the participant families.

Sharon also helped out at the 2016 Empty Bowls event and soon became the first point-of-contact for potential volunteers for HSH. She then served on the committees organizing the 2017 and 2018 Sleep in Your Car fundraising events. She was co-chair of the 2019 Empty Bowls event and was again on the 2020 event committee. Not content to liaise with HSH volunteers without herself digging in to lend a hand in person, Sharon has also been a frequent volunteer at HSH's Community Garden, Blueberry Fields.

The Richardsons have inspired their family to support HSH – their son Graham Richardson and his family having recently donated to the Hope 4 Holidays campaign. And their circle of influence widens. They've been a catalyst fostering their neighbours' support – like their long-time friend Bonnie Lovelace, who has been helpful in HSH accessing funds through the JP Bickell Foundation and The Waugh Family Foundation.

HSH is forever grateful for the support of people like Sharon and Blair Richardson. They not only work on a personal level to effect positive change, but they are invaluable ambassadors.

Read the complete entry in HSH's blog post: <https://homesuitehope.org/2021/02/12/the-richardsons-hsh-supporters-donors-and-ambassadors/>

Community Partnerships

A 2021 FOCUS FOR HSH:

WORKING TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS:

As a professional who has built a career as an innovative leader in collaborative models of support, my belief has always been that “teamwork makes the dream work.”

I believe that the more our community collaborates and the more diverse those collaborations are (government, not-for-profit, philanthropists and corporate) the more impact we have, and fewer people fall through the cracks.

We have committed this section of our newsletter to showcasing the different collaborations we work in, highlighting our collaborators’ events and new programming and providing a space for others to see what might be possible.

That being said, I want to acknowledge that my predecessors at Home Suite Hope worked tirelessly to build a highly successful collaboration which launched in 2014.



Homeward Bound Halton is our flagship program, the first replica of **WoodGreen’s Homeward Bound** program in Toronto.

In building this program, partners understood that people who struggle with homelessness often face multiple barriers that extend beyond a low income.

Furthermore, there was a recognition that women, who must combine parenting responsibilities and income earning responsibilities, are further disadvantaged.

From these insights the partnerships between **Home Suite Hope, WoodGreen, The Halton Region, Sheridan College, Oakville Community Foundation, the YMCA of Oakville and Sagen** (formerly known as Genworth) were born.

In this month’s newsletter, we are highlighting two of those pivotal partnerships.

Partners in the Spotlight



HALTON REGION:

Halton Region is proud to continue to support Home Suite Hope with direct funding and access to a holistic suite of services including housing allowances, case management, Ontario Works and subsidized childcare programs.

Home Suite Hope is a recognized leader in working with single parent families who are facing homelessness and has established an impressive record of moving families to independence with an emphasis on skills development, education and employment. Home Suite Hope has also been an early adopter of a larger systems approach to coordinate efforts between agencies and collectively address issues related to homelessness.

Through this effort, Home Suite Hope is serving the most vulnerable single parent led families in Halton Region. Home Suite Hope has also stepped forward during COVID-19 to provide additional supports and resources to families in need - the ability to rapidly respond to this evolving need alongside Halton Region is a true testament to the success of our ongoing partnership.



WOODGREEN COMMUNITY SERVICES:

WoodGreen Community Services is one of the largest social service agencies

in Toronto, serving 37,000 people each year. One of the many successful programs offered by WoodGreen, Homeward Bound was piloted in 2004 and the model is unique in Canada. Homeward Bound is a holistic program that helps homeless or precariously housed single mothers achieve lasting economic self-sufficiency. In 2015, Home Suite Hope was the first agency partner to replicate WoodGreen's Homeward Bound model outside of Toronto. Along with other Homeward Bound affiliates, WoodGreen and Home Suite Hope continue to facilitate the Homeward Bound program to further support the community and single parents, giving the opportunity of independence. Our partnership has provided many learnings and successes, capacity building supports, sharing of program resources, and innovative ideas to best support participants and improve programming. In the future, the hope is that the Homeward Bound model can expand further to help even more struggling mother-led families in Ontario and beyond.

Want to Get Involved?

HOME SUITE HOPE IS LOOKING TO GROW:

CONSIDER JOINING OUR BOARD:

Home Suite Hope is looking to grow!

We are seeking diverse leaders from across Halton to join our **Board of Directors**.

HSH is a non-profit organization that supports low-income, single-parent families in Halton. Our five programs aim to unite a network of vital wraparound supports for families as they journey from poverty to stability, permanently changing lives for the better.



Illustration by Angel Castro

Are you an experienced lawyer, accountant (CGA, CMA), networker willing to leverage connections and resources for the benefit of the community, marketing and communication professional, strategic organizer or succession planner?

Ideal candidates have a variety of skills and expertise to help set strategic direction; monitor finances; provide governance oversight and have proven interpersonal skills. Professional and lived experience are equally valuable to us. We are looking for engaged and dynamic members wanting to act in the best interest of Home Suite Hope and our inspiring participants.

Home Suite Hope is transforming the patterns of poverty – to a legacy of empowered prosperity.

If you are passionate about making a real difference in people's lives, or know someone who may be the perfect fit please contact: info@homesuitehope.org by April 30, 2021.



Sheridan



SAGEN™

CHANGING THE PATTERNS OF POVERTY TO A LEGACY OF PROSPERITY