

**A PLACE FOR
EVERYONE**



2026

IMPACT REPORT

Centre juif de services
familiaux d'Ottawa

המרכז היהודי לשירותי
משפחה באוטווה

5785-5786 | 2025-2026

VISION

Together, we create **stronger and healthier communities** where everyone can live with dignity and respect.

MISSION

Our work is grounded in Jewish values and we seek to build a community through the pursuit of **social justice and inclusivity.**

VALUES

COMMUNITY (KEHILLAH):

Creating a community through connection and healing, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose for everyone.

RESPECT (KAVOD):

Recognizing that everyone is unique and must be respected for who they are in the world, we treat each individual with respect and dignity.

REPAIRING THE WORLD (TIKKUN OLAM):

Making our community and our world better.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For over 45 years, our agency’s mission has remained steadfast: to meet the evolving needs of Ottawa with compassion, dignity, and excellence.

From breaking down barriers in mental health care, guiding newcomers as they build new lives, to responding rapidly in times of crisis, our work ensures that no individual or family in our city is left behind. Creating lasting change demands an unyielding commitment to the people we serve and the dedicated team delivering that care every day.

Our agency could not play such a vital role in our community without the tireless and professional commitment of our staff. They are at the heart of our agency, and we recognize that to support our community effectively, we must also support our team. That is why we prioritize staff wellness, not just as a buzzword, but as a commitment. We are actively building an organizational culture rooted in genuine care, flexibility, and transparency. By establishing clear channels for feedback and listening to our team’s experiences we ensure that our staff have the resources, trust, and structural support they need to avoid burnout, thrive and deliver the highest quality care to our neighbours.

TRANSFORMING CARE ACROSS OTTAWA

When we equip our team to do their best work, our entire community reaps the benefits. Driven by the evolving needs of our city, we have expanded and modernized our reach over the past year by:

Innovating Seamless Access:

Navigating social services can be overwhelming. We developed a custom, unified client portal that eliminates friction, streamlines referrals, and ensures individuals access to vital care faster and with greater ease.

Adapting to Emerging Needs:

To meet growing demand, we launched a dedicated Community Support Services unit. Concurrently, our Settlement and Mental Health teams continue to pioneer creative, low-barrier programs tailored specifically for local youth, seniors, and newcomers.

Strengthening Local Partnerships:

Real change requires unity. We actively collaborate and initiate partnerships with agencies across Ottawa to simplify complex social safety nets, ensuring families facing acute crises receive immediate and coordinated support.

A COLLECTIVE EFFORT FOR LASTING CHANGE

Strengthening our city is a shared journey. Caring for Ottawa requires a collective effort, and we are profoundly grateful to our team, our Board of Directors, donors, volunteers, and community partners who stand alongside us to make this vision a reality.

As we look to the future, community challenges will inevitably evolve, and our dedication will not waver. By keeping our team empowered and our programs responsive, our agency will continue to stand as a trusted pillar of care, connection, and hope—building a stronger, more compassionate Ottawa for generations to come.



Sarah Caspi
Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE

BOARD PRESIDENT

The strength of our agency is built not only on the dedication of our staff, but also on the commitment and leadership of our Board of Directors. Throughout the year, our Board played a vital role in advancing the mission of JFS, providing strategic guidance, governance, and active support for the agency’s growth and sustainability.

This year, the Governance Committee undertook a review to update the Board Code of Conduct, reinforcing our commitment to accountability, integrity, and strong governance. The Board also deepened its involvement in the agency’s fundraising efforts, recognizing that securing resources is essential to meeting the growing needs of our community. Board members also took a more active role in championing the JFS story, helping to strengthen awareness and engagement across Ottawa.

Our commitment extended beyond the boardroom. In addition to regular Board and committee meetings, Board members joined staff in the Mental Health Matters Walkathon during the Ottawa Race Weekend and participated in social gatherings to strengthen collaboration, connection, and shared purpose among our leadership team.

As community needs continue to evolve, the challenges of funding and sustaining services remain significant. Board members had the opportunity to participate in discussions with funders and witness firsthand the determination, innovation, and resilience of the JFS team as they work to secure resources while delivering high-quality care and support to those who need it most.



Harland Tanner
Board President

On behalf of the Board, I extend my sincere gratitude to my fellow Board members for their dedication and service. I am equally grateful to the staff of JFS, whose compassion and professionalism make our mission possible each day, and to Sarah Caspi for her exceptional leadership and partnership.

Even after many years of involvement with JFS, I continue to discover new ways our organization responds to community needs and transforms lives. We are fortunate to have an agency that serves our community with such purpose, compassion, and impact, and I am proud to be part of that journey.



JFS TEAMS

THE TEAMS THAT BUILD A STRONGER AND HEALTHIER OTTAWA

JFS Ottawa supports more than 10,000 residents of Ottawa and the Eastern Ontario region each year through inclusive, culturally responsive programs and services that foster equity, connection, and belonging. Whether you are seeking support or looking to engage with your community, you will find a welcoming place here.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES UNIT

SUPPORTED
2,100
INDIVIDUALS
& FAMILIES

Jewish Community Support Team

Supporting the growing complexity of client needs, this new unit strengthens collaboration across programs, enhances case management, and provides more integrated support for 2,100 individuals and families. This approach ensures clients receive high-quality, coordinated care that reflects the realities of their lives.

- Brought together the Tikvah Program, specialized case management, supports for Jewish seniors and Holocaust survivors, and access to food security programs.
- Ensures that vulnerable community members received coordinated, compassionate care that preserves dignity, promotes well-being, and provides connection.

Diverse Senior Supports

- Provides culturally and linguistically appropriate support to immigrant and racialized seniors from communities including Chinese, Sikh, Somali, Arabic-speaking, African and Caribbean, South Asian, and other diverse cultural groups across Ottawa.
- Helping them age with dignity, connection, and independence.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS UNIT

14,000
SLIDING-SCALE
SESSIONS

The Counselling Group

Offering professional counselling in multiple languages across Eastern Ontario, making mental health support accessible to all.

- Delivers close to 14,000 psychotherapy sessions to over 3,000 clients with a fee schedule tied to a client's income.

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic & Counselling Connect

- This regional network, coordinated by our team, offers same-day, no-cost mental health support to over 3,000 community members.

STREETSMARTS

- Offering resources, referrals and basic supplies to Ottawa's downtown homeless population.

2,700
NEWCOMERS
SUPPORTED

SETTLEMENT SERVICES UNIT

- Helping 2,700 newcomers from 20+ countries to integrate into Canadian life with practical and emotional support.

Our professional team provides services to community members throughout their lives.

Explore the following pages to learn more about our interconnected services that contribute to a stronger and more diverse community.



INCLUSIVE SOCIAL SUPPORTS

EASING SOCIAL DISCONNECTION AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

One client expressed deep gratitude after JFS helped them enroll in the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP), which provides monthly credits on electricity bills for eligible low-income households:

OTTAWA APRIL 22nd 2026

Miss Liudmyla,

My name is [REDACTED] because of your work I was able to enjoy the benefit of Ontario Electricity Support Program OESP

I was warm all winter this year.

Ottawa April 22nd 2026

Miss Liudmyla,

My name is XXXXX, because of your work I was able to enjoy the benefit of Ontario Electricity Support Program OESP. I was warm all winter this year.

Beyond financial assistance, JFS helps strengthen social connections that foster resilience. Supportive conversations, referrals, grocery deliveries, and links to community resources reduce stress, build trust, and remind people they are not alone. By addressing economic vulnerability and social isolation together, JFS helps individuals build confidence, improve stability, and strengthen community belonging.

189

Jewish community members received High Holiday supports from our team

14

of programs brought together into our new Community Support Services unit, strengthening our ability to respond quickly to emerging community needs

\$650K

direct financial assistance provided by JFS to Jewish community members

241

of clients our team registered for the OESP, saving them over \$14,000 through utility bill relief last year

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

ENHANCING WELLNESS THROUGH AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

We invest in accessible, community-based mental health services that remove barriers to care and foster inclusive, resilient systems of support.

After a lifetime marked by poverty, homelessness, trauma, and exclusion from community services, David* arrived at The Counselling Group distrustful of systems and reluctant to seek help. Through trauma-informed counselling, a focus on trust-building, and coordinated support, he developed healthier coping strategies, improved emotional regulation, and gained confidence in advocating for himself. Most importantly, David remained engaged in care, experienced fewer crises, and began building a more stable and hopeful future.



David's story highlights the importance of low-barrier, trauma-informed mental health care for individuals facing intergenerational poverty and social exclusion. By providing consistent support, clear expectations, and a foundation of trust and dignity, The Counselling Group helps people who have been marginalized by traditional systems reconnect with care, build resilience, and move toward greater stability and well-being.

*Client's name changed for privacy

3,120

unique counselling clients, up 42% from 2024

\$400K+

in fee subsidies provided to counselling and psycho-educational assessment clients

8

the median number of days between a client's initial intake until they are assigned to a counsellor

EMPOWERING SENIORS

SUPPORTING SENIORS WITH CONNECTION, CARE AND PURPOSE

JFS Ottawa helps seniors stay connected, supported and engaged in community life. Through practical assistance, culturally responsive services, counselling, and meaningful social programs we support the mental, emotional and physical well-being of older adults while reducing isolation and strengthening their sense of belonging.

The impact of this work is best reflected in the relationships built through our programs. One JFS staff member shared this story:



“I’ve been supporting seniors in the Eritrean community for some time, helping with whatever they need and never expecting anything in return. At a recent seniors’ event, they completely surprised me with an award. It was such a touching and humbling moment, and it made me feel deeply grateful for our JFS family and the meaningful work we do together.”

– Ifrah Mahamoud, Diverse Seniors Outreach Worker (pictured)



This recognition reflects the trust and belonging that grow when support is delivered with compassion, respect and cultural understanding.

THE IMPACT

88% of clients believed our programs increased their ability to deal with day-to-day challenges

89% felt more positive toward their lives after participating

1,600 seniors were supported by the agency

8+ languages served, reflecting the diversity of our community

STRONG & DIVERSE COMMUNITY

STRENGTHENING DIVERSITY THROUGH INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING

Reflecting the diverse identities, cultures and experiences of our community, our programs strengthen connections, improve outcomes and foster a more inclusive community.

2,700

approximate # of newcomers from 20+ countries who our team helped to integrate into their new lives in Canada

400

of newcomers who took advantage of our free tax clinics, helping them to file tax returns and receive government supports

290

psychoeducational assessments provided in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, helping our clients to express themselves more effectively

40

Russian seniors participating in our regular social programming

SPOTLIGHT

When we first met this single mother, she had just arrived in Canada on her own with three young children and faced significant challenges as she worked to establish a new life. Through employment support and job search guidance from JFS, both she and her teenage daughter secured part-time jobs, creating greater financial stability and confidence for their family.

Years later, she remains connected to our agency, sending holiday greetings and sharing photos of her children. Her continued outreach reflects not only her family's progress, but also the lasting relationships and sense of community that can grow from timely support and compassionate guidance.



OUR GENEROUS DONORS

Our community of donors continues to amaze us! This year, we surpassed 50 monthly donors and 400+ annual donors showing just how deeply people believe in our mission. With an average donor loyalty of 15 years, it is clear: it is not just about support, it is a commitment built on long-term trust, shared values and lasting impact.

“Our family’s endowment commitment reflects our deep belief in the importance of JFS Ottawa’s Jewish Community Support Services team and the compassionate care they provide. We want to ensure that individuals and families in our community can access support, connection, and guidance for generations to come. Through this legacy gift, we are investing in a stronger, more caring Jewish future.”

– Janet & Stephen Kaiman



Janet & Stephen Kaiman
Donors

ELAINE RABIN AWARD



Institut de recherche
en musique et santé

Music and Health
Research Institute

This year, the Elaine Rabin Award is presented to The University of Ottawa's Music and Health Research Institute, led by Dr. Gilles Comeau. Dr. Comeau and his team have been valued partners in JFS Ottawa's Jewish Inclusive Choir, Kol B'Yachad, an innovative program that brings together seniors through the power of music.

Through a federally funded research initiative, the Music and Health Research Institute's work with our choir has contributed to important knowledge about healthy aging and the impact of music on individuals experiencing cognitive change. The research is helping build a stronger understanding of how community-based music programs can support quality of life, social connection, and overall well-being for older adults. By combining academic research with compassionate, real-world programming, this partnership created meaningful benefits for participants and their families while advancing the field of age-related brain health.

The collaboration demonstrates how universities and community organizations can work together to translate research into practical solutions that help seniors remain engaged, connected, and valued members of their communities.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

THANK YOU TO JOHN LUNN

Jewish Family Services Ottawa is proud to recognize John Lunn as our Volunteer of the Year, celebrating more than three decades of dedicated service and leadership.

A CGA-CPA and respected chartered accountant in Ottawa for many years, John first became involved with JFS as a volunteer in the 1990s. By 1997, he had joined the Board of Directors, serving as Treasurer and later as Second Vice-President. Throughout his tenure, John brought exceptional financial expertise, thoughtful leadership, and an unwavering commitment to the organization's mission.

In 2006, John played a pivotal role in establishing the JFSO Tzedakah Foundation, a partner charity dedicated to supporting the long-term sustainability of JFS Ottawa. He served continuously on the Foundation's Board for its entire twenty-year existence. His deep understanding of the



John Lunn
Volunteer of the Year

Foundation's history, purpose, and philanthropic vision provided invaluable guidance to successive generations of board members and helped ensure its continued success.

In 2026, following the decision to wind up the Foundation, John stepped down from the Board to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. His remarkable legacy of volunteerism, leadership, and service has strengthened JFS Ottawa and its community for decades. We are honoured to celebrate John and thank him for his extraordinary contributions.



We'd also like to recognize and thank our Life & Legacy donors who have made a commitment to including JFS in their will/estates.

Mitchell Novick and Ilana Albert-Novick | Aviva Ben-Choreen | Sarah Caspi | Laurie and William Chochinov | Lorne Cutler | Sierra Cwinn | David Dern | John and Dayra Diener | Paul Gardner | Andrea Gardner | Carol Gradus | Jessica Greenberg | Michael Henschel | Nili Kaplan-Myrth | Alan Karovitch | Ora Kendall | Barbara and Steve Levinson | Richard Roth and Riva Levitan | Mary Alice and Lewis Retick | Mark Luden | Janice Pleet | Patsy Mallek Royer | Jeremy Rudin and Nina May | Sol Meyer | Rebecca Ariella Mintz and Jeremy Miller | Sandra Pollack and Steven Poleski | Frank and Margo Rosen | Rabbi Idan and Shifra Scher | Graham and Erica Sher | Sol and Zelaine Shinder | Jenny and Jason Shinder | Adele and Jeffrey Sidney | Mira Sucharov | Deborah and David Weinstein | Kenneth Wright | Sandra Zagon | 9 Anonymous donors

JFS BOARD, MEMBERS & STAFF

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DO OUR WORK
WITHOUT THE
SUPPORT OF OUR
VOLUNTEER BOARD
OF DIRECTORS, OUR
PROFESSIONAL
STAFF AND OUR
MEMBERS!

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Joanne Gorenstein <i>Treasurer</i>	Shereen Benzvy Miller
Matthew Conley	Wendy Myers
Sherill Besser	Ami Wise

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Mitchell Charness	Jean Nelson
Julie Cohen	Jessica Shabinsky
Su Yun Geithner	Jenny Shinder
Sam Hartman	Gary Stein
Rachel Guy Levine	Nancy Werk
John Lunn	Erin Zipes

JFS STAFF, INTERNS AND STUDENTS

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Sarah Agulnik
Amal Ahmed
Sarah Al Hemyari
Nancy Al Kayal
Marcelle Al Sulaiman
Lamia Al-Ansari
Sarah Alderwick
Gonzalo Alonso
Mohammed Al-Sabbagh
Basma Al-Taie
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Chelsea Chen
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Anne-Marie Corbett
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Katie Wang
Fathia Warsama
Stephanie Wolfert
Evelyn Wong
Dalia Wood
Dellon Woodger
Emily Xia
Ming Xiao
Julia Zannini

CONTINUED —————>

IN MEMORY

In memory of our clients, volunteers, and others who have been a part of our agency this past year.

Their resilience, courage, stories, and trust has enriched our agency. We honour their journey and the impact they had on us. May their memory be a blessing.

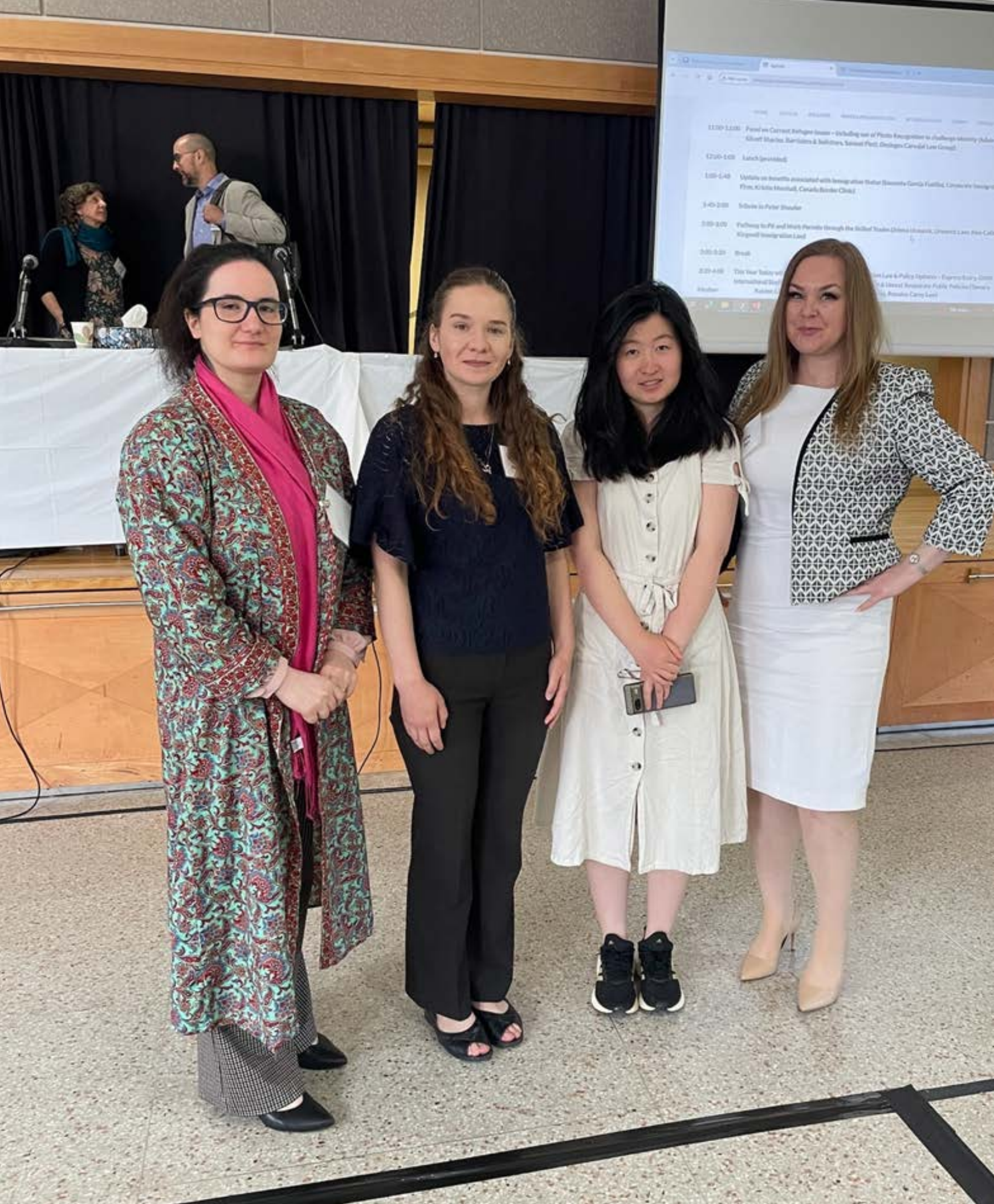
Thank you to our staff and their dedication to the people we support! And, to those celebrating milestone anniversaries.



Lamia Al-Ansari
Liza Ma'arouf
Gohar Vardanyan



Sarah Agulnik
Anne-Marie Corbett
Rubeen Kidwai
Layla Matar
Agnieszka Szymanowicz-Yalcin



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

GRATEFUL FOR HELP FROM OUR NEIGHBOURS

JFS proudly works alongside many community groups to support diverse communities and create a more compassionate city. Some of these include:

Access MHA
AJA50+
Alliance to End Homelessness
Britannia Woods Community House
Centre for Community Settlement, Support and Guidance (CÉSOC)
Centretown Community Health Centre
Champlain Community Support Network
Champlain Mental Health & Addictions Group
Carlington Community Health Centre
City of Ottawa Outreach Coalition
City of Ottawa Unsheltered Task Force
Community Equity Council
Counselling and Family Services
Family Service Ontario
Family Services Ottawa
Hillel Lodge
Hillel Student Union
Inspire Community Support Services
Local Agencies Serving Immigrants
Multifaith Housing Initiative
Nepean, Rideau & Osgoode Community Resource Centre
Network of Jewish Human Services Agencies
North Renfrew Family Services
Ontario Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Ontario Community Support Association
Ontario Health East Region CSS Advisory Committee
Ottawa Blin Community
Ottawa Cancer Foundation
Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women
Ottawa Food Bank
Ottawa Health Team (Ontario Health)
Ottawa Hospice Palliative Care Network
Ottawa Jewish Community School
Ottawa Local Immigrant Partnership
Ottawa Police Service's CORE Strategy Integrated Situation Table
Ottawa Public Library
Ottawa Sikh Society
Ottawa Victim Services
Pinecrest Queensway Community Health Centre
Refugee 613
Roberts/Smart Centre
Sandy Hill Community Health Centre
Social Planning Council of Ottawa
Somerset West Community Health Centre
Southeast Community Health Centre
Support Services Network for Male Survivors
The Osgoode Youth Association
The Royal Ottawa Hospital
YMCA of the National Capital Region

PROGRAM FUNDERS

JFS OTTAWA RECEIVES FUNDING FROM:

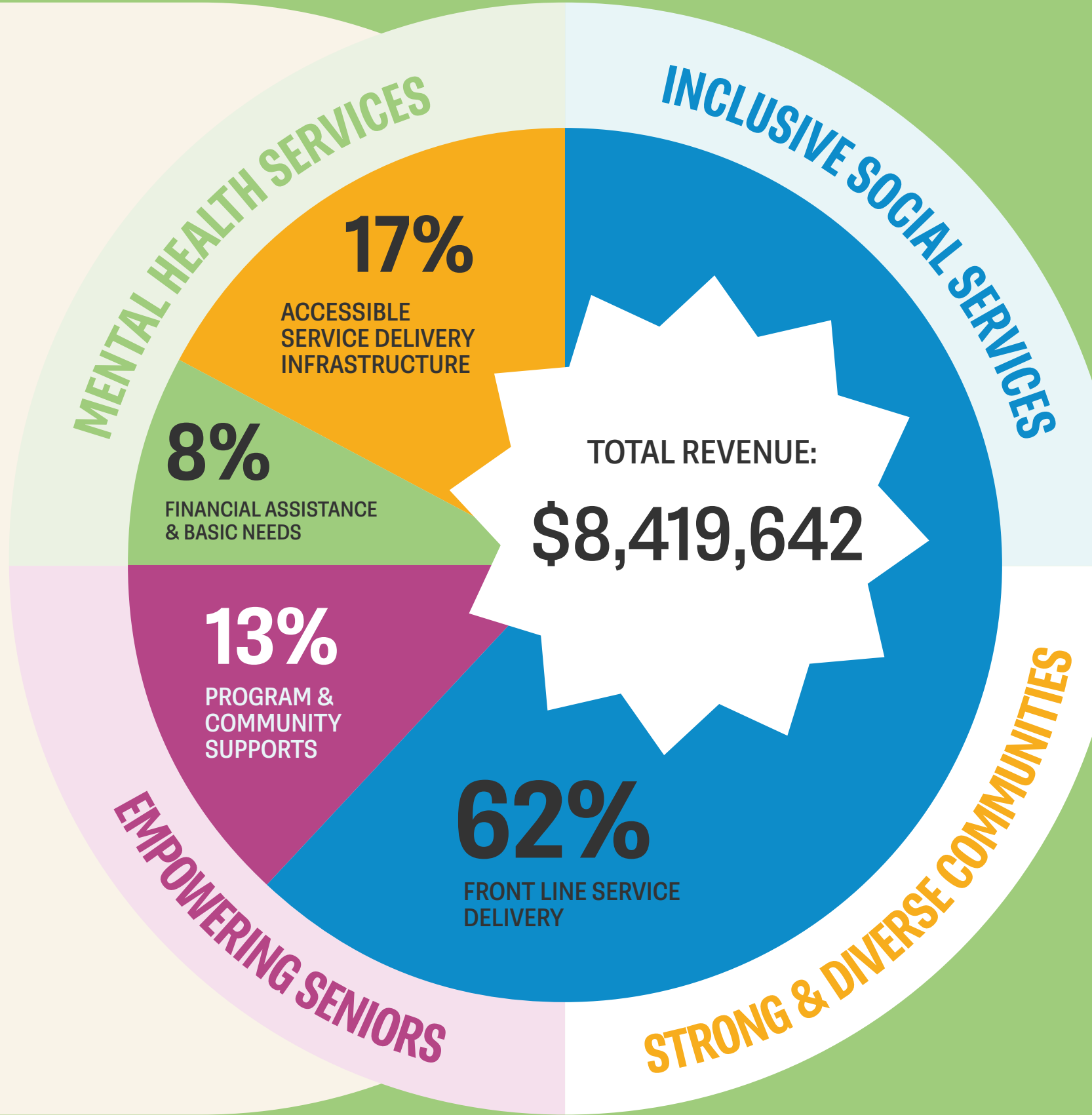
Beth Shalom Legacy Fund
Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
City of Ottawa
Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany
Desjardins
Employment and Social Development Canada
EQ Homes
F.K. Morrow Foundation
Freedman Holdings
Friends Bingo Hall
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Irving Rivers
J.P. Bickell Foundation
Jewish Federation of Ottawa
JFSO Tzedakah Foundation
Kanata Orthodontics
Lauryzen Kitchens
Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming
Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Ontario Ministry of Health
Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
Ottawa Community Foundation
Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation
Raymond James
Regional Corporation
The Azrieli Foundation
United Way East Ontario

OUR IMPACT AS AN AGENCY

This Impact Wheel illustrates how funding is invested across our agency to create meaningful impact in the community. Every dollar invested in our agency ultimately supports the four pillars that guide our work (outer ring): Inclusive Social Supports, Empowering Seniors, Mental Health and Wellness, and Building a Strong and Diverse Community. Together, these pillars reflect our commitment to helping individuals and families thrive.

By investing in JFS Ottawa, you help strengthen mental health, reduce social isolation, support successful settlement, empower seniors to age with dignity, and increase access to essential services for vulnerable community members.

Every dollar invested generates a ripple effect—helping individuals thrive, strengthening families, and building a healthier, more connected Ottawa for everyone.



YOU'RE
INVITED...



JFS
OTTAWA
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

Annual General Meeting 2026
Tuesday, September 15 | 7:00 pm -8:00 pm
JFS Ottawa Offices: 2255 Carling Avenue, 4th Floor

Elaine Rabin Social Services Award
University of Ottawa’s Music and Health Research Institute

Volunteer of the Year Award
John Lunn

KANATA
ORTHODONTICS



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Brian has more than 20 years of experience successfully assisting clients with their finance and insurance goals.

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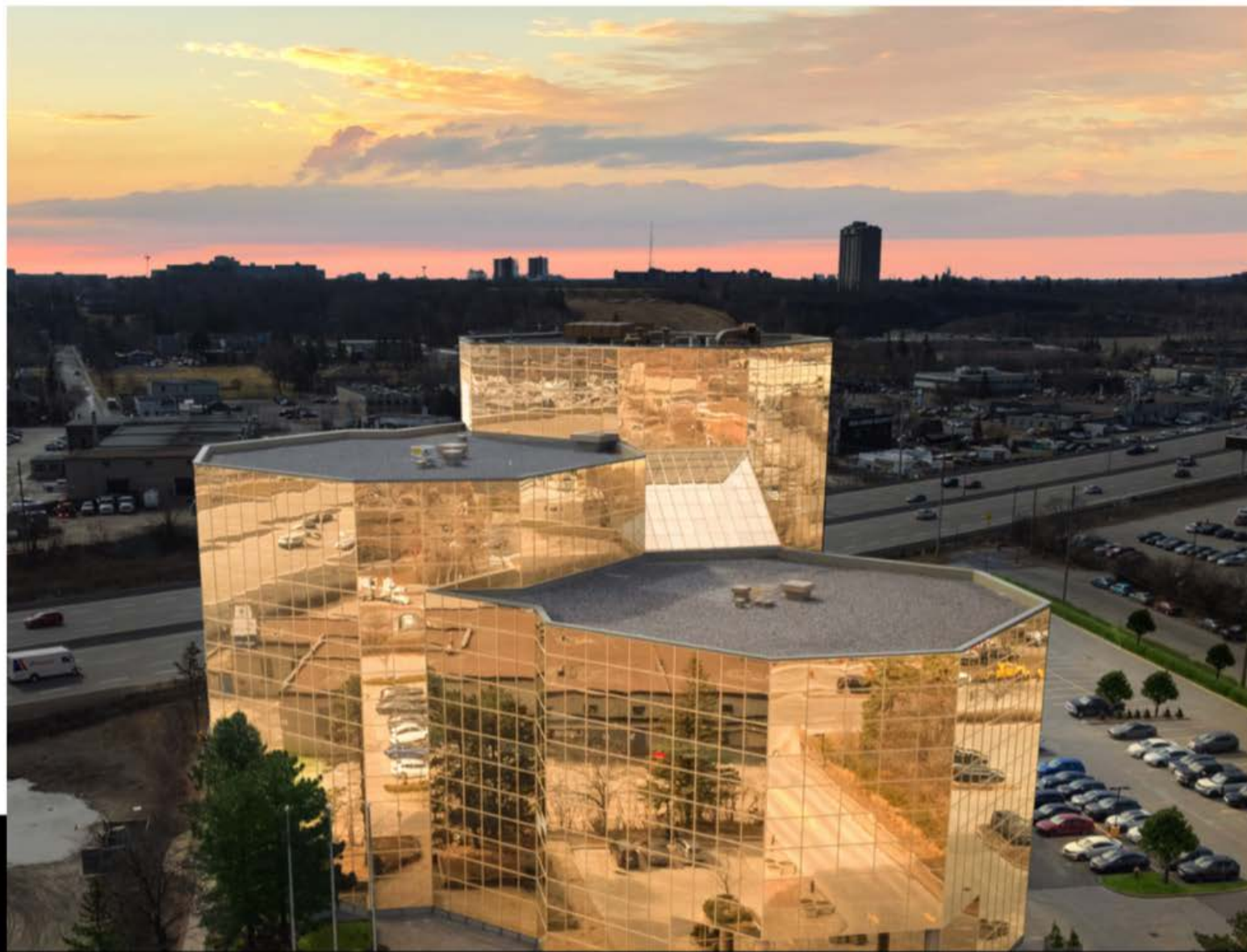
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Going a Level Above Since 1958.

Since 1958, Regional Group has been at the heart of Ottawa's growth. As a vertically integrated real estate company, we don't just develop properties; we create thriving communities where families live, grow, and build their futures. From planning to development to management, our commitment to Ottawa runs deep, ensuring that what we do today will honour traditions and support vibrant communities for generations to come.



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1. Depending on the availability of resources who can provide support in the language spoken.

NOTES

[illegible]



OUR VOLUNTEERS
MAKE IT POSSIBLE



SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS,
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY



Be *seen.*
Be *supported.*



STREETSMARTS

Support starts where people are



CONNECTION
HAPPENS HERE



Добро дошли
歡迎
स्वागत हे
ברוך пожаловать
Karibuni
Murakaza neza
מִיִּשְׁלָח
Witam
بنه راغلاست
venue Welcome
Nnọọ
Bienvenidos
Soo dh
Sannu da zuw
Kaze
欢迎
Pjila'si
By
어서 오세요
Benvenuti
Pjila'si
خوش آمدید