Unitarian House of Ottawa

Annual Report 2025–2026

COMMUNITY. DIGNITY. BELONGING.



We call it home

A CHARITABLE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY
WHERE PEOPLE COME BEFORE PROFIT

A Message from our Executive Director

One of the things I value most about Unitarian House is that our mission is visible every day. It can be seen in residents sharing a meal together, in friendships formed through activities and events, in staff taking the time to provide thoughtful care, and in the many small moments that turn a building into a community. This year has also been one of significant growth and renewal. We have invested in our building, introduced new technology to better understand resident engagement, strengthened our fundraising capacity and continued to look at how our services can evolve to better support residents now and in the future.

At the centre of all of this work is a simple belief: older adults should be able to live with dignity, connection and security, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Our charitable model gives us an opportunity to approach retirement living differently. Rather than asking how we can maximize profit, we can ask how our resources can create the greatest benefit for the people who live here.

That means maintaining affordability, investing in care and wellness, creating opportunities for meaningful connection and ensuring that Unitarian House remains strong for the next generation. There is still much work ahead. Our building requires continued investment, operating costs continue to rise, and the needs and expectations of older adults are changing. These challenges require us to be thoughtful, creative and willing to evolve.

They also create an opportunity.

My vision is for Unitarian House to continue growing into an example of what charitable retirement living can be: financially responsible, deeply connected to community and centred on the dignity and quality of life of every resident.

I am incredibly grateful to our residents, staff, volunteers, donors, families, Board and community partners for everything they contribute. Together, we are not simply maintaining Unitarian House. We are building its future.



Jennifer Brierley
Executive Director
Unitarian House of Ottawa

A Message from The President

Over the past year, your Board of Directors has been very active on many fronts. Our success has been due to the efforts of all our volunteer Board Members who have functioned well as a collaborative team. Directors have chaired committees and/or have participated as committee members. We have also liaised with numerous outside agencies whose activities impact UHO.

A special thank you to our retiring Directors –Irenka Farmilo, Janice Gray, Jackie Holzman, and Chris Hughes. Your efforts on behalf of Unitarian House have been valuable and sincerely appreciated. Thanks to each of you for the time you have given to help others. The successes we have enjoyed required coordination and collaboration with UHO Operations and with the Unitarian House Residents' Association (RA). Their ongoing involvement during this year of transition has been critical to our success.

Our Property Committee has undertaken numerous projects to ensure that our home is well maintained and moves into the future in optimum shape. A clear example of collaborative work by the Board, Operations, and the RA is the new van project, 95% financed by our residents and our Residents Association. Kudos to all involved.

Our Finance Committee has worked closely with Operations to keep our finances on an even keel. We are a unique charitable organization providing affordable housing and retirement residence services for seniors. Additionally we have provided $160,000 in financial assistance through the generosity of donors, including fellow residents. The Governance Committee have brought our policies and procedures in line with current organizational strategies. Governance will always be a work in progress.

We are working collaboratively with First Unitarian Congregation on their campus development project, advocating in the best interests of UHO and to mitigate potential adverse effects, short and long term.

We continue to have extensive discussions to ensure the future of UHO long after the end of our current lease in 2047. Building condition studies suggest that UHO is viable for at least 60 more years. We are investigating ways to extend our life on this campus. Our home, Unitarian House of Ottawa, fulfills a unique position for seniors' housing in Ottawa. We are an example of how seniors can support one another, both socially and financially, by working together as a fully integrated community sustained by our Operations, our Board of Directors, and our Residents' Association.
With everyone's efforts, our future looks bright.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Arnold

Ian M.F Arnold
M.S.C., President
Unitarian House of Ottawa Board of Directors



Unitarian House of Ottawa

A community with purpose.

Who We Are

A charitable, not-for-profit retirement community providing older adults with affordable housing, quality care, and a caring place to call home.



Our Impact

More than housing. A stronger community.

- **113** residences
- **68** senior apartments
- **45** retirement residence suites
- Charitable and not-for-profit
- Community-focused since **1984**

Our Vision

What we want for residents

Our active and engaged community is home to older adults of all means and circumstances. People here belong, contribute and feel valued. More than residents, they are neighbours and friends, sharers and carers — and proud to call Unitarian House of Ottawa home.

Our Mission

Our role in realizing the vision

Unitarian House of Ottawa is a charitable not-for-profit organization that provides affordable housing as well as quality care and support for older adults. We enable a vibrant, fulfilling seniors' community where residents, staff and volunteers contribute together to the wellbeing and safety of those who live here — and will continue to do so for decades to come.

What We Stand For

The commitments that guide us in all we do.

Community

We believe people's lives are richer, happier and healthier in community. We foster engagement in our community while respecting individuals' independence and personal choices.

Quality

We personalize the care and support we provide to suit each individual, ensuring health and safety and upholding high standards for our facilities and services.

Respect

We honour the unique value of every member of our community, listening with interest and ensuring all voices are heard.

Kindness

We maintain an appreciative culture, seeking opportunities to give thanks and recognize each other, and to work and live in harmony.

Openness

We are open to change, excited by new possibilities, and think outside our own boxes.

Our Strategic Plan in Action

This year was one of strengthening our foundation.

As we move further along in our strategic plan, we continue to focus our energy on the areas that will have the greatest impact over the next five years. We are doing so in a complex environment: some residents require financial support while others do not; some need care and living supports while others live more independently; our campus is changing; and we must continue to balance mission, financial sustainability, and the stewardship of our physical infrastructure. These realities continue to guide our direction.

Our strategic areas of focus

Where we'll direct our energies in the next five years

IDENTITY
Who we are

Vision
Mission

Sustaining access to affordable, supportive housing

Supporting people as they age

Reimagining our future on campus

CULTURE
How we act

Commitments
Ways of working

Ensuring a strong, adaptive foundation for UHO

PEOPLE • PLACE • PURPOSE • POSSIBILITY

How this strategic plan came to life this year

A stronger wellness direction

We continued moving more intentionally in the direction of wellness, with increasing attention to how care, hospitality, activity, and community experience work together.

Reviewing what we provide

We are actively assessing the services and supports we provide to both Retirement Residence and Senior Apartment residents to ensure our model continues to respond to changing needs.

Building fundraising pathways

We are strengthening fundraising pathways to help sustain our charitable mission and support affordability, programming, and future growth.

Preparing for a growing campus

We have begun preparing for a changing and growing campus, ensuring Unitarian House is positioned to adapt thoughtfully to what comes next.

Together, these steps are helping build a stronger, more adaptive foundation for the future of Unitarian House.

Unitarian House of Ottawa

The Year at a Glance

We call it home.

Real people. Meaningful impact.
A stronger tomorrow.



10,000+
hours of volunteer time

Powering our community with care.

100+
volunteers

Sharing time, talent and compassion.

$200,000+
in donations

Investing in residents, programs and a brighter future.

$1.4 million
in capital repairs

Maintaining and improving our home for today and tomorrow.

~70%
average activity participation

A vibrant and engaged community.

New initiatives

Investing in wellness, community spaces and technology to enhance daily life.

Unitarian House of Ottawa

A Year at a Glance

Moments that made a difference.







Celebrating community

Friends. Laughter. Belonging.













Music brings us together

Good conversations, brighter days







Unitarian House of Ottawa

A COMMUNITY FOR BRIGHTER TOMORROWS

Our Financial Assistance Program



A home should not become unaffordable simply because someone grows older.

The Financial Assistance Fund is central to the mission of Unitarian House of Ottawa because it helps ensure residents can continue to call Unitarian House home, regardless of their financial circumstances.

The Fund provides self-subsidized financial assistance to residents who need additional support, with no government funding for this program. It is sustained through the generosity of donors and community supporters.

In 2025–26, the Fund provided **$151,056** in financial assistance to residents, made possible through the generosity of donors and community supporters.

Senior living is becoming more and more expensive, and the need for affordable, supportive housing continues to grow. It is imperative that we continue to fundraise for this important cause.

Unitarian House is doing this work well and is a model worth investing in for the future and for generations to come.

> *Unitarian House has given me more than a home – it has given me a community.*
>
> — Resident

$65k
Raised in Fundraising Initiatives

$151k
Provided in Financial Assistance

Over 10%
of the population is subsidized

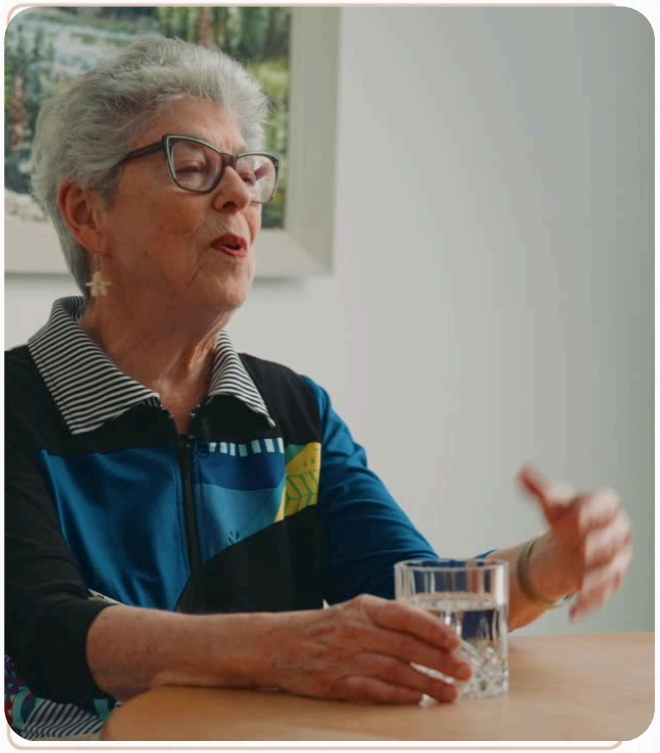
Affordable homes. Stronger futures.

A Lifetime of Building Community

Jackie Holzman, housing advocate and former Mayor of Ottawa, championing stronger, more inclusive communities.

After a lifetime of building communities across Ottawa, former mayor Jackie Holzman wasn't looking for luxury when it came time to retire, she was looking for community. More than 40 years later, the retirement community she watched take shape has become the place she proudly calls home.

Jackie has spent much of her life advocating for strong, inclusive communities and affordable housing, so when it came time to look for retirement living, naturally Unitarian House came to mind.



Looking for a Place to Call Home

In May 1982, representing the Social Planning Council, Jackie attended a Saturday workshop at the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa during the early stages of the development. There, she met members of the original Board, including her now husband, John Rutherford.

Jackie's move to Unitarian House came at an extraordinary time. She and John moved into one of the 68 Senior Apartments just two weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic reached Ontario.

Despite the uncertainty and isolation of those early months, it was the sense of community that made the transition so easy. The relationships between neighbours, residents helping residents, and the commitment of staff and volunteers reinforced exactly what had drawn Jackie to Unitarian House in the first place.

> *"More than 40 years after watching Unitarian House take shape, Jackie now calls it home."*

A Model for Connected, Independent Living

As Ottawa's charitable retirement community, Unitarian House has long been built on the idea that residents are not simply recipients of services — they are active participants in community life. Residents volunteer at the front desk, care for the gardens, lead activities, support one another and contribute their time and talents in countless ways.

This philosophy reflects the kind of community Jackie has advocated for throughout her life: one where older adults can remain independent, connected and engaged while knowing that support and friendship are close at hand.

It also reflects a growing recognition of the importance of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), communities where a large proportion of residents are older adults, allowing neighbours, services and community supports to work together to help people remain independent and connected as they age.

Life at Unitarian House

Connection. Creativity. Purpose.

Life here is about more than a place to live — it's about people, experiences and opportunities to stay active, engaged and connected. Our programs, events and shared spaces help residents nurture friendships and pursue what they love.






70%+
average activity participation

12+
resident-run activities

15
average participants in small groups

40
average participants at large events

A Well-Rounded Approach

UHO balances social, cultural, spiritual, physical and cognitive programming.

Popular programs include:

- Chair Yoga
- Musical Performances
- Music We Remember
- Coffee & Conversation
- Giant Crossword
- Travelogues



Building Community Together

Socials, special meals and outdoor BBQs provide a rich social life and help build community and belonging.

Additional Initiatives Include:

1. Establishing regular visits from the Handi House Walker Repair Clinic, providing convenient walker servicing for residents.
2. Hosting quarterly Activities Feedback Meetings for our retirement residents to share suggestions and provide input on outings, programs, and activities.
3. Continuing to adapt programming based on resident interests, participation trends, and feedback.
4. Working collaboratively to identify opportunities to connect our residents with programs and activities that support social connection and active living.



Intergenerational Programming

We are connecting with our neighbours, River Parkway Children's Centre daycare once a month so seniors and toddlers can benefit from one another.
Sing-alongs and visits have been going well.

"Different generations. A stronger community."

Wellness Initiative

Supporting residents as their needs change.

Our Wellness team provides individualized care and support while helping residents remain active members of our community. Because living well is about more than care — it's about connection, choice and belonging.

- **Personalized care and support**
- **Wellness programs**
- **A culture of respect and inclusion**



"Wellness means more than care. It means being known, having choices and staying connected."



Introducing Katrina Galariana, Director of Wellness

Katrina is a compassionate and highly respected nurse who brings with her a strong commitment to resident-centred care, team collaboration, and continuous learning. Throughout her nursing career, she has demonstrated a natural interest in leadership, mentorship, and supporting both residents and staff in meaningful ways. Katrina is deeply focused on professional growth and ongoing development, and we are excited to support her as she steps into this important leadership role within our community.

Good Food Fuels Wellness

Angelo Karalekas, our dietary manager, has come up with a more seasonal way to provide meals — we now rotate our menus every quarter and run on a 4 week rotation. We introduced an alternative menu to accommodate any sensitivities or preferences. All of these things tie into wellness, ensuring our residents enjoy nutritious, delicious meals that support their individual needs and choices.



Investing in Our Future

A strong mission requires a safe, accessible and well-maintained home.

This was a significant year for capital projects at Unitarian House, with another major year still ahead. We upgraded the fire alarm panel, replaced the hydro meter stacks, and continued work on the building envelope through sealant repairs and cladding improvements. By far the largest initiative was the elevator modernization project. This multi-month undertaking required patience and flexibility across the community, and we are deeply grateful to residents, staff and families for working together while operating with just one elevator.

Fire alarm panel
Upgraded to support safety and reliability

Hydro meter stacks
Replaced to strengthen building infrastructure

Building envelope
Sealant and cladding improvements for long-term durability

Elevator modernization
A major multi-month accessibility and reliability project

Transportation
A new accessible Mercedes Sprinter van

A Special Thank You
A special shout-out goes to the Residents' Association for their remarkable $24,000 donation this year. It says so much about Unitarian House that one of our major donors is our own community.



our van connects our home with our community



A Van for a More Connected Community
The capital item that generated the most excitement was the purchase of a new van. Over the past two years, our incredible community raised $130,000 toward a new Mercedes Sprinter van. The van helps connect our home with the wider community through shopping trips, appointments and more.

Volunteer Drivers Needed
We will also be launching a volunteer driver recruitment program. If you are interested, please reach out to activities@unitarianhouse.ca.

Out and About
Residents have been enjoying Friday outings every two weeks — from the Tulip Festival and blueberry picking to gallery visits and more.

Together, these investments are helping ensure Unitarian House remains safe, connected and ready for the future.

Unitarian House of Ottawa



Staff & Volunteers

The people behind our mission.

Our Staff

Our staff work incredibly hard and embody the mission of Unitarian House every day. They bring compassion, professionalism, and care to every part of community life. This year, we continued investing in our team through stronger benefits and meaningful opportunities to connect and celebrate together.

47 staff

20 full time

29 employees with enhanced benefits



Better benefits provided to **29 employees**, including a virtual physician service, an employee assistance program, and 4% RRSP matching.

The staff appreciation fund helps us treat staff to an annual party and team-building events throughout the year.

Our Volunteers

Golden Hearts
Honouring the volunteers who make our community stronger.

Our volunteers are at the heart of what we do. This year, we honoured many of them with Golden Hearts. So much of our community is built on what volunteers contribute. Many of our volunteers are also residents, strengthening the sense of community even further.

Gardeners help keep the property looking beautiful.

Front desk volunteers help maintain communication and a warm atmosphere at reception after hours and on weekends.

The security team helps keep the building safe.

Our librarians are volunteers.

Most of our volunteers are residents, strengthening the community even more.

People create community

Unitarian House of Ottawa

Community, Fundraising & Generosity

Building support for residents, strengthening community, and investing in the future.



The Grand Parade continues to be one of our most important community fundraisers.

$65K+ raised
from our two largest fundraisers: the Annual Fundraising Dinner and The Grand Parade

$12K raised
through Giving Tuesday for our van fund

28K+ donated
by the Residents' Association
supporting resident initiatives, the new van, and the Financial Assistance Fund



Fundraising Dinner Feature

We were thrilled to welcome Stephen Beckta as guest speaker at our Fundraising Dinner. As President of the Beckta Restaurant Group—home to Beckta Dining & Wine, Gezellig, and Curated by Beckta—Stephen has built an extraordinary career rooted in hospitality, innovation, and community leadership. Most recently, his work with The Ottawa Hospital helped develop an innovative food service program that improved patient nutrition and recovery outcomes, work recognized with the Ontario Cancer Innovation Award. His philosophy around hospitality, inclusion, and the experience of food aligns beautifully with conversations underway at Unitarian House as we launched our kitchen renovation project.
The evening's conversation was led by Sam Laprade, award-winning broadcaster and host of *An Hour to Give*.

We look forward to future collaboration and to continuing to improve how we feed and care for our community.

Unitarian House of Ottawa

Community Support in Action

Residents, donors, and community partners help strengthen our mission.

Unitarian House Residents' Association Spotlight

The Unitarian House Residents' Association (RA) is our most consistent major donor. A vibrant and robust association, representing all residents, it has been in place since UHO's inception. It enhances resident life by organizing ongoing activities and special events that complement UHO-led programming. These initiatives encourage resident leadership, independence, physical activity, social connection, and individual psychological benefits. In the RA's last fiscal year, over $28,000 was donated, enabling significant contributions toward the purchase of the new UHO van and to the Financial Assistance Fund for residents.

M. Suzanne Arnold, President
Unitarian House Residents' Association



Growing Community Partnerships

We have built community partnerships with Tea and Toast, Darling Solutions, Medical Arts, RBC Advantage, and COBS Bread. We also received wonderful support for our silent auction from local businesses and community friends. The more we connect, the more we are able to share our mission.

A STRONGER TOMORROW, TOGETHER.

Unitarian House of Ottawa

OUR FINANCIALS

Financial Highlights

Total Revenue & Expenses

Total Revenue

$4,197,198

up 5.3% from 2025

(2025: $3,987,441)

Total Expenses

$3,382,903

down 4.2% from 2025

(2025: $3,529,542)

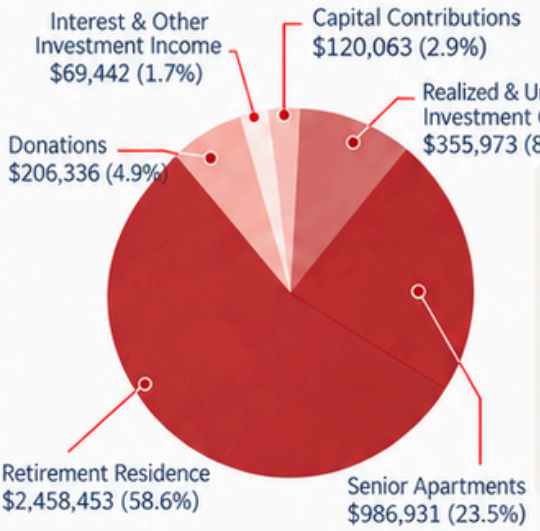
Annual Surplus

$482,316

up from $120,708 in 2025

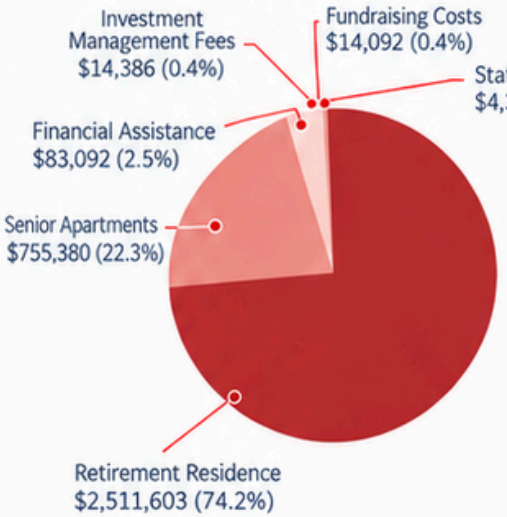
(2025: $120,708)

Revenue Sources



Retirement Residence	$2,458,453	58.6%
Senior Apartments	$986,931	23.5%
Realized & Unrealized Investment Gains	$355,973	8.5%
Donations	$206,336	4.9%
Capital Contributions	$120,063	2.9%
Interest & Other Investment Income	$69,442	1.7%

Expense Breakdown



Retirement Residence	$2,511,603	74.2%
Senior Apartments	$755,380	22.3%
Financial Assistance	$83,092	2.5%
Investment Management Fees	$14,386	0.4%
Fundraising Costs	$14,092	0.4%
Staff Appreciation	$4,350	0.1%

2026 totals shown. Revenue includes all funds. Expenses shown before amortization and deferred capital contribution adjustments.

Unitarian House of Ottawa

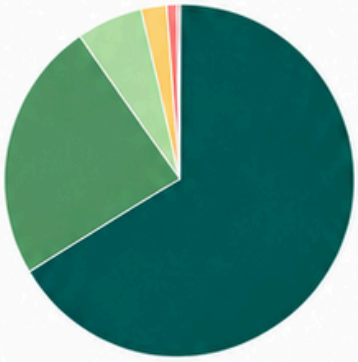
Financial Stewardship

Responsible today. Sustainable tomorrow.

We are committed to careful financial management so we can continue to provide affordable housing, quality services and a strong community for years to come.

Operating Revenue

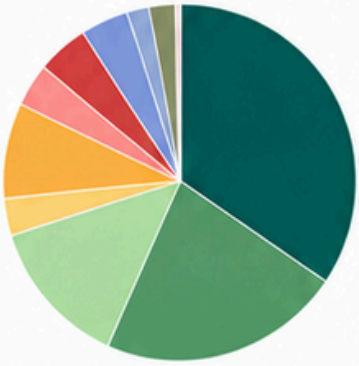
WHERE OUR OPERATING REVENUE COMES FROM



Retirement residence fees for units	$2,297,952	66.7%
Senior apartment occupancy revenue	$924,305	26.8%
Other (parking, fees, laundry etc.)	$162,031	4.7%
Meal revenue	$48,622	1.4%
Grants and contributions	$12,474	0.4%

Operating Expenses

WHERE THE MONEY GOES



Nursing	$1,118,334	34.2%
Food services	$709,144	21.7%
Administration	$453,964	13.9%
Activities	$119,800	3.7%
Repairs and maintenance	$310,655	9.5%
Housekeeping	$123,346	3.8%
Utilities	$151,976	4.7%
Realty taxes	$156,604	4.8%
Professional fees	$71,174	2.2%
Insurance	$49,196	1.5%
Membership fees	$3,790	0.1%

The complete audited financial statements for the year ended May 31, 2026 are available separately.

Your support helps Unitarian House remain a vibrant, welcoming and accessible community for seniors.

Donations recorded during the 2025–2026 fiscal year supported several important impact areas, including:

Preserving Our Community

The Preservation Fund supports the ongoing preservation and long-term sustainability of Unitarian House.

Financial Assistance

The Financial Assistance Fund provides rent-geared-to-income and retirement subsidies to our community.

Supporting Our Staff

The Staff Reppreciation Fund provides a way for residents and families to recognize and show appreciation for the dedicated people who care for and support our community.

Supporting Mobility

The Van Replacement Fund held the donations for the purchase of a new Sprinter mobility van for Unitarian House.

Looking Ahead

Strengthening our foundation for the future.

In the year ahead, we will continue building on our strengths while investing in the people, programs, and infrastructure that support our mission.

- Strengthening our Dietary Services Department.
- Implementing Synergy, a program designed to enhance service and the guest experience.
- Connecting our departments more closely and continuing to operate along the wellness continuum.
- Investing in our building through the parking lot expansion project, electrical distribution work, and Wi-Fi infrastructure project.
- Preparing for our changing campus by implementing building improvements that keep us safe and efficient.
- Focusing on hospitality and the resident experience.
- Continuing to strengthen our foundation through marketing, resident packages, and improved processes.
- Protecting affordability by creating realistic fundraising plans and budget improvements that allow Unitarian House to grow, thrive, and keep prices affordable.

A stronger tomorrow, together.

Governance and Leadership

Guiding our mission. Planning for the future.

Board of Directors 2025-2026



Ian Arnold
President



Louise Schwartz
Vice President



Janet Sutherland
Treasurer



Irenka Farmilo
Secretary

Directors

Katrina Anders
Samantha Caldwell
Matt Firestone
John Goodwin
Janice Gray
Suzanne Gumpert
Jackie Holzman
Chris Hughes
Leigh Street

Suzanne Arnold
Residents' Association President

Terry Kimmel
Congregational Liaison

Leadership Team



Jennifer Brierley
Executive Director



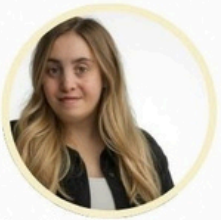
Katrina Galariana
Director of Wellness



Ryley Bell
Activity & Volunteer Coordinator



Alison Jones
Community Liaison



Emily Brewster
Communciations & Fundraising Lead



Daniel Brisebois
Maintenance Manager



Angelo Karalekas
Dietary Manager



Tony Altaher
Accounting Officer

Unitarian House of Ottawa

Thank You

for being part of Unitarian House.

Your generosity, time and support help ensure Unitarian House remains a safe, welcoming and vibrant home for older adults — today and for generations to come.

Together, we are building a more inclusive and compassionate community where people can age with dignity, connection and a true sense of belonging.

Ways to Give

There are many meaningful ways to support Unitarian House and help us continue our important work.

Make a Donation

Help provide quality care, programs and financial assistance for residents.

Give in Honour or Memory

Celebrate a loved one with a meaningful gift.

Become a Monthly Donor

Provide ongoing support for a brighter future.

Leave a Legacy

Include Unitarian House in your estate plans.

Stay Connected

www.unitarianhouse.ca

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