



Effective. Just. Humane.

ANNUAL REPORT  
2022

## OUR MISSION

THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF ONTARIO IS DEDICATED TO EFFECTIVE, JUST AND HUMANE RESPONSES TO CRIME AND ITS CAUSES.

## OUR VISION

We promote practical, evidenced-based policies while providing services, programs and education to all those affected by our criminal justice system. This work includes:

- Building bridges between people leaving incarceration and their communities to help them build productive lives.
- Advocating for fair treatment for all incarcerated people in accordance with international standards for human rights.
- Raising awareness of the root causes of crime and calling on Ontarians to share responsibility for addressing them.
- Developing policies, programs, and educational material through our [Centre of Research & Policy](#).



# REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT & CEO– 2022

We are delighted to present our 2022 Annual Report of the John Howard Society of Ontario.

Last year, the JHSO Board of Directors struck an equity committee with the goal of advancing anti-oppression and anti-racism (AOAR) principles at all levels of the organization. This year, the Committee developed an equity statement that defines equity, diversity and inclusion for the organization and outlines key commitments to remove barriers, promote access and opportunity and foster an environment where everyone feels safe and heard. The Equity Committee will monitor progress on those goals and identify opportunities to build on our AOAR work.

Included in those commitments is ensuring diverse voices are included in the work of the Centre of Research & Policy (the Centre) and to that end, the Centre has struck a Research & Policy Fellowship program specifically aimed at recruiting individuals from the Black or African Diaspora community. The Fellowship program is designed to create opportunity for individuals looking to develop experience in the field through work on a wide range of projects across the different portfolios at the Centre. We are preparing to extend a similar fellowship opportunity the following year to members of Indigenous communities.

The Centre has continued important research and evaluation work including a report on homelessness and the justice system and evaluation of JHS Thunder Bay's residential reintegration program. Over the past year, the Centre also launched the JHS Learning Hub, an open access website with resources and e-learning modules for front line workers serving justice-involved people. The Learning Hub has already reached thousands of people across the province helping to ensure that justice involved individuals get help for civil legal issues that arise related to things like housing, employment or income support.

This year also marks a period of transition as recruitment and hiring of a new CEO took place as a result of Paula's retirement. Paula retires after 20 years with the organization. Under Paula's strong leadership, JHSO has added research and evaluation capacity with the establishment of the Centre of Research and Policy and the reach and impact of the organization has grown immensely. Paula provided support and guidance, not only to JHSO staff, but to the network of Executive Directors of JHS offices across the province. We wish her the best for this next chapter and we are thrilled to welcome Christin Cullen to the role of CEO. Christin brings a wealth of experience from her time as Executive Director of JHS York Region. Thank you to the Board of Directors for their important role in facilitating the recruitment and hiring process and we look forward to working with Christin moving forward.

Thank you to our staff and volunteers who continue to drive change with their passion and dedication. We appreciate the Board of Directors for their good governance and accountability and are always immensely thankful to our donors for allowing us to continue this important work. Thank you for your support as we continue to strive for justice, promote humanity and build a stronger future for us all.



*Paula Osmick*



*R. Christin Cullen*

# PAULA OSMOK - REFLECTION

I will be forever grateful for the privilege to have worked with people who share my values, vision, and for whom I have tremendous admiration and respect. The list is long and includes many Directors, some who serve on the Board today. In particular, a special thank you to Rob MacLellan, Bruce Simpson and Ron Cuthbert. They took a chance and offered me the ED position and supported adding research capacity to JHSO. There are many Executive Directors on that list as well who encouraged me to apply and backed my vision of how JHSO could better serve our communities.

The Centre of Research and Policy at the John Howard Society of Ontario was formally established in 2003. I am proud to have done the groundwork in founding the Centre, but also to work with colleagues who have taken it on as their own and made what we have achieved possible. As Reza Ahmadi and Maureen Zuniga stepped into more senior roles, they began to assemble and solidify the structures and, later with Jacqueline Tasca, the relationships needed to advance our new work. JHSO became a leader in our field and continues to enjoy a position of both respect and high regard. That same talent and commitment continues to be demonstrated by all JHSO colleagues today. It has been an honour to work with each and every one of you, and to play a part in the quality work produced by our team. I have no doubt that JHSO's contributions will continue to be timely, relevant and impactful.

I want to recognize Bruce Simpson and Ron Cuthbert a second time. They have both held the role of Board Chair during my 20 years with JHSO, and they managed to balance their oversight with strong support. Their steadfast and wise leadership to our Board helped steer us in the right direction.

I am excited for the future of JHSO with Christin Cullen as the new CEO. Having worked closely with Christin for many years, I know JHSO will continue to make important contributions to both policy and research as well as grow our capacity to do this and other important work.

Finally, I need to recognize my colleagues at the local offices who change lives every day in communities across Ontario. I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you and I continue to be in awe of your skills and the care with which you do your work.

While I am retiring, I am only retiring from JHSO. Fortunately, I have a full bucket list ahead including travel, some art classes, volunteer work, and lots of walks with the fur boy in the picture. And, of course, I'll be active in the JHSO Alumni Association, to which I was formally admitted on June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year in a ceremony officiated by Chair Marg Bodnar. This is the place where our working relationships become lifelong friendships.

One never really leaves John Howard. There's a song from the 70s about that, "*you can check out any time you like, but you can never leave.*" The level of commitment and strong values that I've experienced working beside you will stay with me forever. I will look back on this time with deep gratitude. I will always be a champion for and supporter of JHSO as it continues to make this world a better place.

Thank you.



# RESEARCH & POLICY PUBLICATIONS

## A FOUNDATION TO BUILD ON

In March, JHSO released the final evaluation report entitled, “[A Foundation to Build On: An Evaluation of John Howard Society of Thunder Bay’s Residential Reintegration Program.](#)” The report focuses on a transitional housing facility in Thunder Bay that supports individuals who are in conflict with the law and are either homeless or at-risk of being homeless. The evaluation was structured under a realist evaluation framework and aimed to contribute to Ontario’s 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness by illuminating what works for youth, women, and Indigenous Peoples leaving provincial correctional institutions. The evaluation examined the successes, challenges, and outcomes for individuals in securing housing in the community while bolstering independent living skills, and reducing their risks of homelessness and recidivism. The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on service delivery, the program, and the evaluation, which is outlined throughout the report.



## NO FIXED ADDRESS

In May, JHSO, in partnership with Canadian Observatory on Homelessness and Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, launched our report, “[No Fixed Address: The Intersections of Justice Involvement and Homelessness.](#)” The report represents the first phase of a new research endeavor conducted by JHSO in partnership with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness and the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. This report explores the vicious cycle of justice involvement and homelessness. People involved with the justice system are at an increased risk of becoming homeless, while people living with homelessness are at an increased risk of incarceration. There are various systemic barriers that serve to trap people in this cycle of homelessness and justice involvement, preventing reintegration into society after incarceration. This report also analyzed over a decade’s worth of data on admissions to Ontario’s correctional institutions for people with No Fixed Address. The findings suggest that the number of admissions of people with No Fixed Address has increased over the past decade. Furthermore, the problems are worse for some people than they are for others. It is clear that changes to policy and practices are required to prevent more people from becoming trapped in this cycle.



# RESEARCH & EVALUATION

## EMPOWER EMPLOYMENT PILOT PROJECT

In partnership with a group of academic experts, JHSO has researched and implemented an innovative employment pilot project delivered at three distinct sites across Ontario (York Region, Sarnia and London). The project promotes employment and social participation to individuals from marginalized communities who may also be in conflict with the law. The project includes a research and evaluation component, which will be supported by academic experts. The findings will help inform other programs related to employment and the target communities and will be used to develop concrete solutions and recommendations. The program is currently being delivered and anticipates a participation of 60 persons (20 at each site) from Black, Indigenous and newcomer communities.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS PEER SUPPORT (MAPS) PROGRAM

The Mental Health and Addictions Peer Support (MAPS) Program is staffed by Peer Support Workers, who are individuals with lived experience, who will work with clients one-on-one to explore recovery goals and help connect them with community supports and services. Clients are referred by Probation & Parole offices to the following local JHS offices: JHS Toronto, JHS York Region, and JHS Peel-Halton-Dufferin.

## A SECOND CHANCE IN SIGHT

In collaboration with a group of eight academics across North America, JHSO is in the process of supporting a research project, A Second Chance in Sight, which will investigate employer perspectives towards hiring individuals with a criminal history. Funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the study will include a systematic literature review, qualitative interviews and surveys to individuals in hiring positions at various organizations.

## IMPACTS OF CANNABIS USE ON DRUG TREATMENT COURT PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO

In collaboration with the **CMHA Ontario**, JHSO is conducting a research project examining the Impacts of Cannabis Use on Drug Treatment Court (DTC) Programs in Ontario. This Ontario wide community-based research project explores the impact of cannabis use on mental health, and whether it helps or hinders a participant's completion of a DTC program. In addition to understanding participants' experiences, the project explores how service providers perceive cannabis use and the resulting impact on how clients are supported. The objective is to clarify the relationship between cannabis use and mental health among diverse populations, including any disproportionate impacts on women and racialized groups, the impacts of criminalization for people who use cannabis, and how the legalization of cannabis can impact potential policy changes within the justice system.

## EVALUATION

JHSO is currently in the process of evaluating 6 local JHS programs and services. Current and on-going evaluations include the JHS Ottawa's ReSet Project, JHS Hamilton's All 4 One program, JHS Kawartha's Mapping a Plan project, the Mental Health and Addictions Peer Support Program delivered at JHS Toronto, JHS Peel and JHS York Region, the Systems Navigation Program offered through JHS Peel and JHS Toronto, and the EMPower Employment Program delivered at JHS York Region, JHS Sarnia, and JHS London.

# **POLICY INITIATIVES**

## **CORRECTIONAL REFORM COALITION**

The Correctional Reform Coalition is a group of organizations and individuals dedicated to improvements in corrections in Ontario, co-chaired by JHSO and the Institute for Advancements in Mental Health (IAM). Formed in 2019, this coalition is a merger of the Correctional Health Care Coalition and the Coalition on Reforming Segregation in Ontario's Correctional institutions, both established in 2017. The Coalition focuses advocacy on four main areas: Pre-cursors to justice involvement; conditions of confinement; rehabilitation, reintegration and discharge planning; and amplifying the voices of prisoners.

Over the past year, the Coalition has written to the Ministry of the Solicitor General regarding the health and safety risks faced by imprisoned people stemming from COVID-19 transmission. Recently, the Coalition led a pre-election social media campaign highlighting issues in corrections and opportunities to engage with candidates on criminal justice issues in order to bring about needed change post election.

## **FRESH START COALITION**

The Fresh Start Coalition is an initiative started by JHSO along with JHS Canada and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. Launched in November 2021, the Fresh Start Coalition brings together over 90 civil society groups to advocate for a "spent" record regime – a system that would automatically seal a person's criminal record once they have successfully completed their sentence and lived in the community without further convictions. The coalition includes a wide range of organizations, including Black- and Indigenous-led groups, mental health advocates, housing support providers, and organizations focused on fighting gender-based violence from across the country.

Currently, the Coalition is meeting with Ministers and Members of Parliament to garner support for a spent regime. JHSO and other members of the Coalition have also participated in consultations by the Federal Government on a proposed automatic sequestering of criminal records system that would involve automatic record suspensions for certain convictions.

## **TRANSITIONS IN CARE**

The Transitions in Care project is an initiative led by the Indigenous Primary Care Council and the Alliance for Healthier Communities in partnership with the Ministry of the Solicitor General. The goal of the project is to ensure individuals being released from Ontario's provincial correctional institutions have access to wraparound health services and supports including primary care, mental health care, harm reduction, social care and access to material supports. JHSO has been working together with DPRA Canada on research and deliverables for the project which include a gap analysis and the development of provincial and local partnership frameworks. This project is set to wrap up at the end of June.

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## JHS LEARNING HUB

In February this year, with the generous support of the Law Foundation of Ontario, JHSO launched its new learning platform, the [JHS Learning Hub](#), a free online training and educational website dedicated to frontline staff who serve justice-involved individuals in Ontario. This new platform, the first of its kind in Canada, offers tools and resources to frontline workers to better equip and empower them to spot and respond to their clients' civil legal issues, ultimately helping break down barriers to accessing civil justice.

These resources were designed to address information gaps previously identified by JHSO's 2020 research report, [Legally Bound: Addressing the Civil Legal Needs of Justice-Involved Ontarians](#), which revealed the unaddressed housing, income and other civil legal issues that negatively impact the lives of justice-involved Ontarians long after they exit the criminal justice system. The report also found that justice-involved individuals tend to harbour distrust for legal systems but will reach out to trusted frontline social service staff when they encounter legal challenges in their day-to-day lives. These individuals turn to frontline staff in times of crisis, and the resources on the Learning Hub help ensure staff are well-positioned to improve access to legal information and make quality referrals for help. Arming frontline staff with this knowledge and information can help them recognize issues, intervene sooner and connect clients to local legal supports which can help stop the costly cycle of collateral justice consequences.

Through engaging and interactive training videos, as well as handout resources and a certification feature, frontline staff from social service agencies across the province can access the Learning Hub to build their own knowledge and awareness of some of the most common civil legal issues their clients are facing and promote greater access to justice.

## JHS LEARNING HUB ANALYTICS

**2600: USERS**

**225: CERTIFICATES**



## MEDIA

The launch of JHSO's new online learning platform, the JHS Learning Hub, garnered excellent media coverage this past year, in print and digital formats of the Toronto Star. It also generated exceptional social media uptake on Twitter and LinkedIn, was highlighted in Law Times News and was shared widely throughout social and legal networks in Ontario.

The work of the Fair Chances Coalition was also featured in the media this past year, with articles in the Sudbury Star, the Hamilton Spectator, amongst others, and coverage on City News as well, garnering the attention of leaders in the employment space.

In addition, JHSO was engaged by various outlets for our expertise and insights, including commentary on a Toronto Star article about the Toronto encampments and a discussion about police record checks in employment on the Changing Lenses Podcast.

Finally, JHSO's presence on social media grew this year as well, particularly on Twitter. With over 250 new followers, over 500 mentions, and an average of 10,000 impressions on our tweets monthly, JHSO continues to grow our brand and community awareness of our mission

TORONTO STAR

METCALF  
FOUNDATION



CityNews

HAMILTON **THE** SPECTATOR

Linked **in**



THE  
SUDBURY STAR

LAW TIMES

TORONTO STAR

## DONOR-SUPPORTED PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Thanks to our compassionate donors, JHSO helps families stay connected with loved ones who are incarcerated. The Transportation Program provides low-cost transportation to federal prisons in Kingston. Without this service, it would be impossible for many families to visit their loved ones – it can cost hundreds of dollars to make the trip. When people maintain or develop connections with family while they are incarcerated, they are given the gift of hope and preparation for a healthy transition back home when released.

### INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

Together, with the help of our donors, John Howard Societies across Ontario support people who are incarcerated so that they can access the support they need to start transforming their lives while they are incarcerated. Institutional Service Workers help incarcerated individuals plan for their release and build support networks in their communities. These workers meet with clients and create plans to find employment, stable housing, and/or treatment for substance and anger management issues, where needed. Most importantly, with donors' support, Institutional Service Workers help give people who are incarcerated a sense of purpose and hope. Successful reintegration planning is key to reducing risk factors of reoffending and contributes to safer communities for us all. Currently 14 local JHS offices provide Institutional Services to over 20 Provincial and Federal correctional institutions in Ontario

### BY THE NUMBERS: INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES STATISTICS 2020

**3704**  
CLIENTS SERVED

**3933**  
CLIENTS  
CONTACTS

**985**  
SESSIONS  
HELD

**367**  
VISITS BY  
STAFF

**1072**  
PARTICIPANTS IN  
SESSIONS

**4098**  
CLIENT REQUESTS

**1681**  
CLIENT REFERRALS

# LOOKING AHEAD

## INTERSECTION OF HOMELESSNESS AND JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT – PHASE 2

In May 2022, we released the No Fixed Address report, which was the culmination of the first phase of the **Intersections of Homelessness and Justice Involvement project**. Over the next 12 months we look forward to continuing our collaboration with the **Canadian Observatory on Homelessness** and the **Social Research and Demonstration Corporation** on phase 2 of the project. The next phase in the research plan is to understand the lived experiences of those who have recently been incarcerated and are now in the process of attempting to re-establish their lives after their incarceration. In this phase, specific Ontario communities will be selected, and in-depth interviews will be conducted with people with lived experience with homelessness and justice involvement from those communities. What are their experiences with finding housing after having been justice-involved? What barriers and challenges do they face in trying to re-establish themselves after release?

## COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION PLANNING TABLES

JHSO is working with DPRA Canada as consultants on a new project involving the development and operationalization of Community Reintegration Planning Tables. The project, led by the Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee (HSJCC) in partnership with the Ministry of the Solicitor General, is part of the Ministry's community reintegration strategy and is intended to support a person-centered, collaborative, multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach to release planning for high needs individuals. JHSO and DPRA Canada will be developing the framework and structure of the Community Reintegration Planning Tables and conduct an evaluation of the tables.

## FAIR CHANCES COALITION

Over the last decade, JHSO has researched and documented the ways in which Canadians who have criminal records are unfairly excluded from the workplace. Because of the stigma of a record, many of the 4 million Canadians who have one are denied even a chance at employment and the measure of social/economic stability that comes with it. Due to over-policing, over-incarceration, and systemic bias in Canada's justice system, criminal records disproportionately impact our most marginalized and racialized groups, and this only deepens and compounds the disadvantages they face. Legal reform alone can't overcome a social stigma that's rooted in widespread fears, misconceptions, and stereotypes. So, with the support of the Metcalf Foundation in 2020-2021, JHSO laid the groundwork for a broad Fair Chance Hiring movement among Toronto-based employers and beyond. Through Fair Chance Hiring training, policies and practices, the Fair Chances Coalition aims to arm employers with the knowledge and awareness to breakdown systemic, unfair barriers to employment and source from this untapped pool of talented qualified candidates to meet their labour needs. Last year, our groundwork culminated in the launch of the [Fair Chances website](#), which will help support our current major recruitment drive targeted to large employers as we aim to launch our public-facing media campaign by the end of 2022.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ron Cuthbert	President
Rob MacLellan	Vice-President
Hermon Mayers	Treasurer
Christina Ninham	Secretary
Jean LeDrew-Metcalfe	Executive Committee Member-at-large
Trisha Simpson	Executive Committee Member-at-large
Rob Thibodeau	Executive Committee Member-at-large
Bruce Simpson	Past President

## DIRECTORS

Hamza Khalid	Pauline Wainwright
Jill Evans	Dan Smith
Christopher Fleury	Jill Hillman
Peter Stephenson	Phil Wilkins
Jeff Manishen	Michael Sabo
Tom Hickey	Sandy Lychowyd
David Williams	Jennifer Rooke
Steve Scriven	Gyan Chandra

## RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD MEMBERS

Voula Marinos (Chair)	Nathan Innocente
Lisa Whittingham	Kemi S. Anazodo
Jessica Sutherland	Marsha Rampersaud
Nicole Myers	

## OUR STAFF

Paula Osmok	Executive Director
Reza Ahmadi	Director of Research & Evaluation
Jacqueline Tasca	Director of Partnerships & Strategic Initiatives ( <i>On Leave</i> )
Maureen Zuniga	Director of Human Resources & Administration
Monica Vela	Director of Finance
Safiyah Husein	Senior Policy Analyst
Aileen Simon	Education & Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Hannah Cook	Research & Evaluation Analyst
Meaghan Costa	Research & Evaluation Analyst
Justin McNeil	Research & Evaluation Specialist

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of **Avery Au** who left JHS Ontario this year. We wish him all the best in the future.



# STAFF APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION

We are pleased to announce the following staff members who completed their milestone years of service:

**15 Years:** Maureen Zuniga

**20 Years:** Paula Osmok

# VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS

A huge thank you to our dedicated volunteers and interns, without whom our work would not be possible: Aliyah, Alysha, Alyssa, Darius, Jillian, Karin, Katie, Lauren, Mehran, Nicole, Patrick, Rebekah, Sara, Zach, Zaynab.

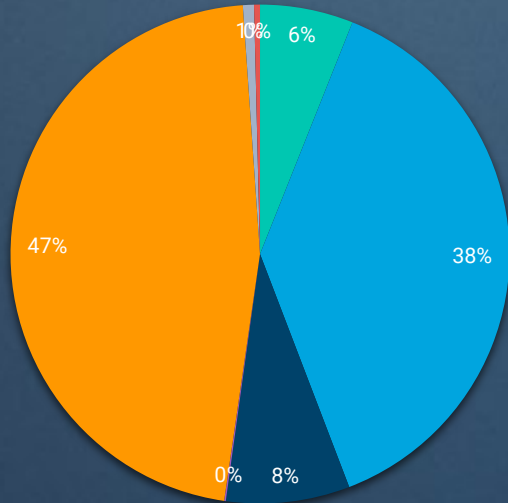
# 2021 AWARD WINNERS

**Volunteer of the Year Award:** Angie Tse  
& Lauren Konikoff



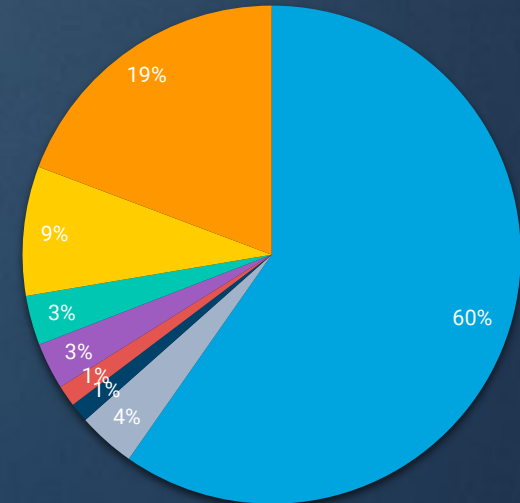
# 2021 REVENUE & EXPENDITURES

2021 Revenue  
\$1,783,029



- National Grant
- Local Office Contributions
- Fundraising
- Cost Recovery
- Misc & Other Grants
- Amortization of Deferred Rev
- Investments

2021 Expenditures  
\$1,465,064



- Salary & Benefits
- Local Office Programs
- Fundraising
- Occupancy
- Office Expenses
- Travel & Meeting Costs
- Expenses for Grant Projects
- Miscellaneous

# 2020 FUNDRAISING

## DONORS

We are very grateful for the support of our generous donors. We have not listed names in order to protect confidentiality, but wish to thank each and every one of our supporters. Donors make it possible for us to work towards effective, just, and humane responses to crime and its causes. THANK YOU.

## FUNDRAISING REVENUE:

Donations and Fundraising:	\$142,842
Fundraising Direct Costs: (Direct Mail/Break Open Tickets etc.)	\$22,996
<b>Fundraising Revenue after Direct Costs:</b>	<b>\$119,842</b>

## DISTRIBUTION/SPENDING OF FUNDRAISING REVENUE AFTER DIRECT COSTS:

Institutional Services Program:	\$42,480	92%
Affiliate Program Support:	\$3,900	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$46,380</b>	<b>100%</b>

## FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS

We are pleased to acknowledge the following funders and collaborators. Your generous support is vital to our work and we thank you for your support and belief in our mission.





**342 Queen Street East  
Toronto, ON M5A 1S8**

**T: 416.408.4282  
F: 416.408.2991**

[info@johnhoward.on.ca](mailto:info@johnhoward.on.ca)  
[www.johnhoward.on.ca](http://www.johnhoward.on.ca)  
[@jhsontario](https://www.instagram.com/jhsontario)



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