



Feed Hope this Easter

For only **\$4.68**,
you can provide a
*warm meal, hope
and support* to
someone in need
this Easter.

♥ Give Today



Chef Ric and Kenzie share a smile before a day of work

HOT MEALS. WARM BEDS. VITAL SERVICES.

Your gift provides all this and more to
Ottawa's most vulnerable people.



Development Office
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Ottawa, ON K1N 6E4
613-234-1155
OttawaMission.com

*Read how you helped
Kenzie on page 4*

**“Feed the hungry,
and help those
in trouble.
Then your light
will shine out
from the darkness,
and the darkness
around you
will be as bright
as noon.”**

ISAIAH 58:10

CHAMPIONS OF
HOPE

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BECOME A
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613.234.1155

...
or visit
**ottawamission.com/
monthly**

HELPING EACH OTHER GROW THIS SPRING

Spring is almost here! Soon, seedlings will sprout, flowers will bloom, and the season of growth and renewal will be upon us.



But for anything to grow to its full potential, the right conditions need to be in place. And at The Ottawa Mission, your support is essential for us to maintain an environment that nurtures the development of our clients, staff, and community. We'll share some examples in this Easter newsletter.

Before he was a budding chef, Kenzie was a troubled youth experiencing homelessness. You'll learn about his inspiring turnaround coming through our Food Services Training Program.

You'll also read about two people working to build a more supportive and inclusive environment at The Mission. James once relied on your support for help finding a home. Now, he regularly returns to The Mission to offer important Indigenous cultural and spiritual services. And Laura, our new Manager of Clinical Services, is hard at work fostering a healthy work environment for our staff.

We collaborate with many wonderful community partners to ensure that our food trucks get out and serve those in need across the entire city. You'll read about a stop in Gloucester, where a hub for community outreach has blossomed around the truck.

We couldn't provide any of this without the help of you, our generous donors. On behalf of our clients, staff, and community at large, thank you for helping us grow!

Blessings and Happy Easter,

PETER TILLEY
CEO, The Ottawa Mission

James Gives Back: CONNECTING CLIENTS THROUGH CULTURE



James after leading a Smudging Ceremony

James is a friendly 59-year-old, born in Kahnawake Mohawk Territory on the southern shore of the Saint Lawrence River. Sadly, he wasn't home for long.

Taken away from his family at the age of 5, James was brought to Oka, Quebec and enrolled in a residential school that aimed to eradicate his language, culture, and way of life. Beyond having his very identity under siege, James suffered horrific abuse at the school.

But James nurtures what others sought to erase, taking every opportunity he can to honour and support his Indigeneity. **And now, he's helping The Ottawa Mission.**

Due to the legacy of residential schools, a disproportionate amount of Indigenous people access our programs and services, and James was one of them. He persevered in life and had a great 25-year career as a waste collection operator. But when the pandemic hit, he was unexpectedly out of work. Soon after, he couldn't afford his rent and turned to us for shelter. Our client services and housing staff eventually helped him find a suitable apartment.

While at The Mission, James saw an opportunity to help our staff better connect with Indigenous clients. Now, he performs smudging ceremonies, with plans to perform sunrise ceremonies in the future. These deeply meaningful smudging ceremonies are important spiritual touchstones of Indigenous culture and help foster an inclusive environment for the clients that observe them. James hopes they'll also help staff understand the importance of Indigenous culture and ceremony in the lives of Indigenous clients.

“There are a lot of us; those who went through what I went through. This is my calling... this is what I've always wanted to do: help others.”

Thanks to your support, James is in a position to do just that.

Give Today

Kenzie finds his way THROUGH THE FTSP



Kenzie prepares meals ahead of serving them from our food trucks

**“Have you heard
of Chef Ric and the
Food Services
Training Program?”**

**This was a question
that changed the
course of a young
man’s life. Kenzie
and a support worker
from Causeway were
discussing work
aspirations, and
Kenzie had shared
that he wanted to
be a cook.**



Despite only being 20 at that time, Kenzie had already experienced a tremendous amount of hardship. At 19, he was working a typical warehouse job and was uncertain about his future. Things began to shift when he started using recreational marijuana more frequently. Kenzie didn’t know it, but he was predisposed to marijuana-use triggering symptoms of psychosis.

**“It was a rough road.
I wasn’t doing well.”**

Things unraveled quickly for Kenzie. It got to the point where he was out of work, using street substances, and experiencing homelessness. His Mom was able to convince him to seek care through an Ottawa Hospital program. Slowly, Kenzie began taking significant steps towards recovery and independence.

He decided that his next step was to apply for the Food Services Training Program (FSTP). Chef Ric was impressed with the youngster’s drive and told him: **“I’m going to make a chef out of you.”**

Once he started the FSTP, it was like a switch had flipped. His Mom recalls him FaceTiming her after one of his first days in the program, saying: **“Oh my God Mom, I love it here. I never want to leave.”**

He had found something he was passionate about and his progress was remarkable.

“My life has improved, 100%. It’s completely turned around.”

Kenzie’s progress didn’t go unnoticed. During his graduation ceremony, Chef Ric proudly offered him a job with The Ottawa Mission. Today, Kenzie works specifically with our Mobile Mission Meals food truck program, cooking and serving to-go meals handed out in communities across Ottawa.

Kenzie is now in a position where he can help others, some in similar situations to where he was not all that long ago. This remarkable turnaround in his life wouldn’t have been possible without your support.

The FSTP, a 4-month job training program offered to students at no cost, provides instruction in knife skills, culinary theory, occupational health and safety, food handling and work placement experience, and is entirely donor-funded.

Thanks to you, Kenzie and so many other promising students can stabilize their lives and chase down their dreams!



Marjolaine Hudon, President, Ontario North & East Region for RBC, seen here with FSTP graduate Jean Chirac at the Blue Door Gala



CAIVAN presents

Blue Door
— GALA —

in partnership with Infinity Cares Gala

Generosity that changes lives!

We’re proud to count on The **RBC Foundation** as a longtime supporter and partner of the FSTP.

Investing \$135,000 since 2019 to help young people develop skills for jobs in the food industry, they’ve been instrumental in empowering youth and changing lives for the better!

Give Today

Providing more than just meals IN GLOUCESTER



Community partner clients line up for warm meals from one of our food trucks

You'll often hear us talking about the valued community partners we collaborate with to run our Mobile Mission Meals food truck program. These partners are vital for connecting us to their respective communities so that we may bring food their way. One of those partners is the Gloucester Emergency Food Cupboard (GEFC).

The GEFC runs a food bank and a variety of food growing programs that provide up to 3,600 of their area residents with emergency food every year. And since day one of our food truck program, we've had a weekly stop at their location. When asked about the impact of the food trucks, Erin, Executive Director of the GEFC shares:

"The food truck has helped us broaden the ways we address food insecurity over here. It's been nice to see a sense of community grow around the truck."

Erin explains that the GEFC has leaned into that budding sense of community and have added some extra support around the stop: they've shared social and employment resources, they've invited social workers out to make connections, and they've also given extra farm fresh veggies or treats to those waiting in line.

It takes teamwork to soften the severity of food insecurity and provide outreach to those in need across our city. Thank you for helping us connect with wonderful community partners like the GEFC and grow our food truck program!

Practicing self-care

— AT —
THE MISSION



Laura checks in with a staff member

Every day, our staff offer crucial support to our clients in need. But who helps the helpers?

We've always looked after one another here at The Mission. To help formalize that supportive work environment, we've placed a familiar face in a new and unique role: Laura, as our Manager of Clinical Services!

If any staff need help navigating occasionally stressful workdays, Laura is available for support. And with over 10 years of social work experience across our programs, she is well-suited for her role.

At a high-level, Laura explains that her position can be divided into two parts: reactive and proactive work. She'll meet with staff when needed for post-incident debriefs as well as to support training and guidance concerning how staff can provide trauma-informed care and set healthy boundaries. This ensures that our staff are best equipped to handle their evolving roles and responsibilities.

"We've always worked with people who are facing challenges in their life, but recognize that staff are dealing with more critical incidents than ever before, having to be present on some people's worst days. The work we do here is rewarding, but it's not easy."

And Laura knows that she, and the rest of our staff, also have your support:

"We can't provide this type of help to our clients and staff without the support of our community and beyond. Today, so many people can be touched by poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness... we truly appreciate that our donors recognize the urgent need for the work that we do."

Give Today

Words of Gratitude

from our clients, past and present

You make real change possible – thank you!

*I was helped by the services offered by
The Mission in 2009. **I have been
self-reliant since then and I thank you
from the bottom of my heart.***

— “ —

JACQUES

*Anything I needed, they'd help me out
with: housing and work included.
**The resources are there,
you just have to ask.***

— “ —

KYLE

*I think LifeHouse is a great program,
a lot of thought goes into it... and
**for the staff to help me find an
apartment, it shows they care.***

— “ —

MIKE

*As a former resident of The Mission...
**The Hope program they put together
for people with addictions is
greatly helping the community.**
Thank you for your kindness
and support.*

— “ —

DALE



Your support will provide the people
served by The Mission with a
delicious Easter dinner on April 1.

Please give today.

To make a donation, visit ottawamission.com
or call 613.234.1155

