

The Council  
on Aging  
of Ottawa



Le Conseil sur  
le vieillissement  
d'Ottawa



# Annual Report 2020



# Mission & Vision

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**Mission** The Council on Aging of Ottawa serves as a leading community voice in both official languages for Ottawa’s seniors. Our aim is to help Ottawa become more Age-Friendly by identifying and addressing issues and services that impact the lives of seniors.

**Vision** Respected, informed and engaged seniors living in an age-friendly city

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# COA by the Numbers (for 2020)

**45** years of  
service

**463** members  
(down 9% since 2019)

**157** volunteers

**50** workshops, forums  
and special events

**592** 

**16,000+** volunteer  
hours

**3032** INFO-FLASH  
subscribers

**126**  attendees

**12** publications  
and reports

## COA Staff

**Executive Director:**

Sarah Bercier

**Students:**

Ali Chiarelli

**Age-Friendly Ottawa:**

Bonnie Schroeder

Ali Reyazee

**Community Development:**

Pascale Lalonde

Clara Luck

**Education:**

Stéphanie Cadieux

Erin Smale

**Communications:**

Dagmar Horsman

Nathalie Mehrer

**Administration:**

Donna McLeod

Rhea Verma

# Leadership Report

*Nicole Robert, President*

*Sarah Bercier, Executive Director*

I think we can all agree that 2020 has been a year different than any other... a year marked by significant change, transition, resilience, and reflection. Working to improve the lives of Ottawa's seniors looked very different this year as we quickly pivoted in every aspect of the work that the COA is known for.

## INFORMED



The educational year started strong with 4 Smart Aging programs running across the city. Educational sessions at our home office on Kilborn were all on track for a very successful year. On March 11, over 100 women gathered for International Women's Day to discuss navigating later life as a single. That same day, the WHO pronounced a worldwide pandemic. This began the navigation of the many transitions that lay ahead. We quickly moved to Zoom to finish our Smart Aging workshops and postponed all other educational sessions until the fall.

The focus of informing Ottawa's older adults immediately turned to connecting with each and every one of our members personally. A tremendous team of volunteers ensured that they had the information they needed to manage safely in their homes and communities. Eight special COVID editions of the Info-Flash were produced to keep older adults informed city-wide on topics such as physical distancing, getting the food you need, safe transportation, and caring for self and others. Seniors were informed of hundreds of age-friendly events through the Community Events Calendar and Info-Flash Events newsletter. We heard from Ottawa's older adults, close to 3000 of them, through not one, but two surveys: one for our members and subscribers and the other the COVID-19 survey asking them how they were coping during the pandemic. We co-hosted a Facebook Live event with the City of Ottawa and NAFR with Dr. Vera Etches discussing what opening up in June would mean for older adults. Our virtual AGM in June provided an update on the COVID-19 seniors survey for over 100 in attendance.



The fall of 2020 saw the launch of our newly branded COA Online to provide educational sessions on long term care, caregiving, winter walking, winter driving, the men's breakfast, and journaling during challenging times. The year was rounded out with a Virtual Holiday Open House.

## ENGAGED

Under the leadership of the Council on Aging's 150+ dedicated volunteers and with the support and direction of COA staff, the engagement of Ottawa's older adults and advocacy on their behalf barely skipped a beat. Committees addressing such key issues as long-term care, income security, transportation, and social



inclusion moved online within weeks of the pandemic and continued with strong agendas on issues of importance to seniors.

A significant focus of 2020 was to redress the long-standing tragic conditions in long-term care. The Long-Term Care Committee launched the highly visible “We Need Change Now” campaign that shone a light on the conditions in long-term care in Ottawa that have put residents, families and staff at greater risk to the virus. We have continued to review health services needed by seniors, the consequences of long wait lists and cancelled/postponed services due to COVID -19, alternate level of care for designated patients, the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine and other long-standing pressures in the sector.



## MOVED



In the midst of an already change-filled year, the COA was informed in September that we would need to move our offices from our long-standing home on Kilborn as the building was being closed down. In December we moved to our new home at 217-815 St. Laurent Blvd, in the Rideau Community Hub. We will have smaller office space but plenty of meeting space and parking. Being co-located with a very diverse range of community organizations will allow us to increase our impact and expand our reach to a wider range of Ottawa’s seniors. We look forward to welcoming everyone to our new home as soon as it is safe to do so!

## THANK YOU

We thank you for your tremendous engagement and support in 2020. March of last year seems almost unimaginably long ago when we all found ourselves transitioning to working and living online in ways we had never imagined. To our great delight, you stuck with us. You humoured us through technical glitches. You regrouped with us to continue participating in important committee work online. You shared words of encouragement. You also donated generously. For all of this, we are immensely grateful. 2020 has shown how much we rely on each other to help each other out. The ongoing effort and enthusiasm of dedicated volunteers, Board members, and staff, despite current circumstances, has continued to be not only effective but also truly inspirational. We look forward to continued opportunities for increasingly respected, informed and engaged seniors, both individually and city-wide. We believe, with your continued help, we can make an even bigger difference in the lives of Ottawa seniors in 2021.



*Nicole Robert*

Nicole Robert  
President



*S Bercier*

Sarah Bercier  
Executive Director

## Committee Reports

# Education

*Alex Roussakis, Chair, Education*

*Caroline Bergeron, Chair, Francophone Affairs*

*Lee McCoy, Chair, Spirituality*

*Sandra Chatterton, Chair, Smart Aging*

*Rick Strong, Chair, Men's Breakfast*



The year started strong with the pilot of our first four Smart Aging programs. Spread throughout the city, programs were held in both English and French with 126 participants at the COA office on Kilborn, St. John's Church in Kanata, Good Companions downtown, and MIFO in Orleans. Smart Aging is a unique and comprehensive 8-week educational program focused on the basics of navigating our senior years. Workshops include facilitated learning time and participant interaction in activity-based learning, with a tremendous emphasis on accountability

for weekly decisions made with partners or small groups. Participants have opportunities to expand their own knowledge and understanding, enjoy participation, and benefit from the lived experiences of others in the program.



Regular educational sessions at our home office on Kilborn were all on track for a very successful year. Sessions were held on "Travel: Dreams and Realities", "A Community Conversation on Dying, Death & Grief", and "Empowerment through Mindful Aging". On March 11, over 100 women gathered for International Women's Day to discuss "Flying Solo: Thriving on Your Own". That same day, we also heard the WHO pronounce a worldwide pandemic. We quickly moved to Zoom to finish our last few Smart Aging workshops. All other educational sessions were cancelled or postponed until the fall including our Annual Francophone Forum and Annual Spirituality Conference.

The early months of 2020 saw the launch of Ottawa's first Men's Shed. This was initiated as a result of the COA's International Men's Day Breakfast 2019. They continued to meet regularly throughout the year as it was safe to do so. The COA is very proud to have been part of the launch of this tremendous new offering for Ottawa's older men.



The COA's Community Events Calendar and weekly Info-Flash Events newsletters were heavily utilized and provided a huge source of information throughout the

year listing hundreds of age friendly community events.

To inform Ottawa's older adults on a large scale regarding the pandemic, COA co-hosted a Facebook Live event with the City of Ottawa and the National Association of Federal Retirees. With over 1000 in attendance, Dr. Vera Etches addressed what opening up in June would mean for older adults. We also provided an update on the COVID-19 seniors survey for over 100 in attendance at our AGM.



In the fall we transitioned to our newly branded COA Online. Through this new format, all educational sessions were offered, in both English and French, on the following topics: "Where are Things at in Long-Term Care?", "Worried About Winter Walking", "Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy: Supporting Caregivers, Supporting Communities", and "Older Drivers: Be Ready for Winter".

In place of the Annual Spirituality Conference the committee decided to hold a series of workshops entitled "Third Act Journaling: Finding Peace in Challenging Times" led by Lee McCoy, and sponsored by Kelly Funeral Homes, which was well-attended and very much appreciated.



The Second Annual Men's Breakfast on "Purposeful Life Choices" was held online in November with over 80 men in attendance to hear from Francis Savage, Kevin Ford, Arnold Midgley, and Rabbi Bulka.

The resiliency of staff, speakers, participants, and all volunteers is noteworthy in their successful transition to online education. Many thanks to the volunteers who provided training to all those who needed it to be able to participate online. It is our hope that we will be able to continue to use this technology to be increasingly inclusive as in-person events reopen in the future.

**Education Committee:** Alex Roussakis, Judy Bedell, Christine O'Grady, Christine McGinn, Guilheme Perodeau

**Spirituality Committee:** Lee McCoy, Patricia Marsden-Dole, Helen Smith, Marjorie Milloy, Anne Marie Bazinet-Miller, Brenda Verch, Lyne Cyr, Kabahenda Nyakabwa

**Men's Breakfast Committee:** Rick Strong, Gord Larose, Simon Gardner, George Hartsgrove

**COA Online Committee:** Lee McCoy, Trudy Medcalf, Jacquie Latham, Alex Roussakis, Sandra Murray, Christiane Kirkland, Judy Bedell, Sandra Chatterton

**Smart Aging Committee:** Sandra Chatterton, Alex Roussakis, Caroline Midgley, Claudine Guiet, Guilheme Perodeau, Hugh Nelson, Janet Bax, Kim Peterson, Trudy Medcalf, Mary Appleton, Sharon Irven, Christiane Kirkland, Dagmar Horsman

**Smart Aging Speakers, Course Directors, Volunteers:** Trudy Medcalf, Dominique Paris-McKay, Nathalie Mehrer, Jennifer Moir, François Lanthier, Christiane Kirkland, Asaf Mitta, Louise Brunelle, Peggy Edwards, Sharon Irven, Grace Welch, Mary Appleton, Dagmar Horsman, Francis Savage, Janet Gray, Anne Perrault, Carol Lepage, Marion Lapierre, Trèva Cousineau, Jocelyn Chabot, Suzanne Lafrance

**Staff:** Stephanie Cadieux



## Committee Reports

# Francophone Affairs Committee

*Caroline Bergeron, Chair*

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We have all been affected this year by the COVID-19 pandemic! We congratulate everyone on their resilience, but especially seniors!

The committee held two in-person events in January and February and was also planning its annual forum for May 2020 which was to focus on sleep. The forum and other events had to be canceled due to the pandemic. The following months focussed on staying in touch with Francophone seniors by phone and through the Info-Flash, recruiting new committee members, strategic planning and establishing concrete objectives, strengthening collaborations with other COA committees (e.g. health, education) and establishing new partnerships within the community, for example by supporting the White Paper on Ontario's Aging Francophone Population from AFO and FARFO. COA Online was launched in September.

The committee did a complete overhaul of the COA website to ensure the quality of French. We thank Trèva Cousineau for making all the changes on the website.

An Inclusion and Diversity Working Group was created to combat discrimination by facilitating dialogue between groups and individuals who have different experiences, but who have their age and the French language in common, and to provide education on this diversity.

Finally, thanks to our partnership with Rogers Community TV, the committee members managed to keep Francophone seniors informed weekly from April to June and monthly the rest of the year through the program Entre Nous. We thank Yoland Lessard and Claude Andrea Bonny for this valuable time spent live with the Francophone community of Ottawa.

**Returning Committee Members :** Caroline Bergeron, (Chair), Marise Bellavance (Manoir Belcourt), Hélène Carrière (Retraite), Mariette Chikuru (La Cité), Florent Clairoux (Visavie), Thérèse Legault (Centre Pauline Charron), Jacqueline Noiseux (Rendez-vous des aînés francophones d'Ottawa)

**New Members in 2020 :** Carmen Paquette (Retraite en action), Marielle Racette, Sarra Rouhabi, Corinna Simeoni-Buhay and Arianna-Marie Skoloudik (Université d'Ottawa), Lucie Sabourin (Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans), Michel Tremblay (Monfort Renaissance), Myriam Taillon (Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Est de l'Ontario)

**Departed Members in 2020 :** Monique Gibbens (Chair), Andrée Tremblay (secretary), Charles Simard (Montfort Renaissance), Huguette Van Bergen (Retraite en action), Diane Laflamme-Millette and Fleurette Fontaine. We thank them for their great contribution to the committee.

**Inclusion and Diversity Working Group members :** Mélissa Beaudet (Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario), Corinna Simeoni-Buhay and Sarra Rouabhi (Université d'Ottawa), Mirela Dranca, Bernadette Muhimakazi and Espérance Umutesi (Conseil économique et social d'Ottawa-Carleton), Jacqueline Noiseux (Rendez-vous des aînés francophones d'Ottawa), Nicole Olivier (Réseau Fierté des aîné(e)s d'Ottawa), Carmen Paquette (Retraite en action), Lucie Sabourin (Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans), Claude Sauvé and Marie Lanthier (Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario)

**Staff :** Stéphanie Cadieux



# Committee Reports

## Health Issues Committee

*Nancy Garrard, Chair*

The members of the Committee would like to acknowledge the excellent leadership and dedication demonstrated by Ms. Diane Hupé, chair from June 2019 to September 2020.

The Committee concentrated its efforts on long-term care change in 2020. The Council (COA) released the position paper, Long-Term Care in Ottawa: We Need Change Now! in February and a Statement of Concerns focused on changes needed to reduce the risks of COVID-19 to seniors living in Ottawa's 28 Long-term care (LTC) homes. Throughout rest of the year, the COA raised additional concerns about LTC and government policies with elected officials, the Ontario's LTC COVID-19 Commission, Ontario's Patient Ombudsman and Ontario's Ombudsman.

The COA convened a meeting in February 2020 of interested community organizations concerned with LTC. Three themes emerged: the pivotal role of personal support workers, transformation in long-term care and the importance of key shared messages. A follow-up meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 but was rescheduled to January 2021.

Between May and September, the COA released a bilingual awareness campaign through its website and newsletter. All material from this campaign can be found at [www.coaottawa.ca/we-need-change-now](http://www.coaottawa.ca/we-need-change-now). In September, information sessions were held in English and in French with over 75 concerned individuals and partners.

The Committee continues to monitor the situation of seniors using and waiting for needed health services. Presentations from Ottawa Public Health, The Champlain Community Support Network and the National Association of Federal Retirees were made to the Committee.

### Committee Members:

Diane Hupé (Chair - resigned in September), Nancy Garrard (Chair - September onward), Beverlee McIntosh (recorder), Grace Welch, Robert Greenslade, Sheila Pepper, Pat Thornton, Kevin Babulic (Champlain LHIN, Home and Community Care), Chris Cobus (Champlain Community Support Network), Ted Cohen (Hillel Lodge, Chair, Ottawa Region, AdvantAge Ontario), Kelly Milne (Regional Geriatric Program of Eastern Ontario), Diane Law (National Association of Federal Retirees), Sally Zhang (Ottawa Public Health), Bonnie Cheung (Abbeyfield House - resigned - November)

**Staff:** Bonnie Schroeder



#### Provide more care

Fund more direct care staff - RN, RPN, PSW and other health workers - in LTC with a regulated minimum number of care hours/resident appropriate to the complexity of care needed.



#### Plan for beds

Ensure that enough LTC beds are available to meet current and future needs and that all beds meet Ministry standards.



#### Pay attention to at-risk seniors

Monitor all barriers that reduce or delay access to LTC and while seniors wait for care.



#### Promote innovation and quality

Regulate and manage LTC in a manner that promotes innovation and continuous quality improvement for residents and staff.

## Committee Reports

# Housing Committee

*Miriam Fry, Chair and Peggy Edwards, Co-Chair*

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Ah! The best laid plans...After the fabulous response to the Housing Workshop booklet and the Housing Checklist, our Committee made plans to focus on outreach events in a number of Ottawa communities. We all know that Covid-19 put paid to that plan. Instead we have taken advantage of the Smart Aging initiative that the Council has launched and have been a big player in that online program.

As well, we have focused on our Advocacy platform – one of the planks of our Committee’s Statement of Purpose. We continue to advocate strongly for “age-friendly housing”, on the continuum from independent living to long-term care. To that end, we have supported the efforts of the Health Committee’s long-term care sub-committee which has been extremely active in the past year.

We have instituted a program of knowledge development and exchange with a number of other local programs to broaden both their learning and ours in the area of “age-friendly housing”.

Finally, how to adequately thank Bonnie Schroeder who supports the work of all the Council’s Action Committees? Thank you for all your time, advice and patience, Bonnie.

### **Committee Members:**

Miriam Fry and Peggy Edwards (Co-Chairs), John Anderson, Mary Appleton, Jennifer Brooks, Michael Elliott, Mary Huang, Sharon Irven, Suzanne Labonte (Royal LePage), Fatma Maged, Rod Manchee, Sheila Pepper, Pat Thornton, Grace Welch, Valerie Wright **Staff:** Bonnie Schroeder

## Committee Reports

# Bilingualism Committee

*Trèva Cousineau, Chair*

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The Council on Aging of Ottawa is an agency designated under the French Language Services Act. The role of the Bilingualism Committee is to ensure that Council fully discharges its mandate respecting both official languages.

Although the two members (John Johnson and Nancy Garrard) were most willing to serve, the Committee has not had to meet even once this year as Council regularly respects its designation requirements.

The main responsibility this year was the completion of the form required by the Government every three years indicating all points to be covered to remain consistent with the designation, including certain changes to policies to better reflect our engagement.

I wish to thank the members of the Francophone Affairs Committee for their review of the COA website to improve the quality of the French versions of the information provided. I also wish to thank our dedicated volunteer translators who give freely of their time and expertise, namely Claire Caron, Marcelle Mitchell, Hélène Masson, Danielle Harwood, Christiane Kirkland, Louise Nantel, Alton Legault, Louise Brunelle, Bernard Dussault, and Michelle Faber. Merci du fond du Coeur. Thanks also to Council staff, who, although not all bilingual, are always aware of the need to provide services in both languages and do their best to make that happen.

## Committee Reports

# Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee

*Alex Cullen, Chair*

The OSTC has 3 active sub-committees: Age-Friendly Pedestrian Safety & Walkability (chaired by Janet Luloff), Rural Transportation (chaired by Ken Holmes), and Older Drivers (chaired by Louise Brunelle).

Our accomplishments this year included: the annual Snow Mole Report (based on audits on winter walking conditions) and neighbourhood age-friendly pedestrian audits in a number of communities.

As well, the OSTC lobbied Ottawa City Council for improved winter sidewalk snow-clearing standards and is participating in the City's Winter Quality Maintenance Standards Review. The OSTC provided comments to the City regarding the development of a new Official Plan, in particular regarding the concept of 15 Minute Neighbourhoods. The OSTC continues to lobby for converting the current Seniors Ride-Free Wednesday program at OC Transpo to a Seniors Pick Your Ride-Free Day during the week, and additional funding for Para Transpo to meet increased demand for this service.



The OSTC will continue to monitor the roll-out of the City's LRT program, seek improvements to the City's winter sidewalk maintenance program, and assess progress on the City's Older Adult Plan and the status of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

### Committee Members:

Claire Argo, Amy Bevilacqua (OWCS), Lisa Bornn (SEOCHC), Janet Luloff, Louise Brunelle, Cristina Di Tomasso (WOCRC), Ardyth Elliott, Ken Holmes, Asaf Mitta, Safia Nawaz (OCISO), Cynthia Nuzzi, Kathy Riley (OCT), Karen Scott (MSS), Moriyah Kleiman, and John Woodhouse. A note of thanks to our very helpful collaborators: the Champlain Community Support Network and OC Transpo.

**Staff:** Bonnie Schroeder



## Committee Reports

# Expert Panel on Income Security

*Dr. Russ Robinson, Chair*

Early in 2020 the Panel produced a major “Next Steps” document describing possible projects and priorities to help address income security and related challenges for seniors likely immersing over the next several years. It was recognized that the pandemic would influence future trends affecting the aging population and their retirement.

Long-term care and related health issues were obviously a high priority. Effects on housing, labour market arrangements, and changes in financial markets that might affect retirement savings and pensions could all be important, and these are being examined.

We had been conducting retirement planning workshops designed to assist those with lower incomes, who often do not have the information and supports needed to access our complex retirement income and taxation system. Due to COVID, two virtual (Zoom based) workshops were held in November, one each in English and French.

Advocacy for improved data, research and policy analysis on seniors-related issues continued throughout 2020. Panel members produced numerous papers – either published or submitted to relevant government departments – and several also served on federal policy development panels or boards or as expert advisors on a variety of policy, data and research developments. (Examples/list available on request.)

Collaboration with other COA committees on cross-cutting issues, and adjustments in light of COA’s Strategic Planning review will continue, with focus on our educational and advocacy mandates and priorities.

### Committee Members:

Russell Robinson, Chair. Former federal senior executive, social policy and intergovernmental  
Bob Baldwin. Pension researcher/author, member of Boards/Committees (CPP; C.D.Howe;...)  
Bernard Dussault. Pension author/consultant; former Chief Actuary of Canada  
Peter Hicks. Former senior federal executive; Social policy advisor and author, Canada/international  
Andrew Jackson. Social and economic policy researcher/writer/advisor  
Jennifer Robson. Associate Professor (Carleton); researcher/advisor, social/tax/public administration  
Richard Shillington. Statistician/researcher/consultant/author, social policy, poverty  
John Stapleton. Numerous advisory groups and task forces; poverty, security, access to programs  
Michael Wolfson. Former federal senior executive, statistics; social policy research/analysis/advice

**Staff:** Bonnie Schroeder





## Committee Reports

# Social Inclusion Committee

*George Hartsgrove, Chair*

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2020 was a year of transitions and changes in the membership of the committee and its activities. Here are a few highlights of activities from 2020:

The Committee supported the Seniors COVID Survey that found seniors reported feeling lonelier and more anxious. Isolation and mental health continue to be a strong focus of the committee.

The Committee focused on sharing information and resources among its partner agencies including the COVID-19 Special Updates in the INFOFLASH. In addition, many of the COA's partner agencies, including Good Companions and the Library, used the COA Community Events calendar as a promotional tool for their online events and programming. The COA continues to provide this valuable service to other agencies to connect older adults in Ottawa to activities and social programming. Five sessions on how to access banking and shopping online were organized in collaboration with Good Companions Seniors Centre Without Walls (SCWW).

The committee was proud to support 4th year Carleton student, Erin Smale. She completed a literature review and focus groups with both the Social Inclusion and Housing Committees and produced a paper titled, Smart Growth, Housing Diversity, and Development of Socially Inclusive Places and Spaces for Older Adults in Ottawa.

Two members of the committee sat on the planning committee of the Men's Breakfast. This second annual event was well-attended in November by over eighty men. The Committee received regular updates on the new Ottawa-Centre Men's Sheds that was created following the 2019 Men's Breakfast. The COA is pleased to see this program flourish in the community offering social/recreational program by men for men, an identified gender gap in programming for older adults.

The COA continued to be active on City for All Women Initiative and the City's Women and Gender Equity Working Group to ensure older woman and gender diverse people were included in the city policies. In the Fall of 2020, the Committee participated in the development of CAWI's A Municipal Gendered Recovery Plan for All with a focus on housing, food security, income security, social inclusion, and safety for all in the COVID-19 pandemic recovery plan.

Presentations were made in fall 2020 at Alta Vista Community Association, Carleton Heights & Area Residents Association, and River Ward Older Adult Summit with Councillor Riley Brockington.

### **Committee Members:**

George Hartsgrove (Chair), Barbara Zagon – CMHA Ottawa, Cinthia Pagé - City of Ottawa (resigned March 2020), Laura Ward/Rachel Sutcliffe - The Good Companions, Seniors Center Without Walls, Mark Gelsomino/Suzanne McCormack - Ottawa Public Library, Patricia Marsden-Dole, Rick Strong – Men's Group, Sybil Braganza – Social Planning Council, Amanda Labbe – Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre, Trudy Medcalf (resigned September 2020)

**Staff:** Bonnie Schroeder **Student Intern:** Erin Smale (until April 2020)

## Committee Reports

# Nominations Report

*Alex Roussakis, Vice-President*

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The Nominating Committee is guided by the By-laws of The Council on Aging of Ottawa which state that at least 50% of the Directors shall be aged 55 and over and at least 20% shall be Francophone. Directors are eligible to serve a maximum of three consecutive two-year terms.

**We are pleased to present the slate for the Board of Directors for 2021-2022.**

**For election to a two-year term for 2021-2023:**

*Linton Garner Chandra Hapuarachchi Yves Leduc*

**For re-election to a two-year term for 2021-2023:**

*Miriam Fry Nicole Robert Alex Roussakis*

**Current members whose term continues to 2022:**

*Alex Cullen Sandra Murray*

**Organisations which appoint a member by virtue of office:**

*La Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario (FARFO) : Trèva Cousineau*

**The Executive Director of The Council on Aging of Ottawa is an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors:**

*Sarah Bercier*

**Members whose term has ended in 2020-2021 - Thank you for your service.**

*Caroline Bergeron Luc Bigras Nancy Garrard George Hartsgrove Diane Hupé Linda Meek  
Kimberly Peterson Dr. Russell Robinson*

**The following nominations of officers of the Board for 2020-2021 will be proposed to the Board of Directors at its first meeting following the annual election of directors:**

*President: Alex Roussakis Vice President: Trèva Cousineau Secretary: Sandra Murray  
Treasurer: Chandra Hapuarachchi Past President: Nicole Robert*

*The Executive Committee is responsible to oversee the annual nomination process for the Board. The nominations process was chaired in 2021 by the Vice-President of the Board: Alex Roussakis*



## Board of Directors 2021-2022

### Executive

<i>President:</i>	<i>Alex Roussakis</i>
<i>Vice President:</i>	<i>Trèva Cousineau</i>
<i>Secretary:</i>	<i>Sandra Murray</i>
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<i>Chandra Hapuarachchi</i>
<i>Past President:</i>	<i>Nicole Robert</i>

### Directors

*Alex Cullen Miriam Fry Linton Garner Yves Leduc*

# Margaret Griffiths Award

*Trudy Medcalf*

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Margaret Griffiths taught for 25 years at the McGill School of Social Work. In a second career, after her retirement, Ms. Griffiths became actively involved in many organisations concerned with the health and welfare of seniors in Ottawa. These included the Good Companions Seniors Centre, the Glebe Centre, the District Health Council and the Council on Aging of Ottawa.

It was in recognition of her outstanding contribution in the volunteer field that the Margaret Griffiths Award was established. The award is presented annually to a senior volunteer who, like Ms. Griffiths, has contributed substantially to the betterment of the quality of life of seniors in Ottawa.

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## This Year's Recipient: Trudy Medcalf

Trudy has always been an educator, first with special needs children in elementary schools; then in high school guidance, special education, and administration; next at the college level with adult students, many of them new to Canada; and finally teaching university students in undergraduate gerontology. Along the way, her doctoral work in education explored the meaning of old age and the experience of growing older, always from the perspective of those living there.

Trudy co-created “Aging by the Book,” a reading circle program supported by the Ottawa Public Library and based on earlier pre-Ottawa work on the concept of elder circles. In 2012, she asked to volunteer with the Council on Aging of Ottawa and began by leading a federally-funded project focused on social inclusion for tenants of Community Housing for Seniors.

Over the next few years, Trudy participated in COA committee work as well as facilitation for several of the COA's programs and events. Her long-standing enthusiasm for the power of intergenerational work in helping to dispel ageism and promote shared understanding was folded into some of that COA facilitation work as well as appearing, outside of the COA, as an undergraduate course in “literary gerontology,” enabling deep conversation between much older and much younger adults.

Two years ago, Trudy was invited to contribute to the creation of what's come to be known as Smart Aging, an eight-session educational program designed to “better equip individuals to navigate life's transitions in their senior years.” As time progressed, and with increasingly more input from COA staff and a host of additional volunteers, Smart Aging has become a sought-after experience for many of Ottawa's older adults. As author and facilitator of four of the modules of the Smart Aging core and elective programs, it's been Trudy's joy to have been given the opportunity to shape the Smart Aging program with her long-held beliefs about how older adults learn best.

Trudy's next project is to create and launch an edgy podcast about later life, to be called “Made You Look.”

# Margaret Griffiths Award

## Long-Term Care Committee

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In early 2018, long before COVID-19, the COA's Health Issues Committee identified the state of long-term care (LTC) in Ottawa as their top priority. Over the next two years, a dedicated sub-committee developed a list of 23 indicators to monitor LTC in Ottawa. With support from Champlain Local Health Integration Network and Canadian Institute for Health Information officials, they sought national, provincial, and local data in this area, created a comprehensive report, and developed a strategy to address issues in LTC. The Position Paper, *Long-Term Care in Ottawa: We Need Change Now!*, identified four priorities: Provide more care; Plan for beds; Pay attention to at-risk seniors; and Promote innovation and quality.

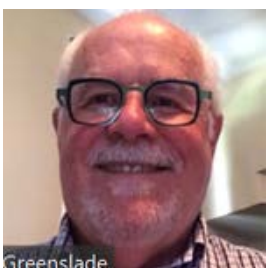
With a strong position in hand, a meeting of 17 community organizations who share a common interest in improving outcomes for LTC residents was convened. The goal of this February 2020 meeting was to share and discuss the Position Paper and ascertain the interest of participants to work together for a strong voice for LTC in the region. Engaged discussion led to interest in taking collective action on the identified areas. With the emergence of COVID-19, plans shifted to a more immediate response.

In May 2020, the Committee released the position paper followed by the release of a *Statement of Concerns* focused on changes needed to reduce the risks of COVID-19 to seniors living in Ottawa's 28 LTC homes. Centering on the health and safety of residents, families, and staff of LTC in Ottawa, the committee released each of the five concerns in the COA INFO-FLASH between May and September recommending immediate action to protect the most vulnerable during this pandemic. An information session was held in September 2020, with over seventy-five concerned individuals and organizations, about the state of LTC in Ottawa at the end of this campaign. With the heightened attention to LTC over the past year, this group have also secured six media interviews in print, radio, and tv in both languages. This committee has continued to raise additional concerns about LTC and government policies through a letter writing campaign with elected officials, the Ontario's LTC COVID-19 Commission, and Ontario's Patient Ombudsman and Ontario's Ombudsman, to name a few. In January 2021, the Committee reconvened the 17+ organizations to reaffirm their commitment to work together. This conversation is ongoing.

Four individuals have been at the heart of this work.



Nancy Garrard is a COA Board member (2016-2021), Chair of the Health Issues Committee (October 2020 - June 2021) and of the LTC Committee (January 2018 - present). She is the primary author of the position paper, statement of concerns, letters, op-eds, and information sheets. She has supported crafting our message and sharing our concerns with members, subscribers, organizations, policy makers and politicians. She has led this mighty group during weekly ZOOM calls while staying abreast of media, webinars, reports, and government announcements on this topic.

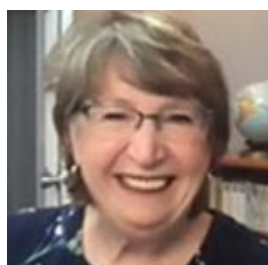


Robert Greenslade is a member of the Health Issues and LTC Committees. He first started volunteering with the COA through the Health Literacy Project in 2014. As a retired communication professional in the federal government, Robert provides communications support to the team efforts. As a concerned family member/friend to others who are in LTC, he also brings the layperson's perspective to the discussions and decisions to find clarity and common ground.





Diane Hupé was a Board member and Chair of the Health Issues Committee (June 2019 - September 2020). Diane came in at a pivotal moment of the LTC Committee's work. Her strategic leadership supported the strengthening of key relationships with partners in the sector. As a seasoned health care professional during her career, Diane elevated the work of the LTC Committee to a wider audience of community and LTC partners, politicians, and the public through the media and newsletter/Facebook campaign. She also was our bilingual media spokesperson.



Grace Welch, an active COA volunteer, sits on the Housing, Health Issues, and LTC Committees. A retired librarian, Grace keeps the other members informed and engaged on the current media, reports, government announcements, and insider knowledge. As Chair of the Advocacy Committee of the Champlain Region Family Council Network (CRFCN), Grace brings a family's perspective to the deliberations as well as connections within the sector. Grace was the main researcher and co-author of the position paper as well as copyeditor and fact checker of all documents produced over the last year. She also plays a pivotal role brokering linkages between the Housing and Health portfolios of the COA.

## Events 2020

<b>JANUARY</b>	15 janvier	Voyages : rêves et réalités
	January 22	A Community Conversation about Dying, Death & Grief
	January 30	Smart Aging - St. John's Kanata - 8 weeks
	January 31	Smart Aging - Good Companions - 8 weeks
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	1 février	Vieillir allumé - MIFO - 8 semaines
	February 5	Empowerment Through Mindful Aging
	February 11	Long-Term Care in Ottawa: We Need Change Now! (consultation) Les soins de longue à Ottawa : Qu'attendons-nous! (consultation)
	February 14	Ottawa Men's Shed (Inaugural Planning Meeting)
	19 février	La consommation d'alcool chez les personnes âgées
<b>MARCH</b>	March 11	Flying Solo: Thriving on Your Own
<b>JUNE</b>	June 10	Virtual Annual General Meeting Assemblée générale annuelle virtuelle du CSV
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	September 24	Where are things at in Long-Term Care?
	29 septembre	Où en sommes-nous en soins de longue durée ?
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	November 3-17	Third-Act Journaling: Finding Peace in Challenging Times
	November 18	International Men's Day - 2nd Annual Men's Breakfast
<b>DECEMBER</b>	December 4	Worried about Winter Walking?
	4 décembre	Peut-on marcher en toute sécurité en hiver?
	December 9	Eastern Ontario Caregiver Strategy: Supporting Caregivers, Supporting Communities
	December 15	Older Drivers: Be winter ready!
	15 décembre	Soyez prêts pour l'hiver !
	December 16	COA Virtual Holiday Open House
	16 décembre	Célébration virtuelle du Temps des Fêtes



# Corporate Members 2020



# Our Funders

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The Ontario Seniors Community Grant 2019-2020 provided funding to help launch Smart Aging. COA was able to deliver this program to 126 older adults in Ottawa at four locations to help prepare for life's transitions with tremendous results and testimonials.



The Ottawa Community Foundation provided funding for the "How Seniors are Coping with the COVID-19 Pandemic" research. Over 2400 of Ottawa's seniors responded from April to September 2020 resulting in key findings being released in March of 2021.



In the early days of the pandemic lockdown, there was little information specific to older adults. Thanks to funding from United Way East Ontario, we published a series of bilingual INFO-FLASH Special Updates on social distancing, food, caring for self and others, transportation, and more.



The Impact and Strategic Clarity coaching stream, funded by Innoweave, took our Board through a rigorous thinking and planning process in 2020. This process helps community organizations clarify what they aim to achieve, how they will achieve it, and how they will measure their success.



New Horizons for Seniors provided funding to develop 4 new Smart Aging workshops on COVID-related topics including Online Banking and Shopping, Connecting at a Distance, Emergency Preparedness and Healthy Eating. Over 100 participants attended in both English and French.



The Ontario Seniors Community Grant 2020-21 provided funding to take Smart Aging online. Through this funding, COA was able to deliver the Smart Aging Core Program to over 80 more older adults in rural areas, by phone for those without technology and in both English and French.

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The Council on Aging of Ottawa  
gratefully acknowledges the financial support  
of the City of Ottawa and the Province of Ontario



**The Council  
on Aging  
of Ottawa**



**Le Conseil sur  
le vieillissement  
d'Ottawa**



## **We moved in 2020!**

We look forward to  
seeing everyone  
at our new location  
when things reopen!

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