



Empower Simcoe

Annual Report 2022-2023

Be . Belong . Thrive



ANNUAL MESSAGE FROM CEO

Last year, was about moving forward. 2022-2023 has been a year of planning for transition and transformation to move forward.

Alongside the work on our new strategic plan, an organizational review was simultaneously undertaken. The consultants who partnered with us on the Strategic Plan, provided recommendations that were folded into the strategic plan, and from this process, emerged key themes and the creation of committees formed to undertake this work.

Another transformation that will impact the developmental services sector is the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services' Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion plan to reform how supports and services are provided. I have been sharing information on this transformation directly with our employees by attending their team meetings and hosted virtual meetings with families and the community to help everyone understand what these upcoming changes could mean to us as an organization and to the sector as a whole.



Dr. Claudine Cousins

Simcoe who make us the great organization that we are. They enable us to provide exceptional supports and services to the people and families we serve. It is with gratitude and thankfulness to both Board of Directors' for their guidance this past year; their support and effort have been unwavering. We also acknowledge and value the relationships with our funders and community partners.

Dr. Claudine Cousins . Chief Executive Officer . Empower Simcoe

Transformation is happening all around us; within the sector and the broader environment we work in. We want to be aligned with, and ahead of that change. We will leverage our reputation and expertise as we grow our organization by taking the good we are doing and making changes to what we could be doing better.

Also, the construction of Lakeshore Ridge in Oro-Medonte, our designated treatment home, has remained on-target for occupancy in summer 2022. We are excited to be able to provide state-of-the-art living to people with complex special needs in this tranquil, peaceful setting where everyone will be supported to define and enhance their quality of life.

It has truly been a team effort getting through the pandemic and I must again acknowledge all the hard-working employees along with the Leadership Team at Empower

EMPOWER SIMCOE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Protecting stakeholders' interests, establishing policies for management, oversight of the organization, and making decisions about important issues Empower Simcoe faces

- ◆ Strategic Planning
- ◆ Legal Compliance
- ◆ Resource Management
- ◆ Governance
- ◆ Financial Oversight
- ◆ Special Projects



(From left to right) Vice President Valerie Scott, Craig Lilley, Carla Kostiak, Treasurer Tim Berry, Empower Simcoe CEO Dr. Claudine Cousins, President Deborah Wall-Armstrong, Miriam Villamil-Pallister, Roma Czech, Brian Young, and Allison Bobbette. (Absent: Jacob McNamara)

I'm Valerie Scott,
President of the Empower Simcoe Board of Directors.

2022-23 saw us put the pandemic behind us and return, for the most part, back to normalcy. I commend CEO, Dr. Claudine Cousins and her exceptional leadership team for bringing Empower Simcoe back to regular operations. Of course, none of this could have occurred without the notable dedication and support of all Empower Simcoe employees.

These strategic directions will drive the work that will be accomplished over the next three years.

Another highlight of the past year was the completion of Lakeshore Ridge, Empower Simcoe's new state of the art supported living home located in Oro-Medonte. On behalf of the Empower Simcoe Board of Directors, my heartfelt gratitude to all our valued donors for their commitment to making this new home a reality for people with developmental disabilities and other multiple complex needs.

In 2023, Empower Simcoe celebrates 70 years of providing supports and services to our communities in Simcoe County. I know a lot of exciting events are being planned. 70 years speaks to the strength and commitment of this ever-evolving organization and the people, including our dedicated Empower Simcoe volunteers, who work tirelessly to ensure the people we provide services to, live a self-fulfilling life as part of their community

Keep up the great work Empower Simcoe!

Valerie Scott
President, Empower Simcoe Board of Directors



ANNUAL MESSAGE
FROM BOARD OF
DIRECTORS PRESIDENT

CORE VALUES

Core Values Represent Our Highest Priorities And Core, Fundamental Driving Forces

They are the heart of what our organization and employees stand for in the world.



Driven

We strive to constantly move forward, while celebrating successes.



Accountable

We work mindfully to empower every individuals goals.



Community

We are accepting of all people and give each a voice.



Respect

We treat everyone with dignity, deserving of our full attention and commitment.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Where We're At 2022-2023

Empower Simcoe 3 years strategic plan for 2022-2025 was developed through engagement and consultations with individuals supported, families, employees and our community. These consultations resulted in Empower Simcoe creating three key strategic directions: Service Excellence, Our People and Culture and a Strong Partner. Our dedicated and energetic staff are working on the goals for each strategic priority to meet the needs of people receiving supports and services. Our agency is transforming the way we do business to meet the transformation agenda espoused by the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services through the Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion agenda.

I am excited and pleased to present Empower Simcoe's year one strategic plan progress report or update.

Priority #1 Outcome #1: Service Excellence

As a responsive and forward-thinking organization, Empower Simcoe has constructed a state-of-the-art treatment program in Oro Medonte to support complex individuals with multiple challenges. This state-of-the-art program was officially opened on March 20, 2023, when we welcomed our first client from Waypoint. We have also started constructing a specialized transition program in Orillia to support individuals interested in acquiring living and social skills to enhance their independence. This new program is on target for completion, with an anticipated opening date of November 2023.

Empower Simcoe has invested much in using technology solutions to streamline our operations. The use of technology has become an integral part of how we conduct business here at Empower Simcoe; in late 2022, Empower Simcoe launched an Electronic Medication Administration Record system. Five locations are piloting the Quickmar system to document medication administrations for people receiving services from Empower Simcoe. Our goal is to transition all remaining sites to the EMAR system by the end of the year. Additionally, on June 6, 2023, we introduced the document management section of AIMS (Alliance Information Management System) and have started uploading and storing files for people supported in the document management library in AIMS with an anticipated completion date of December 2023. Our goal is to go completely paperless by the end of the year. An online registration /payment process for Community Support and Services activities and fee for services, including Job Readiness Program and sensory program, started in May 2023. Online registration covers all scheduling needs and payment options, eliminating the exchange of money.

Priority #2 Outcome : Our People and Culture

Empower Simcoe renamed the Human Resource Department to People and Culture, focusing on transforming the work we do to meet the needs of the future. Much work has been done in this strategic direction. Our People and Culture have developed robust recruitment strategies that included a recruitment video, created job postings reflecting the agency, highlighted the compensation and benefits of working for Empower Simcoe, revamped job postings, launched an employee referral program, and hosted career fairs, partnered with York/Simcoe Collective to promote working in the developmental sector. All the above strategies have resulted in Empower Simcoe hiring close to 81 new employees since January 2023, compared with 88 hires in 2022.

Continue Reading...

In May of 2022, Empower Simcoe People and Culture department rolled out a new Employee Referral Program; 19 employees have participated in this referral program by referring their friends, family members and close associates to work with Empower Simcoe as an employer of choice. All 19 employees have qualified to receive the referral bonus.

In 2022, People and Culture developed a robust, equitable, diverse, and inclusive (EDI) program where EDI is embedded in Empower Simcoe's Culture. In light of making Empower Simcoe a more inclusive, diverse and equitable workplace for staff, the People and Culture department launched safe spaces training as part of the EDIAC work plan. All staff and volunteers were

enrolled in this training. Close to 400 plus employees have completed the safe spaces training. In addition to the safer space training, Empower Simcoe participated in black history month in February 2023, with employees and people supported by sharing how they celebrate their black culture. Empower Simcoe also participated in Barrie's pride parade in late June.

Priority Outcome #3: People Experience Services as a Result of Building Our Capacities to Serve – 97%

We were successful in the creation of a scorecard to provide the Board with a high-level overview of the health of the agency, and in the development of a comprehensive Asset Management Plan. Even with the limitations of the pandemic, we made great progress in terms of expanding on virtual training options, promoting LifeWorks EAP program and the delivery of 12 wellness webinars and are at 75% completion of core competency training for our employees. The effects of the pandemic also had an impact in regards to our strategic goal around the Volunteer program as many areas of the agency were unable to accept or utilize volunteers with the safety protocols in place for our employees and the people we support.

We were also able to complete two longer term strategies identified in the Strategic Plan. The development of a multi-year technology plan allowed the agency to deliver more accessible supports and services to the people we support, as well as the ability to deliver some programs virtually for a broader reach and minimizing physical distance barriers. An increase in efficiencies was also realized through the use of new applications.

The Empower Simcoe Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council made great gains on their workplan including the creation of a cultural/diversity competency definition and land acknowledgement statement. A review of policies and updating to include an EDI lens was also accomplished. We continue to receive requests from outside organizations interested in learning about our processes and tools and are being recognized as leaders on this front.

I cannot express enough how proud I am of the dedicated employees of Empower Simcoe. Their efforts to complete the numerous tasks of an extremely robust strategic plan, while dealing with the challenges of the pandemic, is truly remarkable. Thank you again to all our employees for your hard work.

Much progress has been made in accomplishing tasks in Empower Simcoe's year one strategic plan. This was made possible by our dedicated and committed staff. I want to thank our employees for their dedication and commitment to moving our agency forward to meet the needs of people in our community and getting our agency ready for the MCCSS journey to belonging and transformation. Much work is ahead of us, and we will complete the work in no time.

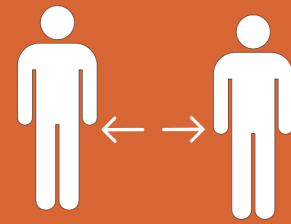
STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2023 Update



Organizational Review

3 all employee info meetings, surveys, 4 frontline and 1 admin. employee meeting, individual meetings with Senior Leadership teams



Strategic Planning Focus Groups

16 Supervisors, EDIAC, Board of Directors, Believe In Yourself Committee, 2 Family meetings, external stakeholders and community partners



Community Partner Meetings With CEO

6 meetings in March 2023 to discuss new Empower Simcoe Strategic Plan and ways to partner and collaborate



Transformation To People And Culture

Human Resources department renamed to People and Culture. 81 employees hired since the beginning of January 2023



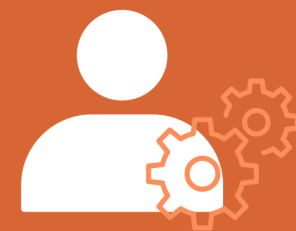
Launch Of EMAR System

Launched Electronic Medication Administration Record System (EMAR) at 5 supported living locations to pilot the system



Online Registration For Fee For Service

Empower Simcoe's Information Technology department launched online payment platform



Resilience And Mental Health Training

Building Resiliency Training completed for 336 Empower Simcoe employees.



Safer Spaces Training For Staff

417 Empower Simcoe employees have completed Safer Spaces training



Completion Of Lakeshore Ridge

We welcomed our first person supported/client in March 2023 to Empower Simcoe's newest supported living home for individuals with complex needs



Celebrating Black History Month

7 videos featuring Empower Simcoe employees sharing their culture and heritage

2022 - 2023

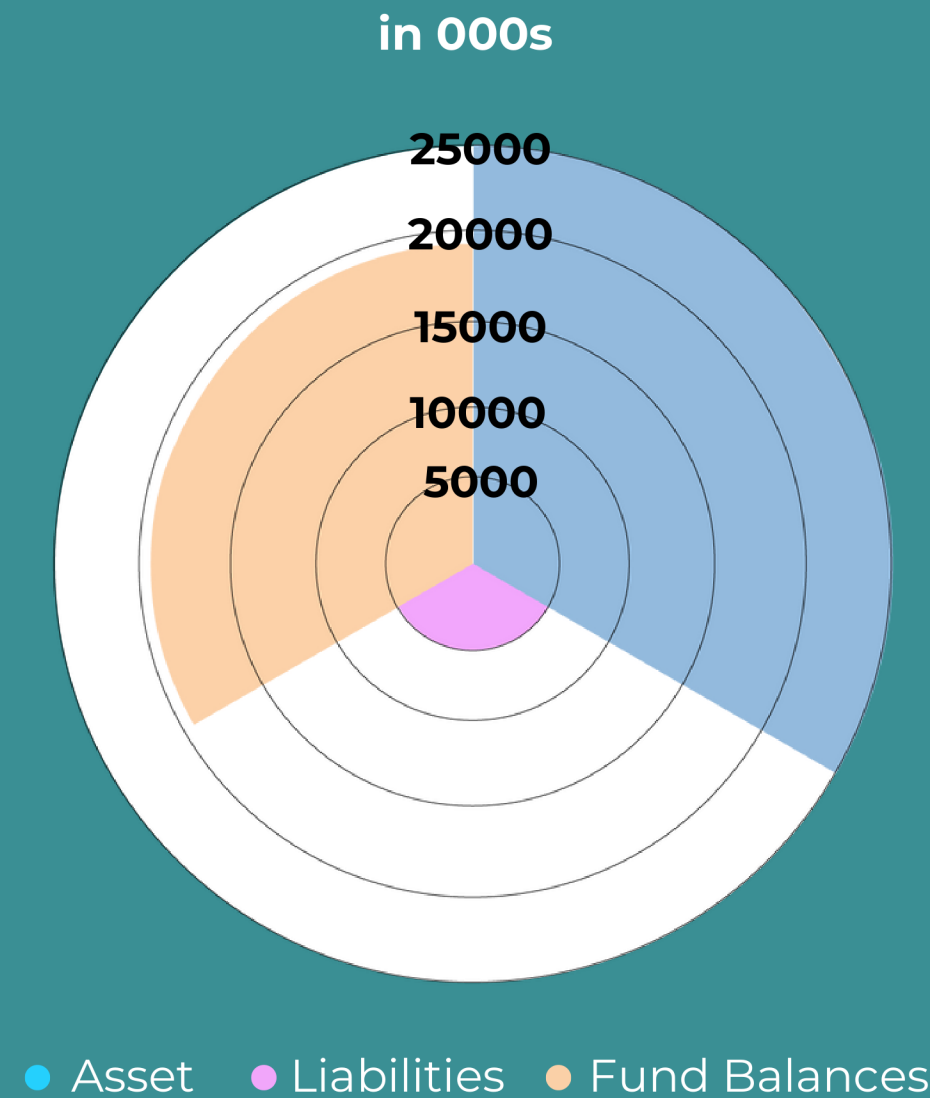
Financial Highlights

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Budget To Actual Analysis

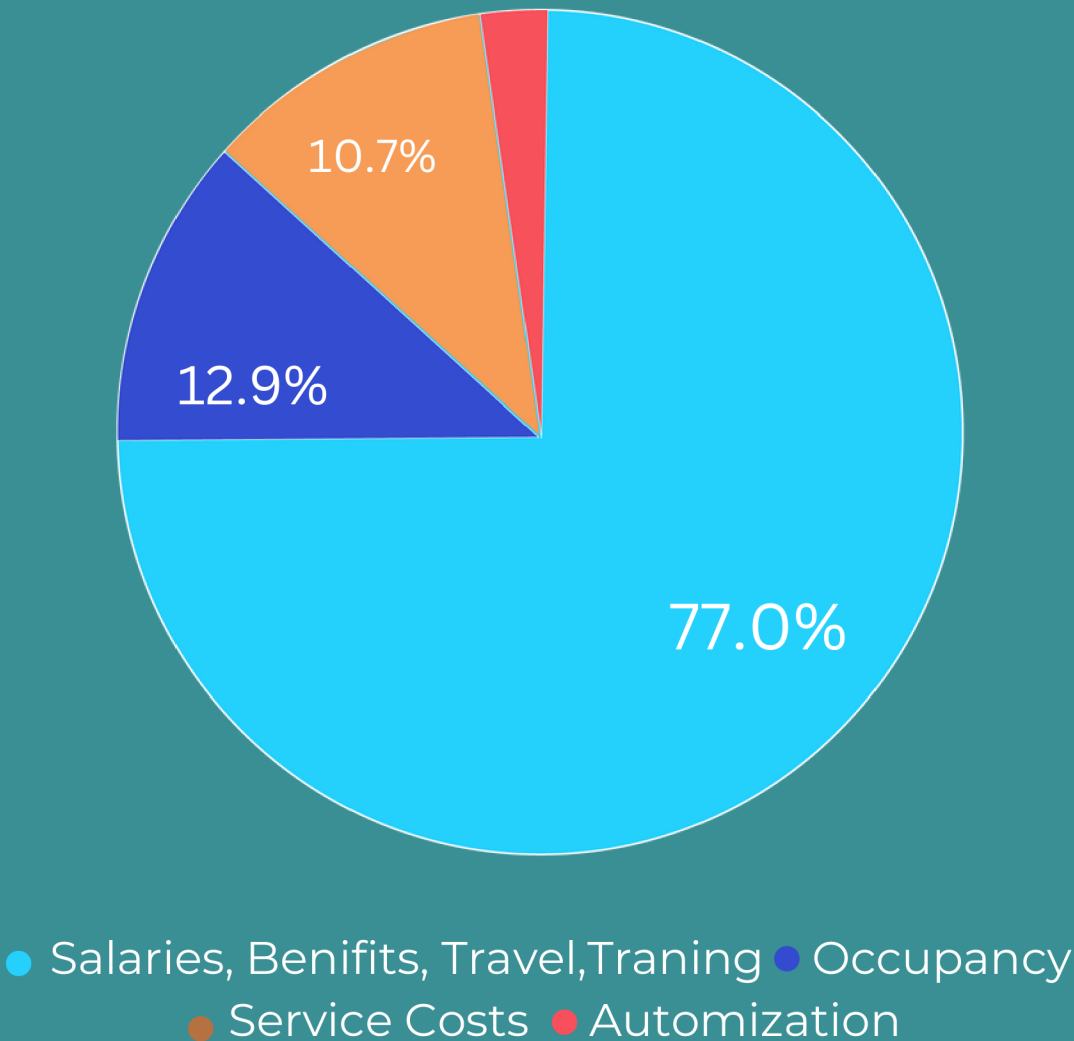
Total Revenue was \$6.8M more than budgeted. Additional \$3.2M from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services' (MCCSS) for the Permanent Compensation Enhancement was received. The new Ontario Autism Program contributed an additional \$1.5M in funding. Total Expenses exceeded the budget by \$6.8M. This was due to the spending of the Permanent Compensation funding and the Ontario Autism program funds.

Assets, Liabilities & Fund Balances



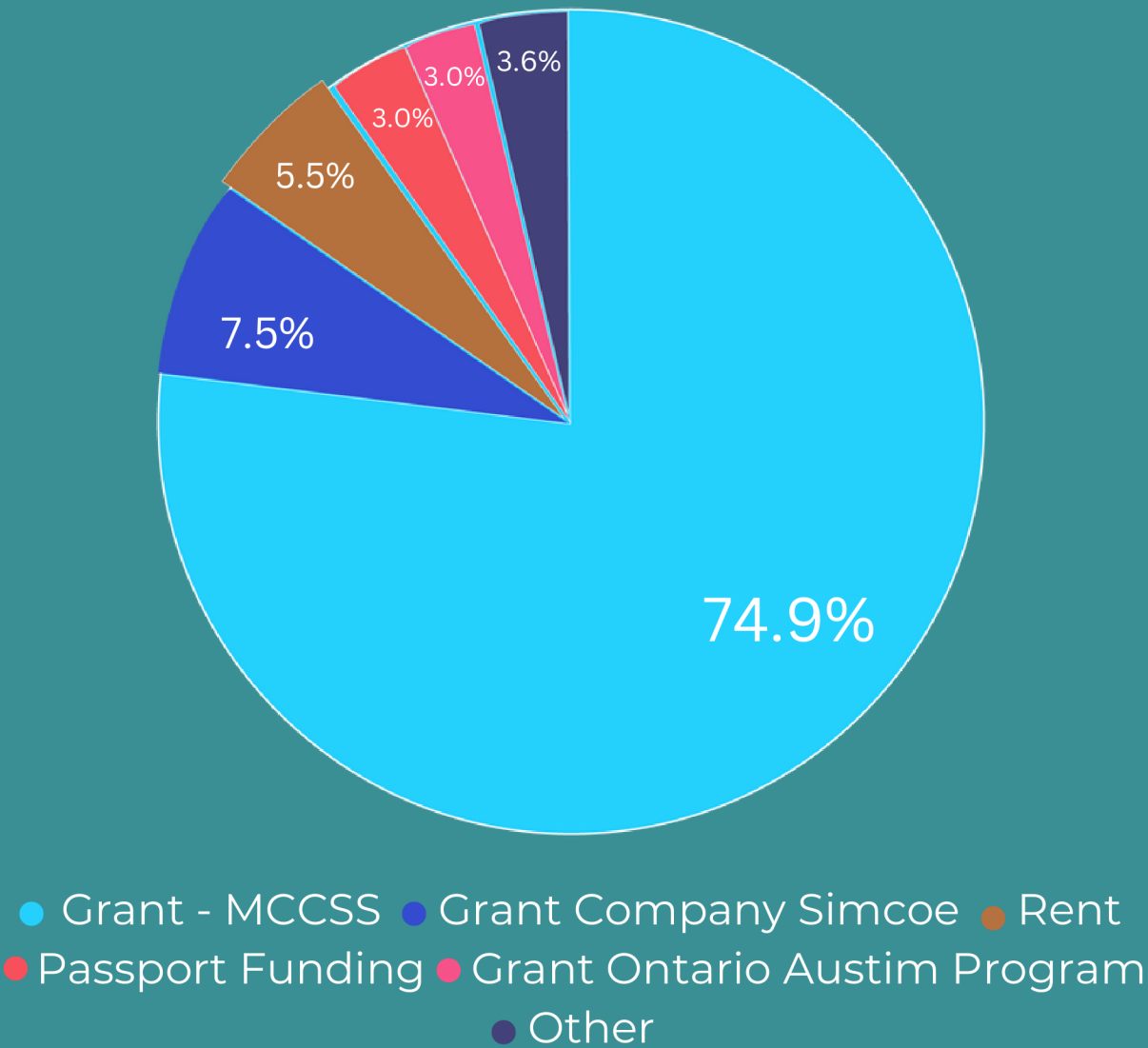
Expenditures (In 000s)

Total \$49,553

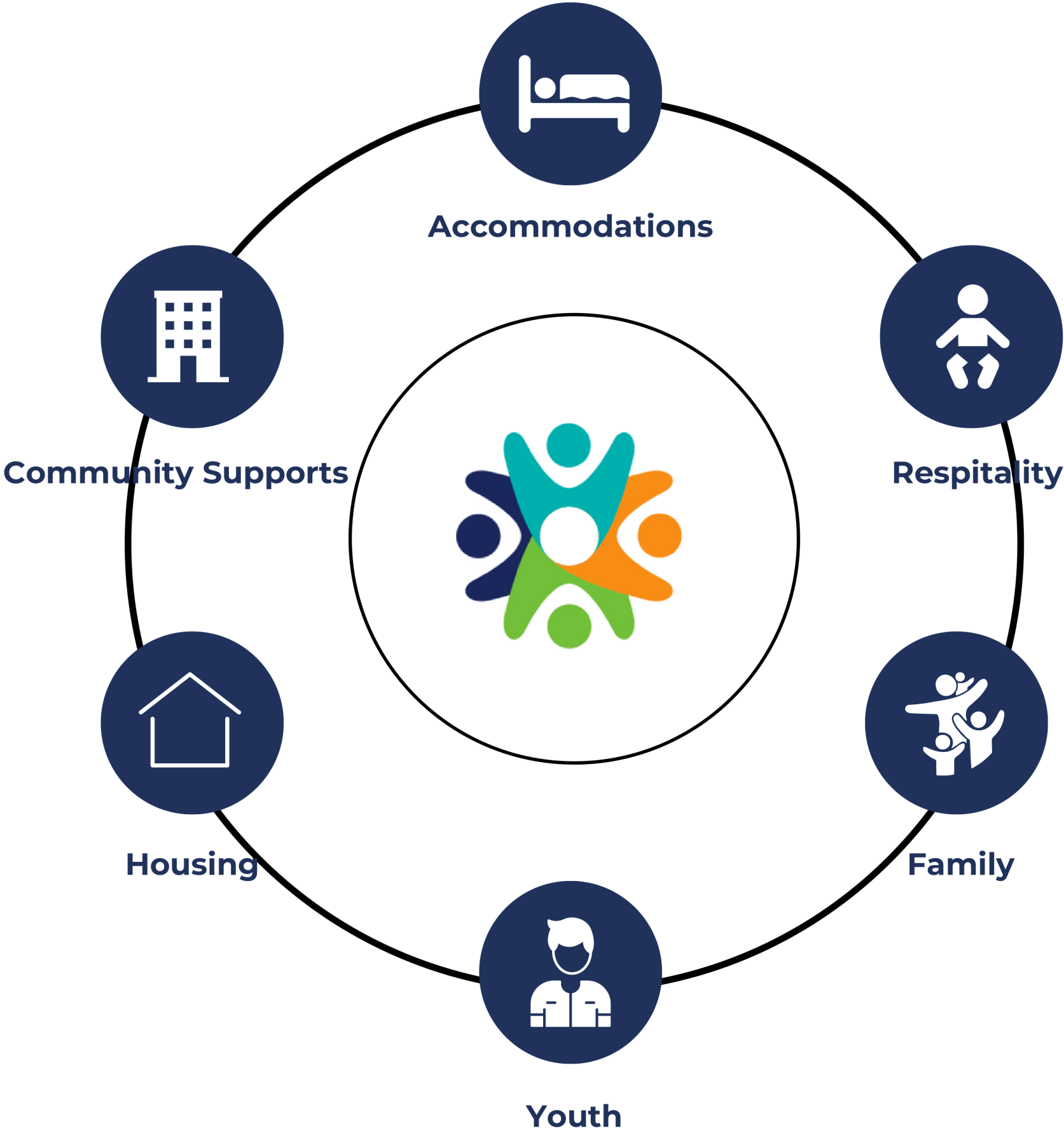


Sources Of Revenue (In 000s)

Total \$51,352



IMPACTFUL STORIES OF SUCCESS



Impactful Housing Support

Empower Simcoe's Respite Services Program



Exceptional Leadership

Empower Simcoe's CEO Dr. Claudine Cousins



Strengthening Caregiving Resiliency

Empower Simcoe's CEO Dr. Claudine Cousins

‘STORIES OF SUCCESS’ ‘Celebrating Steps To Independence’

Empower Simcoe Housing Access Worker Kathleen Aikins shares this inspiring story about the power of community support.

I first met Gordon at The Lighthouse in Orillia. With health challenges, a hearing impairment, and on the verge of homelessness, Gordon was alone, scared and incredibly sad. His wife recently passed away and he was facing eviction. After completing an intake form, Gordon indicated his goal was to move to Orillia.

After returning from lunch I noticed Gordon was sitting in his car. I walked over to make sure he was okay and noticed he was crying. Gordon thanked me for my help. I reassured him that it would be okay and that I was still going to try and support him.

As I sat in my office, I wished there was something I could immediately offer Gordon. I then received an email from Hillcrest Lodge; one of our earlier inquiries. Hillcrest Lodge is a charitable organization offering affordable housing for seniors in need. The Hillcrest manager confirmed they had an opening. With the help of shelter staff, Gordon was called to return to The Lighthouse to complete a thorough application that included income statements, landlord references and emergency contact information.

Advocacy and meaningful collaboration with Early Intervention partners on behalf of children and families is a big part of Adrienne’s work as an Infant and Child Development Worker. “Parents know best and are the greatest experts regarding their children. It’s essential to listen to that parenting instinct,” adds Adrienne.

After receiving the news that his application was approved, I was reunited with Gordon at The Lighthouse. This time the tears in his eyes were happy ones. “Thank you, thank you. You changed my life,” he exclaimed. “I thought it was hopeless, but because of you, I have somewhere to live. I know my wife is looking down on me and that you and I met for a reason.”

I’m pleased to update that Gordon moved into his own, affordable bachelor apartment with homemade meals every day, and his own sense of community.

It is not every day, especially in the Regional Housing Support Services program, that we are able to successfully navigate the current housing climate for some of our most vulnerable clients. This story is a special one for me, and I’m happy to share it for my Housing team, for Empower Simcoe, and for Gordon.



**Gordon and Empower Simcoe Housing
Access Worker Kathleen Aikins**

7,214

Incoming Calls for Empower
Simcoe Regional Housing supports

373

Individualized Housing Plans
Creations in 2022 - 2023

3,234

People Served by Regional Housing
Support Services Program

STORIES OF SUCCESS Exceptional Leadership

November 23, 2022, was a night to celebrate Empower Simcoe and its Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Claudine Cousins. With family, friends, and colleagues in attendance at the elegant Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Dr. Cousins was named the Social Change Award: Regional Impact recipient at the RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards.

Presented by the Women of Influence, now in their 30th year, the prestigious awards recognize the country's leading female entrepreneurs who have made impressive and substantial contributions to the local, Canadian, or global economy.

"This distinguished honour is one I'm privileged to share with all Empower Simcoe employees, volunteers, donors, and our community partners," says Dr. Cousins. "This is a validation of the commitment of the work being done every day at Empower Simcoe that ensures people of all abilities lead meaningful and inclusive lives."

Dr. Cousins was one of seven recipients celebrated at this year's awards gala, following a robust nomination drive that saw over 9,000 nominations come in from across the country. The Social Change Award: Regional Impact is dedicated to a female entrepreneur making a profound and positive impact in society as a leader of a registered charity, social enterprise, or not-for-profit dedicated to their unique brand of social change.



**Dr. Claudine Cousins, CEO
Empower Simcoe**

"Claudine has constantly demonstrated exceptional leadership and dedication to social change as Empower Simcoe's CEO. We are proud to have Claudine leading our organization," says Empower Simcoe President Valerie Scott.

As the recipient of the Social Change Award: Regional Impact in 2022, Dr. Cousins is a herald for change, an advocate for marginalized communities, and a force for community impact.

Congratulations Claudine! We can't wait to see what lies ahead for Empower Simcoe, the people and families we support, and our community.

Find more information here on the 2022 RBC Canadian Entrepreneur Award recipients.

STORIES OF SUCCESS Strengthening Caregiver Resiliency

In 2022, Empower Simcoe launched Respitality, a progressive pilot Program, implemented across Simcoe County, to further assist parents and caregivers who provide live-in/full-time care for their loved ones diagnosed with an Intellectual Disability.



As part of a Global Respitality Network with members from Scotland, the UK, USA, and other areas of Canada, Empower Simcoe's Respitality Program is an innovative partnership with the hospitality industry whereby hotels and other businesses donate overnight stays, dinners out, memberships, and attractions in the community; experiences that allow for added quality of life and provide families a much-needed break.

This investment in the Caregiver means strengthened family relationships and a greater connection to community that bolsters caregiver resilience and allows the entire family to thrive.

Here's what a few Caregivers and community partners have shared about receiving support from the Empower Simcoe Respitality Program:

\$72,478

received in financial
donations to date

\$9,235

in vouchers & in-kind
service donations

31

caregiver experiences
delivered

137

caregiver packages already
secured for 2023

78%

reported that Respitality
made this break possible

Empower Simcoe Foundation

Raising funds to improve the quality of life for people of all abilities and foster an inclusive society.

- ✓ Specialized Housing Needs
- ✓ Recreational & Leisure Activities
- ✓ Assist Families with Respite
- ✓ Accessibility Equipment
- ✓ Provide Skill Development
- ✓ Special Projects

Hello, I'm Victoria Ptasiuk,

President of the Empower Simcoe Foundation.

What an extraordinary year it's been for the Empower Foundation and its commitment to generate funds and resources beyond government and other funding sources for people and families supported by Empower Simcoe.

This year, with the assistance of the Empower Simcoe Foundation's Lakeshore Ridge Capital campaign, a new 6,000-square-foot, six-bedroom state-of-the-art group living home in Oro-Medonte became a reality. Our heartfelt gratitude to all our donors for helping to make this vision come to life. Everyone deserves a place to call home, and your unwavering support allowed the Empower Simcoe Foundation to make a difference in people's lives.

We were also delighted to see the return of our Annual Empower Simcoe Community Champions Fashion Show as a live event this past year, a celebration of friends, fashion, and philanthropy that raised over \$30,000 for the Empower Simcoe Foundation. Thank you to our generous sponsors, donors, community partners, and volunteers who have supported this signature event for twenty-seven years.

On behalf of the Empower Simcoe Foundation Board of Directors, we sincerely thank all our donors, volunteers, community partners, and employees. Your incredible generosity and tireless efforts to assist the Empower Simcoe Foundation in responding to community needs through collaborative fundraising are to be applauded.

Victoria Ptasiuk
President, Foundation Board of Directors



Financial Highlights 2022-2023

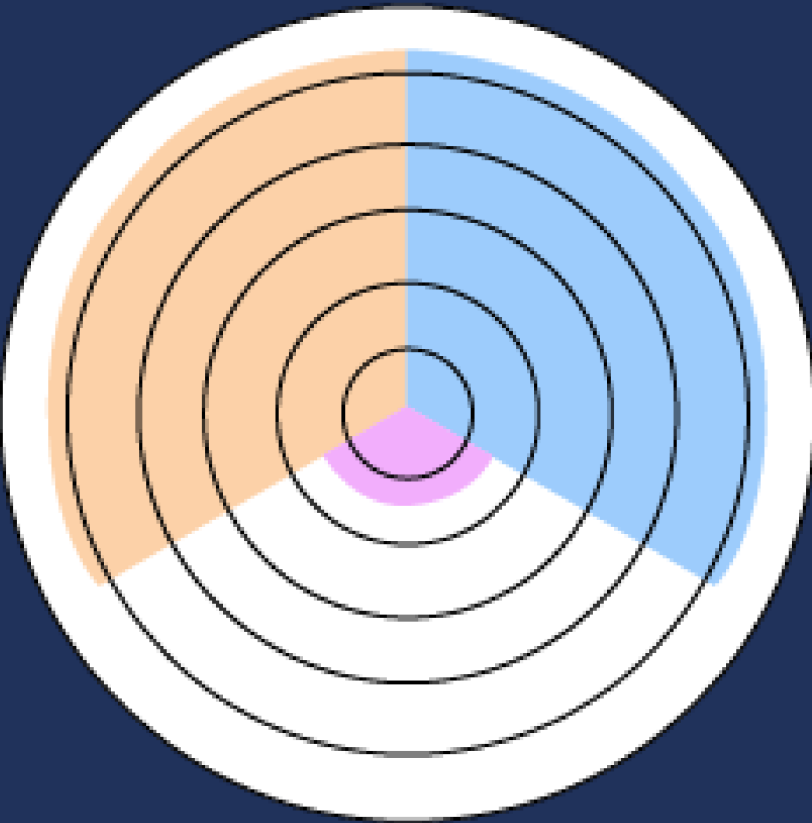
Why Give?

Many people with intellectual disabilities are living at or below the poverty line and barely have enough money to cover rent, food and basic health expenses. This means recreational activities and specialized equipment that would contribute to a better quality of life are simply out of reach.

With the support of many generous donors, our fundraising campaigns support the purchase of accessibility equipment; cover the cost of specialized housing needs; assist families with respite; provide youth with skills development; offer adults and seniors recreational and leisure activities.

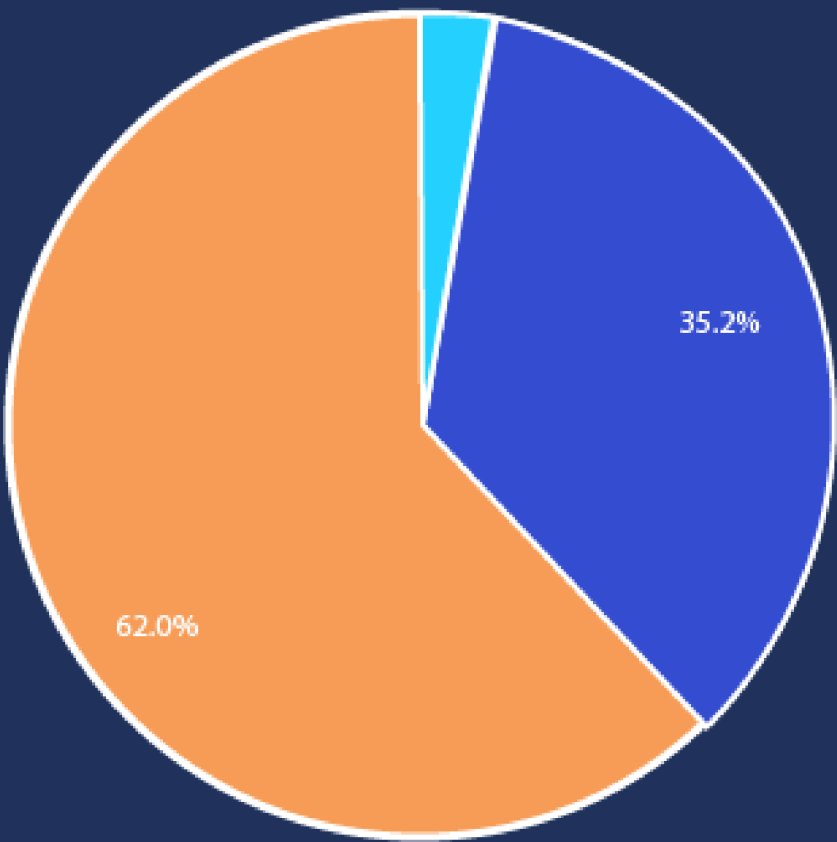
Your donation helps make it possible for people of all abilities to live a meaningful and inclusive life.

Assets, Liabilities & Fund Balances
in 000s



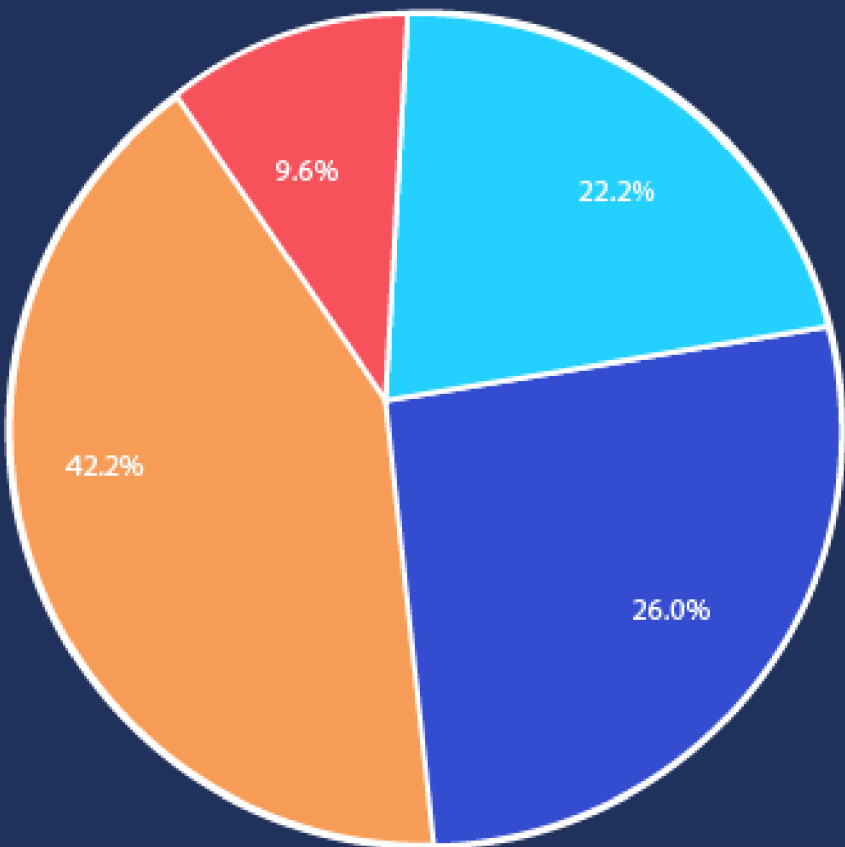
● Asset ● Liabilities ● Fund Balances

Expenditures (In 000s)
Total \$124



● Contribution Of Bingo Proceeds
● Administrative ● Amortization

Sources Of Revenue (In 000s)
Total \$365



● Fundraising ● Donations
● Rental ● Other Revenue

FOUNDATION : A Donor's Story

Donor's StoryThe Power of Paying It Forward



Margaret Good

Growing up in Welland, Ontario, Margaret Good learned early the importance of philanthropy, the welfare of others, and giving back to those in need. “I grew up in a family where it was all about community,” shared Margaret. “You knew everybody and helped everyone out because that’s just how it was.”

These tight-knit family and community values have served her well in life and as an entrepreneur and CEO of Good Girls Marketing and Consulting Services Inc., a company that provides strategic planning and consulting for businesses, maximizing people’s earning potential through tax strategies. “My Dad always said working for yourself was the way to go. I took that advice to heart.”

As she built her thriving consultation business, Margaret also expanded her impact to include causes close to her heart – including Empower Simcoe. Through collaboration with Mary Kay Cosmetics, Margaret first became involved with Empower Simcoe in 2015 at the Celebrating Community Champions Fashion Show by purchasing a table and providing gifts for all the models and those in attendance.

Now, the Mary Kay team is an Empower Simcoe Fashion Show fixture contributing gifts and providing makeup behind the scenes for the models. “It brings us a lot of joy to see the excitement of the Empower Simcoe models every year. Seeing them happy and excited is so nice to be part of that.”

In 2022, Empower Simcoe was pleased to accept another generous donation from Margaret and the Mary Kay team. Dozens of Mary Kay Boxes of Bliss now allow Caregivers supported through the Empower Simcoe Respite Program to receive the ultimate pampering experience.

And still, Margaret continues to spread the word. Thanks to her promotion and advocacy of Empower Simcoe, new handmade blankets and afghans lovingly crafted by her sister and many blanketeers are being put to comforting use by the people and families supported by Empower Simcoe.

“Giving back makes me feel that I’m contributing a little bit to making life better for other people. It’s my small contribution. I want to make life a little bit easier and happier for people, to know they are loved and cared about and are important.”

Learn more about how you can make an impactful and lasting contribution to help the people and families we support live meaningful lives. Contact our Empower Simcoe Foundation at foundation@empowersimcoe.ca.





FOUNDATION

Gift Of The Heart Awards

For giving selflessly to improve the quality of life for people supported by Empower Simcoe, please join us in congratulating the 2021 Gift of the Heart Award recipients

✓ Community Partner

✓ Family

✓ Volunteer

✓ Employee

✓ Self-Advocate



EMPOWER SIMCOE

People That Make The Difference



Donors & Sponsors

Heartfelt 'Thank You' to all of the people and local businesses that helped support Empower Simcoe in 2021-22



Service Awards

Empower Simcoe staff are the heartbeat of our mission and we celebrate those that have reached a milestone this past year.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Thanks To All Of Our Valuable Sponsors!

