



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | Social media campaign for Veterans' House launched

**OTTAWA | TUES., NOV. 3, 2020** – Ottawa charity Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) introduced an innovative social media fundraising campaign today in support of **Veterans' House: the Andy Carswell Building**.

This morning, His Worship Jim Watson, Mayor of the City of Ottawa, officially launched the **#WeSaluteYourService Challenge for Veterans' House** on MHI's behalf. Through #WeSaluteYourService, participants are encouraged to honour an individual or group's military service on social media, and make a donation to Veterans' House if they can.

"To participate in this challenge, you can record a video or post on any social media platform, and use the hashtag #WeSaluteYourService to honour someone's military service," Watson explained in his launch video posted to Twitter and Facebook this morning. "Also, consider donating to help support homeless veterans."

Watson then proceeded to nominate two people to take on #WeSaluteYourService next: Lt-Col (ret'd) Karen McCrimmon, MP for Kanata-Carleton, as well as City of Ottawa Councillor Matthew Luloff, Council Liaison for Veteran and Military Issues, who deployed to Afghanistan in 2008 as a member of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

#WeSaluteYourService starts Nov. 3 – just in time for Veterans' Week, which begins Nov. 5 – and will continue until the end of 2020.

All contributions made through #WeSaluteYourService will support the capital campaign for Veterans' House, a 40-unit facility for veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Commissionaires Ottawa has generously offered to match all donations made directly to MHI in support of Veterans' House, to a maximum of \$150,000, until Dec. 31, 2020.

### HOW TO JOIN #WESALUTEYOURSERVICE, IN THREE STEPS

- 1. Choose someone you wish to honour:** Choose someone – living or passed – who has served in the Canadian Armed Forces or Royal Canadian Mounted Police. You can honour a single individual (e.g., a family member; a friend; someone you've heard of and admire) or a group (e.g., a specific division or regiment; everyone who's served in a military effort such as Afghanistan; parents deployed overseas etc.).
- 2. Make a donation if you can:** Text VETERANS2021 to 41010 to give \$25, or visit [multifaithhousing.ca/wesaluteyourservice](https://multifaithhousing.ca/wesaluteyourservice) to give a different amount.
- 3. Post to social media:** Make a video or text post honouring the individual/group you selected, use the hashtag #WeSaluteYourService, and tag someone to do the challenge next. You can use any social media platform you like. Participants are encouraged to post to social media using the official challenge text (available at [www.multifaithhousing.ca/wesaluteyourservice](https://www.multifaithhousing.ca/wesaluteyourservice)).

### ABOUT VETERANS' HOUSE



Currently under construction, Veterans' House: the Andy Carswell Building is located on the site of the former Canadian Forces Base Rockcliffe. Veterans' House will offer onsite social supports including mental health and addiction counselling, peer support, an indoor gym, gardens, a barbecue area, and a dog park for training the veterans' service dogs. Veterans' House cost \$11.5 million to build, not including the City of Ottawa's \$730,000 worth of contributions in development charges relief, property tax waivers, and other fees and permits. Veterans' House also received \$6.5 million in federal funding. MHI has \$2 million to fundraise on Veterans' House as of November 2020. Veterans' House is on track to open as soon as construction wraps up in 2021.

## ABOUT MULTIFAITH HOUSING INITIATIVE

Multifaith Housing Initiative is an affordable housing charity based in Ottawa. Founded by a coalition of faith groups in 2002, MHI is dedicated to providing safe, affordable, and well-maintained housing in inclusive communities. Veterans' House will be MHI's fifth housing project, and its first community exclusively constructed for veterans. Learn more at [www.multifaithhousing.ca](http://www.multifaithhousing.ca).

## QUOTES

"Multifaith Housing Initiative is thrilled to launch the #WeSaluteYourService Challenge for Veterans' House. We hope as many Canadians as possible will opt to show their appreciation to veterans on social media before the end of 2020. To all our veterans who have served and continue to serve: We are forever grateful."

**-Suzanne Le, Executive Director, Multifaith Housing Initiative**

"The City of Ottawa is committed to providing affordable and supportive housing for all its residents. We were proud to contribute to Veterans' House, which will help Veterans settle into stable and safe housing while receiving important supportive services. Multifaith Housing Initiative now needs the community's support to push this over the finish line."

**-Jim Watson, Mayor, City of Ottawa**

"For generations, Commissionaires Ottawa has been creating meaningful employment opportunities for veterans and giving back to military families. Our offer to match donations in support of Veterans' House is our way of mobilizing our fellow Canadians to honour, support and protect those who have served our country. Together, we can fight homelessness."

**-Captain (N) (ret'd) Paul A. Guindon, CEO, Commissionaires Ottawa**