



**Home of My Own<sup>®</sup>**  
of WNY  
*On my own but not alone*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Annual Meeting – January 16, 2024  
**[homeofmyownofwny.org](https://homeofmyownofwny.org)**

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## **Proposed 2024 Budget (attached)**



## MISSION, VISION & VALUES

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### Our Mission:

To create apartment communities tailored to independent individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who desire to live in a safe, social and integrated community with lifelong sustainability.

### Our Vision:

Our apartments are an inclusive, community-focused model. Readily available opportunities for socialization in and within close walking distance of their homes creates organic, meaningful interactions and opportunities that inspire the pathways to friendship and independence. Our community-centered location will provide easy accessibility to public transportation, employment opportunities, and leisure that will provide for life long sustainability.

### Our Values:

Supported housing options need to be diverse if a person's rights are to be met. Individuals have the right to live as independently as is possible, in an environment that is appropriate to them. They need housing in community-centered spaces and opportunities that promote inclusion. Individuals should not be deprived of any civil or legal rights because of a diagnosis of a developmental disability. They deserve respect and dignity.





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Management Team

Our Board of Directors currently consists of parents and advocates looking for an alternative housing option to what is currently provided under OPWDD.

### 2023 Board of Directors

**Ellen Pachioli**, Co-Founding Director, *Secretary*  
Parent/Advocate

**Connie Stives**, Co-Founding Director, *Treasurer*  
Parent, Business Owner

**Mark S. Carney, Esq.**, Director  
Attorney

**Hon. Mary Giallanza Carney**, Director  
Erie County Family Court Judge

**Karen Cuddy-Miller**, Director, *President*  
Retired Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

**Cindy Fohrd**, Director  
Chief Administrative Officer at Seneca Foods Corporation.

Home of My Own® of WNY has been blessed with positive, supportive, and passionate leadership and committees from its inception in 2019. During 2023, we expanded our Board of Directors with the addition of Cindy Fohrd. Her experience in a variety of business areas brought a well-rounded dynamic to our organization.

Sadly, Cindy Fohrd, died suddenly during the night of July 20, 2023. We were so fortunate when Cindy joined our Board of Directors in January 2023. She quickly proved to be a valuable member with great insight and generosity of time, focus, and support. In addition to her contributions as a member of our Board of Directors, Cindy was active in supporting our legislative mailing efforts, successful in securing generous donations to our Destroyer Park Golf fundraising event, and an active member of the committee working to enhance the success of the Transit Valley Country Club Charity Event. She brought a positive outlook to every conversation. She had a genuine commitment to providing an inclusive and interactive future for all individuals in our community. Her presence and influence will be dearly missed. In 2024, we hope to continue the expansion of our Board of Directors with smart, talented persons who are purpose driven to the mission, vision and values of Home of My Own®.



## SUPPORTERS, ADVISORY BOARD

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Our team consists of parents, community and professional persons supportive of our cause.

### 2023 Advisory Board

**Anita Ballow**, *Fundraising*  
Parent

**Nancy Bojanowski**, *Residential Supports*  
Human Resources

**Michael Burns**, *Advisory*  
Financial Advisor

**Deb Cavers**, *Grants, Fundraising*  
Parent, Community Development Liaison

**Amy Downing**, *Property Development*  
Parent, Real Estate Development

**Janet Fisher**, *Fundraising Chair*  
Teacher (Retired), Parent

**Rhonda Frederick**, *Advisory*  
President, CEO People Inc. (Retired)

**Paula Glauber**, *Fundraising*  
Parent

**PJ Glauber**, *Fundraising*  
Parent, Business Owner

**Krisan Hahn**, *Fundraising, Task Force*  
Parent

**Pat Lawrence**, *Residential Supports, Fundraising*  
Parent, Nurse

**Leah Marchewka**, *IT/Social Media/Marketing*  
Parent, Marketing Consultant

**John Monson**, *Property Development*  
Parent, Safety Consultant

**Joe Somma**, *Fundraising*  
Non-Profit and Marketing Consultant

**Deborah Waldrop**, *Residential Supports, Fundraising*  
Department of Social Work – UB (Retired June 2022), Social work liaison.

**Gretchen White**, *IT/Social Media/Marketing*  
Parent, Graphic Designer





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is almost hard to believe that we have brought another year to a close and are looking forward to all that 2024 will bring. The past year was a busy one for those individuals who were active on the Board and members of our volunteer committees. We ebbed, flowed, and evolved in the trajectory of our efforts. While we remain committed to the mission, vision, values and goals of Home of My Own® of WNY – we have refocused the energy of our efforts.

As mentioned in our Fall 2023 newsletter, while we had TREMENDOUS success with the fundraising events, we also recognized a common “price tag” in our pursuit of property was consistently significant. Whether we buy land and build new or purchase an existing property and remodel; each of these options have a price tag that would outpace our ability to raise sufficient funding based on our past efforts. The Board of Directors during the fall of 2023 became committed to a focused effort on philanthropic fundraising. Through this effort, we will be seeking large donation funds and/or donation of land or property from donors in a manner that will help us to meet our goals at a faster, more effective pace.

In the closing month of the past year, we worked to bring the Philanthropic Fundraising Committee together to set the focus and foundation for our work. We have greatly increased our database and will soon be articulating the communications efforts to seek our donors that can help us bring our vision to life. The goal of this committee: \$12,000,000.00 – this will ensure that we can build OR buy!

In support of this important effort, Home of My Own® of WNY Board of Directors was able to utilize grant funds to hire an independent contractor whose focus will be to facilitate partnerships, manifest connections, support our fundraising communications, and articulate a capital campaign to ensure that once we have established our community apartments, we will be able to maintain and improve the property as needed. While we have entered a six-month contract at this point, we anticipate that this will be a relationship which will be beneficial to our organization with options to renew and extend.

Among other exciting news – you might have recently noticed the Registered Trademark symbol (®) now connected to the title of our organization. We were successful in registering our name during 2023 – and recently received news of this success. This will help to ensure that as we grow in both awareness and success in our mission – we will be able to maintain ownership of the “who we are” part of our efforts.

With passion and purpose, we are grateful for your continued support and partnership.

Karen M. Cuddy  
*President, Board of Directors*



## COMMITTEE REPORTS

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### Property Development

*Submitted by Amy Downing*

Home of my Own's Property Development committee and Board have evaluated five potential properties presented by our real estate broker, Steve Hunt of Hunt Commercial Real Estate. All but one property would entail rehabilitation and re-use of an existing building; the fifth is a vacant parcel on which a new building would be constructed for Home of my Own. The existing buildings range from two former assisted living facilities, a hotel, and a former church.

Unfortunately, after much consideration, all the existing buildings have been deemed unsuitable as a future housing community for Home of my Own®.

#### 3600 Harlem Rd., Cheektowaga:

- 38,000SF former skilled nursing facility.
- Extensive renovation required due to building condition and long-term vacancy.

#### 601 Dingens St., Cheektowaga:

- 69,000SF Best Western hotel.
- Location deemed unsatisfactory.

#### 410 Mill Street, Williamsville:

- 48,000SF former Park Creek assisted living facility
- Campus setting very appealing.
- Cost to acquire and renovate translates into prohibitively high rent rates.

#### 2765 Delaware Avenue, Kenmore

- 38,000SF former Kenmore Presbyterian Church
- Walkable location in Village of Kenmore just over Buffalo line very appealing
- Cost to acquire and renovate translates into prohibitively high rent rates; high pre-development costs deemed too risky.

#### Woodlands Corporate Center, Wheatfield

- 5-acre remaining parcel in campus owned by Calamar
- Campus setting, including offices, senior apartments, townhomes, is appealing
- Niagara County location precludes consideration at this time

Several other properties were also considered and were ruled out due to cost, location, and/or rehab needs eliminating an in-person walkthrough.





## Marketing/Social Media/IT

*Submitted by Ellen Pachioli*

Members across our organization stepped up in many ways to support marketing needs in 2023:

### Communications & Public Relations

We participated for the first time in DDDay (Developmental Disabilities Day) in August. It was a day of connecting with the WNY community spreading our mission, vision and values to agency professionals and families alike.

A new banner was created for the occasion.

### Fundraising

The marketing committee was able to assist the fundraising committee with a number of events. Signage, branding, digital PDFs, social media – whatever was necessary. Some of these events included the Park Golf Party, TVCC Charity Event, St. Paul's Chicken BBQ, and Give 716.

### Social Media

Facebook continued as our social media means to engage with people in the Western New York Community. Posts focused on fundraising activities, legislative issues and other pertinent information that affects the IDD community.

### Web Updates

Our team is committed to keeping our website in compliance with ADA and other governmental mandates. Webpage links and content are monitored and updated in a timely manner. We often receive positive comments concerning our website. It remains a high priority when attracting new supporters to Home of My Own®.

### Marketing Collateral

Home of My Own® created its first mailing to our current database and potential new donors in December. This mailing was in the form of a Holiday Postcard. Earlier in the year, the Legislative Committee did a postcard mailing concerning NYS housing and transportation bills which were sent to all of our state senators and legislators.

### Network for Good Database Software

Our Network for Good database was put to extensive use in fundraising campaigns, especially for the Destroyer Park Golf Party Fundraiser in June, Give716 in July, the TVCC Charity Event in August, Giving Tuesday in November and the Give716 Holiday Raffle in December. It continues to be used to acknowledge and manage donations as well as sending email updates to our internal organization as well as to the broader mailing list when appropriate







## Fundraising

*Submitted by Ellen Pachioli*

The year 2023 had diverse array of fundraisers. Revenue results of these events may be found in the financial report.

**April 28, 2023 – St. Paul’s Chicken BBQ** – This was the third year that St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Williamsville hosted a BBQ fundraiser on our behalf. Their goal is to be one of the first BBQ’s of the season in order to make as much money as possible. Joe Somma, a newer member of our Advisory Board spearheaded this event and had record results! Thank you, Joe!

**June 4, 2023 – Destroyer Park Golf Party** – Our entire fundraising team works hard every year to create this all-day fundraising extravaganza. From sponsorships, to raffle and auction solicitations, to food and golf, this committee steps up every time.

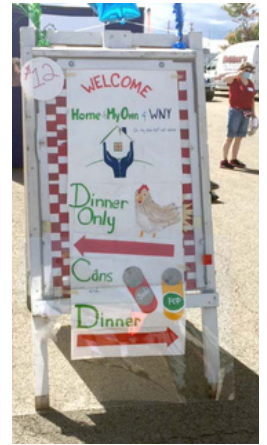
**July 16-18, 2023 – Give 716**

**August 10, 2023 – TVCC Charity Event** – As recorded in our Fall Newsletter, this was a new fundraising event sponsored by Transit Valley Country Club. TVCC has supported many local charities over the years. Home of My Own® was not only the beneficiary of their event, but we were able to raise awareness to the housing crisis our population faces. The members of this club were generous with their time and their treasures and made this the most successful charity event they have held. We are thrilled to be chosen again for their 2024 charity event!

**November 28, 2023 – Giving Tuesday**

**December 27, 2023 – Give716 Holiday Raffle**

As mentioned in the president’s message, our 2024 fundraising efforts will focus on a Philanthropic Capital Campaign with the help of a professional fundraising consultant. The funding for the consultant is covered by a grant from the Erie County Legislature – Republican Caucus.





## Legislative Task Force

*Submitted by Karen Cuddy-Miller*

### **OPWDD Update:**

Several of our organizational leaders engaged in conversations with local representatives of OPWDD, (Office of Persons with Developmental Disabilities). Over the course of several months, we were successful in requesting and participating in meetings with this office. (THIS, alone, was significant...as past efforts to obtain a response to our communications and requests had been less than successful).

Relationships built during these meetings were largely positive. OPWDD representatives with whom we met were receptive and responsive to our questions and dialogue. Our first meeting led to our ability to build an understanding with them surrounding our needs, interests and concerns. When the present representative did not have answers, she took copious notes, confirmed that she would do some research and meet with us again. We brought that June meeting to a close with another meeting already in the calendar.

During our August meeting, another 'more well-versed' representative joined us to discuss the research results and understandings that were available to them based on knowledge and experience. Similarly, a September meeting also included some additional professionals who had experience in our focus.

OPWDD conveyed their support and acknowledged the dedication to our vision. They confirmed that when we are able to bring our vision to fruition, our residents WILL be able to use their subsidies if they apply individually for their individual apartments. OPWDD also confirmed that the AMD of March 2022 effectively lifted and removed the 25% settings cap that would previously have prevented our efforts to create the community of our choice. That's great news.

The struggle that continues is that OPWDD confirmed (even though we pushed hard on the parameters and interpretation) that IF we were to use public (government funds), that the settings cap on residential availability remains at 30%. They have explained that this is really the result/influence of the federal guidelines that control these monies and their distribution. To that end, we have once again affirmed that if we want to bring the Home of My Own® of WNY vision to life – we have to bring this to life without government funding options at this time. This understanding continues to affirm the direction of a philanthropic fundraising focus at this time.



## Finance/Treasurer's Report

*Submitted by Connie Stives*

We ended the year with a strong financial balance and are looking forward to gaining momentum in 2024. Since our existing funds have gradually increased due to over three years of many fundraisers, we opened two CDs and have earned over \$7K in interest income in 2023. The focus has transitioned from our Park Golf fundraiser to applying for philanthropic giving, grants, and foundations in 2024. With success, this will allow us to reach our financial goal to be able to purchase a property at a faster pace than our current trajectory. We are also participating in additional opportunities to bring in funds, such as registering with Donate Stock to offer another option in giving for donors. We began using a CPA to file our 2022 and beyond Federal and State tax returns since our income is now over \$50K/year. We look forward to 2024!

