



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

A fulfilling life.
Together.



“Life can be very beautiful.”

When Noelle stays at Hopewell for respite, she brings a smile on her face.

Ask Noelle to talk about her life, and one of the first things she might say is: “I was on TV with Lisa Laflamme.”

“She interviewed my family when I was born in Haiti. My dad was doing a project there to help raise money for children, and Lisa Laflamme talked with them.”

Adopted from Haiti as an infant, Noelle now lives in Guelph with her mother who’s from France and father who’s from Canada, as well as an older adopted sister from Korea.

“When I was young, I had open heart surgery,” says Noelle, who’s 33 years old. “Then growing

"MY GOAL IS TO SPREAD AWARENESS THAT IT'S OKAY TO BE DIFFERENT. TO BE HAVING A HARD TIME. IT'S OKAY TO BE HAPPY...AND TO BE SAD. I TRY TO BE KIND TO EVERYONE. I THINK JUST BEING KIND TO ONE ANOTHER GOES A LONG WAY."

NOELLE

up was a challenge because I'm Black and my parents are white, so I had to adapt to that.

"I had a wonderful childhood. Blessed and lucky. I love my family very much. I owe everything to them because they saved me from a bad place."

Every month, she spends some days at Hopewell for respite support, something she's been doing since she was 18 years old. "I really enjoy spending time with the staff. They are wonderful to me," says Noelle. "I go on hikes and walks, sometimes go to Tim Hortons or the arcade. And they take me to the mall. I have a love for shopping. I could literally live in the mall. I love my home, but...I like the mall too."

Noelle cooks at home with her mother, chopping vegetables almost every night for dinner. She practices her cooking skills when she goes to Hopewell. "I asked if I could make pasta for everyone," she says, "and it turned out pretty well."

For 14 years, Noelle has worked at Zehrs, packing groceries five days a week for four hours per day. A job, she admits, she's good at. But does she place bread at the top of the bag so it doesn't get squashed? "That's just common sense," she says without hesitation.

Her down-to-earth sensibilities evoke her appreciation for Hopewell and its team.

"Everybody has a voice and has stuff going on in their lives. Even though it's hard for each person, the staff put in 100 per cent and help others.

"I will admit I was going through a tough time last month. That's life. But the staff helped me so much. I want to be grateful for everything. Life can be very beautiful."

WHEN THE NEED COMES: EMERGENCY RESPITE

No one knows when the unexpected will come. A medical emergency. A vehicular accident. A family crisis. A tragic loss. When any of these happen, families and caregivers of people with developmental disabilities may be unable to care for their loved one.

To serve our community, Hopewell offers an emergency respite program where people can stay with us for a day, week or longer. **This year, we supported five individuals with a combined total of 483 days of emergency respite.**

Providing this service ensures vulnerable people receive support when their caregivers are coping with an emergency, which then lessens the risk of the situation becoming more severe.





“My highest score... is 200.”

Meet Kyle. Music lover.
Family guy. Hockey fan.
Special Olympics bowler. Artist.

Moving to Cowdy House in August 2023, Kyle is one of the newest to call Hopewell home. Every week, he engages in an eclectic mix of activities—from participating in art sessions to cheering on the Guelph Storm.

“I’m a big fan of the Guelph Storm (hockey). I went to some of their games this year,” says Kyle, who is 30 years old. “I also like watching basketball and baseball on TV. I cheer for all the Toronto teams.”

When not watching hockey, Kyle might have a paint brush in his hand, diligently applying colour to the canvases.

“I like to paint ‘colour by number’ pictures. This year, I set a goal to finish 200 paintings,” he says.

His artistic talent doesn’t stop there. Kyle regularly heads to the library to look for books on drawing characters. “I went to Comic-Con this year,” he adds, “and saw lots of people dressed up like different characters.”

“I also went to the car show near the Guelph airport and saw big jacked-up trucks,” says Kyle. “At home, I cut out car pictures from magazines to make collages of cars.”

Kyle stays physically active as a participant in the Special Olympics, specializing in bowling. “I’ve been bowling since I was a kid,” he says. “My highest score so far is 200.”

Like many of his generation, Kyle describes himself as a big music fan. “I am on Spotify a lot listening to all kinds of new school hip hop music...and some country music too.”

Beyond his varied pursuits, Kyle shares life with his girlfriend Ashley who brings support and joy to his week. That may explain why he has set two important goals for this year. “I want to cook more,” he says, “and go for more walks.”



Hopewell provides three modes of support



SUPPORTED LIVING

At five different locations, residents receive 24-hour support tailored to their individual needs and wants. Our trained professionals (from nurses to behaviour therapists) create opportunities where residents can experience a full, meaningful life.

RESPIRE SERVICES

Sometimes, caregivers need temporary support when an emergency, illness or vacation makes it impossible for them to care for their loved one. For such occasions, our two respite locations can accommodate children and adults for short-term stays.

RECREATIONAL SUPPORT

Keeping active builds social connection and offers health benefits. Whether it's recreational activities, social outings or summer camps, our programs are available yearlong to our residents and those living in the region of Guelph-Wellington.

Forty years marks a milestone.

Guests at our summer carnival brought joy to our 40th anniversary.

When you turn 'middle age,' you throw a party. That's what we did in June 2023, as we celebrated our 40th birthday with a community carnival. Here are snapshots from our get-together held at the first and oldest location of Hopewell in Ariss, Ont.



ON A WARM SUMMER DAY, MANY GUESTS SIPPED ON TALL GLASSES OF ICED DRINKS.

STEP RIGHT UP! GUESTS DONNED CRAZY, COLOURFUL ACCESSORIES IN OUR PHOTO BOOTH.



SUPPORTED INDIVIDUALS, FRIENDS AND STAFF FROM HOPEWELL JOINED IN THE FESTIVITIES.

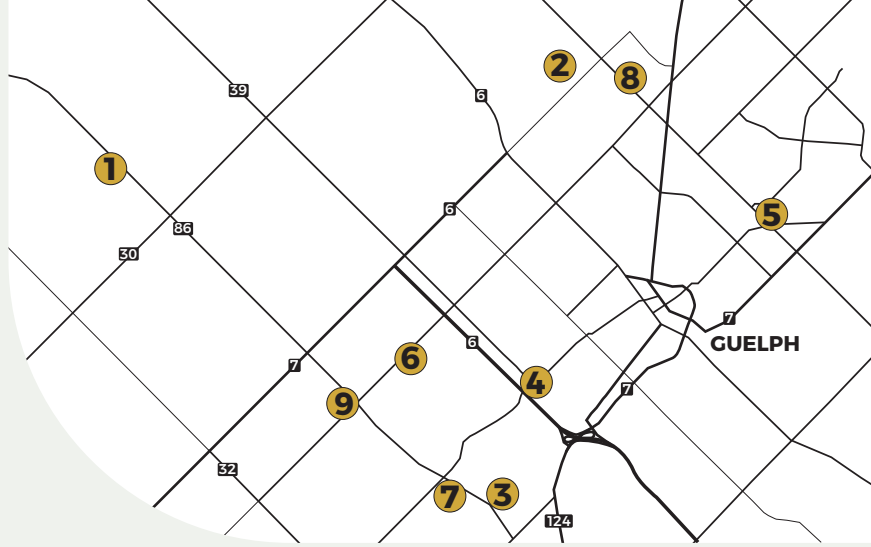


Numbers tell one amazing story.

How a single idea has helped multiply our reach, impact and influence.

In 1983, John and Johanna Oosterhuis had an idea. Wanting to support children with disabilities, they purchased a large farmhouse in Ariss, Ont., where they became foster parents to four children while still caring for their own in the same house.

Fast forward 41 years. Today, we operate locations across the Guelph-Wellington region, and offer supported living, respite and recreational services to hundreds. Living out the ideas embodied by the Oosterhuis family, we continue to excel in providing person-focused support to adults and children with developmental disabilities, giving each one the opportunity to lead a full life.



WHERE WE ARE LOCATED

- ① Hope Home (Ariss)
- ② Wilton Home (Wilton Road)
- ③ Stephanie Home (Stephanie Drive)
- ④ Cowdy Home (Cowdy Avenue)
- ⑤ Grange Home (Grange Road)
- ⑥ Activity Centre (Royal Road)
- ⑦ Respite Home – adults (Elmira)
- ⑧ Respite Home – children (Montana road)
- ⑨ Administrative Office (Elmira Road)

182

Individuals helped

by Hopewell Support Services in 2023/2024

9

Locations throughout
Guelph / Wellington

146

Children & adults supported
in Respite Services

72 & 13

Age of oldest and youngest persons
in supported living

>100

Donors, businesses and partners
who gave to Hopewell



“Cookie taster.”

Connecting with April reveals some sweet surprises.

April sits at the kitchen table at Wilton House ready to chat. With deliberate taps on images populating her tablet screen, the 48-year-old engages in conversation about her life at Hopewell.

“What’s your name?”

“April,” she types with precision and certainty.

Though she relies on her uniquely programmed tablet to communicate, April never lets that stand in the way of a good conversation.

“What’s the best part of living at Hopewell?”

“Carmen,” she responds, pointing to a support staff member who stands nearby. “She is my friend.”

April’s face beams. Her eyes glow. She places an unmistakable trust in her support team who are her companions, her friends.

That can possibly explain her answer when asked about her favourite pastime. “I watch Golden Girls.” A TV show about four women who start out as strangers but become good friends.

April also expresses love for her family, yearning for home visits so she can see her brother Michael.

“What are some things you want to do in the coming year?”

April looks to Carmen for assistance, knowing she can rely on her help whenever she needs it.

“You want to start volunteering, which you did at the golf tournament this year, right? And you want to be a cookie taster. We’re still figuring out how to do that,” says Carmen, as April nods in gleeful agreement.

“Where are some places you like to go to?”

“Library or the mall,” she taps on her device. Once a week, April makes a trip to the library, which may include a stop at Tim Hortons to grab her favourite beverage—a French vanilla coffee.

Other activities might include swimming and dancing, as well as going to the grocery store. All of which April chooses to do, accompanied by her Hopewell support team.

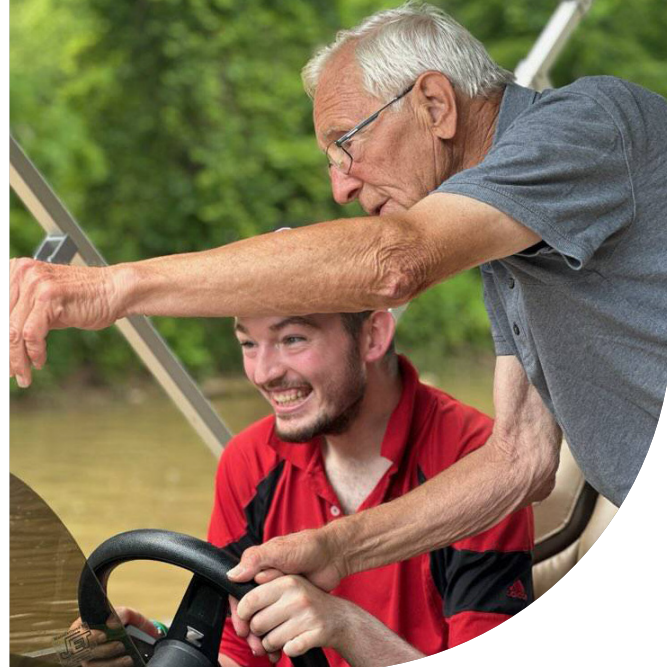
As the conversation ends, she moves on to the next part of her day. Maybe to start cookie tasting. Or watch a classic TV sitcom. No matter what she does, April will be at home.

WHEN THE SPACE GROWS: ADULT RECREATION

Staying active is a key part of what we offer individuals. We tailor their recreational activities to their interests, preferences and abilities.

This year, thanks to moving to a larger location in Guelph, our Adult Recreation Support program welcomed 13 new individuals this year. The improved, accessible space helped open up four additional spots per day so more people could receive recreational support.





Generosity makes memories.

Our community partners and donors give meaningful support to individuals with complex needs. These two examples demonstrate how generosity has provided life-changing experiences.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFERS A SUMMER TO REMEMBER.

Just like any other young boy, Adam loves summer. Enjoying time outside. Splashing in the water. Attending day camps.

In the summer of 2023, going to camp almost did not happen for Adam. “We were struggling to make ends meet,” says Ali Alaawad, Adam’s father. “What support we receive for camp does not match the real costs. So, we approached Hopewell.”

Thanks to a grant from the Guelph Community Fund (GCF), Hopewell could provide funding to the Alaawad family, which meant Adam attended summer camp with 1:1 support.

He was among 5 individuals who benefited from the GCF gift to Hopewell. “Not only was the support a financial relief,” says Ali, “it also meant we could give our son a great experience at camp. We’re so grateful for the heartfelt generosity of the GCF and Hopewell to make Adam’s summer one to remember.”

FAMILY BUSINESS HELPS OUTFIT NEW ACTIVITY CENTRE.

What if a physical space can help enhance social skills? Bolster self-esteem? Foster greater independence?

Sounds like a tall order. But not for the 180 children annually who now benefit from a new Activity Centre within the community program space at Hopewell. Equipped with sensory devices and physical supports, the space on Royal Road gives children with developmental disabilities a safe, inclusive setting to engage, learn and play.

Thanks to the generosity of Cremasco Financial and the Cremasco family, the Centre launched in January 2024.

“Their partnership exemplifies a deep commitment to create brighter futures for children with diverse abilities and their families,” says Maria Zegarac, Executive Director at Hopewell. “Through their donation, they are giving more than a physical space...they are supporting more than 50 families in our community who want their children to realize their potential.”

Donors drive hope forward.

Every year, local partners and donors generously contribute to Hopewell, helping us achieve our promise. To every person or organization who donated in 2023/2024, we say, “Thank you for giving—and for offering opportunities to live a fulfilling life.”

- Almita Piling Inc.
- Amy Doherty
- Andrew Martin
- Angela Hofstra
- Ashik Bhat
- Benjamin Hutten-Czapski
- Buchwald Services Consulting Inc.
- Cadence's Staffing Services Inc.
- CanadaHelps
- Chahat Sharma
- Charlie Spano
- Christ Church Lion's Head
- Contour Directional Drilling Ltd.
- Cosmo Carere
- Craig Jennings
- Cremasco Family
- Dan Sweeney
- Daniel Ehman
- David Court
- Denise Robertson
- Divya Handa
- Document Imaging Partners
- DW Lorentz Construction
- Elizabeth Bowden
- Enbridge- Waterloo District
- Eric Lunn
- Erin Appleton
- Gerry and Greta Hofstra
- Gerry Johnston
- Gore Mutual Insurance
- Hammond Power Solutions
- Holy Rosary Church
- Jack & Heidi VanderSlikke
- James Thome Construction Ltd.
- Jan Oosterhuis
- Jane Stamp
- Jean Luc Moled
- Jeff Drimmie
- Jeff Ollerhead
- Jennifer Stockall
- Jeri Knowles
- Jessica Johnston
- Jim Martin Van Dam
- John London
- Jon Christensen
- Karen Izenberg
- Kasia Rusiniak
- KEA Canada

- Kimberley Floyd
- Kristin Morrison
- Labatt
- Laurie Iversen
- Lindsay and Megg Sweeney Hockin
- Lisa Shoemaker
- Manoj Devineni
- Maria Cruciano
- Maria Zegarac
- Marika Shaw
- Marina Bangham
- Mario Sproviero
- Mark Henry
- Mary Cruciano
- MedPro Direct Inc.
- Michael Powers
- Michelle Leyte
- MTB Transit Solutions Inc.
- Nicole Gatto
- Nicole Powell
- Peter and Ornella Miller
- Peter Pickfield
- Pickfield Law Professional Corporation
- Puresource Natural Products Distributor
- Ray Angod
- Robert Ball
- Rosalind Gunn
- Rotary Club of Guelph-Wellington
- Rowland and Wilhelmina Martin
- Ryan Leslie
- Sarah Sauve
- Scott McRoberts
- Sheila Conley
- Shelley Chafe
- Silvercreek Developments Corporation
- Stan & Donna Nahrgang
- Susan Ellis
- T & T Power Group
- Terry Scroggie
- The Guelph Community Foundation
- The Royal City Men's Club
- Todd Skinner
- Tri-Mech Inc.

- United Way Community Services of Guelph Wellington
- Waterloo Catholic District School Board
- Wendy Jespersen
- William Parker
- Windmill Power Equipment Ltd.

OUR BOARD

Members of our volunteer board give their expertise, energy and time to help us achieve our mission. We are immensely thankful for their service and passion.

Chair • Jon Christensen
Vice-Chair • Laurie Iversen
Treasurer • Jan Stamp
Secretary • Devlin Scanlon
Director • Elizabeth Bowden
Director • Kimberley Floyd
Director • Rosalind Gunn
Director • Wendy Jespersen
Director • Peter Pickfield
Director • Kasia Rusiniak
Director • Charlie Spano

Brand refresh draws on past and future.

Telling our story in creative, engaging ways opens up great possibilities.

What do you value about Hopewell? That is one of the many questions we asked families, staff members, donors and community partners in the past year. We wanted to hear their voices and understand their experiences, as we worked to build a new brand for Hopewell.

Celebrating 41 years of supporting people with developmental disabilities gave us an opportunity to take stock. To honour our history. Reflect on our present. Look to our future. This journey led us to where we are today with a new name, a clear promise and revived logo.

OUR NAME

To preserve our unique identity in the community and capture our evolving range of supports, our new full name is **Hopewell Support Services**.

OUR PROMISE

We have adopted a clear and concise promise: **We work to make every day full of possibilities for regular moments of choice, opportunity, and joy for individuals living with physical and developmental disabilities.**

OUR SLOGAN

Distilled into four words, our new tagline is: **A fulfilling life. Together.**

OUR LOGO

Visually, our refreshed logo expresses optimism, enthusiasm, support and togetherness.



Advocacy gives voice and seeks action.

Championing improved funding models supports families and agencies.

To cover their son's healthcare needs, Barb and Gino Vettor remortgaged their home.

Government funding only provided so much to support their son who is autistic, non-verbal and epileptic. They paid out of pocket for behaviour therapy sessions and specialized equipment. For years, Gino worked 12-hour shifts on weekends so he could go with Barb to weekday appointments with their son.

"We just made it through one day to go onto the next. That's all we ever did," admits Gino. "At times, we didn't know what to do, where to turn. We were getting older, and I thought, 'One of these days I'm going to retire, then what?'"

These kinds of stories are more commonplace, as parents struggle to find or fund support services for their child who has complex needs. That is why we lend our voice to advocate for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

This year, Executive Director, Maria Zegarac, championed the need for greater provincial funding for all agencies who support people with developmental needs. She also spoke of the burden placed on families and individuals when services are out of reach for those who rely on them.



CHRIS AT HOME.

IN 2024, OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARIA ZEGARAC, ADVOCATED FOR INCREASED FUNDING BY WRITING TO AND APPEARING ON LOCAL MEDIA OUTLETS. READ, WATCH OR LISTEN TO WHAT SHE SHARED TO ADVANCE THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES WHO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.



Rogers TV
Interview



Kitchener-
Waterloo Record
Op-ed piece



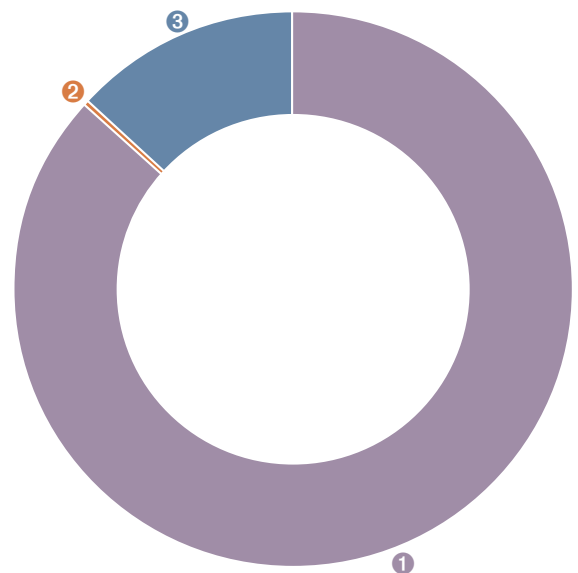
CBC
Radio
Interview

Our financial summary 2023/2024

REVENUE	FY2023-24		FY2022-23	
Provincial Grants	7,460,712	77.6%	6,501,384	77.4%
Federal Grants	27,559	0.3%	22,512	0.3%
Other Grants	76,519	0.8%	83,806	1.0%
User Fees	1,387,269	14.4%	818,564	9.7%
One-time Funding - COVID-19	8,557	0.1%	538,513	6.4%
Fund Development	192,837	2.0%	114,359	1.4%
Other Income	458,310	4.8%	317,759	3.8%
TOTAL	\$9,611,762	100.0%	\$8,396,897	100.0%
EXPENSES				
Salaries and Benefits	\$7,210,832	75.2%	\$6,189,774	72.9%
Building Occupancy, Supplies & Other Program Costs	\$2,068,298	21.6%	\$1,522,010	17.9%
One-time Funding - COVID-19	\$8,557	0.1%	\$516,279	6.1%
Fund Development	\$113,922	1.2%	\$106,018	1.2%
Other Expenses (incl amort.)	\$184,358	1.9%	\$160,074	1.9%
TOTAL	\$9,585,968	100.0%	\$8,494,156	100.0%
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$25,794		(\$97,259)	

HOW OUR FUNDS ARE SPENT

- ① Direct Support
86.8%
- ② COVID-19
0.1%
- ③ Corporate-Fund Development-Other
13.1%



Successes fuel opportunities

Leadership messages reflect on the past and future of Hopewell.

MAKING A YEAR OF PROFOUND DIFFERENCE

Our dedicated team—staff, volunteers, board members, and donors—bring their best to help others live fulfilling lives. I am so proud of what we've achieved this year. Here's a snapshot of our year in review and what we accomplished together:

- **Finalist for the Not-for-Profit of the Year Award:** The Guelph Chamber of Commerce recognized Hopewell as a 2023 finalist, highlighting our team's tireless efforts to make a positive impact.
- **Expanded service capacity:** We welcomed two new residents into our Hopewell family, enhancing the lives of more individuals.
- **Home retrofits:** Thanks to provincial funding, we retrofitted two homes to meet Guelph's new building and fire codes, improving comfort, security, and safety.
- **Anniversary celebration:** We celebrated our 40th anniversary with a summer carnival for the Hopewell community.
- **Rebrand:** In collaboration with Red Rhino, we refreshed Hopewell's brand, culminating in a new visual identity reflected in this report.

- **Strengthened support services:** Our ongoing collaboration with the health sector has broadened and strengthened our services, ensuring more individuals can access our community support model.
- **Equity, diversity, and inclusion:** Partnering with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI), we developed our first EDI action plan to create a more inclusive community and workplace.
- **Strategic relocations:** We moved two programs into more accessible and cost-effective spaces, allowing us to increase our impact.
- **Expanded financial foundation:** Our baseline funding structure has grown, providing stability and the opportunity to innovate as we empower people to live fulfilling lives.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to every member of our Hopewell community. Your unwavering dedication, passion, and generosity drive our success, making a profound difference for so many.

Thank you,
Maria Zegarac | Executive Director

CREATING A YEAR OF GREATER IMPACT

Within the complex models of government funding, Hopewell continues to innovate with resilience and lead with resourcefulness.

In fact, this past year, we received additional funding from our government partners to expand our reach and impact. This outcome stands as a testament to Hopewell's role as a beacon of sustainable growth and excellence.

Our desire is to give the best in everything we do. That's why, this year, we enhanced some facilities, launched EDI policies and improved day-to-day support.

None of this work happens in isolation. My deepest gratitude goes to Maria and her team, as well as staff and board members, for their relentless passion and hard work.

To those we are privileged to serve, thank you for the trust you place in us. To the donors we depend on, thank you for the generosity you place in future of Hopewell. Together, your enthusiasm and benevolence propel us forward in supporting our supported residents and individuals.

Additionally, I extend thanks to our government partners for their support, particularly Bobbi Wilson, Program Supervisor (Adult Services), James Culp, Community Programs Manager (Adult Services), Eva Bak-Hebert, Program Supervisor (Children's Services) and Danette Blue, Community Programs Manager (Children's Services). Your assistance has been instrumental in Hopewell's success, which underscores what can be achieved together.

Looking ahead, we are poised to build a stronger, more inclusive community. Let's do that together.

In gratitude,
Jon Christensen | Board Chair



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