

MHI's Tulipathon

Every May, among the beautiful backdrop of Dow's Lake and the Canadian Tulip Festival, members of different faith groups from across Ottawa gather for Multifaith Housing Initiative's annual Tulipathon fundraiser. Walking among a rainbow of tulips, people of all different ages, races, creeds, and religions come together to support MHI's mission of wanting all people to have safe and affordable housing in Ottawa. While the roots of the Canadian Tulip Festival date back more than 70 years, Tulipathon participants have been walking along the tulip-lined paths for almost 25 years.

The original charity walk, started in the 1990s by the late Dr. Farook Tareen with support from the Ottawa Muslim Association, departed from Dow's Lake and saw some participants walk all the way down the canal to the NAC and back. The original fundraiser only brought in about \$1,500 but the Tareen Family continued with the event year after year, eventually gifting the walkathon to MHI as their own charitable event. Now members from more than 70 faith groups gather for the annual walk and continue to fundraise in support of MHI, raising more than \$100,000 annually. All proceeds from Tulipathon go towards MHI's subsidies program, helping to provide rent subsidies to MHI's 300-400 tenants. Every year MHI provides more than \$400,000 in rent subsidies, which wouldn't be possible without Tulipathon and the generous support of Ottawa's faith communities.

Each year at MHI's Annual General Meeting in April, there is an award given in Dr. Farook Tareen's name to celebrate outstanding Tulipathon fundraising efforts by a faith group from the previous year. In 2023, this award was given to the Ottawa Muslim Women's Association, who raised \$10,000 for tenant subsidies. Participating Tulipathon teams are also encouraged to bring a decorative banner to show their support for Tulipathon.

As Tulipathon nears its 25th anniversary, this year's event is sure to be another great success. Join the diverse faith groups of Ottawa, along with MHI donors, tenants, staff, and volunteers, on Sunday, May 26th for what promises to be one of the best Tulipathons yet! For more information, please visit <https://www.multifaithhousing.ca/tulipathon>