



**Tungasuvvingat Inuit**

**OTTAWA'S ONLY WEEKLY FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM SERVING RIDING WITH ONTARIO'S HIGHEST FOOD BANK USAGE**

**OTTAWA, ON - JULY 26, 2019**

A new report issued by Feed Ontario raises significant concerns about food security in the nation's capital. The report states that Ottawa-Vanier has the highest per-capita use of food banks in the entire province. Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI), in partnership with the Ottawa Food Bank, provides the only weekly food security program in all of Ottawa which is located in the Ottawa-Vanier riding.

Upon further analysis, three ridings in Ottawa were among the top 10 most used food banks per capita in the province. They include Ottawa-Vanier, Ottawa South and Ottawa West-Nepean. That represents more than 35,000 clients that used the food banks at least once in 2018.

The TI food security program serves our Inuit clients that have little or no income, who are homeless, or who are considered food insecure. Executive Director, Jason LeBlanc shared, "TI has seen a consistent increase in the need for our food security program. Our Inuit community in the south is growing at a rapid rate as more and more community leave Inuit Nunangat and settle in Ottawa and Ontario. As the only Inuit specific food security program in Ottawa, we are working hard to service the ever-growing need of the Inuit community. Food should not be a luxury and through conversations with our community, it is evident that there is more and more stress about where many community members will find their next meal.

The TI program has been a blessing for the Inuit community in Ottawa-Vanier, but the need extends much broader. TI Manager of Family Well-Being, Rhonda Huneault manages the food security program and sees the expanding need every week. "It is a cause for concern that the need for food security programs is expanding. There are many factors that we can attribute to the increase in demand that includes the high incidence of low-income or no-income families in Ottawa-Vanier, the economy, displacement from Inuit Nunangat, a low rate of available and affordable housing and homelessness. The struggles of paying for living expenses like rent and hydro means families are treating food as a luxury item."

TI continues to develop poverty reduction strategies to define a path towards the elimination of poverty for Inuit in Ottawa. The need for more funding and increased Inuit-specific programs are significant. The report issued by Feed Ontario and the staggering food bank usage in Ottawa illustrates the need to source funding and long-term investment in poverty reduction for Inuit living in the fifth region. (outside of Inuit Nunangat)

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**Jason LeBlanc**  
 Executive Director

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**Rhonda Huneault**  
 Manager - Family Well-Being

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Tungasuvvingat Inuit is the only Inuit-specific service organization of its kind in Canada offering 20+ highly integrated, front-line programs and services to urban Inuit in Ontario. Tungasuvvingat Inuit is a one-stop resource centre to meet the rapidly growing, complex and evolving needs of Inuit in Ontario and is recognized as a leading advocate for urban Inuit and is prominent within the framework of national Inuit organizations