

OCFootprints



Because you care...

The way we come together, communicate, and do just about everything is quite different these days. But one thing hasn't changed: we all care deeply about our community.

COVID-19 has shown us just how connected and interdependent our world is. When we do our best to help every child, senior, parent, business owner or vulnerable person in need in our community, we all thrive.

There are many developments happening right here in our community as well as elsewhere that make it clear just how little control we actually have over many aspects of our world right now.

We see overcrowded shelters – yes in Oxford too – struggling to abide by physical distancing rules. This highlights the sobering risks that exist every day to public health. We see staggering growth in unemployment and local businesses closing, which points to the fact that our entire economy is at stake. We see many families and caregivers struggling with stress and uncertainty and we recognize that our children's development and mental health are at risk. As we watch global food systems being disrupted, prices steadily rising, we know that we are all in jeopardy. This crisis shows us that our individual wellbeing is inextricably tied to our collective welfare.

At the same time, tragedy and loss need not be this pandemic's only legacy. This pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine and reset our world to create a healthier,

more equitable, and more prosperous future. To build a legacy of thriving based on the foundation of this situation will take hard work from each of us.

That work is already happening in Oxford County, which makes us proud to live and work here. It has been amazing to see so many step up to help. Donors are setting up new endowment funds and contemplating how their annual grants can best support our community's evolving and growing needs. Existing fundholders have also stepped up to increase their funds and impact. Golf tournament sponsors are pledging support so that OCF can have a stable operating fund for the coming year. Grant recipients are working on solutions to local priorities in creative, collaborative and resourceful ways. We are inspired and you should feel proud as well – your support is making a difference.

In this newsletter, you will read about the \$201,870 granted through the Emergency Community Support Fund, the legacy of a dear founder Doug Eckel and the opportunity to support or participate in the Oxford County Warden's Annual Charity Golf Tournament.

And as always, if you are interested in learning more about how you can leave a lasting legacy, I welcome your call. You can start now and grow your fund over time. It will live on even after you're gone. Your donations will be invested and make grants in your name year after year. You will leave a lasting legacy that continues to make Oxford better — **forever**.

– **Louise Wardrop, Executive Director**
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2020 Oxford County Warden's Charity Golf Tournament

Warden Larry Martin will host his charity golf tournament at The Ingersoll Golf Club on Friday, September 25, 2020 in support of Oxford Community Foundation (OCF.)

The Warden said, "It's important we support our local charities doing good work in our community, especially now when so many people are stretched to their limits because of this pandemic. Let's dig deep, go out and have some fun and support our community."

A new format and precautions will be in place to ensure everyone's safety due to COVID-19.

Proceeds will go towards furthering the work of your community foundation, OCF. Without OCF, the only community foundation serving all of Oxford County, we would not have benefited from the \$201,870 granted through the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF) made possible by the Government of Canada. Because of your support, OCF brings new money to Oxford County, and through legacy endowment funds set up by individuals, families, and organizations, we keep more money in Oxford – **forever**.

To find out how you can participate as a sponsor or golfer, please contact the Golf Committee made up of Rosaline Bruyns, Mary Holmes, Michael Kukhta and John MacDonald at info@oxfordcommunityfoundation.org or 226-667-6404. Golfer registration is available on www.oxfordcommunityfoundation.org.

Thank you Doug Eckel for leaving a legacy



It is with sadness that we share the news of Doug Eckel's passing at the age of 87 on June 20th.

Family and community defined Doug. He was married to Yvonne for more than 60 years and together they raised four wonderful children. I remember fondly how his eyes would light up when he talked about his family, especially his grandchildren, and his world travels. He was a kind, gentle and generous man who loved to chat.

Giving back to their community was tremendously important for both Doug and Yvonne. We, at Oxford Community Foundation (OCF) are grateful for Doug's expertise and assistance in setting up the foundation. Doug was a founding board member, and he and his wife Yvonne established one of the first legacy funds, the Doug and Yvonne Eckel Fund, in 2006. Having an interest in children as well as arts and culture, grants from their fund have supported numerous initiatives including Economics for Success program through Junior Achievement, Imprinting Generations print making program at The Woodstock Art Gallery, a workshop for singers through Woodstock Fanshawe Singers', the weekend backpack food program at Helping Hands Food Bank, and so many more.

Doug & Yvonne's legacy will live on forever through annual grants made from their fund supporting local initiatives through local charities.

Rest in peace Doug. You will be missed and never forgotten.



Oxford Community Foundation distributes \$201,870 in grants to four local charities

In our May newsletter we announced that OCF had \$201,870 available to grant to support local charities responding to COVID-19. This funding was made possible through a partnership with Community Foundations of Canada and the Government of Canada's \$350 million Emergency Community Support Fund.

This funding will help to ensure that our most vulnerable populations are safe and healthy, and that no one is left behind during these challenging times.

In communities across Canada, including Oxford County, the demand far exceeded the funds available. Our volunteer Grants Committee received applications for twice the amount available and in the end had to make some tough decisions.

The Refuge, Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO), Wellkin and Indwell each received grants. We hope you take pleasure in their stories about the work they are doing.

The Refuge



The Refuge, a day shelter helping the homeless as well as those experiencing active addiction and mental health struggles was

granted \$74,686 to help fund kitchen renovations and hire staff. Before the pandemic, the Refuge provided meals, day shelter, clean laundry, clothes, toiletries, sleeping bags etc. one and a half days per week. Services were expanded to five days per week when other facilities closed because of the pandemic and the Refuge saw a marked increase in drug usage and need for shelter and food. This has put a huge strain on a volunteer-based organization.

“Our primary purpose is to reach the hearts of those we serve with love and dignity. And, this project will benefit the community by reducing the visible face of homelessness on our streets, lessening the burden on police services responding to loitering and disturbance calls, and add to the overall sense of safety in our communities and our downtown

businesses,” said Rene McIntyre, Senior Pastor and Founder of TOTCM and the Refuge.

Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO)

DASO was awarded \$50,000 so it could better support those needing the protection and services of the shelter. Many women, adolescents, and children are at greater risk of domestic abuse due to social isolation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Two accessible bathrooms in existing bedrooms will be built with the funds. Amenities such as small fridges, tablets, comfy chairs and loveseats, lamps and side tables will be provided for residents in their bedrooms as they will not be able to use the communal living and recreation spaces. Renovation of the 24/7 residential support office will allow staff to safely meet with shelter residents.

“When everyone first started hearing daily news reports about COVID-19, at DASO we were ready. We had pandemic and emergency plans which we immediately implemented. We had ample supplies including PPE. We had a dedicated, capable staff team ready to take on new challenges. We were prepared to continue to offer our essential services 24/7... But the expected length of this pandemic was not on our radar,” said Rhonda Hendel, Executive Director at DASO. “We had not planned for many, many months, maybe years of COVID-19. Our operating plans and financial forecasting did not include a drastic loss of fund-raised revenue.”

Wellkin

Wellkin received a grant of \$40,000 to help support the alarming growth of families and caregivers requiring mental health supports. This includes families who may never have required services previously but are suffering due to the complex challenges of COVID-19. This funding will support the launch of an online hub allowing family and caregivers to connect to mental health supports, whether through formal treatment, education or a peer support model.

“This pandemic has impacted our nation and our communities in unprecedented ways. Physical distancing measures and government restrictions on the economy, although much needed, are taking an incredible toll on the mental wellness of families in ways no one predicted. At Wellkin, we are already experiencing what people are calling the ‘fourth wave of COVID-19’ which is an increase in the need and demand for mental health services,” said Wellkin Executive Director, Mamta Chail. “We are thrilled that our community will have access to such an amazing resource locally.”

Indwell

Indwell was granted \$37,184 to support those living in its affordable housing communities who are disproportionately



affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to close living quarters, reliance on public transit and lack of access to technology.

“Cell phones and pre-paid calling cards are a luxury that a number of Indwell tenants cannot afford on their fixed incomes and connecting with family, friends and community professionals is increasingly important during the pandemic. As more medical services are conducted exclusively by phone, those without this technology are more likely to fall through the cracks,” said Justin DeWaard, Regional Manager at Indwell.

The grant will provide support for Indwell tenants through enhanced cleaning and sanitation to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. It will also provide tenants with food security, technology to enable them to access external support networks and training for staff supporting residents who are struggling with mental health and addictions.



Looking Forward...Giving Back!

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OCF Volunteer Board of Directors: Bill Mackesy (Chair), Keith Stevens (Vice-chair), Neil Dolson (Treasurer), Rosemary George, Don Hilborn, Mary Holmes, Michael Kukhta, John MacDonald, Kim Parker, Steve Robb, Karen Sample, Kelly Gilson (ex-officio United Way)