

## PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### “Heroes Among Us Fund” created to help everyone honor their personal Oxford County Hero

#### *Anyone can recognize an Oxford County hero*

**WOODSTOCK, ONTARIO – November 25, 2019:** A new fund has been launched to help all of us recognize the “unsung heroes” of Oxford County. Named the “Heroes Among Us Fund” by the Oxford Community Foundation, the intent of the new fund is to give anyone an opportunity to make a donation small or large to recognize someone who contributes, often quietly, to the betterment of our community.

“We all know a local hero in our community,” explains the foundation’s Executive Director, Louise Wardrop. “They may be a friend, neighbour, or family member who makes a positive impact nearly every single day, making the place we live a better one through their actions and contributions.

These people usually don’t ask for recognition of their efforts; they just keep contributing in a quiet and generous way. They don’t think of themselves as heroes. But we know they are.”

All donations will be pooled and invested together in a community fund. The interest earned will fund annual grants to meet ever-changing community needs and priorities. All contributions to the new fund, in the name of these unsung heroes, will grow and live on forever through ongoing annual grants back to worthwhile Oxford initiatives.

“You might say this is the people’s fund,” says Wardrop. “It is there for anyone who would like to donate at any time, to recognize someone who is a hero in their eyes.”

The fund was inspired by two of these quiet, unsung Oxford County Heroes: Deb Landon, retired Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ingersoll, Tillsonburg and Area and Sam Horton, retired sergeant of the Oxford Provincial Police, both instrumental in helping to establish the Hawkins Family Fund in memory of Laurie, Rick, Cassandra and Jordan. They have been named the first two heroes recognized via the new fund.

Talking about the Hawkins Fund this past summer, Sam Horton reflected, “It isn’t until there is a passing like this that we go ‘Wow that person was really important.’ Laurie helps us remember that there are heroes among us. There are some really important heroes among us, even today, that we forget about sometimes.”

Sam’s profound words inspired the new fund.





Looking Forward...Giving Back!

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“When Deb and I agreed to the interview I had no expectation of this positive outcome and I am pleased. My view has not changed and I look forward to this program developing and our unsung heroes being recognized,” Sam commented when told about the new fund he inspired and his recognition as one of the first heroes.

Deb Landon said, “Thank you for recognizing Sam and me as your local heroes... We don't do what we do in the community for recognition. We do it to make living in Oxford County a wonderful experience - a safe place to call home.”

Various levels of hero recognition have been established and donors are welcome to make ongoing or subsequent contributions at any time to build the fund in their hero's name. All heroes will be recognized in the year of the donation on the OCF Website and in the Annual Report. All donors will receive a charitable receipt and acknowledgement that a contribution has been made to the “Heroes Among Us Fund” in their hero's name. Heroes will receive a certificate and note informing them that the donor has made a gift in their name. Small or large donations, in any amount, can be added at any time. Once a hero reaches \$2,000 in donations, their name will be permanently recognized on OCF's wall of heroes and once a hero reaches \$10,000 in donations, community grants will be made in their name each year.

Regular and continued donations are encouraged, says Waldrop. “The Heroes Among Us Fund is a great way to recognize a hero's birthday, anniversary, retirement, friendship, death or as a gift at Christmas – especially for those who already have everything they need and are community minded.”

Already have a hero in mind? For further details, or to make a donation, contact:

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