



OCFootprints

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

This year, we are celebrating **20** years as a registered charity. We celebrate our tenacious founder, Pat Smith, who saw the tremendous positive impact a community foundation can make locally. We celebrate this movement now more than 100 years old in Canada and more than 200 strong across our country.

We celebrate the more than **\$1.4 million** granted to more than **115 organizations** – all helping to make Oxford a better place. We celebrate our donors and the 33 permanent legacy funds that generate grants in support of our community each year. Read about our very first fund, the Alabastine-Willkinson Fund, in our Fundholder Spotlight in this newsletter.

While we have much to celebrate, we are reminded each granting cycle that far too many opportunities and crucial needs continue to go unmet. This past year end granting cycle was no exception. Yet again funding requests far surpassed funds available. Our Grants Committee and Board made difficult decisions in ensuring grants from local legacy funds were disbursed across all aspects and geographies of Oxford County. We will share the stories at our annual meeting and in our annual report. In the meantime, here are a few examples of areas and initiatives funded late last year:

- Arts & Culture – drama, art, clay and sewing programs for youth;
- The Environment – protecting nature reserves and enhancing trails;
- Education – Economics for Success and Literacy programs;
- Sports & Recreation – free skate Sundays, and just try it hockey camp and equipment;
- Health & Wellness – youth wellness drop-in centre, dentures for those in need, cooler bags for meal delivery programs; and
- Social Services – wellness kits, baby bottle campaign, The Christmas Place, access to fitness and support programs.

These grants are helping to make Oxford better. Our Grants Committee is an active group of volunteers. They are now busy reviewing applications for the **\$355,000** available through the **Community Services Recovery Fund**. These grants will support what charities and non-profits need right now as they adapt to the long-term impacts of the pandemic. We have additional opportunities open now. We are accepting applications for grants from the **Maple Leaf Community Fund** which honours Harvey and Erma Beaty. This fund supports capital expenditures for food security programs. Applications for MLCF grants close on April 5th and applications for various **student bursaries** close on May 2nd. For more information about our grant programs, please visit our website

www.oxfordcommunityfoundation.org

There's no doubt your generous donations are making a difference in Oxford County. If you are interested in how you can start a permanent legacy fund supporting areas important and unique to you, we can help. Let's talk.

In closing, I would like to thank Rosaline Bruyns for her contributions to OCF over the past four years. We join her in celebrating her upcoming retirement at the end of April and we wish her well. And we welcome Heather Haldane who has joined us as our new Office and Grants Administrator.

Happy spring. We look forward to seeing you at our AGM and golf tournament.



Louise Wardrop,
Executive Director

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Janet Wilkinson (front) at Big Brothers Big Sisters Ingersoll, Tillsonburg & Area

fundholder spotlight

Celebrating OCF's first fund
The Alabastine-Wilkinson Fund

Matthew Alabastine spent his working and volunteer career devoted to the community of Tillsonburg. He served many years as an educator and was the first principal at Tillson Avenue Public School. In 2005, his daughter Janet Wilkinson and her family established the Alabastine-Wilkinson Fund to ensure that her father's love and support for his community would last forever. The foundation model was not new to Janet, having set up a fund where she lived in Aylmer. Her daughters have also set up a fund at the Cambridge Community Foundation.

Janet shared "our family knows how important it is to support local organizations. They do good work and often fall through the cracks." Janet appreciates seeing the grants in action and regularly joins us on our visits to grantees. Grants made in the name of Alabastine-Wilkinson Fund have supported many initiatives in Tillsonburg and Oxford County including the purchase of computers and TVs for Big Brothers Big Sisters Ingersoll, Tillsonburg & Area, bedding for Domestic Abuse Services Oxford, the revitalization of Lake Lisgar, Junior Achievement programs at Glendale High School, the weekend backpack program at Helping Hands Food Bank, tables, chairs and games for the Tillsonburg Seniors Centre, and a volunteer development program at Tillsonburg Multi Service Centre.

Important Dates

Oxford County Warden's Charity Golf Tournament

Mark your calendars for the 2023 Warden's Charity Golf Tournament Thursday September 21, 2023. This event moves around the county and this year Ingersoll Golf Club will host the event. All proceeds from the event will go towards furthering OCF's work of making Oxford a better place.



For registration and sponsorship information please contact Heather at 226-667-6404 or heatherh@oxfordcommunityfoundation.org

Bursaries available for Oxford County Students

At OCF we know that ensuring quality education is one of the most important things we can do for our future generation. Generous donors have established various student awards recognizing team play, community involvement, leadership and skill development. Twelve bursaries are available this year. Deadline for 2023 applications is Tuesday May 2nd.



For more information contact your school's Student Services Department or go to OCF's website <https://oxfordcommunityfoundation.org/grant-application/>

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 4 p.m. on Tuesday April 25th at the Embro Community Centre, 355644 35th Line, Embro. Please join us to learn more about the many organizations and initiatives supported.



To reserve your spot please contact Heather at 226-667-6404 or heatherh@oxfordcommunityfoundation.org

OCF Volunteer Board of Directors: Keith Stevens (Chair), Rosemary George (Vice-chair), Neil Dolson (Treasurer), Bill Mackesy (Past Chair), Jade Davies, Lynne DePlancke, Selina Guy, Brian Hadley, Don Hilborn, Kim Parker, Karen Sample, Kelly Gilson (ex-officio United Way)

OCF Staff: Louise Wardrop (Executive Director), Rosaline Bruyns & Heather Haldane (Office & Grants Administrators)