



OC Footprints

Rooted in Oxford County Community for 20 Years

After years of being apart due to COVID-19, the need for belonging and a sense of community has never been greater. But who is addressing these needs and leading collaborative action? Communities are.

The story of the Oxford Community Foundation is rooted in community. The Foundation was founded by Oxford residents 20 years ago with the purpose of addressing local needs unique to Oxford through endowment building, generosity planning, grant creation and connecting individuals to important causes. Along with celebrating 20 years, the Foundation is also celebrating almost \$2,000,000 in grants supporting the entire County in all facets of our community – from arts, culture, heritage, education, the environment, health and wellness, social services, and recreation.



Since the Foundation's inception, our County has undergone significant changes, and it continues to evolve. Our population flourishes with diversity and vibrancy while our physical spaces adapt to embrace our growth. Yet, beneath the surface, we're confronted with challenges once associated with larger cities. Homelessness, a scarcity of affordable housing, the pervasive issue of food insecurity, mounting mental health pressures, gender-based violence, and the strain on our environment due to growth may sometimes overwhelm us. However, the Foundation assists community members and organizations in navigating these complex issues and striving for positive outcomes. Balancing the commitment to meet community needs through grants and ensuring the long-term growth of the Foundation's assets remains a top priority.

Establishing a Fund with the Oxford Community Foundation allows you to create a legacy that can endure for multiple generations. The Foundation provides insights into the community's greatest needs and offers opportunities to network with other donors, amplifying the impact of your contributions. A Fund also provides significant flexibility in tax planning. It also allows individuals to involve their children or grandchildren in allocating gifts to charities, imparting a multi-generational value of giving back. Rather than making ad-hoc donations, individuals seek meaningful and impactful ways to make a difference. They want to ensure that their charitable dollars are effectively utilized, and they value transparency in understanding the impact of their contributions. Creating a Fund or contributing to an existing Community Fund offers a profound and lasting way for you to leave a positive legacy. Please reach out to me if you are interested in exploring options that meet your interests and timing.

On the second side of this newsletter, you will read about the \$392,000 granted to 12 organizations earlier this year. Follow us on social media or go to our website to learn more. Stay tuned, soon we will be announcing our fall grants.

From everyone at the Oxford Community Foundation, we wish you a warm holiday season and a New Year of peace and happiness.



LOUISE WARDROP
Executive Director

lwardrop@
oxfordcommunityfoundation.org
226-667-6404

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

spotlight

on

Partnerships



Bringing New Money to Oxford

Along with establishing legacy funds, keeping money in Oxford for Oxford, the Oxford Community Foundation brings new money to Oxford. This year, the Foundation granted \$392,000 to 12 community service organizations in partnership with the Community Foundations of Canada and the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund.



Now more than ever, our community service organizations are playing a key role in bringing community together and addressing persistent and complex social problems. Many of

these organizations are struggling to recover and adapt their services. They are experiencing increased demand for services, decreased numbers of staff and volunteers, declines in charitable giving, and a greater need to make use of digital tools.



This Recovery Fund supports one-time projects that invest in the systems and processes involved in creating the internal workings of an organization's overall efficient and effective structure. Quite simply, these grants, totaling \$392,000, will help these organizations improve the way they do their work.

- \$75,000 to Woodstock Little Theatre for digital "no touch" signage and technology upgrade for remote work. Bringing community together to enjoy amateur live productions.
- \$54,250 to Community Living Tillsonburg for Strategic and Operational Plan development. Building inclusive communities by promoting acceptance.
- \$45,000 to Women's Employment Resource Centre for a Community Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan. Inspiring hope, enabling change, and empowering all who identify as women in reaching their individual goals and realizing their full potential.
- \$42,450 to Social Planning Council Oxford for a Strategic and Communications Plan. Illuminating realities of poverty and marginalization to shift understanding and inspire collaborative action for positive change.
- \$39,250 to Victims Assistance Services Oxford County for updates of website, policies, procedures, and by-laws. Assisting police in providing short term emotional and practical assistance to victims of crime, tragic circumstances, and disaster.
- \$39,250 to Community Options for Justice for health and safety infection control consultation and policy development. Enabling people in conflict with the law through community work, education and skill development, victim awareness, and lifestyle choices.
- \$20,000 to Zorra Caledonian Society for E-Commerce website and technology to support hybrid work. Hosting the oldest Highland Games in Ontario and other Scottish events.
- \$17,315 to Big Brothers Big Sisters Oxford for tablets and conference system to support virtually meetings and training. Enabling life-changing mentoring relationships to ignite the power and potential of young people.
- \$15,295 to Tillsonburg Multi-Service Centre for a Human Resources Information System. Building communities of inclusiveness, innovation and independence through home support, literacy, and employment.
- \$14,995 to Stonebridge Community Services for a Human Resources Consultation and Strategic Plan. Providing in-home health care and preventative health services designed to help people maintain good health and independence through the aging process.
- \$14,650 to Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre for a Community Awareness Campaign. Promoting creative activity by providing programs and events in all art forms for all ages and tastes.
- \$14,475 to STEM Camp for a recruitment website. Inspiring youth through participation in hands-on activities in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.