

DC MOVES awarded for outstanding contribution to local community

Written By **MARNI WALSH**

DC MOVES a collaborative initiative between Dufferin County Community Services and Headwaters Communities in Action (HCIA) formed to unify service agencies has been chosen for the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) Local Municipal Champion Awards and Recognition program. The Local Municipal Champion award is a peer nominated award to recognize the great work being done by teams and individuals by Consolidated Municipal Services Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) across the province.

HCIA Lead Project Consultant Shirley Boxem says, "We are hugely pleased at this award. DC Moves was the vision of Keith Palmer who chose HCIA as the community partner with which to launch this initiative. It has been operational for about two years now and the processes that were initially put in place by the first coordinator Carol Good, are now being used to further the impact in the not for profit community.

"Better Together" DC MOVES logo is symbolic of the initiative's efforts to connect "the broader human service community to activities and information." One of the ways they achieve this is through a twice monthly news bulletin "What's On The Moves" with a current reach of over 250 recipients and through hosting quarterly forums with the potential to connect over 100 participating members comprised of human service providers, local municipalities and engaged citizens designed to continually advance the collective knowledge regarding services, agencies, and initiatives and to provide a platform for engagement to increase opportunities for collaboration.

For example, DC MOVES brings together local expertise and links to regional resources in Public Health and LHIN. "Undertaking a Report on Poverty provided local data identifying what poverty looks like in Dufferin County," says Shirley Boxem, "giving us a framework to understand our rural needs and create awareness by cascading this out to the community through presentations to upper and lower tier municipal councils, and hosting a Community Poverty Reduction Summit."

DC MOVES and HCIA were highlighted at OMSSA's Leadership Symposium in Windsor late last month. The initiative was on display at the event where OMSSA members had the opportunity to browse, engage and discuss the best practices that make DC MOVES and HCIA Local Municipal Champions.

Headwaters Communities in Action's Leadership Council Chair, Gord Gallagher, said: "DC MOVES and Headwaters Communities in Action work collaboratively with Dufferin human services agencies, partners and stakeholders to shape a vibrant, sustainable & resilient community. We are proud to receive this award in support of our collective impact model which maximizes limited resources to improve awareness and access for Dufferin County residents. Congratulations to everyone involved and we are honoured to be recognized."