

Local non-profit organization Streams Community Hub secures charity status

Written By **MARNI WALSH**

“Becoming a charitable organization was always our goal,” says Streams Community Hub director Juli-Anne James, who founded the non-profit organization with her husband Andrew in 2016.

“We believe charity status is key to increasing our capacity. When you can fundraise at a broader level, it goes a long way toward helping you to address the needs of more people in the community.”

The Shelburne organization applied to the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) in January 2017, after completing just over a year of operation as a not-for-profit (NFP) organization. Ms. James says the Streams' Board heard back in August, and the CRA had a lot of questions - with only 90 days to answer them.

“It was our first time in this sort of process,” she said, “and to be honest, it was discouraging.”

The Board considered withdrawing their application, continuing as an NFP, and trying again at a later date. However, their accountant suggested that there would be no harm in responding. “So we buckled down and responded with 19 pages of our own,” says Ms. James. “It was a true team effort. The board was fully committed and involved in ensuring we were thorough in answering what was asked of us.”

“Our response went back in October, and we heard back again in December. Following the review of our application and our responses, the CRA suggested some adjustments to our articles of incorporation, after which they said they would be able to approve us,” says the director. “We made those adjustments on Dec. 28, and shortly after were granted charitable status.”

“Needless to say, we are all very happy that we did not throw in the towel,” says Juli-Anne James. “There is some satisfaction in knowing that what you are doing, and hope to do, makes sense to more than just you. So we are excited to have the opportunity to make that a reality.”

Streams Community Hub has a mandate to “provide an engaging environment to educate, inspire and encourage youth development, community involvement and leadership” in Shelburne. They want to empower youth to build a better community.

Streams Community Hub is offering two streams this March Break: Art Adventure (visual arts) and Broadway Bound (performing arts). Ms. James says, “Registration opened on Jan. 8 and Art Adventure was sold out and waitlisted within 24 hours.”

She added, “Thankfully, we were able to open up another block of 15 spots because we were able to find another artist/educator to teach.” There were a few spots left at the time this was written. Broadway Bound is sold out and waitlisted. Streams Hub encourages parents to sign up their children for the waiting list.

Streams Community Hub is actively planning their summer session. “We are adding a new stream that we are all very excited about,” says Juli-Anne James. “I won't say too much about it, except that it will be “delicious.” Summer registration will open in April.