

Dufferin County Multicultural Foundation recently established

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For four years the Shelburne Multicultural Event has celebrated diversity within the community and now organizers of the annual event will be able to do so year-round.

Althea Alli, founder and president of the Shelburne Multicultural Event, announced on March 2 that the annual event had officially become a non-profit known as Dufferin County Multicultural Foundation.

"It's definitely an amazing feeling to be part of something like this and I say part of because it's been the different partnerships, the multicultural committee and so many different supporters and people who have believed in this," said Alli. "I'm just happy that we're able to be there to assist and support our community."

Transitioning the multicultural event from a one-day affair to a year-round non-profit foundation has been a two-year process that Alli said was the next logical step in helping the community.

"It offers us that opportunity to grow and partner with different organizations and agencies," she said. "It's quite a large undertaking so we wanted to make sure there was adequate support and that everyone participating in it would give it an opportunity to grow."

Planning for the first Shelburne Multicultural Event began in 2017 and was designed to promote diversity, inclusion and equity as well as bring the community together through arts, entertainment and food. The first Multicultural Day Event was held in 2018 in partnership with the Shelburne Public Library, and doubled in size the following year before moving to a virtual format in 2020. Multicultural Day (June 27) was proclaimed for the first time in Dufferin County in 2021 and saw the raising of the Unity in Diversity flag, created by the multicultural committee, throughout the county and Caledon.

In creating the Dufferin County Multicultural Foundation, Alli said they are hoping to provide support such as workshops, initiatives to assist the community in diversity and inclusion, and equity in employment.

"We're essentially an organization that supports diversity, inclusion, equity, and equality in our community. As our community continues to grow, not only Shelburne but Dufferin County, we want to make sure that we're able to have a seat at the table to represent BIPOC, marginalized, and racialized communities, and offer a space to be heard," said Alli.

Now officially established as a non-profit, the Dufferin County Multicultural Foundation is well underway in planning for the 2022 Multicultural Day event. The organization recently released a call for artists to take part in the event.

The Multicultural Day Event will be celebrated in June and is expected to see further details provided by mid-April.

Anyone interested in sponsoring the event can contact the foundation by email at shelburnemulticulturalevent@gmail.com.