

# Local nonprofits across the region unite to celebrate Nonprofit Appreciation Week

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES

## LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Nonprofit Appreciation Week is underway, and more than 100 not-for-profit organizations in Guelph, Wellington, Waterloo and Dufferin County are coming together to celebrate.

Running from Feb. 15 to 21, the week highlights the important work of nonprofits in the region while raising awareness of their role in promoting community wellbeing, connection and resilience.

'Charities and nonprofits are at the very heart of our community. And the staff who power up the programs and services do it because they intrinsically care about people and believe in building strengths. This week gives all of us the opportunity to say, 'Thank you. We see you and appreciate all that you do.' Their impact on our community is second-to-none,' said Michele Fisher, executive director of Dufferin Community Foundation.

The local activation of Nonprofit Appreciation Week was sparked by conversations between Glenna Banda, executive director of United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin, and Kris Cummings, owner and principal consultant at Do/able Consulting. United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin was the inaugural partner and helped shape the idea of creating a shared, visible way to recognize nonprofit teams while also helping the public better understand nonprofit impact.

From that initial idea, the initiative grew into a collaborative effort supported by United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin, Lind Design, Guelph Community Foundation, Dufferin Community Foundation, and the Dufferin Board of Trade.

'At the Dufferin Board of Trade, we work closely with businesses across our region and see firsthand how interconnected our nonprofit and business communities truly are,' said Diana Morris, executive director of the Dufferin Board of Trade. 'Nonprofit organizations strengthen our local economy, support workforce wellbeing, and help build the vibrant, resilient communities that businesses rely on. We are proud to participate in Nonprofit Appreciation Week and to recognize the individuals and teams whose work makes such a meaningful difference every day.'

Additional promotion and outreach support in Waterloo Region is being provided by the Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region, United Way Waterloo Region, Volunteer Waterloo Region, and Waterloo Region Community Foundation.

'Participating nonprofits have received activation kits that include posters, thank-you cards, and stickers designed to recognize staff teams and share why nonprofit work matters,' reads the United Way's press release.

'Over the week posters will be displayed at more than 150 nonprofit organizations and community spaces across the region, creating a shared visual presence during the week and 10,000 stickers and 10,000 thank you cards will be distributed to recognize those who work in the nonprofit sector.'

Throughout Nonprofit Appreciation Week, nonprofits will also be sharing reflections on 'what they wish others understood about their work,' along with moments they are proud of from the past year.

'Across our region, nonprofits are doing deeply important work that helps people feel supported, connected, and cared for,' said Glenna Banda, executive director of United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin.

'Nonprofit Appreciation Week is about recognizing the people behind that work and ensuring the broader community understands just how vital the nonprofit sector is to our collective wellbeing. We offer an enormous thank you to all of our fellow non-profit

employees for continuing to show up and for the work you do to make even one person's life a little bit better every day.?

Nonprofit Appreciation Week is formally recognized by the Government of Ontario through Bill 9, the Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week Act (2021). The legislation acknowledges the contributions of nonprofit workers and organizations across the province and was championed by the Bhayana Family Foundation, Ontario Nonprofit Network, and United Way Greater Toronto. With more than 1 in 10 Canadians working in the nonprofit sector (Imagine Canada), this week provides an opportunity for communities to recognize nonprofit workers and deepen public understanding of the sector's importance.

Community members are encouraged to look for the posters, follow along during the week, and engage with the stories being shared to help amplify appreciation for nonprofit organizations and the people behind the work.