

Shop With Purpose raises over \$5,000 in 2020

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

An Orangeville women has raised over \$5,000 this year through her 'Shop With Purpose' fundraisers and markets, where 10 per cent of each vendor fee is donated to a different not-for-profit each month.

Jessica Medeiros founded Shop With Purpose in March of last year and has since supported countless local not-for-profit organizations, such as Bethell Hospice Foundation, Community Living, Headwaters Healthcare Foundation, Choices Youth Shelter and the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County.

'A portion of everything that we do goes to a cause, which is how we end up donating, what we donate,' said Medeiros.

Last year, over \$2,000 was raised for charitable organizations in the community.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic struck Orangeville, markets were hosted in-person but they've since went online.

In addition to the markets, Mederios also hosts general fundraisers. Most recently, she held Zoom visits with Santa and coming up on Dec. 13 is a COVID-19 safe Santa Selfies event for Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS)

'For that [event] we've created an entire office for Santa, like with an inflatable tree, a fire place ? it literally looks like the North Pole inside this room,' she enthused.

The not-for-profit's that are selected each month are generally determined by Shop With Purpose's following on Facebook, which is approaching 1,500 people.

Once every three months she puts out a message to get a list of organizations that are meaningful to her audience and sees if they're accepting cash donations.

Prior to starting Shop With Purpose, Mederios was a small business owner within the market scene but found she was more interested in creating the events then selling at them.

'I actually work for a not-for-profit, DCAFS, here in Town, so I'm involved a lot with the whole not-for-profit world. I know how hard it is to actually fundraise and get those dollars that are needed every month and every year to keep programs running, so I wanted a way to give back to the community while still supporting our local businesses,' Medeiros explained.

Back when the markets were held in-person, the not-for-profit organization that was being fundraised for each month would set up a booth to spread awareness and collect direct donations.

'The community, they show up, they show up for every event we're running, whether it's virtual or in-person, they're always asking how they can help,' Mederios lauded.

Looking ahead to 2021, Shop With Purpose is launching a virtual magazine for small businesses and the local community, which will run quarterly.

Mederios said she hopes some in-person markets can be hosted next year as well.

In the meantime, she told the Citizen that it's important for everyone to shop local as much as possible this holiday season.

?There's so many great people out there who are running small businesses,? Mederios noted.