



House of
Friendship

your friendship news

SPRING EDITION 2020

www.houseoffriendship.org



Girls & Boys in Leadership provides opportunities for youth to develop their leadership skills, as well as their confidence.

You are Inspiring Future Leaders

Christine struggled finding a place in this world for her daughter, Grace.

Grace, who has autism, had enrolled in a number of programs in the past, never finding a true fit. It had gotten to the point where she didn't want to try anything new. She would rather just stay home, where she felt safe.

But when Grace took a chance on *Girls in Leadership*, a House of Friendship program offered at Kingsdale Community Centre and funded by the Astley Family Foundation, Christine saw her daughter begin to change.

"She had the chance to connect with the leaders, to meet them before the program began, and that made all the difference," said Christine.

The flexible and accessible way the program leaders reached out to Grace made her feel comfortable enough to get involved.

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“Her confidence grew while she was there. Grace started coming out of her comfort zone and was willing to try new things.”

- Christine

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Girls & Boys in Leadership provides mentoring opportunities for youth in grades 7 to 9. In addition, thanks to your donations, our other programs in low-income neighbourhoods also provide vital supports to *Change the Odds* for these kids, to help them overcome the barriers that poverty creates.

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Now 15, Grace is moving on to new leadership opportunities, joining a small group where she will further hone her ability to plan and lead programs.

Grace has already completed her 40 hours of required volunteering for high school, regularly helping out with many programs at Kingsdale Community Centre.

Having the program in her own community, at no cost, removed barriers Christine faces as a single parent living on low income. Your support of these

vital services is *Changing the Odds* for girls like Grace.

“Her confidence grew so much. She thinks she can rule the world now!”

Your financial support is crucial to develop future leaders through our *Neighbourhoods* programs. Thank you for helping to *Change the Odds* for these children as they move toward a better future, filled with potential and possibility.

Removing Barriers to Inspire Bright Minds

When you remove the barriers that poverty creates for children with smart and creative minds, you inspire leaders and create brighter futures. **You *Change the Odds* for these children.** This is what some local companies are doing by providing access to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) learning for children living in low-income neighbourhoods. A few examples are:



Bright and eager minds were given the opportunity to develop their passions, goals and skills in the world of tech, thanks to two separate events in Waterloo Region - a STEM day recently funded and hosted by Brock Solutions, as well as a recent Google-funded PD Day Camp run by Launch Waterloo. Students tapped into their creativity to build innovative projects aimed at reducing our impact on the environment.

You Can Leave a Legacy for Future Generations

Jim Blair knew what it was like to see a life of potential not given the opportunity to shine. It happened to his own mother who although very bright, was never able to attend high school. There was simply no money and she was needed at home.

Jim's wife Lorna has a similar story. Her father was forced to leave school at the age of 11 to help support his family when his own dad died.

"His life was blighted," said Lorna. "We're the children of people whose lives were affected by the Great Depression. We were very much aware of the missed opportunities that can happen in the lives of children."

Sadly, Jim passed away in September 2019 – but not before leaving behind a legacy of generosity that is impacting the lives of children living on low income in Waterloo Region.

It's not surprising that Jim and Lorna Blair saw the value in contributing to House of Friendship's *Neighbourhoods* programs, through the Jim and Lorna Blair Charitable Foundation. For more than two decades, their support provided opportunities for children to take music lessons or enrol in sports programs and for families to experience some of these activities together.

"We wanted the money to be used for things that wouldn't happen otherwise," said Lorna. "We wanted to do something that wasn't already a budget item."

Linda Kruger, Community Resource Coordinator at Sunnydale Community Centre, said the flexibility of the program meant that children were given the chance to participate in activities they would have otherwise missed.

"The funding allowed families experiencing low



Lorna and Jim Blair, pictured with House of Friendship Executive Director John Neufeld.

income to ensure that their children had a level playing field when it came to recreational activities," said Linda.

“When children have hope, it makes a big difference. When they want to do something, and are able to do it, it helps them believe they can do other things as well.” - Lorna Blair

Lorna and her husband always felt that helping out with what some might consider “small things” like joining a soccer team can make a big difference.

“In families who are living on the edge, these kinds of choices require sacrifices. For families on the lower end of the economic scale, there is no choice.”

“We considered it a privilege to be involved in the work of House of Friendship, where people there are dedicated to making a significant difference in people's lives.”

**Would you help to *Change the Odds* for children living on low income?
Please donate today at www.houseoffriendship.org/donate.**



Children like Timothy are better equipped to face new challenges with confidence thanks to your support of camp.

Because of You, Timothy Dreams of a Better Future

Camp is so much more than simply a fun week away for families living on low income.

For Sarah and her son, Timothy*, it was life-changing.

Sarah is a single mother. Timothy's father sadly passed away two years ago, when Timothy was only seven years old. While he has older siblings in his life, he doesn't always get the chance to be around young adults that he can look up to.

At camp, that changed.

"At camp he had the opportunity to interact with kind, caring young men not much older than himself. He met wonderful staff of young women and men demonstrating good sportsmanship and leadership," said Sarah.

Sarah said her son saw a future for himself when he realized he could become a camp counsellor.

"He's not going to continue in poverty," said Sarah. "He's got employment plans at nine years old."

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"He grew so much that week. He is now asking 'what is the earliest I can work at camp?' In one week, this has become part of his life."

– Sarah, Timothy's mom

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Sarah is thankful for the support from generous donors like you that make this life-changing summer camp experience possible.

"I couldn't have done any of this without support. I wouldn't have had the money to provide this for my son."

In 2019, donations from incredible supporters like you sent more than 300 children to camp. For children like Timothy, camp provides the chance to learn, to grow, and to develop a better vision for their future, one filled with hope.

"Your support is invaluable to both the children and our communities," said Sarah. **"Thank you** so much for investing in children's futures!"

**names have been changed*

You can support children like Timothy this spring! Please look for a special letter in your mailbox early April inviting you to *Change the Odds* for children living on low income. Your donation will help build community, remove barriers and inspire future leaders!
To donate, visit www.houseoffriendship.org/donate.

Thank You For Sharing the Gift of Christmas

Thank you so much for taking the time to care!



Because of you, families in Kitchener and Waterloo were able to celebrate the holiday season with a special meal through our *Christmas Hamper* program.

None of this would have been possible without the support of **Kitchener-Conestoga Rotary Club's Turkey Drive** fundraiser, which provides more than \$300,000 to provide food, including turkeys, for families in need. Also, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region generously provided the warehouse space for the hamper packing this year.

More than **1,000 volunteers** worked together to pack food, hand out turkeys, and to deliver Christmas Hampers to over 14,000 men, women and children in Kitchener and Waterloo.



Volunteers braved the cold temperatures to help families in need enjoy a special holiday meal. Thank you!

All of this is thanks to you! Thank you for doing your part in helping families celebrate the holiday season with hope and dignity.



JOIN US AT OUR AGM!

81ST ANNUAL MEETING & STRAWBERRY SOCIAL

"TECH FOR GOOD"

- TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020, 4:00pm to 6:00pm
- Catalyst 137, 137 Glasgow Street, Kitchener

Reserve your free ticket today at <https://hof2020agm.eventbrite.ca>

House of Friendship Coming Events

JULY 8, 2020
FRIENDSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

Enjoy a day of *Playing with Purpose* to benefit those struggling with homelessness at the *Charles Street Men's Shelter*.

Register today at:
www.houseoffriendship.org/FriendshipGolf



**Save
the
Date**

OCTOBER 24, 2020
FRIENDSHIP DINNER

Join us for an inspiring evening where we can share the incredible impact you are making in lives across Waterloo Region! We hope to see you there!

Tickets available in June at:
www.houseoffriendship.org/FriendshipDinner

Getting Closer to Home, Thanks to You!

We're so excited to share with you that our Close to Home project is nearing completion!

Work continues at a rapid pace for our community's new Addiction Treatment Centre in Cambridge, with Nith Valley Construction continuing to guide this project with expertise and dedication.

When complete, the Close to Home building will provide a range of addiction treatment options for men and women throughout Waterloo Region.

We're so thankful for your ongoing support of this vision, including your care and compassion after last year's fire.

The building will be completed in May, with move in in July. Open house events will be scheduled for September when you can see the facility and learn about the incredible impact you are having in the



Thank you for making this Addiction Treatment Centre possible!



lives of those struggling with addiction. Stay tuned for details in [August's Friendship News](#).

Thank you for continuing to support this vital project during this journey – we couldn't do it without you!

Thank You for Joining the Fight Against Hunger

This year's Supermarket Blitz was a great success, thanks to you!



On Saturday, Feb. 8, 350 volunteers collected donations of cash and potatoes at 28 local grocery stores to support House of Friendship's

Emergency Food Hamper program. A special thank you to members of Waterloo Regional Police Services, as well as Waterloo and Kitchener Fire departments and the many members of our local faith community for bringing their added energy and enthusiasm to this year's Blitz!

Through your generous donations of over 60,000 lbs. of potatoes and \$23,000 in cash, you are helping to provide food to 20,000 men, women and children who turn to the *Emergency Food Hamper* program every year. When you provide the gift of food, you

give so much more. You give hope and a future. Families are able to get through a difficult season of life, **thanks to you.**

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

YUKON GOLD SPONSORS

Orchard Design Studio Inc.
Waste Connections of Canada
Way-Mar Inc.



We extend a special thank you to the Kitchener Rangers, for continuing the legacy that is *Don Cameron Potato Night*. This year's event, held on Jan. 24, carried forward Don's spirit of care and compassion, raising an incredible \$7,500 and collecting 6,000 lbs. of potatoes. Thank you!

Increase Your Impact with Monthly Giving!

Consider becoming a **MONTHLY DONOR**! Monthly giving provides ongoing program support to Waterloo Region's most vulnerable residents while reducing administrative costs, ensuring that more of your donation will reach those in need. To become a monthly donor, please contact Yasir at 519-742-8327 x 131 or fundraising@houseoffriendship.org.

Give Today and Make a Difference!



Give a **financial donation** with 3 easy ways to give:

Online at
www.houseoffriendship.org

Call Yasir at
519-742-8327 x131

Mail or drop off at
51 Charles St. E.
Kitchener, ON N2G 2P3

NOTE: We are no longer using our P.O. Box. Please update your records.



Volunteer:

Please visit
www.houseoffriendship.org/volunteer
to learn about the latest opportunities to serve in your community.



Leave a **Gift in your Will:**

A gift in your Will ensures that future generations of men, women and children will be able to find the support they need in their most difficult season of life.

To find out more, call Margaret at 519-742-8327 x 122.



Donate needed items:

- *The Men's Shelter* needs facial tissues (boxes and personal packs), umbrellas and rain ponchos, new backpacks or duffel bags and ear plugs. Call 519-742-8327 x 1.
- *The Shelter Kitchen* needs juice crystals for meals. Meat donations are also always welcome. Call Sandra at 519-742-8327 x 334.
- *Sunnydale Community Centre* needs fabrics in lengths of 1 yard/metre or more, fabric elastic of ½ or 1" width. Call Linda at 519-742-8327 x 613.
- *Kingsdale Community Centre* needs jam jars, dishes and cutlery. Call Alissa at 519-742-8327 x 614.

For a full list of items that are being currently accepted, visit www.houseoffriendship.org/donations.

NEW DONATION HOURS!

Food Donations:

-Monday to Friday 9:00 am -7:00 pm
-Saturdays 12:00 pm - 7:00pm

Non-Food Donations:

(only certain items accepted – see below)
-Tuesdays 8:00am - 12:00 noon
-Wednesdays 12:00 noon - 4:00pm
-By appointment: call 519-742-8327 x 1

Drop donations off at the back door of the Shelter at 63 Charles St. E. Kitchener



VOLUNTEER POWER – Volunteering will bring a smile to your face! We are so thankful for our many volunteers who help out in so many valuable ways – whether it is providing one-on-one homework help, painting at our *Men’s Shelter*, or getting their hands dirty in our community gardens – every volunteer has an impact that can’t be measured. Thank you! To learn more about our range of volunteering opportunities please visit www.houseoffriendship.org/volunteer.

COMMUNICATIONS YOUR WAY

We want to communicate with you in the format you prefer. If you would like to receive electronic communications from House of Friendship, such as Friendship News or electronic receipts, please contact Yasir at 519-742-8327 x 131, or email fundraising@houseoffriendship.org. You can also contact Yasir if you need to update your contact information or if you would like to change how we communicate with you. **We’d love to hear from you!**

Your Friendship News!

The stories shared in this Friendship News are your stories – you have made them possible. You are walking alongside men, women and children in Waterloo Region during their most difficult season of life. We hope that you enjoy reading these stories that show the impact of your support. Contact Gail Martin, at gailm@houseoffriendship.org if you have any feedback.



51 Charles Street East
Kitchener, ON N2G 2P3
519-742-8327
admin@houseoffriendship.org



Charitable # 10749 3892 RR0001