



National Volunteer Week: April 7-13, 2019 • volunteer.ca/nvw2019 • #NVW2019

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK 2019

Release Date: April 7, 2019

From April 7 to 13, Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region and the United Way Waterloo Region Communities join with Volunteer Canada to celebrate and recognize Canada's 12.7 million volunteers during National Volunteer Week (NVW).

Every year in April we officially recognize volunteers for their contribution. This tradition began in 1943 to recognize the volunteer efforts of women supporting the war efforts during WWII. It took a variety of forms during the years, culminating in the proclamation of a week of volunteer recognition by Volunteer Canada in 1990.

This year's theme for National Volunteer Week is "The Volunteer Factor...Lifting Communities. We see it everyday! Volunteers leading neighbourhood activities, lifting the collective confidence to solve common issues. Volunteers tutoring people to read, lifting their self-esteem and increasing their success in school. Volunteers visiting people, lifting their spirits and keeping them connected. Volunteers coaching sports teams, lifting community pride and creating lifelong bonds.

In 2018 the Conference Board of Canada with Volunteer Canada released research highlighting the \$56 Billion contribution of volunteers to the Canadian GDP; the equivalent workforce of the entire Educational Services. While the volunteer contribution is not usually seen in economic terms, (for how do you measure the value the person who sits with a dying family member while you work, coaches your child in a favourite sport or brings a pet visitor to the hospital or nursing home) it is important to see that many of the programs and services we rely on could not exist without our volunteers. The time and skills contributed by the volunteer may be given freely, but the community value of that contribution is immeasurable.

National Volunteer Week 2019 Events:

During National Volunteer Week the Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region will be recognizing significant contributions made by individuals throughout the community. As the organization celebrates 35 years of service to the community this year we were able to increase the number of awards given.

The Volunteer Impact Awards Gala (VIA 2019) will take place on Thursday, April 11, 2019.

For event details visit volunteerwr.ca/VIA2019

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Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region (www.volunteerwr.ca)

Celebrating 35 years of service to Waterloo Region Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo provides local leadership and expertise on volunteerism to increase the participation, quality and diversity of volunteer experiences. Since 1984 we have worked closely with our network of more than 200 community organization across Waterloo Region to promote volunteerism and share its contribution.

For more information, please contact:

(Name, title and contact information for your organization's media person)

CARING/ PROGRAM	Jeff Silver	The Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank
CARING/ PROGRAM	Johnny Montgomery	Ray of Hope
MENTORSHIP	Kashif Memon	University of Waterloo
OUTSTANDING YOUTH	Haylee Kemsley	Lisaard and Innisfree Hospice
OUTSTANDING YOUTH	Marisa Rankin	House of Friendship
OUTSTANDING YOUTH	Meena Waseem	Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute
ORGANIZATION SUPPORT	Dean Schmidt	House of Friendship
ORGANIZATION SUPPORT	Ray Robbins	Lisaard and Innisfree Hospice
SPECIAL EVENT AWARD	Doug Sullivan	House of Friendship
BOARD OR COMMITTEE	Board of Directors	Bereaved Families of Ontario - Midwestern Region
GROUP ENGAGEMENT	Vidyad	House of Friendship
GRASSROOTS	Dan Clements	For A Better Cambridge
MULTICULTURAL	Ekram Al Momani	KW Women Empowerment Group
OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP	Mary Lou Roe	CCORIC
OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP	David Brenneman	Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation
VOLUNTEER MANAGER	Samantha Tremmel	Reep Green Solutions
VOLUNTEER MANAGER	Ashley Hendricks	Victim Services of Waterloo Region
VOLUNTEER IMPACT INDIV.	Linda Kieswetter	KidSport Kitchener Waterloo Chapter
VOLUNTEER IMPACT GROUP	Eastwood Christian Fellowship	Ray of Hope





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VOLUNTEER STORY CONTENT – WATERLOO

Outdoor Rinks are Run by Great Neighbours!

The City of Waterloo Neighbourhoods join the Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region to thank the many volunteers that helped maintain the outdoor rinks in our community. As the snow disappears and signs of spring begin to arrive, the City of Waterloo and local volunteers begin the process of wrapping up the outdoor rink program for another season. Outdoor rinks are located throughout the community in a number of city parks and provide opportunities for free skating and hockey in the winter months. The 2018-2019 outdoor rink program had 25 different rink locations. Community members who volunteer to flood and maintain the rink each season make the program possible. Each rink has a dedicated team of six or more volunteers; which adds up to a lot of helping hands throughout the winter! If you have an outdoor rink in your community, please take the time to say thank you to all the volunteers who made hours of winter fun possible. If you are interested in learning more about the program please visit waterloo.ca/outdoorrinks or for other opportunities in Waterloo visit the Volunteer Action Centre at volunteerwr.ca.

VOLUNTEER STORY CONTENT – KITCHENER

Volunteer Team Has Served over 30,000 Nutritious Meals.

Since 2007 volunteers from Eastwood Christian Fellowship, and friends, have volunteered on the third Monday of each month for Ray of Hope contributing more than 5000 volunteer hours and serving more than 30,000 nutritious meals to those struggling with poverty, addictions and mental health issues. Like the other groups they purchase groceries, cook nutritious meals, serve them and clean up. When an Eastwood Monday happens to fall on or close to a special holiday, guests can always expect additional treats, decorations, coloured food items - even costumes - to mark the occasion. As a result, Eastwood Mondays continue to draw the highest attendance each month. "(Eastwood) is a compelling example of a church that doesn't stay cloistered within their walls but moves out into their community to demonstrate concern and compassion in pragmatic and concrete ways," Ken Wideman from Ray of Hope says. "It has made a huge difference to us here at Ray of Hope." To learn about this organizations and its volunteer opportunities visit rayofhope.net or for other opportunities in Waterloo Region visit the Volunteer Action Centre at volunteerwr.ca.

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VOLUNTEER STORY CONTENT – CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge Volunteer Jeff Silver Receives Volunteer Impact Award.

On April 11th during National Volunteer Week, Jeff Silver will receive a Volunteer Impact Award for his contributions to the Cambridge Self Help Food Bank (CSHFB). Jeff joined the CSHFB team in January 2018 as a server in the Community Pantry when he was looking for find a way to give back during his retirement. Community Pantry volunteers directly serve about forty families during a typical four-hour shift. The role is to keep the shelves stocked and tidy, and to help the participants choose items. Jeff regularly works extra shifts, repairs broken equipment, suggests recipes and even helps people to their car. Jeff's easy attitude puts participants at ease during what can be an uncomfortable experience. It is his kind words and his uplifting spirit that impact some program participants more deeply than the calories and the nourishment provided by CSHFB. To learn about this organizations and its volunteer opportunities visit cambridgefoodbank.org or for other opportunities in Cambridge visit the Volunteer Action Centre at volunteerwr.ca.

VOLUNTEER STORY CONTENT – REGIONAL

Leadership Wears Many Hats

David is a true leader in our community. His leadership extends beyond his role as CAO for the Township of Woolwich because he believes strongly in giving back to the community. His commitment to wear "hats" on community boards, committees and task forces is a testament to the vision he has for a thriving inclusive community. Some of these boards and committees include; Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation, The Foodbank of Waterloo Region, Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation, Canada's Technology Triangle, the Prosperity Council Creative Enterprise Task Force and Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Youth Engagement Task Force. In addition, he participates broadly in events like the recent Coldest Night of the Year, raising funds personally and walking the 5K to raise awareness and support hungry, homeless, and hurting people and families. David rolls up his sleeves and gets the work done. His nominator, Lynne Short of Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation, has had the privilege of being on a board with David as a colleague and when he was Chair. "I am now in a staff position at KWCF, and David is the Past-Chair. In all instances, I have learned from him, been encouraged and pushed to do my best and thoroughly enjoyed the experience." David truly exemplifies organizational leadership. To learn about Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation visit kwcf.ca or to search volunteer opportunities in Waterloo Region visit the Volunteer Action Centre at volunteerwr.ca.

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