

Annual Report

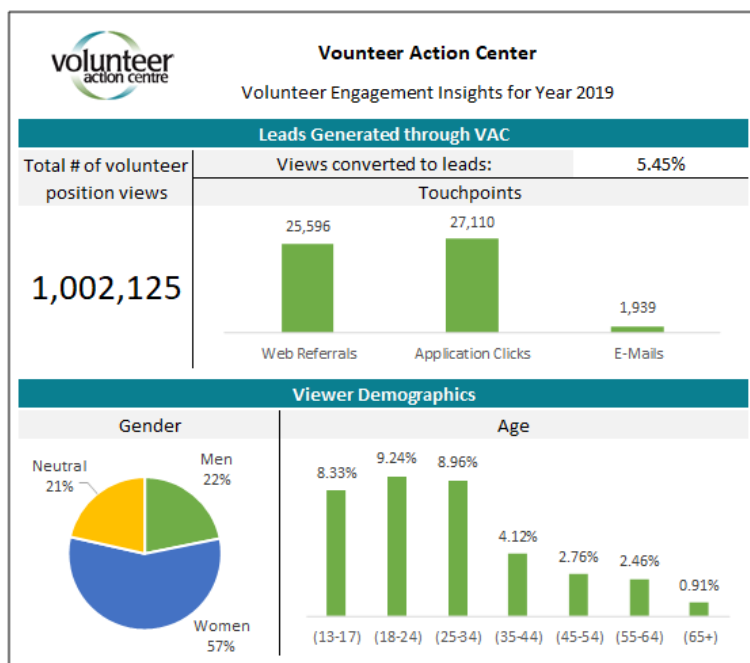
2019-2020



Executive Director Report

What a year. We certainly ended our fiscal year in a way that none of us would have anticipated. Before I share the Volunteer Action Centres changes related to Covid-19, I would like to reflect on the many other things that took place prior to March 2020. At this time, it is almost challenging to remember that there were 11 other months that made up the year for which we are reporting.

It is always a highlight to kick-start our year with National Volunteer Week and the Volunteer Impact Awards. Recognizing the contributions of volunteers in our community is important and so inspiring. The stories of the volunteers recognized never ceases to amaze. A recent paper by the Conference Board of Canada “The Value of Volunteering in Canada” quantified the work contribution of volunteers to the Canadian Economy. This provided us a new lens from which to see and speak about the amazing contributions of our volunteers and our sector. We were not surprised to learn that volunteers contribute nearly 3% of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and that combined with the economic impact of the charitable and non-profit sector we contribute nearly 8% of the GDP in Canada. This contribution is among the highest of any industry in Canada. Now when we speak of the value that volunteers bring we can also quantify the contribution which equally amazes.



Our online services again produced results for our membership with nearly 110,000 unique visitors to our site. With the assistance of a VAC volunteer, Prashanth Promod, we were able use his expertise as a Data Scientist to put a new lens on our data and produce and share dashboards from that service with every member organization. The example to the left shows the combined dashboard of online results for 2019.

Through the year we were able apply the lens of peer networks, professional development, corporate citizenship, youth, mentors and others to promote volunteerism, grow community capacity to engage volunteers, and provide a voice for volunteers in community.

It is a privilege and responsibility our leadership, staff and volunteers take seriously. We anticipate a challenging and exciting road ahead as we deal with this many changes brought about by the pandemic. We look forward to supporting our membership and the many volunteers in community as we transition. Thank you to our Board of Directors for their leadership and our program and office volunteers for their ongoing support. A special thanks to the Volunteer Action Team of highschool youth who continue to share their lens on our work. To the staff team who continually amaze with their skills and flexibility – Dianne, Sarah-Ruth, and Kate – and to those who have moved on to new challenge – Lily, Sydney, Ingrid, Delina and Josh.

Board of Directors Report

It should come as no surprise to those reading this, that 2019/2020 has been another year of change and adaption by the Volunteer Action Centre, and we expect for many of you as well. VAC continues to work towards the new strategic direction which was set early 2019.

Little did we know what Spring 2020 would bring. As COVID-19 became a household term and social distancing restrictions changed the way we interact with each other VAC worked to do what they do best, connect volunteers with those who need them. VAC was central to the development of an emergency volunteer program, under the Regional state of emergency, that not only supports the initial wave, but in preparation for a potential second wave. To provide some context, in the first 7 weeks of the COVID response, there were over 33,000 volunteer position views and 1,200 applications submitted through **volunteerwr.ca**.



We would be remiss to allow COVID-19 to overshadow the other positive work VAC had done prior. VAC youth engagement programs, moved forward with helping our youth learn about the community through adventures in volunteering at various organizations in the region. Traditional in-person meetings became virtual meetings and students helped develop ways to run online volunteer fairs to continue engaging and inspiring the youth of the Waterloo region.

On behalf of the entire Board, I would like to extend sincere thanks to the VAC staff and volunteers for all of their efforts to remain flexible and adapt over the past year. This small but mighty team is an inspiration as they work tirelessly to keep Waterloo Region invested in volunteering. A special thank you to Jane for her leadership during this year. She continues to push VAC forward and acts as an inspiration to her team, the board, and me personally.

Rob Howe, President
VAC Board of Directors

Treasurer Report

The Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region successfully completed our move to a new office space within a reasonable budget that offers exciting new opportunities. With the rise of the pandemic we shifted our focus to support the volunteer response of the Region. In these uncertain times we remain confident that we have established a solid infrastructure that help to sustain our work through constant transitions.

The audit has concluded, and the financial statements fairly present the financial position of the Organization during the year and as at year end. We ended the year in a stable position, thanks to Jane's fiscal management.

Looking forward to the next year, we will continue to assess the impact of the pandemic on the organization and the charitable sector as a whole. We will continue to focus our work in the strategic plan we developed in 2019, and will adapt with the changing times. We will place a focus on sound financial management and protection of cash flows to ensure that we come through these times a stronger organization and stronger community driven by volunteerism.

Andrew Paylor, Treasurer
VAC Board of Directors



Member Services

This past year VAC celebrated many exciting moments, learned how to be flexible in every situation and strived to serve this community better each day.

Professional Development for Volunteer Managers is one of the core service streams offered to our membership. Waterloo Region Association for Volunteer Administrators (WRAVA) was established as such, to best serve volunteer manager professionals from the tri-cities and the townships. Dianne Boston–Nyp has been running monthly WRAVA meetings that are open to VAC members.



The average attendance for each session is 25 volunteer managers, with meetings held in both Kitchener and Cambridge. Meetings shifted to the ZOOM platform nicely in March. Shared experiences and invited guest speakers spoke on a range of topics such as: Resiliency, Change Management, Mental Wellness, Virtual Volunteering and Police Record Checks. WRAVA is a great way to connect and learn from other professionals in this unique and demanding role of volunteer management. In addition to the Volunteer Manager meetings, Jane Hennig held monthly Executive Director meetings to cultivate discussions and offer support among the leaders of this sector.



Communications expertise is integral to VAC's success at engaging others in our sector. With social media marketing continuing to grow substantially each year our member organizations receive exposure through a variety of methods. Our weekly promotions were shared with our media partners: Rogers Radio Group, CKWR 98.5 FM radio station, The Record and local community

papers. Sadly, after 30 or more years the Record has discontinued the You Can Help column from the Wednesday paper. However, the base of social media followers and newsletter subscribers, this past year VAC newsletter gained 397 new subscribers, ending our year off with 999 in total.

Staff participated in 16 different High School, College/University and employment fairs, where we were able to connect one on one with hundreds of individuals in the community. Personal connections and conversations are key to the value of service that VAC provides to each member and or inquiries from newcomers, youth, corporate groups and or community partners. Visits to our centre for appointments also continued to provide a personal review of their possible volunteer journey.

Youth & Volunteer Engagement

A classic evolution here at VAC is when former youth volunteer from the last year, Kate Short took on the role of youth engagement coordinator. Kate facilitated the weekly Volunteer Action Team from January 2019 - May 2020 as well as other youth engagement activities. The Volunteer Action Team had 11 participants who volunteered for, and or learned from organizations like Strong Start, the Multicultural Centre, Anishnaabeg Outreach, KidsAbility, Parkwood and Fairview Seniors Communities, Our Kids Network, and more. They also participated in the GreenHouse Youth Innovation Program (YIP) at St. Paul's University College out of the University of Waterloo. The Volunteer Action Team and GreenHouse Youth Innovation programs shifted mid-March to a virtual format, and from bi-weekly meetings to weekly zoom meetings with the team. As a third year UW Social Development Studies student, Kate managed to do this role using much of her educational background as well. Kate delivered school outreach presentations that talked about the importance of volunteerism to 11 classes and two Key Clubs, reaching 200+ students across the region.



VAC hits the ground running daily, serving over 200 member organizations across the Region of Waterloo. We are extremely grateful for all the wonderful volunteers who have helped keep our organization running on all cylinders.

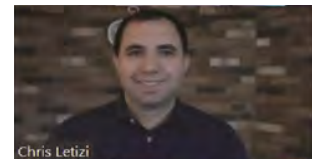
VAC had a total of 29 volunteers in these roles:

- Board of Directors and Executive Committee
- Office support including: business analyst, archive and administrative support roles
- Graphic design and communications/social media assistants
- High School and Conestoga College— student placements (5)
- Volunteer Impact Awards—Selection panelists
- Youth Action Team—participants and mentors

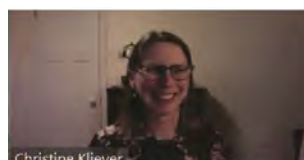
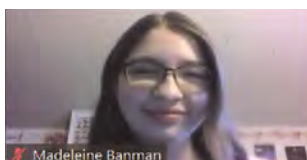
VAC is grateful to all our supporters and partners for making a difference in our region.

Volunteer Impact Awards

At the end of our fiscal year, we were delighted to execute our 15th annual Volunteer Impact Awards to celebrate outstanding and well-deserving volunteers. Due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, we had to move the event to an online platform. Although delayed slightly, the event still happened during National Volunteer Week. Thanks to the 60 nominations received from local volunteer managers, 16 recipients were identified and honoured in the 12 different categories. 100 guests participated in the online presentation with ongoing and awesome host, Susan Cooke-Scheerer, who makes it all flow so well. Throughout the event we heard heartfelt speeches from each recipient along with congratulating remarks from local, regional and federal representatives. We were so pleased to celebrate the incredible group of volunteers—it was a virtual success! Congratulations to all and thanks to our sponsors for their support.



2020 RECIPIENTS	
Caring Program	Deb McCarter
	Sharon Stephens
Organization Support	Daniel Kramer
Outstanding Youth	Madeleine Banman
Special Event Award	Kate McArthur
Youth Mentorship	Adam Metcalf
Group Involvement	Board of Directors
	Planning Committee
Good Neighbour	Mike & Mary Ann Lorentz
	Christine Babin
Outstanding Leadership	Duaa Al-Aghar
	Gary Price
Volunteer Manager	Christine Kliever
Volunteer Impact	Hockey Helps the Homeless
	Kate Merrifield
Award of Merit	Dannon Vasey



Thank you to our Supporters

Board of Directors

Mary McGuinness, President
Rob Howe, Vice-President
Andrew Paylor, Treasurer
David Marsh, Secretary
Alison Boyd, Past Chair
Andrea Stratulat
Madchen Funk
Heather Rennie
Rachel Wagner
Amy Sproule-Jones
Ann de Sequeira

Volunteers/Student Placements

Annie Crump
Catharine Bonas-Taylor
Cayley MacArthur
Claire Wilkinson
Don Cowan
Gohar Sharif
Jade Mulder
Josh Taylor-Detlor
Karen Totzke
Kate Short
Kyle Young
Lily Viggiano
Mac Turchan
Malav Yvas
Martina Belanger
Prashanth Promod
Stephen Trimmed
Sue Jewell
Susan Cook-Scheerer
Tia Dupont
Vicki Nash-Moore
Xin (sheen) Gao

Funders

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City of Kitchener
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Region of Waterloo
United Way Waterloo Region

Partners

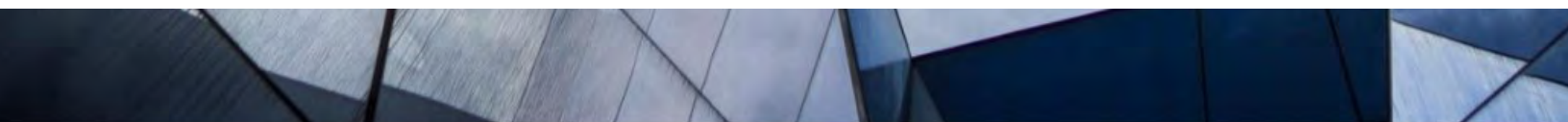
Immigration Partnership
Ontario Non-Profit Network
Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN)
People and Information Network (PIN)
United Way Waterloo Region Communities
Volunteer Attract
Volunteer Canada
WLU—Experiential Learning & Career
Development
Wellbeing Waterloo Region

Sponsors

Don Cowan in Memory of Margaret Cowan
Economical Insurance
Rae Lipske Partnership
Toyota (TMMC)
VolunteerAttract

Staff

Jane Hennig
Dianne Boston-Nyp
Sydney Atwood
Lily Viggiano
Sarah-Ruth McCracken
Kate Short
Josh Taylor—Detlor, Summer Student
Delina Keleta, Summer Student





Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region

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