



# OAKVILLE'S EDUCATION HEROES



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Oakville Resiliency Fund Invests in Education Heroes and Supports Virtual Programming for Educators, Students and their Families**

**Oakville, Ont., April 30, 2020** - With the announcement of public school closures until the end of May, The Foundation is pleased to announce support to teachers, students and families to move educational supports and programming online.

First, The Foundation is excited to announce the launch of "*Community Classroom Online (Virtual programs)*," which is now available free of charge on our website! Through the generous support of our connecting sponsor Toronto Pearson, Genworth Canada, and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, students, teachers and families can enjoy curriculum-based local arts, culture, environmental, and heritage programming online. Currently the site hosts sessions with many of our Community Classroom partners: ArtHouse, Art from the Heart, the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton Steel Pan Drummers, Crash Rhythm bucket drumming, Halton Environmental Network, the Oakville Galleries, the Oakville Symphony Orchestra and more to come. Over \$30,000 in funding is being allocated to these community organizations.

Second, The Foundation is pleased to announce new Oakville Resiliency Fund grants totalling \$25,000 to organizations who continue to provide virtual and direct resources to teachers, students and their families. We have recognized these organizations as our #educationheroes.

These education heroes include: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Halton Hamilton who moved their mentoring program online, HIEC for their virtual career lab, HIPPY for their school readiness program for newcomer parents, ErinoakKids Centre for their continued programming, the Halton Learning Foundation and the Halton Catholic Children's Education Fund for their emergency funding for students. Thank you! To date, The Foundation has distributed over \$550,000 through the Oakville Resiliency Fund.

In addition, our Fundholders have provided an additional \$15,000 in grants for secondary/post secondary education through Home Suite Hope and the Halton Children's Aid Foundation.

Third, The Foundation has invested \$50,000 into the Windmill Microlending Fund supporting the professional retraining of newcomers. Windmill provides micro loans of up to \$15,000 to newcomers to meet Canadian professional certification requirements and has assisted 60 people living in Halton Region to date.

“Sixty percent of all Windmill graduates are in the healthcare profession and many are serving on the front lines meeting the growing need for healthcare workers,” stated Wendy Rinella CEO of The Foundation. “We are making an important investment into the future of healthcare.”

Fourth and final, The Foundation continues to provide a free platform for post-secondary bound students to access local educational awards. Originally announced in January, ahead of the State of Emergency, The Foundation and its community partners combined their efforts to create a new tool for local graduates and mature students to access education awards funding –the Community Education Awards Hub (AwardsHub.ca)

“The Foundation views technology as a Community Asset. As such, we have invested in technology that helps build and connect our community,” said Wendy Rinella. “With the school closures, the timing of this online platform for students and service organizations was serendipity.”

The Awards Hub enables local organizations to virtually conduct and distribute their awards, while ensuring students have a one-window, online access to over \$325,000 in funding. Today, there are more than 350 users on the portal, with over 230 completed applications and a further 200 more in progress. The earliest applications are due in mid-May, so students still have time to apply.

The Awards Hub includes the following organizations: Halton Learning Foundation, The Lions Club of Oakville, The May Court Club of Oakville, Rotary Clubs of Oakville, University Women’s Club of Oakville, IODE (International Order of the Daughters of the Empire), The Oakville Chamber of Commerce, and The Halton Region Chinese Canadian Association. A total of \$4,500 is available from The Foundation for the Alexander and Bernice DeMaio Education Fund.

- 30 -

### **Oakville Community Foundation**

The Foundation is a registered charity with 25 years of experience Building Community Through Philanthropy. The Foundation has granted \$46 million to charities since 1994 and supports investments of over \$110 million in charitable assets. We welcome families, businesses and residents into our community and give everyone the opportunity to be a philanthropist. The Foundation is one of the largest members of a national network of more than 190 Canadian community foundations.

#### **For more information please contact:**

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