

## CREATING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

WINDSORESSEX COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF CONNECTING PHILANTHROPY TO COMMUNITY NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

For the past 25 years, the WindsorEssex Community Foundation has focused on making our communities a better place to live, work, learn and grow by connecting philanthropy to community needs and opportunities. They help citizens, charitable agencies and corporations engage in philanthropy to create a more vibrant, healthy community.

The WindsorEssex Community Foundation (formerly Greater Windsor Community Foundation) was originally founded as Heritage Windsor in 1983 by three visionary, community-minded leaders; Mayor Albert “Bert” Weeks, Charles Clark Sr. and H. Clifford Hatch Sr. These three gentlemen embodied a spirit of philanthropy and recognized the value of pooling and leveraging the philanthropic resources of concerned citizens to ensure a healthy and vibrant community.

Today, the WindsorEssex Community Foundation continues to be led by passionate volunteers and staff with a vision to inspire philanthropy. The Community Foundation has grown in community support, community impact and investments under management to become one of the top 25 community foundations in Canada.

The Community Foundation’s strength has been its innovative, creative and proactive stance on community involvement and partnerships. Its efficient and effective use of community partnerships and donor funds has resulted in the support and development of projects that enhance the quality of life for residents of Windsor and Essex County.

“Community Foundations are about permanence and in a world where so much is ever-changing this is an increasingly powerful concept. Our vision – to inspire philanthropy to benefit our community today and forever – sums up our role and reason for being,” says Jennifer Walker, Executive Director. “Thanks to the generosity of community citizens, we are growing endowment funds that will return annual grants to our community – forever. We are helping donors create positive change in the community they love.”

The Community Foundation takes a broad view of the elements our community needs to succeed, providing grant support to everything from social services and education to the arts, recreation, the environment and heritage preservation. “People want to give, but sometimes they’re unsure of how best to make a charitable gift to have real impact



Photos courtesy of the Convention & Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County & Pelee Island.

on the community,” says Walker. “We are knowledgeable about our community’s needs and we work with donors to channel their philanthropic support to issues and causes they care about most. This is a ‘hands on’ Community Foundation where donors decide their level of involvement in directing their donation and the community impact. We’re here to see that their vision for our community is carried out.”

Donors to the Community Foundation include individuals, families, businesses and corporations.

The Community Foundation works with donors and their professional advisors to tailor gift giving to meet their charitable interests and financial goals. Donations are made in either cash, securities, bequests or gifts of life insurance or real property.

“The Foundation helps donors create positive change in the community they love.”



The gift can be made during the donor’s lifetime or left to the Community Foundation in a bequest. The donor can direct the donation to an existing fund or create their own fund and be involved on a go-forward basis in the fund’s grant-making process.

In most cases, donations are pooled into funds and invested together to achieve greater returns at a lower cost. The income generated from these investments form grants that benefit registered charities and projects in our community. The original donation is never spent. It will continue to provide meaningful financial support to our community for generations to come.

The Community Foundation also encourages volunteerism, believing a healthy community is sustained through active community involvement and service. “Service is just as valuable as philanthropy in creating community vitality,” Walker explains. “Doing good is rewarding and important; sometimes even more so for the individual who has made the commitment to partake.”

“Community vitality remains our main focus,” Walker concludes, and we believe this is achieved by people coming together, getting involved in community issues and by providing philanthropic support for causes and organizations through legacy giving that will support the growth of our community for generations to come.”