

Community Foundation Grants Increasing in Impact Throughout Niagara

In announcing its latest round of grants, Betty Lou Souter, chair of the Niagara Community Foundation's Grants Committee, noted that the foundation has grown "from zero dollars to over \$170,000 in total grants awarded during our first three years of operation. And last year, we were also able to leverage our grant dollars to attract additional support for our applicants from the Business Education Council, our donor endowment funds and the Rotary Club of St. Catharines."

Applications were received from 24 charities from across Niagara to the latest round of the foundation's Community Grants Program. These groups requested over \$78,000 in support. Commenting on the proposals, Ann-Louise Branscombe, President of the foundation noted that "Our community is very fortunate to have such a wealth of caring, creative organizations that are striving to make Niagara better. We saw a 50% increase in funds requested, which speaks to the increased need by the non-profit sector for funds to operate their programs. We wish we were able to support more of the groups who applied."

Twelve charities were selected to receive a total of \$17,450 in grants, ranging from \$500 to \$2,000. The successful applicants included: City of Niagara Falls Heritage Week Committee, Early Childhood Community Development Centre, Fort Erie Multicultural Centre, Literacy Council of Niagara West, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Niagara Artists' Company, Niagara Falls Big Brothers Big Sisters, Port Colbourne CARES, The RAFT, Gallery Players of Niagara, Women's Resource Centre – Lincoln Committee Against Violence and the YWCA of St. Catharines

This announcement brings the total grants awarded in 2003 to over \$135,000 to 54 different initiatives. Every community in the region has benefited from one or more of these projects – whether it was to send kids to camp, supporting environment restoration projects, assisting with strategic planning initiatives, providing resources to new immigrants or starting support groups for boys and their parents.

Established in November 2000, the Niagara Community Foundation is a collection of endowed funds held in perpetuity given by caring citizens who have chosen to make their community a better place to live and work. To date more than \$2,000,000 has been raised in permanently endowed funds.

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NIAGARA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Media Release

GRANT DETAILS:

City of Niagara Falls - Heritage Week Committee (\$1,000)

Images of a Century: Niagara Falls, Canada 1904-2004: A book covering the 100 years since the incorporation of the communities and featuring all aspects of the city's growth and development.

Early Childhood Community Development Centre (\$1,500)

Health and Safety Workplace Educational Series: To provide training to boards, administrators and staff of 30 child-care programs operating in Niagara to comply with current health and safety regulations.

Fort Erie Multicultural Centre (\$2,000)

Welcome Kits for Newcomer Children: To research and develop a prototype of a welcome kit for the children of newcomers who enter Canada via the Peace Bridge.

Literacy Council of Niagara West (\$1,200 plus \$1,250 from Sunday in the Parks Fund)

Skills of Success: A series of ten workshops for women in West Lincoln to help develop self-confidence, improve self-esteem and feel stronger, the intangible prerequisites for any learning to take place.

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada (\$2,000)

Knowledge is Power: A five-day wellness pilot program held over March Break that will bring children from across Niagara, who have a parent with MS, together to learn how to cope with the impacts of MS.

Niagara Artist's Company (\$1,700)

Digi-Art: NAC for the Web: The development of a series of workshops that will instruct Niagara artists in the creation and launch of their own website.

Niagara Falls Big Brothers Big Sisters Association Inc. \$600 (plus \$400 from Niagara Road Supervisors Assoc. Fund)

Improving Communication in the Household: Launch of a 16-week program targeting boys and their parent/guardian with the aim to improve relationships within the family unit, improve communication skills and

increase knowledge of community resources.



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Port Colborne CARES (\$1,300)

STAR (Skills Through Activity and Recreation): To support STAR project staff training. Trained STAR staff will enable clients to be eligible to apply for child care subsidy. This subsidy will sustain the STAR project.

St. Catharines Resource Service for Youth (The RAFT) (\$1,500 plus \$1,500 from St. Catharines Rotary Club)

Youth Volunteer Project: Youth inspired approach to breaking down the walls between youth at risk and the communities in which they live by providing a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. This is a collaborative project for Y.A.R.N. (Youth at Risk Niagara).

The Gallery Players of Niagara (\$500 plus reconditioned computer from Business Education Council)

Office equipment and training: To assist with the cost of purchasing a refurbished computer and to provide staff software training.

Women's Resource Centre – Lincoln Committee Against Violence (\$1,400)

Strategic Planning & AGM Community Consultation Initiative: To support the costs associated with developing and presenting these initiatives.

YWCA of St. Catharines (\$1,100)

Child and Youth Program, Crisis Housing Facility: A program for children in the YWCA facility who require temporary crisis housing. The program provides a safe environment in which they can learn, play and develop.
