

# GIVINGTUESDAY™

## WATERLOO REGION

### **For immediate release**

December 29, 2015

Waterloo Region

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, Waterloo Region celebrated its first region-wide GivingTuesday. GivingTuesday follows Black Friday and Cyber Monday and kicks off the giving season.

Local volunteers, including Community Ambassadors Brenda Halloran and Waterloo Region Police Chief Bryan Larkin, helped to promote GivingTuesday to the community.

More than 100 charities and non-profits in Waterloo Region participated by sharing their stories of giving on social media. The @givingtuesdaywr Retweet reach on December 1<sup>st</sup> was an incredible 71.2K! 25 organizations were present at a Giving Fair hosted by Conestoga Mall. A new website ([www.givingtuesdaywr.ca](http://www.givingtuesdaywr.ca)) donated by COPP Communications saw nearly 500 individual users on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

“I’m very grateful for the support of the Waterloo Region Record, CTV, the Waterloo Inn, Conestoga Mall and COPP Communications for their donations of support for GivingTuesday,” says Scott Williams, Chair of the GivingTuesday Waterloo Region movement. “Without the help of these partners, GivingTuesday Waterloo Region could not have been the success it was.”

“I was moved by so many great stories of giving on December 1<sup>st</sup>,” says Williams. 25 businesses in Belmont Village rallied to support the food bank, students at Suddaby Public School and Wilson Public School raised funds for Nutrition for Learning, a young hockey player challenged his teammates to match his donations of gift cards and many children posted #UNselfies to let the community know they were donating their allowance or making gifts of toys and clothing to those in need.

“We still haven’t collected all the results of GivingTuesday,” says Williams, “but we know that financial and in-kind donations exceeded \$200,000. Nearly 500 volunteer hours were pledged or worked. There were 70 blood donations on December 1<sup>st</sup> and 35 people signed up as organ donors. More than 25,000 lbs of food were donated!”

One of the goals of the GivingTuesday Waterloo Region movement was to increase awareness of the various charities and non-profits in our community. “Most of the organizations who signed up to be added to our website experienced bumps in their social media followers and website visits leading up to December 1<sup>st</sup>,” says Williams. “This was the third year for GivingTuesday in Canada but only the first for our local movement. I’m pleased that more people are now aware of GivingTuesday and I’m looking really forward to what we can do in 2016!”

Media Contact: Scott Williams [swilliams@kwcounselling.com](mailto:swilliams@kwcounselling.com) or 519.884.0000 x211