

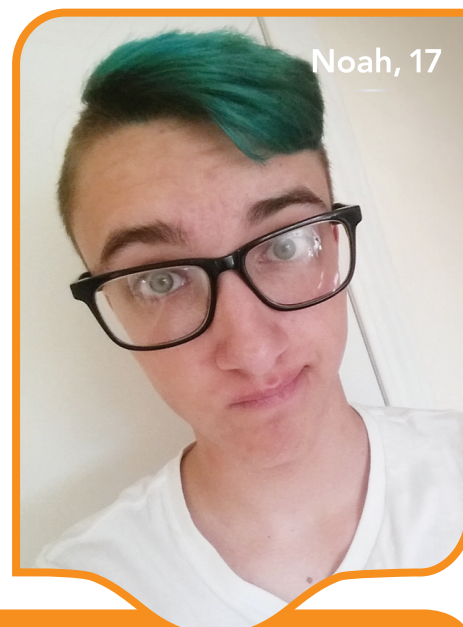
“Our community needs a youth centre because it gives the youth a safe place to go chill and hang out with their friends on their own.”

– Noah, Youth Rep, Clearview Youth Centre

In November 2016, the Clearview Youth Centre (CYC) opened within walking distance from Stayner Collegiate Institute (SCI) and local elementary schools. SCI student council reps were particularly interested in a drug-free and bullying-free space for socializing, academic pursuits, mental-health counselling and other youth-oriented programs and services.

With **social enterprise revenue** and a commitment to support underserved youth in our region, United Way Simcoe Muskoka (UWSM) became a funding partner in July 2017.

Additional funds are necessary to launch the CYC into self-sustainability — designated donations to the Clearview Youth Centre can be made online at **UWSimcoeMuskoka.ca**



GUEST

COLUMNIST

BARRY BURTON | Deputy Mayor, Clearview Township

Clearview community takes action to protect youth

It has been identified within the community that there is a need for youth to have a place to go. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in youth mental-health issues and suicides. In the past year alone, there has been one death by suicide and two planned suicides that were prevented. Youth drug-use is also a growing concern. Clearview Council recognized the need for youth-oriented services and, as a result, passed a resolution to establish a youth centre in the Town of Stayner. Clearview Township committed \$100,000 and, along with the additional financial support of United Way Simcoe Muskoka, we have been able to make the Clearview Youth Centre a reality.

The centre is a drug-free, bully-free safe environment where the youth of our communities can come and have positive social interaction while participating in programs provided by our partnering agencies, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Georgian Triangle, Ray's Place, The Door, Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County and private tutoring.

“Thanks to the United Way team for their continued support.”

The youth centre is quickly becoming of interest to the youth in our area as attendance is constantly growing. Along with providing a drop-in centre for recreational and social purposes, the centre also has three separate counselling rooms for mental-health counselling provided by Canadian Mental Health Association. This counselling area has a separate entrance to ensure privacy. It is also a space where teachers and parents can meet confidentially independent of the school environment.



Clearview Township Deputy Mayor Barry Burton takes his turn at Clearview Youth Centre. Photo courtesy of Ian Adams/Metroland.

**SUPPORT
YOUTH**

100% of your gift supports the Clearview Youth Centre when you donate online (UWSimcoeMuskoka.ca) or call 705-726-2301, x2039.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AT UWSM

UTILITY SUPPORT TELEPHONE HELPLINE

UWSM runs an in-bound call centre connecting individuals and families struggling with utility arrears to helpful programs, grants and local resources.

LEAP • OESP • Energy Conservation • Affordability Fund • 211 • Credit Counselling

“It’s extremely rewarding to help individuals and their families in their time of struggle, and provide peace of mind.”

– Tally, Team Leader, UWSM Helpline

Approximately 2,000 low-income families across Simcoe Muskoka increased their housing security last year with the help of 14 UWSM employees dedicated to connecting the most vulnerable among us with grants, services and other community-based services.

Tally, a registered practical nurse, wanted a career that makes a difference in people’s lives. “This work has an incredible impact,” says the call centre team leader. “It goes way beyond helping one person.”

For nearly 20 years, UWSM has operated a **social enterprise** that earns revenue through business activities with social value. In addition to offsetting operational expenses, these programs have also provided the means to create the Collaborative Fund, which invests in innovative solutions for long-term social change — like the Clearview Youth Centre featured in this newsletter.



Tally, RPN

LIFE BEYOND ADDICTION

Starting over with a supportive community

Like many successful businessmen, Dave is a home owner who enjoys spending time with his three sons and grandchildren. Having reconnected with a previous love, he’s also busy planning a wedding and looking forward to sharing the rest of his life with her in beautiful Muskoka.

“I’m not looking back on what life was like, only looking forward to what life has for me now!”

It wasn’t too long ago that the future wasn’t promising much joy. Dave, now 50, has a long history of crack cocaine addiction and addiction-related federal charges resulting in prison time. Several years ago, while in a halfway house in Barrie, he started working with Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County, a United Way-funded agency. When he later moved to Muskoka, he was pleased

to have the chance to continue receiving substance-abuse counselling through Elizabeth Fry. This time the program funding came from the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy, which UWSM administers on behalf of Service Canada.


In 2016, Dave completed his parole, retained his sobriety, continued building his flooring company and started reestablishing a relationship with his children. He now looks to the future with optimism, knowing the community programs continue to be available to him and others.



United Way Simcoe Muskoka donors are #ChangingLocalLives.

Remember, there are three easy ways to give:

 1110 Hwy 26, Midhurst, Ontario L9X 1N6

 Call 705-726-2301, extension 2039

 Online at UWSimcoeMuskoka.ca

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