



MEDIA RELEASE

OTTAWA CELEBRATES KINDNESS WEEK 2016!

Kind Ottawa crew to surprise 'unsung heroes' with Kindness Awards all week long

Friday, February 12, 2016, Ottawa — This morning the ninth annual Kindness Week in Ottawa was officially launched! The event included remarks on kindness from many community leaders including Deputy Mayor and Bay Ward Councillor Mark Taylor, Ottawa Centre MPP Yasir Naqvi, Rabbi Reuven Bulka, and Steve Ryan, Vice President of Asset Management for Ferguslea Properties Ltd (Presenting Sponsor of Kindness Week 2016).

At the event, Kindness Awards were presented to representatives from some of the dedicated organizations who have been working hard to help Syrian refugees settle in our community, including Refugee 613, Catholic Immigration Services, and the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO). These awards were presented as part of **this year's theme of Unsung Heroes in the Ottawa community.**

"This year, we really wanted to focus on those who are under the radar," said Cindy Smith, Executive Director of the Caring and Sharing Exchange. "The individuals within these organizations have been working tirelessly to ensure that these refugees are settling into our kind city with ease, and we felt it was important to recognize their efforts."

Throughout the week, members of the Kindness Committee will be visiting schools to surprise many more kind individuals and groups with one of these awards. They plan to present more than 40 awards throughout the week at schools and other locations across the city.

"There are so many people in our community who are embodying kindness in their everyday lives and they deserve to be recognized for the impact they have on those around them," said Cindy Smith. "We are very much looking forward to surprising these deserving recipients throughout the week!"

The purpose of Kindness Week is to not only recognize those who are doing wonderful things in our city, but also to encourage the spread of kindness not only this week, but year round!

The launch event may be over, but there are many events happening throughout the week in celebration of Ottawa's kindness. Starting Monday, Canadian Blood Services will be hosting a blood drive in honour of Kindness Week. On Tuesday, Rabbi Reuven Bulka will once again be hosting a multi-faith welcoming committee at the Ottawa International Airport. Accompanied by some of Ottawa's other religious leaders, Rabbi Bulka will greet passengers at the arrival gate with chocolate loonies and toonies.

For more details on these events and many more, visit the Kind Ottawa Facebook page or kindottawa.ca.

If you are interested in attending one or more of the Kindness Award presentations, please contact Megan O'Meara for dates, times and locations.

2016 KINDNESS WEEK SPONSORS

Presenting Sponsor
Ferguslea Properties / Accora Village
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About Kindness Week

Now in its ninth year, Kindness Week Ottawa, proudly presented by the Caring and Sharing Exchange, is a city-wide initiative that encourages community members to choose to be kind and recognizes those who engage in everyday acts of kindness. The brainchild of Rabbi Reuven Bulka of Congregation Machzikei Hadas, Kindness Week was launched to help make a difference in the community by spreading kindness. For more information about Kindness Week visit www.kindottawa.ca or follow updates on Twitter at @kindottawa.

About The Caring and Sharing Exchange

The Caring and Sharing Exchange helps Ottawa families facing economic hardship during the Christmas and back-to-school seasons. The Co-ordination Service verifies the names of clients registered by hundreds of partner agencies in Ottawa in order to eliminate duplicate applications and redistribute funds fairly, helping more people in need. For more information, or to make a donation, please visit www.CaringandSharing.ca or call 613-226-6434.

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