



United Way
Waterloo Region
Communities

News Release

United Way Waterloo Region Communities (WRC)

For Immediate Release

April 11, 2025

United Way Spirit Awards Celebrate Community Champions Across Waterloo Region

Waterloo Region, ON - United Way Waterloo Region Communities (WRC) proudly hosted its 7th Annual Spirit Awards on April 10, 2025, at Tapestry Hall in Cambridge. The event gathered over 350 community leaders, supporters, and change-makers to celebrate the individuals, organizations, and workplaces making an extraordinary impact in Waterloo Region.

The event celebrates how attendees and supporters helped United Way WRC raise nearly \$5 million in 2024, funds that were distributed across 73 charities in Waterloo Region to help local groups and residents in need.

Hosted by Karen Coviello, Senior Vice President at Habitat for Humanity Canada and Board Chair at YW Kitchener-Waterloo, alongside United Way WRC CEO Joan Fisk, the evening also spotlighted the power of community collaboration, compassion, and leadership.

“This celebration is a reminder that when we come together, we create solutions that change lives,” said Fisk during her remarks. “The strength of our community has never been in what we face, but in how we face it united.”

The event featured inspiring stories of impact, culminating in the presentation of award winners:



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- Community Impact Award: YWCA Cambridge
- Outstanding Workplace Campaign (Small– to Mid-Size): GrandBridge Energy
- Outstanding Workplace Campaign (Large): BMO
- Spirit of Community Award: Waterloo Regional Police Service
- Volunteer of the Year Award: Corporate Trivia Founders – Tonya Taylor, Rebecca Tascona, Laura Galbraith, and Rob Connell
- Ken Seiling Community Leaders Award: Rita Westbrook

“This community continues to inspire us with its commitment to lifting one another up,” said MC Karen Coviello. “The Spirit Awards are a celebration of people and organizations who lead with purpose and impact.”

In her acceptance of the Ken Seiling Community Leaders Award, Rita Westbrook commented, “The one thing I learned through a lot of volunteering, is that when you do things you can in fact change someone’s life. You just never know what you do as a volunteer how it will in fact change that persons’ life and that is just so rewarding.”

United Way WRC extends sincere thanks to the event’s sponsors: Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada (TMMC), Wawanesa, KPMG, Morris Wealth Management of RBC Dominion Securities, Onward Media Group, and EY.

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About United Way Waterloo Region Communities (WRC)

United Way WRC is dedicated to helping people live better lives in every one of the seven communities we serve, and we focus on understanding issues and solutions unique to our community. Thanks to generous donors and partners, we are privileged to collaborate with people, non-profits, and businesses to empower multiple innovative, impactful, and measurable solutions. We are fundraisers and local community builders that support a network of agencies whose programs and services are locally focused, informed, connected, and deeply invested in helping people reach their full potential. To ensure critical agencies, programs and services get the funding they need, and to ensure donors have a clear line of site to the work we do, we have focused on cause-based giving which allows for donations to be directed in a way that aligns with selected priorities and goals. To learn more, connect with us at www.uwaywrc.ca



Digital Assets:

Please visit www.uwaywrc.ca/about-us/communications/ to download our digital assets and further information, including photos, CEO bio and photo, and other United Way materials.

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