

WindsorEssex Community Foundation

Author Charles Dickens was a 19th Century promoter of philanthropy at a time when society threatened to overrun itself with greed and indifference. He characterized the ordeals of simple people in novels such as *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol*.

Dickens said, "No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of others."

The WindsorEssex Community Foundation is teaching us not to be useless. This organization, whose mission is "to benefit our community today and forever", does that not by the mere gesture of giving money but by instructing us in the art and the imperative of giving.

When they do provide money through vehicles such as the KidStart Grants they equip elementary classes with enough to facilitate an effort to perform their own good works. In 2017-18 the foundation presented 7 of their 8 \$500 gifts to GECDSD classes.

Those projects included collecting blankets and biscuits for animals at the Humane Society animal shelter, a garden to help connect students to nature and activities with seniors at local retirement homes.

The WECF is a member of a national network of 191 different community foundations inspiring philanthropy across Canada.

They sponsor a 24 hour period each year for the distribution of arbitrary deeds of generosity for everyone, not just our students, called Random Acts of Kindness Day. It is an event our school communities have embraced for expressions of good will to each other and in the community at large.

In some cases the WECF has been a partner to our activities and supported our Student Senate in their planned, random acts and they encourage the demonstration of simple and common decency with little tokens of gratitude.

For being our partner in helping teach character and social skills and for lightening the burden of others, the WindsorEssex Community Foundation is a Champion for Education.



Greater Essex County District School Board

Champions for Education Awards, April 16, 2019