

## **News Release**

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# **LSTAR supports London and St. Thomas communities by investing in local charities**

London, ON – The London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® (LSTAR) announced it has presented more than \$78,000 to local charitable organizations, as part of its community engagement program.

“This program was so important over the past year, as many charities managed the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Jack Lane, LSTAR 2021 President. “Our local non-profits are needed more than ever to help serve individuals and families, and the REALTOR® community is very proud to continue its long tradition of supporting shelter-related causes. Since 1992, LSTAR has given out more than \$1 million in grants to more than 20 organizations across the region.”

“LSTAR and the Ontario REALTORS Care® Foundation remain steadfast in their commitment to help neighbours in need. Even the pandemic did not make their determination waver – and I am so grateful!” said Ericka Ayala Ronson, Director of Development and Communications, Mission Services of London. “This past year, the grant Mission Services of London received, helped with the COVID-19 response efforts; it enabled important services like emergency shelter, shelter diversion, housing selection and meal programs to continue safely if with modifications.”

“Among other things, COVID-19 response funds helped to purchase items like face masks, gloves, face shields and more,” Ronson said. “Without Personal Protective Equipment, services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness could not have continued as they did; LSTAR and the Ontario REALTORS Care® Foundation helped keep staff, volunteers, and participants safe through this time.”

“For several years, we have greatly appreciated the support the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® has benevolently given to us through the REALTORS Care® program,” said Ted Gorski, Executive Director of Investing in Children. “There is no doubt that our collaboration over the years has helped the lives of thousands of children, youth, and indeed families, as well as newcomers, and those experiencing socio-economic limitations, to access our programs without any barriers!”

Between May 2020 and May 2021, the following organizations received an LSTAR grant:

- **Anova**
- **Hockey Helps the Homeless**
- **Inn Out of the Cold St. Thomas Elgin**
- **Investing in Children**
- **London Affordable Housing Foundation**
- **London Food Bank**
- **Meals on Wheels London**
- **Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre**
- **Mission Services of London**
- **My Sisters' Place**
- **St. Joseph's Hospice**
- **St. Thomas Elgin Second Stage Housing**
- **St. Thomas Elgin Food Bank**
- **Strathroy Food Bank**
- **The Unity Project**
- **Violence Against Women, Services Elgin County**
- **Women's Rural Resources Centre of Strathroy and Area**

In addition to the grant program, LSTAR is a *Partner for Life* with the Canadian Blood Services and supports the Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Campaign during the holiday season.

LSTAR adheres to a *Quality of Life* philosophy, supporting growth that fosters economic vitality, provides housing opportunities, respects the environment and builds good communities and safe neighbourhoods. The awarded funds come from LSTAR's Business Partners Program, sponsorship, various fundraising events and the Ontario REALTORS® Care Foundation, of which LSTAR is a proud supporter.

*The London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® (LSTAR) exists to provide its REALTOR® Members with the support and tools they need to succeed in their profession. LSTAR is one of Canada's 10 largest real estate associations, representing over 2,000 REALTORS® working in Middlesex and Elgin Counties, a trading area of 500,000 residents. LSTAR adheres to a Quality of Life philosophy, supporting growth that fosters economic vitality, provides housing opportunities, respects the environment and builds good communities and safe neighbourhoods and is a proud participant in the REALTORS Care Foundation's Every REALTOR™ Campaign.*

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