



COOPERATIVE CHRISTMAS AT LOCAL CREDIT UNION

Charitable Foundation partners with KCCU to help members

(December 15th, 2015 – Kingston, ON.) Kingston Community Credit Union's staff decided over twenty years ago to stop giving presents to each other. Maryann Halladay (who retired from KCCU last year) and the late Betty Ann Palmer thought up the idea of having the staff pool their money and helping less fortunate Credit Union members at Christmas with two weeks of groceries including turkeys and all the trimmings and gifts for their kids. The Christmas Caring Program has been going strong annually for close to twenty five years. This year's program is being run cooperatively by the staff at KCCU and many volunteers whose compassion for others is selfless. Many tears of joy are shed from those who give and those who receive their generosity.

This is the fifth year in a row the Ontario Credit Union Charitable Foundation (OCUCF) has supported this initiative with a generous \$1,500 donation to assist in the purchase of food as part of its province wide food drive initiative. The KCCU Christmas Caring Program is having a significant impact in the community helping to relieve members who might otherwise have to choose between paying bills and having food for the family over the holidays and gifts for their children. This year the program has been expanded to also help families in emergency shelters having to use the services of some of KCCU's co-operative community partners such as Interval House and Dawn House.

"KCCU feels strongly that helping community members when times are difficult is an integral part of who we are. The philosophy of people helping people means more when you see the direct impact on families in our own community" said Jon Dessau, CEO of the local credit union. "We make sure a family can afford the entire Christmas meal plus enough food to last at least a couple of weeks. People show us their appreciation and it is evident the staff feel strongly that their efforts really make a difference." Once they get back on their feet again, many Christmas Caring recipients give presents and volunteer their time as a way to pay forward the kindness they once received.

In fact, The Christmas Caring program has assisted over 900 members and their families since its humble beginnings in 1991. Last year, ten families received groceries and gifts to

help them through a financially challenging year. Many who have been helped in the past now donate toys, gifts and monies for food to help current member families in the spirit of sharing at Christmas.

KCCU is owned by its members. The Credit Union was founded in 1957, and has grown to become one of Ontario's most award-winning, co-operatively oriented credit unions having shared over \$2 Million dollars of profit with members over the past five years and having donated \$1 Million to the community over the same period. KCCU has over \$140 Million in assets under administration, serving more than ten thousand members with its four branches downtown at 18 Market Street, in KGH 76 Stuart St., in Kingston West at 795 Gardiners Road at Taylor-Kidd and in the Kingslake Plaza at 1201 Division Street. To find out more about KCCU on the web visit www.kccu.ca.

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