



# Media Release

*For Immediate Release*

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## **Youth in Foster Care Pursuing Post Secondary Education Programs Receive Gift of Support from Newton Eastwood Wealth Advisory Group at BMO Nesbitt Burns**

Thanks to the generous support of BMO Nesbitt Burns and the Newton Eastwood Wealth Advisory Group, three youth in the care of Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County (F&CS) will receive tuition support for the post secondary education program of their choice. Breaking from their Holiday Season tradition of gift giving to their clientele, Geoff Newton and his team decided to reallocate those funds to Family & Children's Services' Education Support Program, a program of the Children First Fund.

The Children First Fund has been established to provide financial assistance to much needed programs which are not currently funded through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. It has been through the generous support from the individuals, businesses and organizations within the community that the Agency has been able to launch these programs. The Education Support Program provides youth in foster care with tuition support to the school of their choice or with tools and supplies associated with an apprenticeship.

Geoff Newton, Senior Vice President of BMO Nesbitt Burns says: "Our goal was to acknowledge the great partnership that we have with our clients and donate to a cause that is focused on family in our community. Each of our clients received individual charitable tax receipts and recognition for their donations. Collectively we were able to commit to providing awards for 3 youth in foster care this coming year and our plan is to increase this commitment on an annual basis. Financially supporting the foster child / foster parent relationship to ensure the opportunity for post-secondary education seemed like a perfect fit for what we were trying to achieve "

In Ontario, more than 51% of young adults aged 20 – 29 are living at home. Young Canadians have increasingly delayed their transition from their parents' home due to their pursuit of education, the economic challenges of setting up a new household or, in some cases, the need for caregiving (*Human Resources Skills Development Canada*). Most youth in foster care do not have this option. At 18 they may need to say goodbye to foster parents; move out on their own; pay for rent, food and utilities; hold down a job or two; take care of household needs – all while going to school and keeping up with homework.

"Foster children have countless hurdles they need to overcome and I think that if a youth wants to attend college or university money shouldn't be another hurdle they have to jump over! I am so thankful for all the help and support I have received over the past three years!"

*former youth in care*

F&CS encourages the children and youth in their care to have dreams for themselves and to pursue post secondary education in support of these dreams. This past year the Education Support Program assisted 7 youth with tuition to post secondary programs offered locally and elsewhere in the province. It is anticipated that this number will increase to 14 for the coming school year.

Daniel Moore, Executive Director of Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County offers: "We are very pleased to enter into this partnership with Newton Eastwood Wealth Advisory Group at BMO Nesbitt Burns on behalf of our youth in care. Our youth have experienced many personal challenges in the beginning stages of their lives and post secondary education will allow them to pursue their dreams and to open doors for a successful adulthood. As a community agency this commitment is an inspirational example of a group of individuals that want to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable members. Thank you so much for your generosity."

For more information:

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From left to right: Councillor Don McKay (F&CS Board Director), Geoff Newton, BMO Nesbitt Burns Senior Vice President) and Daniel Moore (F&CS Executive Director)