

2024 Good Citizen Award Recipients

Susan Barnes

Susan has been a dedicated volunteer at the 55 Plus Centre since 2013, filling various roles and responsibilities. She offers guidance and knowledge and is not afraid to ask the hard questions where necessary. Susan's journey started when she joined the volunteer team in the Gift Shop, working the register and offer customer service when customers came in for purchases. She worked on the Information Desk, quickly realizing that the Gift Shop was where she wanted to be.



Susan continues to work regularly in the Gift Shop, specifically Monday mornings, when she works along side the consignment volunteers to display the new items brought into the shop. She has also taken on the daunting task of scheduling the volunteers. It is Susan's responsibility to fill vacancies as they come up and she does an amazing job maintaining that, ensuring there is always someone in the shop.

In 2023 the Gift Shop, took on planning and execution of the Annual Harvest Craft Market. Susan works alongside Lorraine to take the lead on this project. Together the ladies have elevated the event, adding another component to it and growing the overall success of the event. The amount of work and hours that goes into the Harvest Craft Market is significant and Susan did not hesitate to say yes, let me help.

In 2016 she joined the Board of Director's and as part of that role the Activities Committee as well. Susan served on the board until her term was complete in 2018, remaining on the Activities Committee still in 2025.

The Activities Committee ensures that drop-in activities offered to participants are successful and fit the wants and needs of older adults in our community. Susan has been a part of some major changes over the years, offering her thoughts and opinions in a constructive way. Susan continues to be a strong support system when changes are being implemented, available to answer questions, explain decision making process and simply support the change with confidence.

Susan Barnes goes all in when needed and is passionate about the work she does with us at the 55 Plus She is a much appreciated and highly valued member of our team and centre family.

When Susan is not volunteering, she is an active grandma, providing after school care, rides to activities and general love and support to the people who mean the most to her.

Natasha Bieniek

Natasha Bieniek began dancing with the Zorya Ukrainian Dancers at age eight. Twenty-four years later, Natasha is still dancing; she is still eager to learn and teach what she has learned.

During the past 12 years Natasha has been actively involved in the leadership of the Zorya Ukrainian Dancers. She started teaching in 2013 and has been in a position of either Assistant or Head Instructor for the Intermediate, Advanced, Girl's Technique and Adult Classes. She is an excellent role model for new dancers and students she instructs.

Currently, Natasha is involved with costume needs and costume distribution. All costumes handed out & returned are documented; those stored on site need to be logically organized, until they are needed again; an exercise of patience and determination. This type of commitment has helped the Zorya Ukrainian Dance Association grow into the successful dance group it is today.

Natasha Bieniek is nominated for the "Good Citizen Award" as a result of the volunteer hours she has provided as a Dancer, a Dance Instructor and Choreographer, plus the projects she has taken on to benefit Zorya. She willingly assists other instructors when needed. Natasha believes communication is key in any organization and tries hard to ensure that this occurs in her roles as a volunteer. Her dedication and commitment have been evident throughout the years.

During her years of Ukrainian dancing, Natasha has studied under well-known choreographers. She values this knowledge and willingly accepts opportunities to pass her knowledge on to others. She has enriched the community of Thunder Bay by not only instructing dance but also as a dancer, performing at special Thunder Bay events and Ukrainian celebrations.

Her dedication and leadership have definitely provided the community of Thunder Bay with a "meaningful voluntary contribution". Therefore, we are pleased to nominate Natasha Bieniek for a "Citizen of Exceptional Achievement Award", the "GOOD CITIZEN AWARD".

Ron Duffy

Ron is an inspiring advocate and dedicated volunteer whose personal journey with a spinal cord injury has shaped his passion for helping others.

Ron is a board member of Spinal Cord Injury Ontario and actively supports Tetra Society, a non profit organization that builds devices to enhance independence, quality of life, and inclusion for people with disabilities, helping them overcome barriers.

Since 2018, Ron has been a valued volunteer with St. Joseph's Care Group, helping to mentor new clients with spinal cord injuries, offering support to help them navigate their new journey. While at SJCG, Ron's care and compassion extends to others. He has built meaningful connections with our hospital clients and residents in our long-term care, brightening their days with friendly visits; socializing, playing cards and crib.

Ron's care, compassion and commitment make him an extraordinary volunteer who continues to inspire and make a lasting impact on the lives of our clients and residents.



Heather Ferguson

Heather Ferguson has a long history of supporting children, youth and families at the Thunder Bay Children's Aid Society (TBCAS), beginning in 2000 as a mentor, later taking on volunteer driving. Heather delivered over 100 food boxes to families and youth in need (always with a positive attitude and smile on her face). She has driven approximately 11,650 km during her tenure (over a ¼ way around the world) and has contributed over 877 hours of service to TBCAS.

Heather also volunteers as Captain for the Walmart Wishes Tree Campaign contributing over 20 hours annually to gift pickups. She takes pride seeing her daughter volunteer while she handed out flyers for TBCAS. Heather aims to make the world a better place and be a positive role model for her children. Heather takes advantage of any volunteer education offered, such as Trauma and the Beautiful Brain, De-escalation, Legal case noting, etc., expanding her knowledge to better serve the children and families she supports. Twice now, Heather has “stopped by” CAS on route home from Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) after delivering her newborns, sharing the good news with her volunteer colleagues, but mostly because she did not want to miss any events! How’s that for committed!



Kyle Gilhooly

A year after joining Chaban Ukrainian Dance Group in 2018 as an Ensemble dancer, Kyle Gilhooly was nominated to Chaban's Executive Committee & has been a volunteer Member-at-Large for the past 6 years as Fundraising Coordinator and charity Bingo volunteer coordinator.



Kyle is also an assistant dance teacher with Chaban's children's groups, a role that he initiated to help inspire dancers (especially the boys) to try new moves, & learn routines & choreography in the their group dances & the all-children's dance. He commits every Sunday to help teach children of varying ages, & then attends rehearsal himself as a dancer. Kyle is also a skilled craftsman & volunteers to make dance props, build Chaban's wooden Folklore cart, & maintain & upkeep the Ukrainian National Hall (Chaban's rehearsal hall). Kyle's interest in Ukrainian dance motivates him to recruit new dancers of all ages, & to introduce new immigrants from Ukraine to the Chaban family. Kyle is an innovative, creative, & dedicated Chaban volunteer whose involvement has touched hundreds of dancers and their families, in promoting Ukrainian culture & tradition through dance.

For the past 6 years, Kyle also volunteers as treasurer, fundraising coordinator (e.g., Pysanka workshop, etc.), & grant researcher/writer for League of Ukrainian Canadians Thunder Bay Branch & volunteers time to upkeep & maintain their Ukrainian National Hall, & rural campground. His innovation shines in initiatives such as LUC movie nights, making pyrohy as LUC fundraising, & summer picnic events at the LUC camp.

Lada Iwasykiw

Lada Iwasykiw retired from Lakehead University in 2015 after a dedicated 33-year career. Following her retirement, she sought meaningful ways to give back to her community and began volunteering with Hospice Northwest the same year. Her journey into caregiving deepened when she became the primary caregiver for her mother, who resided in Bethammi Nursing Home, from 2015 to 2019. This experience profoundly shaped her perspective on elder care, nurturing her innate compassion and reinforcing her belief in the power of human connection.

In 2019, she continued her connection with Bethammi by becoming a volunteer, driven by a heartfelt desire to make a difference in the lives of residents. She believes strongly in the human touch, recognizing its transformative power in fostering trust, comfort, and joy. For her, the greatest reward lies in making someone's life a little brighter by simply showing interest in them and their well-being. Her volunteer work reflects her unwavering dedication helping the elderly feel valued and cared for. Whether offering a kind word, a warm smile, or a listening ear, she finds fulfillment in knowing she is enhancing the lives of others, one meaningful interaction at a time.

Lisa Klymenko

For more than 5 years, Lisa has brought her talent, love of music, married with her dedication & great organizational skills, in the creation & growth of two Thunder Bay groups: Zhuravli Ukrainian Folk Ensemble, Lastivka Bandura Capella. She has spearheaded musical talent from Ukraine to perform in Thunder Bay. Lisa taught Bandura (national instrument of Ukraine) as a teen, supporting Vesnyanka Bandura & Zahrava Ensembles. In 2018 she started to teach more students. In 2022, she started volunteering to teach the many newcomers from Ukraine escaping war. With the current 7 Bandura players, she started the Lastivka Bandura Capella in the beginning of 2024.



Lisa is one of the founding members of the Zhuravli Ukrainian Folk Ensemble, formed in 2018. With Lisa's musical expertise and organizational skills, the two groups have flourished. Both Lastivka and Zhuravli have been performing at local fundraising events, raising money for Ukraine Humanitarian Aid, for the RFDA, the Women's Shelter and have performed at charitable events, annual festivals (Live From the Rock Festival), performances at Seniors homes, and at birthdays. Lisa has coordinated 3 musical instrument workshops and 4 vocal workshops with instructors from Ukraine, New York and Minnesota. Lisa has been instrumental by volunteering to coordinate 4 performances held in the city with performers from Ukraine, all within a year span; building partnerships with venues, donors, restaurants, host families and the general public. Her vision and coordination skills gathered eager volunteers and enthusiastic audiences, and has now put Thunder Bay on the map as a supportive and collaborative community. Each of these events gathered funds to support Ukrainian Humanitarian Aid. One of the most beautiful outcomes of Lisa's volunteer efforts, has been with the newcomers from Ukraine who have fled their homeland, and have been able to surround themselves with the music of their homeland.

Mark Kuszniar

Mark Kuszniar is a dedicated volunteer, and for most all of his life has made significant contributions to his community through a variety of roles. A member of the Thunder Bay Police, Mark balances his professional duties with his commitment to volunteering, supporting numerous local initiatives. He has been an active volunteer with the Lakehead Shrine Club, participating in Shrine parades and fundraising efforts, and has supported Thunder Bay Minor Football and high school football programs, helping to promote youth sports development. As a



member of the OPP Auxiliary, he has provided valuable service to the community, ensuring safety and support in various capacities.

Mark is also involved in several local running clubs, including Metre Eaters, Northern Trail Runners, and Upriver Running, demonstrating his passion for fitness and community engagement. His volunteer work extends to serving Shelter House dinners, as well as participating in the Polar Bear Plunges, raising funds for various worthy causes, including Special Olympics.

Additionally, Mark contributes to the Parade of Lights and other community events, showing his commitment to making Thunder Bay a better place. His selflessness and dedication to both his professional and volunteer roles make him a valued and respected member of his community.

Other Volunteer Work includes: Hockey - Coach, Minor football -Coach - executive, High school football -Coach/manager, Polar bear plunge- volunteer/ fundraiser, Thunder Bay Regional Hospital - Foundation- employee giving program, Opp auxiliary - policing initiatives, Thunder Bay metre eaters - executive and race organizer, Northern trail runners - organizer/ group leader, Upriver running - race volunteer / timing, Kakabeka legion 1/2 - full marathon - last mile club/ race marshal, Lakehead Shrine Club- Parades, fundraising.

Kelly Latoski

Margaret Kelly Latoski, known as Kelly, was born on March 2, 1963, in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, and raised in Armstrong, where she developed a deep love for curling. At Armstrong Public School, curling was part of the curriculum, and she learned to play on natural ice-very different from today's rink conditions. After completing eighth grade, she attended St. Joseph's Boarding School, graduating in 1983. Looking for new opportunities, Kelly moved to Calgary, Alberta, where she pursued college studies in computer science.

While in Calgary, she attended numerous curling events and had the chance to meet her favorite female curler, Jennifer Jones, an experience she still cherishes. Years later, she also met Bruce Mouat, her favorite male curler, at an event in Toronto.

After the passing of her parents, Kelly relocated to Thunder Bay to live with her sister. She immediately joined the Port Arthur Curling Centre, signing up as a paid member and putting her name on the spare board. Her passion for the sport led her to take over the junior program, transforming it into a thriving initiative. She was soon elected as Vice President, a position she held for two years before stepping into her current role as President.

Kelly's leadership experience stems from her time as a retail manager in Alberta, where she successfully rebuilt struggling teams and improved operations. She has applied these skills



to the Port Arthur Curling Centre, working tirelessly to modernize and improve the facility. Under her leadership, the Club has undergone significant renovations, including fresh paint, new flooring, and the addition of an on-site food vendor. She remains dedicated to strengthening the Centre's community presence and fostering the next generation of curlers.

League of Ukrainians

For 70 years, League of Ukrainian Canadians, Thunder Bay Branch (LUC) has been providing a supportive, educational community environment for Ukrainian Canadians, their families and descendants living in Thunder Bay. LUC focuses on the cultural, educational and social aspects of Ukrainian heritage while respecting the historical and political perspectives of the situation in Ukraine and thus enriching the community of Thunder Bay.



Under the LUC umbrella, groups formed over the years have included a youth organization, a women's league, a mandolin orchestra, a choir, a dance group, a theatre group, a competitive chess club, to name a few. Activities held weekly, had regular performances often including banquets and dances. Cultural education included teaching arts such as pysanky making such as pysanky making, embroidery & pottery. Events such as bingos, teas, bake sales, caroling, picnics, bazaars, making of perohy, holubtsi and festive breads continue today. Following its mandate, LUC continues its leadership to provide for the Ukrainian community, particularly important to the latest wave of immigration from war-torn Ukraine.

LUC hosts a dance group, a choir, organized family events such as movie night, games night, pysanky making, family-friendly cooking sessions and dinners, and gatherings at LUC's recreational property. The past and current executive and members have worked hard to maintain the activities for the Ukrainian Canadian community, to provide all that it does. Much initiative for fund-raising events and grant submissions have enabled property improvements: the main building has a new roof, new windows and wifi service. The recreational facility has new structures and renovations to existing buildings all with the dedicated long-term vision of sustainability and growth. Many young members, including newcomers are getting involved, as they gather and participate within this supportive environment. Newcomers escaping the war in Ukraine and calling Thunder Bay home have found comfort and community with others following their Ukrainian roots.

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, LUC has raised community awareness through public gatherings at the Friendship Gardens, City Hall, prayers for Ukraine at local churches. LUC has collected donations for local newcomers, supporting local fundraising and donations to Humanitarian Aid for Ukraine.

Colleen MaGuire

Colleen was born in Nipigon and raised in Thunder Bay with her seven siblings. After spending some time out west, she returned to Thunder Bay, where she worked at the Port Arthur Clinic as a Booking Clerk for the surgery office. Her dedication and efficiency made her a respected colleague. Following her retirement and for the past fifteen years, Colleen has been an integral part of the Regional Food Distribution Association (RFDA) and has set the 'gold standard' of volunteering at the RFDA.



Colleen volunteers a minimum of twice a week and is willing to come in anytime and travel anywhere in the city to get the work done. When a new volunteer starts, she will gladly show them the ropes, and they will come back knowing that a friendly face will be there to work alongside them. The reality is, she likely could have been the one to recruit them in the first place.

Colleen is committed to driving the initiatives and function of the organization forward and has served on the health and safety committee, improving the environment for fellow volunteers. It's not surprising that she also gives of her time to other organizations such as the Francophone Center and Special Olympics.

The work that Colleen does has a direct and immense impact on some of our most vulnerable in Thunder Bay. Because of Colleen's efforts, food reaches those who are unable to leave their homes, food makes its way to over 30 food banks and meal programs within the city, and the RFDA can function efficiently and get food to where it needs to go. We cannot overstate the impact Colleen has on the daily operations of this organization. The bottom line is that she helps to ensure that 'no one goes hungry in our midst'.

Colleen is a leader and mentor within the walls of our organization and should be recognized as a leader within this city. In every sense, she is the dream volunteer.

In her personal life, Colleen enjoys spending time with her spouse and great niece and nephew. She has a passion for camping, reading, and crafting. You can also catch her supporting local!

Temitope Ojo

Temitope Moses Ojo is a dynamic leader, researcher, and advocate for community development, environmental sustainability, and equity. Since arriving in Thunder Bay as an international student in 2019, Temitope has dedicated himself to improving the lives of others through professional excellence and extensive volunteer work. Recognized for his leadership and community service, he has received the Lakehead Leader Awards for Diversity and Inclusion (2020) and Community Engagement (2023). These accolades reflect his ongoing commitment to building a more inclusive and connected society.



Temitope has made lasting contributions through his involvement in organizations like the Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, where he now serves as Vice-President. In this role, he has worked on policy revisions, strategic planning, and community engagement programs that promote local history and culture. Similarly, as Vice-President of the Northwestern Ontario chapter of the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF), he has participated in the efforts to enhance forestry education, reforestation, and sustainability. Since 2019 he has also supported newcomers to Thunder Bay by helping them navigate the city and settle into the community, fostering inclusion and belonging. As Citizen Representative on Thunder Bay's Anti-Racism and Equity Advisory Committee, Temitope has contributed to the development of a four-year action plan aimed at addressing systemic racism and promoting equity.

Temitope's ability to connect with people from all backgrounds is central to his effectiveness as a leader, advocate, and volunteer. Temitope's dedication to community well-being, environmental conservation, and social equity exemplifies the qualities of a Good Citizen. His tireless efforts make him a deserving nominee for this recognition.

Sandra Rutherford

Sandra Rutherford aka Sandy, is an incredibly passionate and dedicated volunteer who has been an amazing support of the Thunder Bay & District Post-Polio Chapter of March of Dimes Canada for nearly 20 years. Sandy has developed long lasting connections and friendships with Survivors of Polio, Caregivers, Health Care Professionals throughout the years, across the region and Canada.

As Chair of the Chapter, Sandy has headed up several wonderful initiatives over these past two decades, such as numerous Post Polio Awareness events, including a unique Polio Expo at the



Thunder Bay Museum (2009), the “Faces of Polio” video in partnership with Confederation College video production class and the ongoing compilation of personal life stories of Survivors throughout Northwestern Ontario. Another amazing highlight is the initiative to have a commemorative memorial plaque laid at the former site of the Port Arthur Isolation Hospital in 2009, inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, David C. Onley.

It has been an honor to work alongside and support Sandy in her role as Chair. She takes a profound interest in everyone’s personal experiences and has always offered an emphatic ear, provided words of hope, strength and encouragement to each and everyone she has met along the way. She has surely made a difference in the lives of many polio survivors, caregivers and family members in the Thunder Bay area over the last 19 years of volunteering as chair of Thunder Bay & District Post-Polio Chapter of March of Dimes Canada.

Sandy continues to keep in contact with survivors via email, personal notes, visits, calls and cards that often have brought upliftment and joy to their lives. Most recently reconvening in-person polio support group chapter meetings in Thunder Bay for polio survivors, their caregivers, friends and family. Her heart is in all that she does and we are so very thankful for the many years she has been a part of March of Dimes Canada.

2024 Spirit of Thunder Bay Award Recipients

Michel Beaulieu

As the Associate Vice-Provost (Academic), Michel supports the Provost and Vice-President Academic with responsibilities for building existing and developing new academic and non-academic initiatives, including pathways and partnerships and providing support for the administration of academic affairs within the Office of the Provost. He is also part of the External Relations Senior Leadership Team and is involved with Alumni Engagement and Prospect Pipeline, and Government Relations. A full Professor of History, he is the past-Chair of the Department of History.



Michel's experience also includes not-for-profit board leadership and governance, with a strong track record of guiding organizations through strategic decision-making, fostering organizational and fiscal accountability, and ensuring effective community engagement and collaboration. This has included driving strategic planning and organizational change to enhance performance, adaptability, and long-term success. Currently, he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, Contact North | Contact Nord, Ontario Council for University Lifelong Learning, the Steering Committee of the Læra Institute for Circumpolar Education, and a director with the Manitoba and North West Ontario Regional Council for the Canadian Forces Liaison Council. He is a past-

president of the Ontario Historical Society, past president of The Champlain Society, and past-president of the Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society. A proud alumnus, he is also a past president of the Alumni Association of Lakehead University and a past member of Lakehead University's Board of Governors.

Michel is the author/co-author of five books and editor/co-editor of several others. Michel is a Canadian historian whose research and publications generally focus on various aspects of the economic, political, and social history of Northern Ontario. Currently, he is working on two main projects. The first is an SSHRC-funded project being co-led with Dr. David Ratz (Lakehead) and Dr. Kari Alenius (University of Oulu) exploring a largely forgotten incident of early twentieth-century espionage. The project seeks to understand the repercussions it had internationally on Canada's role within international security and intelligence but also the international image of Canada. The second is *Thunder Bay and the Second World War, 1939-1945* co-written with Dr. David K. Ratz and Dr. Jenna L. Kirker (Confederation College). This book is a follow-up to *Thunder Bay and the First World War, 1914-19*.

Michel is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (FRHistS), Honorary Colonel of the Lake Superior Scottish Regiment, and a registered Professional Member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP).

Port Arthur Rotary

Port Arthur Rotary is one of 35,000 Rotary clubs worldwide - a global network of more than 1.2 million people who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in



ourselves. Port Arthur Rotary has been incorporated for 100 years. Members have used their passion, energy, and intelligence to undertake sustainable projects. We are genuinely committed to serving this community and supporting international efforts. Rotary believes that we have a shared responsibility to tackle our world's most persistent issues.

Port Arthur Rotary has endeavoured to address these issues at various times since 1924. Some of their initiatives include promoting, fighting diseases through the support of polio eradication, funding wells in third world countries to provide clean water, sanitation and hygiene, supporting local charities, supporting education, growing local economies and protecting the environment. Their mission is to provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through our fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders.

Dani Burbeck

Dani is a grade 12 student at St. Ignatius High School who has reported 933 hours of volunteer community service to date. In grade 9 she competed on the first girls' flag football team based in Thunder Bay, known as Team Manitoba East. On this team she competed at both the provincial and national levels. Since there were no opportunities for her to play at the competitive level she wanted to directly, she decided coaching with TBMFA would allow her to share her love for sport with young athletes.



Since 2022, her involvement has allowed her to advocate for more participation and inclusion of other Thunder Bay girls to join camps and other teams with the TBMFA. In 2024, when Thunder Bay was no longer connected to Team Manitoba for flag football, Dani continued to compete in flag football on the Junior Giants U18 team at the provincial and national levels. In July 2024 her team earned the title of provincial champions.

Abigail Burchat

Upon the completion of over 455 Community Service Hours, we are pleased to nominate Abigail Burchat for the City of Thunder Bay, Citizens of Exceptional Achievement, Youth Award. Abigail is a grade 12 student from St. Patrick High School who has earned the highest number of community service hours for her graduating class. As a student, she has consciously worked hard to improve her academic progress to the point at which she is able to attain high standards and apply to university! college Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs. Her Exploring Health Care teacher, Dr. Longo, has high praise for Abigail and is impressed with the interest and care with which Abigail approaches her learning and preparation for a career in the helping professions and health care field.



Abigail was raised in a family that encourages service to the community and it easily became something that she enjoys doing as she became older and more confident to volunteer independently. Her grandpa, mom and aunt were all volunteers for Camp Gitchigomee and when she was very little they would bring her to the camp to participate and see what goes on there. It made her feel really good when she was finally old enough to volunteer in the camp. She soon realized at an early age that she feels better when she is helping people. When she first attended the Thunder Bay Children's Centre's New Mentality group in 2021, she really liked the inviting atmosphere and active participation in the group immediately became her goal. Over time, her involvement and responsibilities have

increased to the point where she was appointed as youth facilitator of the group. The group's purpose, to advocate on behalf of mental health education for youth and reduce the stigma of mental health provides her with much hope. To quote Abigail,

"Mental health isn't something we should stigmatize... We need to learn to teach children that you are not lesser because you struggle. It makes you more human."

Kyla Harbon

At age 16, Kyla Harbron started to volunteer teach young dancers in Chaban Ukrainian Dance Group. She continued assisting until 2024 when she became a volunteer head instructor. Kyla commits every Sunday to teaching children of varying ages, doing choreography, assisting with their performances, special events, fund raising, and is a dancer herself. Her persistence and creativity resulted in co-choreographing and teaching a fairy-tale dance including 50 children aged 4-15, presented at the 2024 Chaban Concert "Lubov".



Her dedication and commitment is exemplified by her passing an exam for a special Ukrainian dance curriculum, which included learning a lot of Ukrainian vocabulary, and now using it in the classes she teaches. She values the importance of continuity and providing the framework for children to develop skills. She also volunteers to teach Sunday School at Lakehead Baptist Church and as a Summer Camp Leader at a Round Lake Bible Camp.

Kyla is in the Developmental Service Worker program at Confederation College (graduating spring 2025). Her interest and employment in this area have given her a passion for making many activities accessible to people with intellectual and physical disabilities. This interest impacts her volunteering as she is continually thinking of how to combine her love of dancing, children and camp life with making opportunities available to everyone.

Jeremy Nelson

Jeremy is a grade 12 student at St. Ignatius High School. He has been actively volunteering in the Thunder Bay community since the summer of 2021 just before he started grade 9. He has reported 518 hours to date. His volunteer experiences started with the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association and two events with the City of Thunder Bay. His work with the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association and Regional Multicultural Youth Council



(or RMYC) have allowed him to promote inclusion and advocacy for youth of all backgrounds in Thunder Bay.

His various involvements have shifted in recent years to include more time at the New Hope Fellowship Church where his family attends. From using his tech knowledge to help livestream church services during the pandemic to his involvements with various age group programming at the church and in the larger community, Jeremy continues to show that he has a desire to contribute to the lives of people in Thunder Bay.

Megan Rule

For the past three years, Megan has been a dedicated volunteer with the City of Thunder Bay's Recreation and Culture Division, focusing on Chippewa Summer Camps and Playgrounds. Her contributions have made a lasting positive impact on participants, fellow volunteers, and staff.

From her first summer, Megan became an indispensable part of the camp experience. She consistently exceeded expectations, bringing enthusiasm and a proactive energy to every task. Whether assisting with setup and cleanup, engaging with participants, or leading games and activities, Megan has enriched the camp experience for everyone involved. Her willingness to jump in wherever support is needed, coupled with her positive attitude, has made her a standout volunteer.



Megan's support has been invaluable in easing the workload of camp leaders, helping ensure smooth operations throughout the program. She fosters an atmosphere of teamwork and inclusivity, creating lasting memories for campers, staff, and volunteers alike. Her ability to connect with participants through kindness, patience, and enthusiasm has made her a role model for both campers and her peers.

In addition to her hands-on contributions, Megan has been a key advocate for the volunteer program. She has provided testimonials for social media campaigns, serving as a spokesperson for recruitment and inspiring others to get involved. As a peer mentor, Megan supports new volunteers, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Her approachable nature makes her a joy to work with, and she encourages others to contribute to the community.

Megan's dedication and positive influence over the past three years have left a lasting legacy within the City of Thunder Bay's Recreation and Culture Division. She embodies the values of community, collaboration, and service, making a meaningful difference in the lives of everyone she interacts with.