



Carolyn's Community receives Community Board grant from the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation to empower youth through real-world service and skill development

Montreal Community Board grant enables the certified Teen Work Experience and Skills Certificate Program, designed to strengthen work-based skills, build experience and increase employment chances for Montreal youth through meaningful volunteer experiences.

MONTREAL, January 12, 2026 – Montreal charity [Carolyn's Community](#) has received a \$19,500 Community Board grant from the [TELUS Friendly Future Foundation®](#) through the Montreal Community Board, which will support the newly launched Teen Work Experience and Skills Certificate Program.

Created to nurture employable skills in young people, the program is a new year-long initiative for Montreal teens age 13-17 which combines 50 hours of community volunteer work with workshops, mentoring and assessments to earn a Certificate of Completion and a supervisor-endorsed recommendation letter. The grant from the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation will help to cover operational costs including the educational workshops.

“So many entry-level jobs now require work experience, which is a problem for teenagers trying to secure their first real job. Yet so much of this desired experience, such as teamwork, problem solving and time management can be gained through volunteering,” said Carolyn Bouchard-MacNeil, Founder and Executive Director of Carolyn's Community. “We wanted to create a teen program which addressed this need, giving young people an opportunity to have hands-on experience and guidance which will set them up for success in future jobs.”

“As the demand for real-world experience grows against the backdrop of the youth employment crisis we must rethink how we prepare our youth for their future success, said Nimmi Kanji, Executive Director of the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation. “Carolyn and her team have identified a critical barrier to entry-level employment and provided a practical, community-driven solution. Our grant is an investment in this vision, providing teens with a verified pathway from service to employment and ensuring that the next generation of youth is equipped with the resilience and skills to thrive.”

For more information about Carolyn's Community and the Teen Program, please contact Carolyn Bouchard-MacNeil on carolyn@carolynscommunity.com or visit www.carolynscommunity.com. For more information on the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation, please visit www.friendlyfuture.com.

About Carolyn's Community

[Carolyn's Community](#) is a Montreal-based registered charity which aims to create a thriving and inclusive community where every individual and family receives the support they need. Its mission is to collaborate with frontline women's shelters and organizations by addressing their needs through a network of engaged and compassionate individuals and organizations, driving positive and lasting change. Most well-known for its annual toy drive which distributes holiday gifts for more than 7,000 women and children, Carolyn's Community also organizes drives for food, furniture, school supplies and winter coats, alongside initiatives such as its Teen Program aimed at strengthening workplace skills and employability.

About The TELUS Friendly Future Foundation

The TELUS Friendly Future Foundation is driven by the conviction that every young person deserves the chance to reach their full potential.

As a Canadian registered charity and part of a larger global movement, we're turning that belief into action. Since 2005, the Foundation and TELUS Community Boards have contributed over \$147 million in funding to over 11,000 charitable initiatives in Canada and around the world, helping to make the future friendly for millions of youth. In Canada, we have provided \$137M in grants, and since launch of the TELUS Student Bursary program in 2023, we have also awarded 2,000 bursaries and counting, worth over \$6 million, to deserving students nationwide, helping to ensure that every young person in Canada who wants a post-secondary education will get one.

Every year, we empower underserved Canadian youth, helping them build the skills, confidence, and lasting sense of belonging they need to thrive by funding over 500 grassroots charities and awarding over 500 bursaries. In 2025 alone, our Canadian impact exceeded \$10 million in grants and TELUS Student Bursaries, directly supporting critical youth-focused health and education programs and empowering the next generation of changemakers to pursue their post-secondary dreams.

For more information on TELUS Friendly Future Foundation, visit friendlyfuture.com