# For Immediate Release – May 1, 2025

**Sarnia Community Foundation – Women of Excellence**

**Sarnia, ON** – The Sarnia Community Foundation Board of Directors has approved the 2025 Women of Excellence. This year’s five recipients have contributed to their communities in many ways, making Sarnia-Lambton a safe, vibrant, inclusive community. Here are this year’s recipients:

**Brenda Dunn** – Brenda is a passionate community leader, lifelong volunteer, and dedicated advocate for youth development. With two decades of service in Scouts Canada, she has transformed countless young lives through mentorship, innovating programming and unwavering commitment. Brenda’s leadership in the Beaver Scout Revitalization Team helped shape the Canadian Path Program. Brenda played a key role in the Attawandaron Cabin Campaign spearheading fundraising to help replace aging structures making them full seasonal and accessible. Beyond Scouting, Brenda led the local Christmas Kettle Campaign, increasing visibility, organizing 100 volunteers raising over $800, 000.00. Brenda has also been recognized with a Paul Harris Fellowship award as a member of the Rotary Club of Sarnia Bluewaterland and has been recognized being on Mayor Mike Bradley’s Honour List.

**Bertha Rose Park** – Bertha is a lifelong learner and educator. Retiring after 24 years of teaching, Bertha then learned and taught clogging, line dancing and exercise for seniors in the community. Bertha attributes her longevity to her interest in physical fitness. In fact, Bertha won a gold medal in swimming at the Senior Games and completed a triathlon. Bertha is founding member of the Petrolia Chapter of the Red Hat Society. At 92, Bertha continues to participate in many community programs that promote and enhance the physical and mental well-being of people. Bertha also has interest in protecting the environment, in 2023, Bertha was presented with the Southwest Woodlot Management Award for the property that she owns in the township of Dawn-Euphemia.

**Jaylene Henry** – Jaylene is the Executive Director of BGC Sarnia-Lambton, bringing expertise as a certified Child and Youth worker. Jaylene has a deep passion for community service and has been instrumental in the organization’s remarkable growth. Jaylene has led the expansion from serving 180 children annually to now over 2300; growth has also occurred with multiple sites and extended programing in rural areas within Lambton County. Jaylene is a roll model for her vision and leadership, understanding and meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. Jaylene is dedicated to mentoring and fostering personal connections that last a lifetime. As a former Big Sister, Jaylene continues today with her relationship with her mentee as an adult with their family.

**Kirsty Kilner-Holmes** - Kirsty is a true leader within the local arts community.  She was one of the key supporters of the capital campaign for the Judith & Norman Alix Art Gallery (JNAAG) and was instrumental in developing the JNAAG's volunteer and docent program. Kirsty has also been on the board with the Gallery in the Grove for 10 years and is passionate about its commitment to arts education in Sarnia-Lambton. Additionally, she is a tireless advocate and co-chair for the new Bright's Grove Library and Community Hub, which now has full municipal approval and is expected to be under construction in 2026. Apart from the arts, Kirsty's community involvement includes serving on the local Habitat for Humanity board and regularly fostering stray cats. She has volunteered with St. Clair Child & Youth by supporting post partum moms and their babies.  In her spare time, Kirsty plays tennis and travels.

**Jocelyne Paquette** – Constable Jocelyne Paquette is a mother, wife, sister, daughter and community leader. Jocelyne began her career with the Sarnia Police Service in 2005. Jocelyne’s exemplary service with the Sarnia Police has included over a decade in general patrol, working with at-risk youth and brief service in the court division. Today, Jocelyn is serving on the IMPACT Team where she is working directly with those most vulnerable, offering non-traditional resources to support and improve each individual situation. Away from policing, Jocelyne is active in the community; as a co-founder of Noelle’s Gift to Children, honouring her late sister’s legacy supporting under-resourced youth in the local elementary school system. Jocelyne is also active with Special Olympics, Rebound, Big Sisters and is a peer support leader with her fellow officers at Sarnia Police.

The Sarnia Community Foundation is proud to be celebrating its 9th Women of Excellence; this year’s celebration is on June 5th at the Dante Club. The luncheon will start at 12:00 pm noon sharp, with registration beginning at 11:15 am. In collaboration with the Dante Club, the SCF is excited to announce this year’s guest speaker, Karen Lee, PhD, President and CEO at Parkinson Canada. Karen is leading transformational change at Parkinson Canada, ensuring that people living in Canada impacted by Parkinson’s live well, while collaborating with key partners to drive research that will improve quality of life. Karen’s passion for science has benefited several communities across Canada, and she has been recognized by the University of Ottawa’s Faculty of Medicine with an Alumni Award of Distinction.

If you would like to know more about the Women of Excellence or purchase tickets, call the Sarnia Community Foundation office at 519 332 2588 or visit the website under the Events tab for more information [www.sarniacommunityfoundation.ca](http://www.sarniacommunityfoundation.ca). (Table purchase includes 8 tickets for $500.00 and individual tickets are $60.00).

The Sarnia Community Foundation has scholarships that support Women of Excellence; including the Jean Macdougall Women’s Leadership Empowerment Fund, Blue Eyes Big Heart scholarship for women escaping abusive situations will assist them to further their post-secondary education, and the University Women’s Scholarship helps women further their educational goals.

For more information call Sarnia Community Foundation office at 519 332 2588 or visit the website for more information [www.sarniacommunityfoundation.ca](http://www.sarniacommunityfoundation.ca).

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