

Group wants to award champions of the community

By Sarah Sobanski

A county anti-poverty group is providing a new way to champion the members of our communities that strengthen contribute to their resiliency.

Hastings Prince Edward Poverty Roundtable has announced it's accepting nominations for its first ever Community Champions Award. Executive director for the table Christine Durant said the awards will "amplify the good that people are doing in our communities."

"We know that there's all sorts of people that are doing all sorts of things that are helping to reduce poverty and to reduce the impacts of poverty in people's lives," she said. "We don't often have the opportunity to really recognize people for their work so this is a community champions award which means community members are recognizing or putting people forward for the work that they are doing and it's an opportunity to recognize that work."

Criteria for nominations is wide ranging, Durant said. It could be employers who employ those facing barriers in the workforce or provide their employees with a living wage. It could be as wide-influencing as an organization fighting poverty or as local as a neighbour helping a neighbour. It could be someone who provides community spaces that welcome people struggling with poverty to gather.

"When we talk about doing poverty work, it doesn't always just look like making donations to a program. Those things are really important but we also want an opportunity to recognize that anti-poverty work is also things like providing training, employment, reducing barriers, meeting each other, helping neighbours out."

Durant said that the number of champions selected will depend on the number of applications that the roundtable receives. She suspected that they would take the awards to wherever the nominations and champions are selected. Nominations can come from anywhere in Hastings and Prince Edward counties.

"Think about people who are doing things in your community that are making things easier for people or people who are doing work that is actually preventing poverty from happening in the first place, people or groups that reduce barriers," she said.

For more details visit povertyroundtablehpe.ca/contact-us/ or call (613) 779-7477.