



Rainbow Optimist Club – Southwestern Ontario

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Rainbow Optimist Club - Southwestern Ontario is proud to announce the acceptance of **\$31,275** in funding from the United Way Elgin Middlesex Emergency Community Support Fund, funded by the Government of Canada. This funding will directly support education and digital events for rural LGBT2Q+ youth who are socially isolated due to the pandemic in Elgin & Middlesex.

“We are extremely excited about this funding and the programs we will be able to provide for the many youth in our communities that are feeling especially isolated right now,” says Lorna MacDougall, President of the Rainbow Optimist Club.

The Rainbow Optimist Club – SWO works to provide programming and education for rural LGBT2Q+ communities, with a focus on youth. This funding will help provide engaging and informative virtual events, social media content and educational materials that will be launched in early 2021. Some of these programs will include Drag Storytimes, Rainbow Speaker Panels, social media contests and the creation of new videos and resources with Pride Understanding.

“Rural LGBT2Q+ youth have significant challenges with accessing information, resources and support groups, and this pandemic has only added to the problem,” says Martin Withenshaw, Treasurer of the Rainbow Optimist Club. “It is more important than ever that we support our youth and connect with our community.”

More information about these exciting new and expanded initiatives will be shared in early January 2021 through RainbowOptimistClub.com and through the Rainbow Optimist Club’s social media channels.

For more information:

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More about the United Way Elgin Middlesex Emergency Community Support Fund

We are proud to partner with United Way Centraide Canada to deliver the Government of Canada’s Emergency Community Support Fund in Elgin and Middlesex counties. In total, United Way Elgin Middlesex has provided 32 organizations with \$2,735,754 in grants to meet high priority needs across our region. For more information, visit: <http://unitedwayem.ca/covid-19/ecsf/>

More about the Rainbow Optimist Club – Southwestern Ontario

On the eve of Optimist International’s 100 Anniversary, The Rainbow Optimist Club - Southwestern Ontario was formed. They received their charter on September 10, 2018 to become the first in the world to join the Optimist International family. The Rainbow Optimist Club promotes inclusion and diversity to the rural communities to improve the lives for LGBT2Q+ youth. For more information, please visit: <https://www.rainbowoptimistclub.com/>