

April 26, 2017

RVH celebrates the Blue Brigade

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) is celebrating its 800-strong volunteer force during National Volunteer Appreciation Week, April 23 to 29. Throughout the week, volunteers will be recognized in various ways including a luncheon held in their honour.

RVH volunteers, also known as the 'Blue Brigade', provide an extra set of hands in 80 different areas of the health centre and contribute 100,000 hours of volunteer time each year. RVH volunteers assist in areas as diverse as stocking medical supplies in the Emergency department, collating charts for admissions in the Forms room and making appointment confirmation calls when they're not directing patients and visitors at the Information Desks.

RVH's Board of Directors, Research Ethics Board and Patient and Family Advisory Council are also made up of volunteers who donate their skills, expertise and time to governing the health centre, representing RVH in the community, debating ethical issues and providing a patient and family perspective for various initiatives.

"One of the most unique aspects of RVH is our Blue Brigade and we couldn't get by without them," says Janice Skot, president and CEO, RVH. "They are a volunteer force unlike no other - incredibly loyal, dedicated and determined to help their community by giving back to the health centre and its patients. We are so grateful for their many selfless contributions. They really are the heart – and soul – of TEAM RVH."

In addition to giving their time, RVH volunteers who are members of the Auxiliary, raise funds in support of equipment purchases and patient care. The RVH Auxiliary is currently working to fulfill a \$2 million pledge in support of advanced cardiac care and child and youth mental health services at RVH.

The RVH Auxiliary also recognizes the importance of encouraging volunteerism at a young age. In any given year, there are usually 30 to 40 high school and 15 to 20 post-secondary student volunteers at the health centre. Since 2014, the Auxiliary has honoured student volunteers with Outstanding Service Awards and since 1996, has offered two scholarships a year to high school students entering post-secondary education. In the past 20 years, 43 scholarships have been awarded.

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Cutline: Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) celebrated its Blue Brigade of volunteers at its annual Volunteer Appreciation Lunch on April 26. Each year during National Volunteer Appreciation Week, RVH recognizes its 800-strong volunteer force who donate their time in 80 areas of the health centre and contribute 100,000 hours of service. Some of the 250 guests in attendance at the lunch included (from left) DoDee Walsh, coordinator, Volunteer Resources, RVH; Janice Williams, RVH volunteer and president, RVH Auxiliary; Val Smith, chief transformation officer, RVH; Bill Roncken, RVH volunteer; and Doris Allen, RVH volunteer.

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About RVH:

RVH is a regional health centre in Barrie, Ontario, located 80 kilometres north of Toronto. As the largest hospital in the region of Simcoe Muskoka, RVH's team of over 350 physicians, 2,500 employees and 850 volunteers provides exceptional care and specialty services to almost half a million residents, including cancer care, stroke services, orthopedics, intensive care, mental health and interventional radiology. RVH is focused on delivering safe, high quality care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit www.rvh.on.ca