

Bolton Rotary raises funds to donate medical training mannequins to Ukraine

By **ZACHARY ROMAN**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Rotary Club of Bolton is helping to provide much-needed medical supplies in Ukraine.

A few years ago, Bolton Rotary received a presentation from Kevin Leach. Leach is a former Bolton resident who has been living in Ukraine since 2018. He runs Project Volya, a non-profit initiative that works to bring medical supplies where they are most needed.

Bolton Rotary was very impressed with Leach's presentation and began working to fundraise for Project Volya, and presented him with a cheque for \$10,000. When Bolton Rotary saw all the good their money had done, the club knew it wanted to take its support for Project Volya Ukraine to the next level.

Bolton Rotary member Tunde Obatolu explained the club began a new fundraising campaign for Project Volya with a goal of getting matching donations from its local Rotary district (7080) and Rotary International.

As part of the new campaign, a needs assessment was conducted in Ukraine by Project Volya which found that medical training mannequins were a much-needed item. Medical training mannequins are not cheap, but they're very important to use in teaching those providing lifesaving care in Ukraine as Russia's invasion rages on.

"What will be critical, and very much appreciated, is medical training mannequins," said Obatolu.

Initially, Bolton Rotary thought it could raise enough money for five mannequins, but soon found through donations from the community and other Rotary clubs it had enough for seven.

Bolton Rotary raised around \$30,000, and with matching donations from District 7080 and Rotary International, a total grant of \$88,000 for training mannequins will be awarded to Project Volya.

Rotary member Karen Fast explained Bolton Rotary saw the training mannequins as a way to provide sustainable assistance to Ukrainian caregivers.

"Specialized training mannequins will allow them to hone their skills in carrying out a number of procedures in a repeatable training environment," said Fast.

Obatolu said Project Volya will be responsible for distributing and maintaining the medical training mannequins once they are in Ukraine.

"Volya will be tasked with ensuring the medical mannequins are utilized in different areas of the conflict to provide training," said Obatolu. "I have to credit Kevin because it's a real sacrifice he's been making."

Those interested in learning more about Project Volya can visit projectvolya.ca.