

GlowJam's youth dance fundraisers are back with a Christmas special

By **Danielle Williams**

GlowJam will host its first-ever toy drive youth dance fundraiser at Orangeville District Secondary School (ODSS) on Friday, December 15.

After starting the youth dance fundraisers 10 months ago, GlowJam is back with their ninth dance of the year.

GlowJam is spreading holiday joy by hosting a festive, fun-filled event featuring games, activities, and prize-giving competitions for children aged seven to 13, all while raising funds for the Orangeville Food Bank.

"We host these dances primarily for the kids, and it's heartwarming to see them, including my nephews, having so much fun. It's also incredibly rewarding to support local organizations through these events," said Dylan Davis, head dance organizer and owner of Nexus Sound & Lighting Inc., the company behind GlowJam.

After seeing the success of GlowJam's previous food drive at its October 27 dance, they decided to shape it into a toy drive with a holiday twist.

Partnering with the local 7-Eleven as they run an annual toy drive, GlowJam will accept unwrapped toy donations during the dance on December 15. All the toys collected by 7-Eleven and GlowJam will be donated to the Salvation Army, which provides them to less fortunate families so children can have gifts on Christmas.

"I love being part of these dances. You know, it's not just a job for us; it feels like we're part of something bigger," said Tammy Cowen, who assists with planning the dances and managing its snack bar. "It's amazing to see the community come out, have fun, and support each other."

Ten years ago, when Dylan started as a DJ, he and his boss spoke about the potential of putting on events like the youth dances. Following COVID-19, the concept reappeared, and to "fill the void" left by COVID-19 for today's youth, Dylan believed that something positive was essential.

"Coupled with my desire to create positive, community-focused events, especially important in mitigating the isolating effects of COVID, led to the birth of these dances," said Davis.

Fundraising for local organizations and charities is essential, and Davis emphasizes the importance of community events.

"While raising funds is important, our primary goal is to ensure a great experience for attendees. Any funds raised will be a bonus to support local causes. We hope each dance continues to grow in popularity and impact," said Davis.

As GlowJam moves into 2024, they are scheduled to have bi-weekly events starting January 12.

With one group per dance, GlowJam encourages local organizations to partner with them for an opportunity to "engage with the community."