

## Vince's presents cheque to Women's Centre and announces 2021 Community Product Initiative recipient

Representatives from Vince's and from the Women's Centre of York Region (WCYR) assembled for a brief, socially-distanced presentation at the Sharon store last Friday. Here, proceeds from the 2020 Community Product Initiative were released after a successful year-long campaign, and the independent grocer was pleased to announce that \$18,393.68 was raised to help WCYR continue their life-changing work.

"We are thrilled with the response from our customers, staff and vendors in making this happen," said Giancarlo Trimarchi, partner at Vince's. "The Community Product Initiative has so far raised nearly \$60K over the past three years, and we expect continued, strong support in 2021."

As COVID-19 cases have surged, the Women's Centre of York Region has been dealing with more than just the virus. "We now have a 'Pandemic within a Pandemic,'" said Kelly Broome, Interim Executive Director, WCYR.

Following the province's stay-at-home orders, schools closed, and many workers were laid off or told to work from home. With personal movement restricted and people confined to their homes, regulations intended to protect the public and prevent widespread infection, left many intimate partner violence (IPV) victims trapped with their abusers.

"At the Women's Centre of York Region, our supporters are our heroes," added Broome. "Thank you, Vince's Market. With your support, our team has the ability to quickly provide urgent care for victims of IPV and can continue our mission to #HelpKeepHerSafe. We're all in this together and we'll get through this together. That's the power of the community."

### Support for Mental Health

It is normal to feel anxious while dealing with the uncertainty of this pandemic. 2020 has been stressful for many, especially for those already dealing with some form of mental illness. Resources that have been strained during pre-COVID times are quickly becoming overloaded.

The Mental Health Program at Southlake Regional Health Centre is one of these key resources, and provides a wide range of services for children, adolescents and adults. It comprises a multidisciplinary team focused on helping people through acute mental illness, allowing individuals experiencing an urgent mental health crisis to find immediate care in a safe, private environment as soon as they need it. But COVID-19 is just one piece of the challenge. As one of Canada's fastest growing communities with a rapidly aging population, rising rates of dementia, addiction and mental illness, combined with impacts of the pandemic, Southlake is facing the perfect storm of challenges in providing mental health care.

"Vince's is pleased to announce Southlake's Mental Health Program as the 2021 recipient for our Community Product Initiative," said Trimarchi. "The pandemic has severely stressed their resources, and we know how important this is for patients facing mental health challenges, and how this impacts them in their ability to contribute to their families, their workplaces, and to ensure their financial independence. I am honoured that we are able to help."

"We are so grateful to be partnering with Vince's Market to raise awareness and generate much-needed support for the Mental Health Program at Southlake," said Jennifer Klotz-Ritter, President & CEO, Southlake Foundation. "Vince's shares our commitment to create a healing environment that provides privacy, peace, dignity and security to ensure that we can make a vital difference in the recovery for mental health patients and their families. Together, we're building the right spaces at our hospital to give patients right here in our communities the leading-edge mental health care that they deserve, when it matters most."