

Hon. Dalton McGuinty with the Support of the Rideau Hall Foundation Launches the Ottawa Youth Service Year Pilot

A new pilot, the Ottawa Youth Service Year (OYSY), is giving recent graduates a paid, year-long opportunity to gain experience while serving their community.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA, June 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new pilot initiative, [the](#)

[Ottawa Youth Service Year \(OYSY\)](#), is set to launch in September 2026, offering recent high school graduates a paid, structured opportunity to gain real-world experience while serving their community. Applications for the program will remain open until June 19, 2026.

“

To our young people: you have much to offer, and our community needs you. OYSY gives you the opportunity to discover your strengths, build confidence, and get to know your community by serving it.”

*-Hon. Dalton McGuinty,
Founder, the Ottawa Youth
Service Year*

The program is a partnership between [Volunteer Ottawa](#) and the Honourable Dalton McGuinty, with funding provided by [the Rideau Hall Foundation](#). OYSY will run from September 2026 through June 2027 and is designed for youth aged 17 to 19, providing a meaningful bridge between high school and post-secondary education.

“I say to our young people: you have much to offer, and

our community needs you. The Ottawa Youth Service Year gives you the opportunity to discover your strengths, build confidence, and get to know your community by serving it.”

-Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Founder, the Ottawa Youth Service Year

“The Ottawa Youth Service Year reflects something we believe in deeply at the Rideau Hall Foundation: when young people are given meaningful opportunities to contribute, communities become stronger. This initiative will help young people build confidence, skills, and purpose through service, while strengthening the social fabric of our communities.”

— Simran Singh, Chief Impact Officer, Rideau Hall Foundation

“We are excited to be the project partner for the Ottawa Youth Service Year. For almost seventy years, Volunteer Ottawa has helped connect thousands of volunteers to causes that matter. This

program is the next chapter of our work as we expand opportunities for young people to gain critical experience and meaning through service.”

— Jessie-Lee Wallace, Executive Director,
Volunteer Ottawa

Participants in OYSY will complete full-time placements with nonprofit organizations across Ottawa complimented by cohort-based training, coaching, and educational programming focused on community development. Upon successful completion, participants will receive a guaranteed post-secondary education award.

The initiative is designed to achieve three key outcomes:

- Youth readiness: Participants will build confidence, professional skills, and real-world experience, strengthening their readiness for higher education and employment.
- Nonprofit capacity: Youth placements are structured with defined roles and deliverables, generating measurable and lasting capacity gains for host organizations.
- Equity of access: As a paid program, OYSY removes financial barriers and expands access to gap-year opportunities for youth across Ottawa, particularly those from underserved communities.

Volunteer Ottawa will serve as the backbone service delivery organization, leading recruitment and selection of youth participants, onboarding nonprofit partners, matching placements, delivering training and coaching, and ensuring program quality, safety, and impact reporting. OYSY is supported by a strong network of project partners, including:

- The University of Ottawa
- Carleton University
- Algonquin College
- La Cité
- the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
- the Ottawa Catholic School Board
- Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario
- Caza Saikaley LLP

About Volunteer Ottawa: The change Volunteer Ottawa wants to see in the world is for every charity and nonprofit in our community to be a high-performing organisation, well-resourced



The Ottawa Youth Service Year (OYSY), is set to launch in September 2026, offering recent high school graduates a paid, structured opportunity to gain real-world experience while serving their community.

with tools and education, able to manage volunteers well, and provide opportunities for decent, ethical, and sustainable volunteering across the city. For almost 70 years, Volunteer Ottawa, a registered charity, has connected the citizens of Ottawa and surrounding rural areas with access to opportunities that improve their neighbourhoods through volunteering.

- 30-

For more information, please contact:

Jessie-Lee Wallace
Executive Director
Volunteer Ottawa
(613) 986-6708
executivedirector@volunteerottawa.ca
www.volunteerottawa.ca

Jessie Lee Wallace
Volunteer Ottawa
+1 613-986-6708
[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/918711922>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.