

October 2026

Falling into the giving season

Find a way to give that feels right for you



Volunteer Recognition



This year's Hospital Bed Races brought 14 teams together and raised more than \$71,000 for Healthcare across Wood Buffalo.

"Hospital Bed Races may be one of our most entertaining events, but the impact behind it is very real. The support raised helps us continue investing in Healthcare priorities that directly benefit families throughout our region" said Venessa MacNevin CEO, NLHF.

The NLHF extends its thanks to every race, donor, volunteer, sponsor and community member who helped make the 2026 Hospital Bed Races a success.



Volunteer Spotlight: Grace Mahoro

Congratulations Grace!

Grace is our NSFWBVC volunteer of the month, way to go Grace! She is a dedicated volunteer and frequently gives her time at both the Food Bank, and the Soup Kitchen. In September alone she has volunteered for over 45 hours. Her dedication and generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you for everything you do!



Send us your volunteering pictures & stories!

Show us what you've been up to

We want to feature you!





Annual

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NORTHSTAR
WB volunteer
centre



NSFWB Vol Centre Award Recipients

Unsung Hero – Andre Baker

For over 20 years, Andre has volunteered every other Thursday at the North Life Soup Kitchen, often arriving straight from a night shift. He goes above and beyond to make every meal special, bringing extra ingredients for desserts and creating treat bags for holidays like Halloween, Easter and Christmas. His three young sons often join him, helping peel potatoes, bake cakes and serve meals. Andre brings the same care and generosity to the kitchen that he would to his own family, making everyone feel a little more special.

Unsung Hero – Rita Dizak

For more than 15 years, Rita has been a dedicated part of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Wood Buffalo, serving as a board member, board chair and volunteer at countless events. She is always ready to show up, lend a hand and lift those around her. Even when she stepped away from the board, she continued volunteering and supporting the organization she believes in so deeply. Humble, selfless and always quick to celebrate others, Rita is a true pillar of the organization and an incredible example of community service.

Youth Volunteer – Nikitha Rajendran

Nikitha began volunteering at just 12 years old and has since contributed more than 300 hours to organizations throughout Wood Buffalo. From the Food Bank and SPCA to Girls Inc., the library and many others, she consistently shows up and gives her all. Once a shy and introverted youth, Nikitha has grown into a confident and compassionate volunteer and leader. Her journey shows how volunteering can make a difference in the community while also opening doors to new skills, experiences and opportunities.

Newcomer Volunteer – Sarochini (Tan) Phakdi

For over a year, Tan has been a valued volunteer with the Wood Buffalo Regional Library, supporting the Kid Create Sunday program. She brings incredible dedication, reliability and a genuine desire to help participants feel supported and included. Always willing to step in, problem-solve and lend a hand, Tan helps create a welcoming experience for children and families. Her kindness and commitment have made her an important part of the library's volunteer team.

Senior Volunteer – Laura Farthing

Laura is a kind, generous and hardworking volunteer whose smile and willingness to help have made her a beloved member of the Nistawoyou Association Friendship Centre community. She regularly supports the Elders Supper, helping with setup, cleanup and meal preparation. She also joins the Elders & Seniors Coordinator at Willow Square for Tea & Bannock Gatherings and volunteers at special events throughout the community. Laura is someone people can always count on, bringing warmth and dedication wherever she is needed.

Group Volunteerism – YMM Airport Volunteers

Since the YMM Airport Volunteer Program began in 2023, Harvey Tulk, Birgit Riecke, Fernanda Dutra, Foon Szeto, Vigoracion Tabrilla, Hassan Mahmood and Jim Langdon have been a constant and dedicated team. Together, they have contributed more than 1,000 hours at the airport, community events, golf tournaments and car shows. They complete annual airport training and exams, show up in all kinds of weather and consistently answer the call when support is needed. Their reliability, teamwork and dedication make them an invaluable part of our community.

Every shift matters

the reality of volunteer no-shows

Direct Impact

- **Slower Service:** Clients, families, or event guests face longer wait times and reduced support.
- **Team Burnout:** Remaining volunteers and staff must scramble to cover the gaps, causing high stress.
- **Wasted Resources:** Food, supplies, funding to prepare for your shift go entirely to waste.
- **Lost Trust:** Disorganized programs and understaffed events hurt our reputation with the community.

Impact accross roles

- **Daily Programs (Food Banks, Shelters):** Critical meals, sorting, and client services fall behind schedule.
- **Community Events (Fundraisers, Galas):** Long registration lines form, key event features may not be able to happen and unstaffed donation booths lose critical revenue.
- **One-on-One Services (Mentoring, Driving):** A no-show breaks a direct promise to a client counting on you.

How can you help prevent this

- **Give 24–48 Hours Notice:** Cancel early so we have time to find a replacement.
- **Alert THE ORGANIZATION to Emergencies:** If something happens on event day, call or email the organization immediately.
- **Release Your Slot:** Log into your WBV portal or reply to your reminder message to re-open the position.

★ **DON'T JUST SIGN UP** ★
SHOW UP AND MAKE
A DIFFERENCE!





VOLUNTEER FEST &



Volunteer Opportunities



- *Big Brother Mentor
- *Big Sister Mentor
- *Game On Mentor
- *Go Girls Mentor