

SCIENTISTS IN SCHOOL NEEDS STABILIZATION FUNDS TO EMERGE FROM COVID-19

May 4, 2020

Dear CFUW Friends,

I know how proud you all are of Scientists in School and our Ajax-Pickering CFUW club's role in founding and nurturing this outreach initiative for its first 10 years. At that time, it was so successful it became its own charitable entity, sparking over 10 million young scientists so far. Most of your children have been ignited by Scientists in School's in-class workshops, some of you have been presenters, some of you are or have been volunteers, and some of you are founders. Many of you joined CFUW Ajax-Pickering because of Scientists in School.

CFUW's broader role has also been pivotal. In year 10, the Guelph club saw value in having the program in their community, and they were the driving force for the first outside of the GTA branch. In year 20 the Lethbridge club did the same in theirs, launching SiS in a second province.

Currently and very sadly, Scientists in School is in a highly vulnerable position for the first time in its 31-year history. It must raise major funding to help it rebound from a 50% or \$1.2 M loss to its operating funds as a result of extended school and community setting closures due to COVID-19. Seventy per cent of our staff are currently on layoff. Our social enterprise model, with 80% of revenue earned and 20% fundraised, was a key strength. However, in these unusual times it is now a weakness.

Imagine for a moment our classrooms without Scientists in School – 660,000 eager Kindergarten to Grade 8 scientists, along with their teachers, each year missing out on what many recall as their favourite days throughout their elementary school years. Imagine over 50,000 children in hundreds of summer camp programs, Boys and Girls clubs, day cares, libraries and women's shelters, missing out on the curiosity that Scientists in School's community setting programs ignite.

Imagine what Canada would miss out on if the talented researchers needed to discover the cure for the next pandemic did not have the extra sparks for STEM that Scientists in School provides throughout the formative elementary learning years. And imagine the legacy of an organization founded by CFUW Ajax-Pickering in 1989, disappearing for 36% of Ontario elementary students, and 8% of Alberta's.

What is clear is that the loss of this unique organization would be devastating at a time when science - and technology, engineering and math - have never been more important in helping to inspire the next generation of healthcare workers, vaccine researchers, innovators, and thoughtful citizens who question intelligently, think critically and take thoughtful informed actions in all areas, especially those with a STEM underpinning.

Fortunately, you can help to stabilize Scientists in School. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 to help offset the impact of COVID-19. Anything and everything is possible if we focus on solutions together. Growing awareness will make the biggest difference for a current crowdfunding effort. Here are a few ways you can help:

- Visit <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/covid-19-stand-up-for-future-scientists> and use the hashtag #StandUpforFutureScientists to promote the fundraiser widely on social media.

- **Spread the word.** Please share an email message similar to this one, with a personal anecdote about the program (many of your children have participated, as have many of you), with as many people as you can.

- **Reach out to young alumni of our programs, and/or teachers whose students had the program.** Their voices would carry a lot of credibility during our charity's social media push.

Small actions create big change, as CFUW members have seen time and time again. Working together will determine what tomorrow looks like, in more ways that we can possibly imagine.

With appreciation, always,

Cindy Adams

Former President, CFUW Ajax-Pickering

Executive Director, Scientists in School