

Royal Bank Invests in Community

Volunteerism greatly benefits our community and its people. It enriches lives, builds community cohesiveness, contributes valuable skills and raises money for important causes.

The Royal Bank of Canada has promoted volunteerism locally and nationally for many years. The Camrose branch encourages staff to volunteer by offering time off for involvement in activities that interest staff. In 1999, RBC launched an Employee Volunteer Grants Program for added encouragement. Under this program, RBC employees and RBC pensioners who volunteer with a registered charity a minimum of 40 hours a year are eligible for a \$500 grant to the organization in their honour.

Pat Downs, Sales Manager of the Camrose branch (in 2006) leads by example. Listening to her speak of her experience in our community is inspiring. An active volunteer herself, she feels strongly about pitching in when needed. "Volunteers enrich the lives of the community they serve," Downs maintains. "You always make time for something you have an interest or passion for."

Royal Bank employees get involved in Habitat for Humanity, Camrose Family Resource Centre, S.T.A.R.S., and Camrose Association for Community Living, to name a few. "We encourage staff to volunteer in areas they are interested in. It connects people to the community. They usually find people of like interests." Downs considers the cost to support and encourage volunteer activities, "truly minimal in that the community then gives back to business. If we all support and encourage community spirit, then what goes around comes around."

Causes that benefit youth are priorities for the Royal Bank Camrose: breakfast programs, money management sessions to high schools, scholarships. Contributions of employee time are part of their volunteer policy, and many of RBC's decisions about community volunteering are made locally, by people familiar with the needs of our community.

Contact the Volunteer Centre of Camrose and District for resources on developing an employer-supported volunteer program.