



2019

**COMMUNITY
IMPACT REPORT**



United Way
Thunder Bay

MISSION

To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action.

VISION

A community where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

VALUES

- Demonstrate trust, integrity, transparency, inclusivity and respect
- Energize and inspire volunteerism and volunteer leadership
- Endorse innovation, partnerships and collective action
- Provide non-partisan leadership
- Embrace diversity.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



We begin by acknowledging that we are on the traditional territory of the Ojibway people of Fort William First Nation, signatory to the 1850 Robinson-Superior Treaty. We acknowledge all of the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples who currently reside in this territory. The United Way of Thunder Bay is committed to a relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples based on the principles of mutual trust, respect, reciprocity, and collaboration in the spirit of reconciliation.



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO & BOARD PRESIDENT

We do, indeed, live in interesting times.

Having been hit by turmoil, uncertainty and accelerated change, it is impossible to reflect on the past twelve months without taking into consideration what we currently face – the worst humanitarian crisis in living memory.

As the devastating coronavirus pandemic evolves and exposes the depths of poverty in our community, the importance and the need for the United Way has never been more clear. *Local Love in a Global Crisis* embodies the essence of the United Way mission: To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action. Working together with all levels of government; with corporate, community and labour partners; frontline agencies and service providers; and with donors and supporters like you; the United Way of Thunder Bay was able to respond quickly and effectively to the public health emergency, providing much-needed resources to meet the vital needs of individuals, children, families and seniors affected by COVID-19.

Our ability to rise to the challenge of this global crisis was made possible only because of the big-hearted acts of local love inspired by our army of volunteers and donors over the past year. While we could never have imagined what 2020 would bring, our successes in 2019 helped pave the way and positioned us well to be nimble, coordinated and focussed in our efforts to meet COVID-19 head on, and to ready ourselves for the long and difficult road to recovery.

In 2019, we ushered in a new Community Impact Plan, with its ambitious overarching vision of a community free from poverty, and its three core goals; to ensure that people's basic needs are met; to promote a connected and inclusive community; and to create a community where all youth graduate. We introduced a new allocations process to guide our decision-making and ensure that our investments and advocacy efforts address the root

causes of poverty, help people build a better life for themselves and the people they support. Under the leadership of a new Chief Executive Officer and new President of the Board of Directors, we broadened our reach, engaging with community partners, business, public sector, education and nonprofit organizations to confront #UNIGNORABLE issues of poverty in Thunder Bay. We teamed up with the Lakehead Social Planning Council and the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce to host the TBay Community Cross-sector Collaboration forum.

And, when it became apparent that a pandemic was going to disproportionately impact the most vulnerable members of our community, we partnered with the Thunder Bay Community Foundation to launch the Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund. We recognized that service providers would need extra help to deliver essential programs and services to a growing number of clients. The recovery from COVID-19 will require unprecedented levels of community programming, services, resources, coordination and collaboration.

We believe whole-heartedly that the rebuilding and recovery process demands a united approach. We will do this in many ways, including inspiring individuals and businesses to get involved, supporting community initiatives that tackle the root causes of poverty and its impacts on local people, working with partners to find new solutions, and by investing resources where and when they are needed most.

Together, we can – and we will – rebuild the place we call home, stronger than ever, as we strive to create a community where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Albert Brulé, CEO

Kelly Gallagher, President of the Board

2019 HIGHLIGHTS



#UNIGNORABLE 2019

In 2019, the United Way of Thunder Bay campaign focused on making local issues of poverty #UNIGNORABLE. The community was called together to show their Local Love for the place we call home and the people who live here.

Throughout our campaign, we highlighted numerous issues of poverty that impact local people, neighbourhoods and communities every day.

Issues of poverty include:

- Unemployment & Education Inequality
- Homelessness
- Hunger
- Domestic Violence
- Social Isolation
- Mental Health & Addictions

The United Way of Thunder Bay is incredibly grateful to everyone who collaborated with us to start solving these important community issues together. Whether through donations, volunteering or advocacy, your action is helping to make Thunder Bay a better place for everyone.

We would like to acknowledge our amazing 2019 United Way Fundraising Campaign Co-Chairs, Angela Beaucage and Andrew Richert for their passion, commitment and tireless energy to our 2019 campaign.



2019 COMMUNITY IMPACT BREAKFAST

The first-ever Community Impact Breakfast was held in September featuring United Way Canada's CEO Dan Clement. Over 300 people attended the breakfast at the Valhalla Inn to start a deeper community conversation about issues of poverty.

THE ROSS B. JUDGE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE.

The United Way of Thunder Bay has a long history of bringing community visionaries and builders together for positive change. Each year, we take the time to recognize one of these individuals with the Ross B. Judge Award of Excellence.

This Award is the highest honour given to a United Way of Thunder Bay retired Director. It is presented to individuals who exemplified Ross' extraordinary commitment and strong passion for making a better life for everyone in our community.

The 2019 recipient was Shirley Rigato.



Shirley and Emilio Regato

LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN 2019

In September 2019, the United Way of Thunder Bay announced the appointment of Albert Brulé as its new Chief Executive Officer. After a nation-wide search, the board of directors selected Albert Brulé to assume the community leadership role.



In fall 2019, the United Way of Thunder Bay also announced the appointment of Kelly Gallagher as new President of the Board of Directors. Gallagher brings a wealth of community experience and leadership expertise to the role, having recently retired from a 31 years career with the Government of Canada.



“

I am incredibly honoured to have been given the opportunity to lead the United Way of Thunder Bay as the community and the organization embark on a number of major initiatives, in particular seeking positive social change on key issues such as poverty. My priority will be to continue to bring local community builders together to address the root causes of poverty and alleviate conditions for the most vulnerable members of our community.

-Albert Brulé, CEO

”

“

The more I learned about the complex community challenges facing Thunder Bay, the more I wanted to get involved. I started volunteering with United Way of Thunder Bay because I believe it's an organization that can have one of the greatest community impacts in improving lives. I've heard so many testimonials from people who have received life-changing help from programs and services supported by the United Way of Thunder Bay. I want to be part of advancing that community impact for the future.

-Kelly Gallagher, President

”

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

With new appointments comes fond farewells. On behalf of the community, we would like to thank Stephanie Noel, Past President of the Board of Directors of the United Way of Thunder Bay for her community service.

We would also like to give a special acknowledgement to Jodie Wilson for her dedicated efforts in the role of Interim Executive Director in 2019.

HOW WE ARE MAKING AN IMPACT TOGETHER

With your donations, the United Way of Thunder Bay was able to support dozens of local community organizations in their efforts to tackle issues of poverty. Here are some highlights of how your donations are making a positive difference in local people's lives.



EVERGREEN A UNITED NEIGHBOURHOOD

We funded programming that empowers children and youth to believe in themselves and make healthy choices. Evergreen is reporting that more youth stay in school and graduate thanks to your contributions.



COMMUNITY CLOTHING ASSISTANCE

In 2019, 1,013 children were supported through the UNDERCOVER program and 29,007 individuals (some returning) were assisted with clothing. This program is especially valuable to potential job seekers who receive clothing for job interviews.



ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY OF NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO

122 Discharge Kits were distributed to women at the time of their release from jail. Kits included clothing and personal hygiene products as well as information critical to re-establishing themselves in the community. Over 1,800 women participated in the Community Reintegration program in 2019.



OUR KIDS COUNT OF THUNDER BAY BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS (BBBS)

This program empowers children and youth to experience a sense of belonging and begin to feel more confident in themselves and the choices they make. A focus of the program is to allow the children to get out into the community and try new things with their mentor including hikes, going to the library and visits to the marina.

LAKEHEAD SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL

211 NORTH - TELEPHONE PROGRAM (WALK-IN)

2,894 people received in person information & referral services and 1,705 presented with complex and/or multiple needs.



An emotionally distressed and anxious woman called 211 because she was feeling overwhelmed with her recent move. The 211 Specialist connected her with the local distress centre and offered to follow up with her the next day. The Specialist connected her with a local mental health agency for counselling and with her community health centre to assist with her health issues. The Specialist also spoke with her about recreational activities and volunteer opportunities so that she could start meeting new people.



THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF THUNDER BAY & DISTRICT

Individuals were offered access to transitional housing and supports to move back into the community. With access to transitional housing and supports to move back into the community, individuals report feeling more confident and capable to handle stress, navigate social service systems and problem solve.



THUNDER BAY FOOD BANK

3,821 individuals were supported through the provision of food and Emergency Food Supply.

THUNDER BAY COUNSELLING

COMMUNITY COUNSELLING OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Thunder Bay Counselling supported families and individuals to create a comprehensive safety plan and as a result feel safe in their neighbourhoods and homes.



Brenda and John* have been in a relationship for 1.5 years and have a baby together. Brenda has just finished her high school credits and John quit school to find a job. He currently works three part-time jobs to make ends meet. John and Brenda called for counselling as their arguments were escalating, and John disclosed that he had to leave the home on one occasion as he was worried that he was going to hit Brenda. John disclosed a history of family violence and was desperate to not repeat the cycle he knew from childhood. Brenda also lived with violence as a young child until she went to live with her aunt and uncle, who then raised her. Brenda and John are facing a number of challenges; being new parents, safe housing, precarious employment and food insecurity. They identified that those were things they knew they could get through as a couple if they had the tools to do so; their main goal was staying together as a family and learning new skills to be a healthy family and not repeat the cycle of violence. Brenda and John attended the family violence counselling program and report that they are now healthier as a couple and also have the tools to raise their child in a home free from violence.*



CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

EDUCATION SUPPORT GROUP

This group was a 10-week education and support group to families who have a relative living with a mental illness. Participants learned new skills to support their family member and increase their own self-care. They experienced increased mental well-being and ability to cope with life's challenges.

91% of participants feel more hopeful

78% are more committed to self-care

91% feel more confident in
supporting their relative



FAYE PETERSON HOUSE

CARING DADS

This program supported 12 men to have the opportunity to engage in improving and building healthier relationships with their child(ren).

COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM (CAP)

4,345 individuals had access to a free computer workstation (includes internet and printers) to help them in their search for employment opportunities.



CHILDREN'S CENTRE THUNDER BAY

RAPID ACCESS

Through Rapid Access, clients experienced a reduced level of stress, improved sense of hope, increased knowledge and strengthened confidence to manage the challenges they are facing. They achieved positive mental health and can now cope better with life's challenges.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM



A family that utilized the program has six children and one on the way. Five of the children are school aged and the family is living under the poverty line. The mother does not work and the father keeps losing jobs. The children showed up every day for breakfast at one of our sites and our staff gave them food for their nutrition breaks. On occasion the mother has come in to tell us that without this program she would not be able to properly feed her children. She said she would be devastated if she got her children taken away because she can't provide for them. The nutrition program allowed the family to be together and the father has now successfully obtained employment.



CATHOLIC FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

FIRST STEP, WOMEN IN NEED, AND PARENTING EDUCATION

CFDC ran three First Step initiatives weekly. This program helps eliminate lengthy wait times and starts the psycho-educational program to help reduce the relapse of violent behaviours. CFDC and Dilico Anishinabek Family Care worked together on a pilot project offering the First Step Program and the Women in Need program to northern communities via videoconferencing and where Dilico Anishinabek Family Care has staff available on-site. The first pilot project was in the Armstrong, White Sands, Gull Bay area in January 2020.



ST. ANDREW SOUP KITCHEN

The Dew Drop Inn fed an average of 254 people per day from January 1st to November 30th, 2019. Individuals being served by our feeding program were able to access a nutritious meal free of charge which allows them to free up limited funds to cover other necessities.



If given a choice no one would choose to come to a soup kitchen. Pride is usually left at the door and first-time visitors to our soup kitchen are easily identified by their awkwardness. In September 2019, we encountered a young woman with a child in tow standing uncomfortably just inside the doorway. We welcomed her and she told us that she had fallen on hard times and we would be seeing her quite often for the next while. We explained to her that this is why we are here. That day, she chose to have 2 bag lunches and a goody bag for the little one. This food was rationed and became dinner for that evening and lunch for the next day as she had little money left for food. She continued to visit us about 4 to 5 times a week and we would try to have a little extra set aside for her to take home. In late October, she excitedly told us that she had found a job. There was a training period involved so we would still be seeing her for a little while longer until her first pay cheque. In November, she made her final visit to the Dew Drop Inn. Hugs were exchanged by all and tears were shed. The woman was overflowing with gratitude and stated over and over again that she could not have survived without the support of the Dew Drop Inn and thanked us for the dignity and respect shown to her.



NORTHWIND FAMILY MINISTRIES

LIFEBUILD

This program provided a trauma-informed place of safety and acceptance to people recovering from or experiencing the effects of historic or personal trauma/tragedy; increased proximity and staff engagement with participants including more opportunities for coaches and participants to interact and practice new skills, discuss new knowledge for life development, and (to varying degrees) implement coping strategies in everyday circumstances.



GOOD FOOD BOX

11,136 people were supported to access affordable, appropriate and nutritious food, providing increased nutrition and knowledge. 7,787 were adults and 3,349 were children.

64% say Good Food Box (GFB) is 50%-100% of their fresh produce





OUR KIDS COUNT OF THUNDER BAY

FOOD NUTRITION ACCESS

Families are taught how to prepare healthy meals that include new foods and recipes that they can continue to use at home. Individuals are involved with selecting the menu and as their skills grow, so does their confidence. Participants reported increased success in adding variety and vegetables to their meals.

THUNDER BAY LITERACY GROUP

ONE-TO-ONE PROGRAM



I have been taking this Literacy Group class since September, 2018. I went into this class because my English was not good enough to take me to college. In the class, the instructor gave me a short learning plan and where I should start to upgrade my English skills to go to college. Then, I just followed the plan step-by-step to improve my English skills. I am sure I got a lot of English knowledge from the TBLG. Now, I passed the EAP program test, it means I can go to college in January 2020. I appreciate it that TBLG gave me huge help to achieve my goal of taking an accounting program and finding a job.



RFDA (REGIONAL FOOD DISTRIBUTION ASSOCIATION)

OPPORTUNITY KITCHEN

This program supplemented 3 feeding programs in the community with soup, sandwiches and desserts. In total, the program offered 650 sandwiches and 250 liters of soup per week.



CAHEP (COMMUNITY ARTS & HERITAGE EDUCATION PROJECT)

With guidance from this project, local children and youth believe in themselves and are making healthier choices.



VOLUNTEER ACTION CENTRE OF THUNDER BAY (VOLUNTEER THUNDER BAY)

CONNECTORS PROGRAM

With support from the United Way, non-profit organizations and agencies posted multiple events on the Volunteer Thunder Bay website and the organization received over **800 new volunteer requests** in 2019.



THUNDER BAY COUNSELLING

CREDIT COUNSELLING

Individuals received sufficient support to reduce the level of stress they are experiencing in relation to their financial issues. Individuals achieved positive mental health and can better cope with life's challenges. 90% of individuals reported improvements in their personal stress levels after financial counselling.



OUR KIDS COUNT OF THUNDER BAY

Individuals developed assets like employment skills, education, training, and literacy. Peer leaders participated in the "In Good Hands" training where they learned about nutrition, food and equipment.

EVERGREEN A UNITED NEIGHBOURHOOD

As a result of this program, people now feel safe. There is an increase in community safety for women and children, knowledge of community events, and knowledge of holistic and Indigenous teachings.

35/50

individuals feel they have healthy and supportive relationships with family or friends.

45/50

individuals feel supported by their neighbours (Evergreen is counted as a neighbour and family by most respondents).

200

were provided opportunities to learn life skills such as cooking, recipe planning, set up for events at the Evergreen House and Minnesota Park.

25

Evergreen teen participants graduated in 2019, most are in post-secondary education or training.



SHKODAY ABINOJIIWAK

BIWAASE'AA

Cultural school programs were provided at McKellar Park Public School, Ogden Community School, Our Lady of Charity Catholic School, Sherbrooke Public School, St. Ann Catholic School, St. James Public School, Vance Chapman Public School, and Westgate CVI Public School.



Students reported the following outcomes:

“I felt more knowledgeable about First Nations culture and history;”

“I increased my knowledge of the importance of physical awareness regarding Aboriginal cultural and traditional ways”

“I am more engaged at school”

2019 HIGHLIGHTS



RETIRE UNITED

In October, Retire United Thunder Bay was officially launched as a new initiative to create a network of Thunder Bay retirees who want to make a difference in the community together. Retirees and seniors were invited to join the network to help solve local issues related to poverty through giving, volunteer service or advocacy work.

George Saarinen volunteered to lead the Retire United Thunder Bay movement. "Thunder Bay retirees love where they live and are typically looking for ways to stay engaged and active in the community post-employment. They want to give back to help the next generation but they also want to support their peers; low-income seniors who may be facing issues of poverty. Retire United Thunder Bay is a way for us to mobilize together as retirees to tackle poverty and ensure that essential food, clothing, housing and other services are available for children, adults, families and seniors."

YOUTH 4 COMMUNITY

The Youth 4 Community funding program is a program for youth run by youth. It was developed to help students learn how to understand and address needs that are important to youth in Thunder Bay. This unique program gives local high school students an opportunity to learn about the whole funding process from start to finish, and to present the funds to the successful agencies.



\$11,692

was raised to support local youth programs and services.

On April 23, United Way Youth Granting Committee presented grants to three organizations that are supporting local youth in very different and important ways: Evergreen Kitchen Upgrade Project, The Cultural Awareness Project and the Wake the Giant Music Festival.



It's been a great experience and a real eye-opener to the challenges facing local youth. I'm happy to be part of the solution, along with the other students, and am hopeful that these programs will make a real impact in our community now and into the future.

-Abby Brown, Chair of the 2019 United Way Youth Granting Committee





The GenNext Cabinet and Event Committee proudly hosted their signature community event, the **GenNext Day of Caring**, presented by Thunder Bay and District Labour Council and Resolute Forest Products.

This one-day event was held at 11 local not-for-profit organizations throughout our city, where our enthusiastic teams of volunteers completed hands-on projects.

On June 15th 2019, approx.

110 volunteers

left their wallets at home and instead donated their time, energy, and skills to help our community.

//

Now in its 8th year, the Day of Caring is an amazing event where you see community members from all walks of life come together with the common goal of making Thunder Bay a better city for all. It truly is rewarding to see the impact that we are able to make when we all work together over a few short hours, and the sense of accomplishment that is felt by all volunteers.

*- Emily Cormier,
Chair of the 2019 Day of Caring*

//

LEADERS OF THE WAY

The United Way of Thunder Bay shared its local love and appreciation with a crowd of over 200 local donors and volunteers at the organization's Volunteer Appreciation Campaign Celebration & Awards, which was sponsored by Bell and the Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre.

The local charity recognized various groups of volunteers and the nearly 250 Workplace Campaigns while sharing examples of how contributions are making our community united, vibrant, and strong. A new special recognition award was presented to Workplace Ambassadors who demonstrated true leadership in their workplace for their United Way Campaigns, as chosen by the 2018 Sponsored Employees.

27TH ANNUAL GREAT BILLBOARD EVENT

(May 16, 2019)

Last summer 22 teams got crafty with us at IG Wealth Management and let their community spirit shine, by building their own mini-billboard collage. At the end of the day, we created one giant billboard to demonstrate the image of the Thunder Bay we want to build together.

Together these 22 amazing teams raised a grand total of

\$66,300

which impacted hundreds of lives in our community.



Our team is incredibly proud to have been part of The United Way's Great Billboard Event. We really enjoyed the opportunity to creatively collaborate and design a billboard that represents the work that our organization does.

-Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board



Creating our billboard 'Linking Together Our Community' was a lot of fun and an excellent team building exercise. It really got us thinking about what the United Way does in our community and how we can help them achieve those goals. Erika and her team did an excellent job and we are looking forward to next year's event.

-Christine Zieroth, Sun Life Financial



Congratulations to Shawn Christie and his Lowerys team who took the title as Top Fundraising Team, and to Michael Quibell and the team from Dew Drop Inn, who came in 2nd place.

United Way wishes to thank the many team members, donors, and volunteers who helped to make this event possible!

This event would not be possible without the generosity of our caring sponsors. We would like to thank:

- **Presenting Sponsors:** IG Wealth Management and Lowerys
- **Event Sponsors:** Dougall Media - 91.5 CKPR, Rock 94, ENERGY 103 104, TbNewswatch, Global Thunder Bay, CKPR TV; Community Arts and Heritage Education Project, Equipment World - Everything from A to Z & more; Superior Foods; Bennett's Bakery & Deli; Coca-Cola; Superior Propane; Metro; and Robins Donuts





WASAYA - UNITED WAY PLANE PULL

(September 28, 2019)

Last fall United Way of Thunder Bay and Wasaya Airways celebrated the 4th Annual Plane Pull.

15 teams put their strength to the test and participated in the event to pull a plane weighing over **26,000 pounds** a distance of **50 feet** in the fastest time to win.

Now in its 16th year, the awards recognize youth for their achievements and accomplishments in a multitude of areas from academics and athletics to preserving their Culture and Heritage. The awards believe recognizing a person for their achievements is a great way to build self-esteem and build role models so others can see their goals are attainable, which is a concept the United Way also believes in.

2019 Plane Pull Winning Teams:

- **Top Fundraising Team:** Richardson Wheatheads
- **Most Spirited Team:** Wenjack Warriors (Oshki)
- **Division A Champions:** DFC Thunderhawks
- **Division B Champions:** Acadia Broadcasting
- **Division C Champions:** NADF

\$19,800 + raised for the community



ONTARIO POWER GENERATION PRETZEL DAY

(October 2, 2019)

Last fall United Way of Thunder Bay and Sweet North Bakery celebrated the most successful Pretzel Day to date. A new fall feature was introduced – Pumpkin Spice Pretzel with Pumpkin Spice Cream Cheese – and it was a huge hit!

\$10,700.²⁵

Raised for the United Way of Thunder Bay!

A huge thank you to the teams at Ontario Power Generation for hosting and organizing the event as an annual workplace tradition! For over 20 years, OPG and their dedicated employees have chosen to support the United Way as their charity of choice and we are extremely grateful for this continued commitment.

We would also like to thank Erinn DeLorenzi and her team at the Sweet North Bakery as well as Renco Family Foods for their generous sponsorships. Ontario Power Generation Pretzel Day would not be possible without community collaborations like this that help solve important community issues, making our city a better place for everyone.

Over **2,000** pretzels were ordered.

NOVEMBERBURGER

(November 1-30, 2019)

Last fall was the **first annual #Novemburger Competition.**

11 local restaurants showed their #LocalLove and participated in this fundraiser in support of UWTB. Locations included Beaux Daddy's, Beefcake Burger Factory, Bonobo's Foods, Daytona's, Neebing Roadhouse, Portside Restaurant & Bar, Prospector Burger Barn, Prospector Steak House, Red Lion Smokehouse, Roosters Bistro, and The Sal.

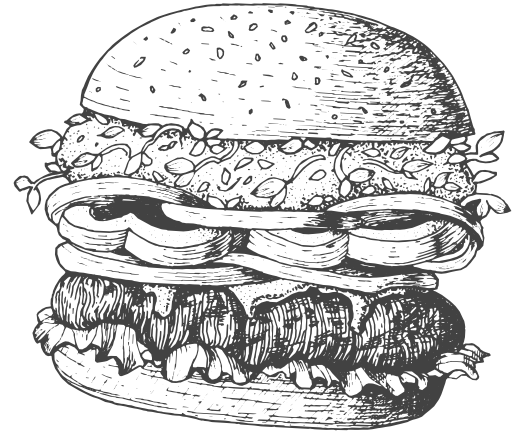
Throughout the month of November, burger lovers were encouraged to visit each restaurant to try versions of each location's signature Novemburger. **For each burger sold, \$2 was donated to United Way of Thunder Bay.**

Collectively **3,901** Novemburgers were sold in total by all participating restaurants.

The community has spoken and has declared Beaux Daddy's to have the *Top Novemburger of 2019*. The restaurant was presented with the top honour for its Bon Bon Bacon Blueberry BBQ Brie Burger that featured a local Murillo beef charbroiled burger patty on a Roma Bakery bun.

United Way of Thunder Bay would also like to recognize Prospector Burger Barn as the restaurant with the *Most Novemburgers Sold*, selling an incredible 1,451 Novemburgers.

\$12,900 + raised through the first ever Novemburger in support of the United Way of Thunder Bay.





United Way
Thunder Bay

1006-715 Hewitson St.
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6B5
T: (807) 623-6420
F: (807) 623-6180

uwaytbay.ca