



**Our Stories
Dec. 2025**



Healed by Home, Driven to Help

In June 2025, Caledon Community Services, (CCS) named Stephen Julian an Honorary Life Member, recognizing his significant contribution over more than a decade of dedicated service. He sees it differently, though. To Stephen, he is simply living the values he was raised with - leadership, integrity, responsiveness and inclusiveness – four of the values that guide CCS. “My values are so aligned with CCS,” he says. “Helping my neighbours here at home is one of the greatest gifts of my life.”

Stephen’s story began in Tullamore, where his family’s roots stretch back through generations of farmers, small-business owners and community builders. Sunday school mornings at Mayfield United Church taught him and his sister Tracy that leadership meant showing up, integrity meant doing what was needed and responsiveness

meant never ignoring a neighbour in trouble. Those values guided his father, a volunteer coach and local councillor, and they quietly shaped Stephen as well.

As a teen, Stephen dreamed big. Football at Laurier felt like his path forward until one snap on the field shattered the future he’d imagined. Determined to rebuild, Stephen moved to Toronto and dug into a sales career, only to find his life upended when a rare kidney disease struck in his thirties. At one point he was on 15 medications and his doctors had discussed a transplant.

Following a period of recovery back in the family home, Stephen tried returning to the city, only to have his health collapse again. When he finally settled back in Caledon, something shifted. Surrounded by family, old friends and

the familiar rhythm of life in a small community, his body steadied. "I think it had something to do with less pollution," Stephen recalls, "but mostly, I was loved back to health." In his mind 'community' saved his life.

Once he was stronger, his sister Tracy "voluntold" him into helping with CCS' Home for the Holidays Gala. It began with fundraising - phone calls from his kitchen table, reaching out to past donors and local businesses. His natural warmth, sales experience and deep community ties made it easy for people to say yes. What started small grew into a decade-long commitment and Stephen became Gala Co-Chair in 2021. He helped to guide the Gala through enormous changes, including the creative virtual years during COVID that not only maintained their fundraising momentum, but also connected community members who were suffering in isolation. From 2014 to

2024, the Gala netted more than \$2 million to support Caledon families.

Working with CCS opened Stephen's eyes to needs he never imagined in his hometown; families facing hunger, seniors and teens struggling alone, even neighbours living in cars and under bridges. He came to see the Gala as more than a fundraiser; it became a powerful way to open people's eyes to the hidden poverty in Caledon and to remind everyone that caring for each other has always been, and continues to be, one of Caledon's greatest strengths.

Today Stephen is especially inspired by CCS' leadership team who are meeting Caledon's growing needs with courage and vision - expanding food access, strengthening services and planning boldly for the future. He remains enthusiastically committed to fundraising outreach, because he knows none of that progress will be possible without community support.



LIFE HERO

CAST

STEPHEN JULIAN

CCS Volunteer, Honorary Life Member and Gala Co-Chair

STEPHEN'S FAMILY

TRACY SMALE

CCS Volunteer and Honorary Life Member

COMMUNITY IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS*

*Statistics referencing 2024-2025 Community Impact Report

851

one-time and active
volunteers.

28,577

rides provided helping
Caledon stay active and
connected.

311

Mobile Pantry
deliveries reached
neighbours

Whatever your skills and abilities, there's a way
you can make a difference with CCS.

ccs4u.org/get-involved



ccs4u.org



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