



For Immediate Release

WE Charity Named Only Organization to Deliver CSSG Program

Toronto (July 21, 2020) – In April, WE Charity was engaged by the Government of Canada to deliver the Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG) program to support post-secondary students through the COVID-19 pandemic. WE Charity was chosen for this project because of its 25 year track record of engaging and inspiring students and youth in meaningful service learning.

As stated by Ian Shugart, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, in his remarks to the Standing Committee on Finance earlier today, “What WE was able to provide... was the full range of services that would go to the heart of this matching program that would put young people in contact with not for profits so they could gain the relevant experience; their ability to promote the program with a massive social media following; experience in other situations of matching young people to service opportunities;... existing database information; representation right across the country with partnerships with other charities.”

WE Charity’s youth programs and impact on both educators and students is unique in Canada. Since its inception, WE Charity has honed its approach and become a North American leader in providing experiential service-learning, currently serving as an educational partner to over 7,000 schools and educational institutions across Canada. During the 2018-2019 academic year WE Charity’s programs impacted over 2.4M youth across Canada, making it one of the largest networks of youth service in Canada.

WE Charity’s programs produce results. 81 per cent of educators say WE Schools make their students more likely to take action, and 90 per cent of educators say students demonstrate increased leadership as a result of our programs. Each year young people participating in the WE Schools program do service actions in support of over 3,000 local and global not-for-profit organizations.

WE Charity has a track record of delivering turn-key service programs including Ontario’s 40 Hours of Service program. WE Charity also developed the U.S. College Board’s AP with WE Service program, which combines college-level learning from the Advanced Placement® Program with WE’s service-learning model to create an opportunity for AP students to apply their classroom work to the real world.

These gains are now in jeopardy. “At committee today, some politicians chose to raise concerns about WE’s financial health in an attempt to show why WE should not, in their view, have been awarded the CSSG contract. To be clear, at the time the contract was



awarded WE Charity was in good financial standing and any assertion to the contrary is not correct. Such inaccurate statements are damaging to both WE Charity’s reputation and to the people helped by WE Charity in Canada and around the world.” said Craig Kielburger.

The contribution agreement itself provided ample opportunity for oversight on WE Charity’s financial health and ability to deliver the program. “The Contribution Agreement contains 13 clauses that require audits to verify all expenditures,” said Marc Kielburger. “These audits ranged from basic audited financial statements up to, and including, a potential audit by Canada’s Auditor General. This was in addition to multiple reporting requirements on a biweekly basis and financial oversight controls, as well as preparing an audited annual financial statement covering the Project Period and a Final Report, which would include a detailing of spending on eligible expenditures and a description of the results achieved.” As previously noted, the agreement only allowed for the reimbursement of funds spent on the delivery of the CSSG program.

WE Charity operates with strong financial and governance controls. Contrary to statements at the committee, we would like to clarify that the renewal of a portion of the Board of Directors was part of the WE Charity’s long-term strategy to help plan for the organization’s future. This process occurred prior to conversations regarding the CSSG and our Board members bring impressive backgrounds in finance, law, academia, technology and social entrepreneurship.

“The delivery of the CSSG program is perfectly aligned with WE’s mandate, and after 25 years of experience, we knew that our abilities and infrastructure could deliver this ambitious program,” said WE Co-Founders Craig and Marc Kielburger. “We are tremendously proud of the work we have done and the organization we have built.” More detailed information on WE’s response to Committee can be found here:

[BACKGROUND](#)

For more information:

PR@we.org