

Q4 • 2023

TD Corporate Citizenship Newsletter

Opening doors for a more sustainable and inclusive tomorrow



Janice Farrell Jones
Senior Vice President,
Sustainability and
Corporate Citizenship



Carolyn Scotchmer
Executive Director,
TD Friends of the
Environment Foundation

Message from Janice Farrell Jones

As we round out the final quarter of the year, I am proud to share highlights of some of the strides we've made in advancing our commitment to drive progress towards a more inclusive and sustainable tomorrow. Throughout Q4, there were many impactful projects and initiatives supported through the TD Ready Commitment that will help create opportunities for people and communities to thrive – including the launch and call for applications for the 2023 edition of our signature program, the TD Ready Challenge, which is focused this year on innovative solutions to help address systemic barriers to affordable housing.

This quarter also saw the return of the always-popular TD Tree Days – the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation (TD FEF) volunteer program aimed at growing and enhancing community green spaces. Thousands participated in TD Tree Days events across our North American footprint this fall, furthering our commitment to helping build stronger, more resilient communities. TD FEF is dedicated to supporting a wide range of environmental initiatives that work to revitalize, animate, and steward public green spaces. For this issue of the TD Corporate Citizenship newsletter, I spoke with **Carolyn Scotchmer, Executive Director of TD FEF**, to dig deeper into how TD FEF aligns with the aspirations of the TD Ready Commitment.

Q&A with Carolyn Scotchmer

Janice: TD Friends of the Environment Foundation (TD FEF) has a long history of support for grassroots environmental projects that are dedicated to creating more vibrant, green, and sustainable communities across Canada. TD FEF has been a trailblazer in this space – how has TD FEF's approach to supporting environmental issues evolved over time and how is TD FEF making a positive impact for people and communities?

Carolyn: In 2024, TD FEF is celebrating its 34th anniversary – since it was founded in 1990, the Foundation has provided over \$112MM in funding to over 29,000 local, grassroots environmental projects across Canada. While there are groups that we've been working with since we began, and who are experts in delivering environmental programs, for others, we provide the first grant they ever receive – our process is designed to be accessible to anyone who is part of an organization undertaking a project of their own.

Janice: As a national charity, TD FEF is powered in large part through generous donations from TD customers and colleagues, as well as other donors from across Canada. How does TD FEF engage and collaborate with communities, volunteers, and organizations on the ground to drive impact at a local level?

In fact, in the last decade, we've observed an increase in applications for projects from non-environmental organizations – from tree planting on hospital grounds to nature-based programs with settlement agencies and senior centres, more and more people are looking to get involved in environmental programs, and we're seeing more organizations stepping in to help meet that demand.

Janice: TD FEF provides support to hundreds of organizations each year to help bring important environmental projects to life. Can you share some of the impacts we've seen in local communities as a result of these initiatives?

Carolyn: TD FEF is relatively unique in that it was founded as a way for the Bank and its customers to work together to support community projects. 80% of the funds provided through our community granting program come from customer and colleague donors, all mapped to one of 36 geographic TD FEF chapters across Canada. And because TD supports all of our operating costs, 100% of every donation is returned to projects in the chapter from which it originated. With an average customer and colleague donation size of only \$2 per month and the help of a \$1MM annual donation through the TD Ready Commitment, we are able to help support impactful work across the country. Part of our success is that we also recognize that different areas of Canada have different needs and priorities, so we have created Regional Advisory Boards, made up of our TD colleagues and subject matter experts from local community groups, to oversee our giving in each region. We also make sure that the TD FEF Regional Managers are based in locations across the country so that we can stay connected to the groups that we fund.

Janice: TD Tree Days is the flagship volunteer and urban greening program for TD FEF that mobilizes TD customers, colleagues, and community members to help build healthy, vibrant communities. How do TD Tree Days and other tree planting initiatives across the country support the Bank's goal of helping people and economies thrive?

Carolyn: Part of the success of TD FEF comes from the fact that we are focused on smaller grants to organizations with a hyperlocal focus, which are often able to have big impacts on their communities with just a little help. Our work in supporting projects taking place in school yards is a great example of this. As one of Canada's largest funders of school ground projects, we provide support for tree planting projects, outdoor classrooms, gathering spaces, and gardens that not only engage thousands of students each year, but which also often act as important community spaces outside school hours. We have also seen an increase in applications from public schools that serve significant populations of children from Indigenous communities, as well as those located in First Nation communities. Because we look at every application through the lens of addressing local needs, we are able to support programs that are focused specifically on cultural practices and traditions, such as the Lakehead District School Board's Land-Based Learning Program, or Muskowekwan School's Traditional Food Program, both of which are profiled in our [Year In Review](#).

Carolyn: A critical aspect of both TD FEF and TD Tree Days is the support of programs that bring people and nature together. Trees and shrubs provide important services to our communities, from removing carbon from the air, to providing habitat to so many of the species on which we depend, to providing shade and reducing air temperature in our towns and cities. The list of benefits goes on and on, but people are only going to care for our natural spaces if they feel connected to them. Programs like TD Tree Days and other planting initiatives provide that opportunity for people from all backgrounds to come together and experience that nature connection firsthand – having a visibly meaningful impact on their local green space while also spending time with their colleagues and neighbours. Long before I worked with TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, I helped coordinate tree planting events in public parks with the support of TD FEF Funding – some of those events took place 20 years ago, and one of my favourite things to do is to go back and see what they've become. The fact that there is now a woodland where there was only an empty field for one of the projects I worked on, and that I had something to do with it, is the best possible motivation to keep working to protect it.

Visit the [TD Friends of the Environment Foundation](#) website to learn more about how it works to help support the protection of the environment and green communities across Canada.

Want to donate to TD Friends of the Environment Foundation? Here's how:

- TD Canada Trust customers can donate online by [logging in to TD Easy Web](#), or by calling 1-866-222-3456 to speak to an EasyLine specialist.
- Make a donation in person at your local TD Canada Trust branch, or by mailing a cheque, payable to TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, to:
66 Wellington Street West, 30th floor, Toronto, ON, M5K 1A2, Canada

The Four Interconnected Drivers of Change

Financial Security

Early Learning, Income Stability, Affordable Housing, Financial Literacy

Vibrant Planet

Green Spaces, Low-Carbon Economy

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