

Community Recognition: Rob Johnson honoured for helping victims



By Brock Weir

Accident scenes can be cleaned up, some of the damage left by fire can be repaired, and physical wounds often heal. But those involved in the accident, fire, or incident that led to physical injury can have emotional and psychological wounds that stick with them for the rest of their lives.

It is in these situations that Victim Services of York Region springs into action, and among those answering the call is Aurora's Rob Johnson.

Mr. Johnson, a long-time volunteer with Victim Services of York Region, was awarded the 2018 Community Safety Award by the Town of Aurora, an honour presented to an individual "dedicated to the development, promotion or support of initiatives that improve community safety."

"This award recognizes that safer communities only happen when individuals take action to make a difference," said event emcee Brian North, reading Mr. Johnson's citation. "This year, we are recognizing Rob Johnson for his outstanding leadership, long-time volunteer commitment and his efforts in raising awareness about issues of safety in our community."

"Rob has been involved with Victim Services of York Region and is currently a Victim Response leader of volunteers. Rob has been trained to emotional support and practical assistance to the clients of Victim Services of York Region who have been victimized by crime or have experienced trauma in the immediate aftermath of an incident. Rob is someone who is consistently reliable for shifts, regularly attends volunteer meetings and is a leader among his peers as a mentor. Rob continually exceeds all expectations and always goes above and beyond in his role."

Mr. Johnson has been involved with the organization since 2016, beginning his work as a photographer and videographer for police events before moving on to becoming a Victim Response Volunteer. In accepting the honour, Mr. Johnson said it was all about giving back to the community.

"For me, community is as good as what you put back into it, really, and there are so many opportunities within York Region to give back to your community through things like Victim Services," he said. "We'll deal with people at their absolute worst and it is our opportunity to be our absolute best. It is a great opportunity for us to give back to our community and make a difference in someone's life. Even if it is just touching one person's life and improving them and helping them see the light and get through a difficult situation, it is all very worthwhile. I enjoy giving back to the community through volunteerism."