

Young soccer players gear up for the pre-season thanks to local contribution



By Brock Weir

With the hockey season winding up, kids across York Region are gearing up for soccer season and some local players will have a little bit of extra fun in the pre-season thanks to Mary Rourke and Hollis Wealth Aurora.

Ms. Rourke welcomed Sebastian Gobbels, a member of the Aurora Youth Soccer Club's 2002 Boys OPDL (Ontario Player Development League) Team, along with his mom Kelly, to her Industrial Parkway South office on Thursday to make a \$500 contribution to the team.

As they received the cheque, Sebastian was grinning from ear to ear as he knew where the money was going.

?It is going to the team in general, but right now we're using the funds for a pre-season camp at Teen Ranch in Caledon,? said Kelly. ?It is a great thing they do the weekend before their season starts. They have two nights there for team bonding, have their days filled with soccer activities, and finish up with a game.

?Last year, there were different boys who hadn't played together but before the end of the weekend they came out like glue, which was amazing to watch.?

This year, the team welcomes a handful of newer members, so there will be fresh faces to join in the fun.

The Aurora Youth Soccer Club is the latest community group to receive a donation from Ms. Rourke and Aurora Hollis Wealth. The company donates money to charities on a rotating business each year.

?There is so much need out there we tend not to focus on one area, but rotate our critical dollars in a way that addresses some of the needs out there,? she said. ?This year, we wanted to focus on our community, in particular the area of youth sport.

?We very much like to focus our dollars preferably where it relates to youth, children. The Aurora Youth Soccer Club does a lot of work around Youth sport. In the past, we have donated to mental health initiatives as it relates to youth, as well as places like the United Way of Toronto [and] Habitat for Humanity have been on our charitable giving list in the past. Need and where we can focus those dollars on children and youth has been very much part of our focus here.?

This contribution, both women hope, will lead to an enduring relationship between the AYSC and Aurora Hollis Wealth.