



(Santa and Sharon Clark – December 2019)

## **Sharon Clark – Sharon’s Kids Founder**

### **Sharon’s Motto: “Making smiles possible”**

It is with great sadness we announce that Sharon Clark, the founder of Sharon’s Kids, Community Caring Program, Durham Children’s Aid Society passed away on April 13, 2020 at her home in Oshawa.

Sharon was a huge community support advocate and founded the Sharon’s Kids Christmas program in General Motors in 1968. In 2018, Sharon’s Kids celebrated 50 years of supporting children and families connected with the Durham Children’s Aid Foundation. For many years, Sharon has worked to improve children’s lives. With the incredible support of the employees of the General Motors Oshawa Assembly Plant for over 46 years, and later the support of GM Headquarters in Oshawa, Sharon’s Kids has raised over \$450,000 for the Sharon’s Kids Community Caring and Holiday Hope Programs.

Sharon began her charity work after being hired by General Motors in the 1960s. The idea to support local families came up one year while she was working as a file clerk in the engineering department. She was discussing a Christmas gift exchange with her coworkers. The spending limit was \$2 a person to buy a gift. Instead of buying for each other, Sharon suggested \$24.00 would really help someone who can’t have a Christmas. They connected with a community agency and supported a single mother and a baby that year with gifts. This generosity had a huge impact on the single mother who was very grateful for the help. As word spread and more of Sharon’s co-workers wanted to get involved, Sharon’s Kids was born. Throughout all of GM

the word spread, and Sharon's Kids and more families throughout the community were supported. Employees of the General Motors Oshawa Assembly Plant and beyond all volunteered for shopping, sorting, wrapping, delivering gifts and food, and donating time and money. Countless restaurants, organizations and families have also supported Sharon's Kids through various fundraising events and donations.

Sharon's family has been advised that General Motors Oshawa, along with many other organizations and individuals who have supported the Sharon's Kids Community Caring and Holiday Hope Programs over the years, will keep Sharon's legacy alive by continuing with their fundraising activities throughout the years to come for Sharon's Kids. The continuing generosity of this community is incredibly important, particularly for the Holiday Hope Program which sees children and families connected with the Durham Children's Aid Society receive food and toys at Christmas time.

Sharon Clark made a huge impact on everyone she met in our community and she will never be forgotten for her kindness and smiles. To a wonderful Lady, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Rest in peace.

Submitted by: Jodi J. Hewett