

**FirstOntario supports *Sleepless in our Cities* and raises awareness and more than \$11,000 to help tackle homelessness**

*On any given night, 35,000 Canadians are living homeless or unhoused*

**Hamilton, ON, February 23, 2021** – The United Way Hamilton and Halton’s *Sleepless in our Cities* event surpassed its \$75,000 goal to raise awareness around homelessness right here in our communities. FirstOntario Credit Union was the title sponsor, but CEO Lloyd Smith wanted to take it a step further. He personally participated in the fundraising event on February 19 by sleeping in his car overnight to emphasize the importance and dire need for affordable housing.

“It’s important to be able to bring awareness to an issue that has become so critical in our communities – we need to do our part to help support our neighbours who don’t have a safe and secure place to call home,” Smith said.

“This was just one night for me – but this is a constant reality for thousands of people who don’t know where they are going to sleep and be safe. I would like to thank everyone who made donations to help with this important cause.”

With the support of FirstOntario employees, Members and other generous donors in our community, Smith raised \$11,270 toward the initiative which will help to support two homeless people in a shelter for one year. The rate of homelessness per 100,000 people is 45.2 in Hamilton. This figure is even greater in Halton Region at 49.4.

Learn more about the [Sleepless in our Cities event](#).

Watch Lloyd Smith’s [personal message](#) about his experience.

Check out a [conversation](#) between FirstOntario’s CEO and Hamilton Tiger-Cats offensive lineman Chris Van Zeyl who also participated in the fundraiser.

**About FirstOntario Credit Union**

FirstOntario is a full service cooperative financial institution, serving Members for over 80 years throughout the Golden Horseshoe, Niagara Region and Southwestern regions of Ontario. With \$5.8 billion in assets under management, FirstOntario is one of Canada’s largest credit unions. Everyone is welcome to be part of FirstOntario for financial services including daily transactions, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario profits are invested into the communities we serve through support for entrepreneurs, competitive rates and charitable pursuits including our award winning student nutrition program. Learn more about us today at [FirstOntario.com](#).

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