

Marc Laferriere nominated for Everyday Political Citizen Project

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As a young volunteer Marc Laferriere became addicted to seeing change in his neighbourhood.

Now, as an adult he strives to make positive changes in Brantford and the County of Brant for those living below the poverty line, youth, seniors and families.

"It blew me away that anything could be created in my neighbourhood," he said. "You can see that in every neighbourhood, those needs and those gaps and want to do something positive to help fill those. There's a lot of need out there."

For all he does, the federal NDP candidate for Brant, co-owner of the Brant Advocate, instructor and volunteer was nominated for the Samara Everyday Political Citizen Project.

Samara is a non-partisan organization that works to improve political participation nationally. The project aims to recognize unsung political heroes like campaigners, activists, community organizers and members of riding associations who work within the political system to improve communities in all 308 ridings in Canada.

Laferriere was nominated as Brant's Everyday Political Citizen in December by old friend and colleague Tom Tranmer.

"It was cool," Laferriere said. "It was really nice that a friend of mine, who I know outside of politics, took the time to do that and it's cool he's become more involved."

Laferriere is currently the vice chair of the Brant United Way's GenNext program, member of Brantford's Self Help Addictions Resource Centre and member of the Brantford-Brant Chamber of Commerce's Young Business Networking Committee.

In the past he has volunteered with Canada Without Poverty as the national director and Brant Brantford Roundtable on Poverty as the co-ordinator. He is co-founder of the Brantford Community Garden Project, co-founder of the free annual Brantford Youth Leadership Conference, was director of Rosewood House, vice chair for the Brantford Arts Block board, a director on the board for the Grand River Council on Aging and more.

He is also a member of the Brant-Brantford Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

Laferriere was named the 2013 Education Champion by The Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie, was a 2012 and 2013 platinum award winner in the Brant News Readers' Choice Awards for best local politician and was recipient of the 2012 YMCA Peace Medal for Brantford Brant.

Laferriere believes that politicians shouldn't make an appearance every four years, make promises and disappear when they don't get elected.

"I think people get really cynical when they see political candidates who have all this vim and vigor when campaigning and practically disappear, come back and talk about how much they care and talk about what they'll do if they're elected and not try to do those things when they don't get elected," he said. "It creates a disconnect with people. (Political candidates) should continue to work hard for the community because it's the proper way to live your values."

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