

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 30, 2014**

---

### **Group Hug Apparel presents cheque to Community Living Essex County**

In 2009, Andrew Banar and his mother, Karen Pickle, started a t-shirt company, Group Hug Apparel, to raise money for college and to help local families and charities from his sales. The shirts, featuring Andrew's rock inspired drawings, quickly became a hit and the company grew into a full time business. It has always been important for Andrew to support the community, and over the years he has donated over \$20,000 to local charities, including most recently to Community Living Essex County.

Andrew donated \$500 to Community Living Essex County in support of the Summer Initiative Program from his Group Hug Apparel sales from the past year. Andrew has had the opportunity to attend this program for many summers and he thought other young teens with disabilities should have this same opportunity as well.

The cheque was presented, in a brief ceremony in the lobby of the offices of Community Living Essex County in Essex. [Click here for photo of presentation](#)

Andrew has also been recognized with several awards including the Queens Diamond Jubilee Award, Canadian Down Syndrome Hero Award, Council for Exceptional Children, and many others. For more information on Group Hug Apparel, visit: [www.grouphugapparel.com](http://www.grouphugapparel.com)

If you have any questions please contact Tony DeSantis, Manager, Community Relations and Resource Development at **519-776-6483, ext. 246** or e-mail at [tony@communitylivingessex.org](mailto:tony@communitylivingessex.org)