

## National Inclusive Education Month - Celebrating and Accepting Our Differences Through Spinclusion

By: Mia McGowan



*Spinclusion player lands on "Double Your Score".*

This year, Community Living Toronto expanded its National Inclusive Education week to the entire month of February. Due to the dedication and hard work of many facilitators, approximately 1,000 students from grades two through high school had an opportunity to play Spinclusion, a fun and interactive game which challenges children and youth to think positively about being welcoming and including everyone.

With over 20 schools participating, there were many great moments of insight. One of the highlights of this past month came from Scarborough Village public school. The grade 4/5 class was very enthusiastic about spinning the wheel and working together to come up with answers to our questions about inclusion.

The teacher, Mr. Malcolm, wrapped up the session beautifully. After an hour of discussion about thinking positively rather than negatively about differences, focusing on people's abilities not their disabilities or inabilities, and thinking about people's feelings rather than what they look like, Mr. Malcolm referred to a sign posted in his classroom that read, "Actions speak louder than words. Don't just say it, do it!" Which was a great addition to Spinclusion's message of including everyone; Don't just talk about inclusion,

practice it! The students wholeheartedly agreed they would take the lessons learned that day and practice them at school.

In other Spinclusion news, 2014 is going to be a great year. Thanks to a generous donation through United Way, 50 new partnerships will be developed with organizations Canada-wide. Participating organizations will receive two free Spinclusion games as well as facilitator training to help them develop effective Spinclusion facilitation skills. We will also be expanding the Spinclusion website and printing more games. As we gear up for an exciting opportunity to promote the game throughout Canada and beyond, a recent visit to Wilkinson Public school is a perfect example of why a game like Spinclusion can be so impactful; after a lively session the grade 6 students reflected on what they had learned by writing letters that their teacher was kind enough to share.

As I read through them, it confirmed for me that a fun and creative game is an excellent way to encourage children and youth to think about how they can make changes in their own lives to be more inclusive and accepting of all people. One of those amazing letters from Wilkinson Public school can be seen on page 2.

For more information, contact Mia McGowan at 416-438-1164 ext 222 or [mmcgowan@cltoronto.ca](mailto:mmcgowan@cltoronto.ca) [www.spinclusion.ca](http://www.spinclusion.ca)

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March 2014

# News

## Volunteer Leadership

### Honourary Patron

The Hon. David C. Onley  
Lieutenant Governor of  
Ontario

Patron's Council Chair  
Duncan N. R. Jackman

### Founding Chair

The Hon. Barbara  
McDougall

### Vice-Chair

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The Hon. Zanana Akande

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Mary Pat Armstrong

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The Hon. William G. Davis

Michael Enright

W. Robert Farquharson

Paul Godfrey

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Dale Lastman

Dr. Kellie Leitch

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Meredith Saunderson

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### Board of Directors

#### President

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Susan Silma

Stefica Skof

Chris Stringer

Chief Executive Officer

Garry Pruden

Dear Community Living,

I am [redacted], today some of your employees came to my room and we played spinclusion, a game which teaches us how to include everyone, no matter of who you are. It made me think what makes a person them, who am I. So I thought about and I realised it doesn't matter what they do but what they want to be.

It also made me think, what is ~~my~~ definition of inclusion, well here it is. Inclusion is letting everyone do something together no matter if they're gay, have a disability or anything. It's letting everyone be equal in a safe environment no matter of race.

I also thought about how there is way too much discrimination.

Almost every where you go there's someone saying "That's so gay" or "don't let him play, he's different, he has a disability". It's not fair, we should all be treated equally, no matter how different we are. We should be embracing different not making fun of it. From: [redacted]

## Amalgamated Zoning By-Law

For the past year, the City of Toronto has been attempting to amalgamate its zoning by-law to bring licensing, distancing and other provisions into alignment across the city. For example, distancing between group homes varied between 300m to none. We met with City Councillor Adam Vaughan, who is on the Planning & Growth Committee as well as chair of the Disability Issues committee, to express our concern about some of the provisions outlined in the bylaw. These included group homes needing to occupy an entire building and be in a detached house, the number of people living together which qualifies a group home, and a separation requirement of 250m, among other requirements.

While most of our concerns were addressed in the updated version, including the removal of the distancing requirement (thanks to the Ontario Human Rights Commission), the final by-law is still being reviewed, and public consultation will take place in early April. This is good news! Well, mostly. Some Councillors are trying to have the 250m distancing requirement inserted back into the by-law, even though they have been advised that any distancing requirements would lose a Human Rights or charter challenge. Why? Well, it is still generally felt that 'group homes' devalue the other homes in the neighbourhood.

The other item that we are concerned about is the number of people living together that qualifies as a group home. The first draft of the by-law indicated that 3 or more unrelated persons could be considered a group home. This was changed to not more than 10. Which is good. However, by removing the lower threshold of what constitutes a 'group home', the potential for licensing group living arrangements of any size is at risk. We would prefer a lower threshold of 5-6, which would protect group living arrangements with fewer people from needing to be licensed.

### Why are we telling you this? Well, we need your help!

We need our members to tell your councillor, particularly those on the Planning & Growth Committee, that

- People with an intellectual disability have a right to live in the communities of their choosing, in the neighbourhoods they want and with the people they want.
- People with disabilities have been living, as of right, in communities all across Toronto since the 1970's, without incident, without objection from their neighbours
- Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in the world, and that is reflected by all people living together in all of Toronto's neighbourhoods. And,
- By enforcing a distancing requirement, you are creating communities that lack diversity and inclusion
- Defining a lower threshold of a group home for licensing purposes will further enable people to live with 1-2 roommates in a supported environment privately and independently.

You can find your councillor by clicking [here](#). You can also contact the members of the Planning & Growth Management Committee:

Peter Milczyn (Chair): [councillor\\_milczyn@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_milczyn@toronto.ca)

Josh Colle: [councillor\\_colle@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_colle@toronto.ca)

John Filion: [councillor\\_filion@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_filion@toronto.ca)

Frances Nunziata: [councillor\\_nunziata@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_nunziata@toronto.ca)

Karen Stintz: [councillor\\_stintz@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_stintz@toronto.ca)

Adam Vaughan: [councillor\\_vaughan@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_vaughan@toronto.ca)

### Thank you!

If you have any questions, you can contact Karen Bell at [kbell@cltoronto.ca](mailto:kbell@cltoronto.ca). We will keep you updated on this important issue.

## Federal Budget

February's Federal budget made some solid investments in the disability sector, particularly in the areas of employment training, where \$15million over three years was designated to the Canadian Association for Community Living's Ready, Willing and Able program, which will work with employers to promote hiring people with intellectual disabilities and create up to 1,200 new jobs across Canada. In addition, over \$11million will be invested in employment training programs for people with

autism. With over \$200million invested in Labour Market Agreements for people with disabilities and a newly established Canadian Employers Disability Forum, we are hoping more people will be able to find work.

Other investments include programs for seniors, increased tax relief for families who have children with disabilities and increased funding for Special Olympics. For details, you can visit [www.gc.ca](http://www.gc.ca).



## Meet Alex!

### He Recently Moved Into His Own Home

*He's 30 years old; loves music, dancing, and bowling; plays the guitar; rides horses; and works four days a week in two Coffee Sheds, one at Surrey Place Centre and one at George Brown College. He's one of 24 people who are living more independently with the support of LIGHTS. Below is an excerpt of an interview with LIGHTS founder, Mary Pat Armstrong.*

When he opens the door of his apartment to me, his beaming smile lights up the hallway. He invites me in, takes my coat, introduces me to his brother Jamie, and then, with great pride, shows me his new home—the kitchen, the living room, and the amazing view from his bedroom. (He lives on one of the top floors in his building.)

Alex is a thoroughly engaging young man and host. With occasional support from his brother, Alex explains that their mother died four years ago. His father has serious health problems, and his sister and brother have both moved out of the family home. Now it was his turn to set out on his own.

The prospect frightened Alex. He needed time to prepare, and he needed money. But as 2013 rolled around, Alex had made up his mind. He wanted to find a job he liked, which he has since done, and he wanted to move into his own place.

By then his family had heard about LIGHTS. With support from Community Living Toronto, they began

to work on a plan and a budget. His dad worried about all of it, but Alex's brother and sister were confident in the plan and completely supportive. Laura, our LIGHTS facilitator, helped Alex and his family finalize their personal plan and budget. Alex was ready to go!

As soon as the apartment Alex lives in became available, his sister Mariam took him to see it. Alex walked through the door, and—well, we can't print what he next told me. But, he says, "My eyes were as big as saucers!"

*Interested in reading more about Alex's new life? Visit [www.lights.to](http://www.lights.to) for the full interview.*

## CLToronto Annual Picnic!

Saturday, June 21st

11am—3pm

1712 Ellesmere Road

For more info, watch [www.communitylivingtoronto.ca](http://www.communitylivingtoronto.ca)

# Central News

## Council Listings

### Central Regional Council

Chairperson  
Peter Wakayama

Vice Chair  
Lee Tarshis

Board Representative  
Susan McCloy

Alternate  
Board Representative  
Peter Wakayama

Treasurer  
Susan McCloy

Chair of Fundraising Committee  
Judy Dawson

### Members at Large

David Danyluk  
Kate Gilhooly  
Dawn Lunan  
Daniel Paquin  
Nelson Raposo  
Alda Zimbalatti

Regional Executive Director  
Frances MacNeil

Membership Coordinator  
Ann-Marie Binetti  
647-729-1210  
[abinetti@cltoronto.ca](mailto:abinetti@cltoronto.ca)

Contact Information  
Central Regional Office  
20 Spadina Rd.  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5R 2S7

T: 416.968.0650  
F: 416.968.6463

**Central Region Meeting:  
March 11th, 2014  
6:00 pm  
20 Spadina Road  
Room 2B**



## Central Region Council's Annual

# SPRING FLING

*Dinner and Dance*

Saturday May 10, 2014

5:00 pm reception

6:00 pm dinner



Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

6 Garamond Court

(Don Mills and Wynford Drive)

Tickets: \$50 each

Please contact Ann-Marie Binetti at  
(647) 729-1210 or at [abinetti@cltoronto.ca](mailto:abinetti@cltoronto.ca)

Community  
Living  
Toronto



Where choices change the lives  
of people with an intellectual disability

## Council Listings

Etobicoke/ York  
Regional Council

Chairperson  
Ann Marie Fierro

Board Representative  
Stefica Skof

Treasurer  
Susan King

### Members at Large

Airi Clifford  
Zdenka Bilic  
Mary Byne  
Janina Coulthard  
Joan Karout  
Gaston Karout  
Christine LeClair  
Peter Marrese  
Ruth Nagy  
Laura Parsonson  
Mary Pawson  
Sharon Totafurno

Regional Executive Director  
Brad Saunders

Membership Coordinator  
Eric Laimer  
647.729.0445  
[elaimer@cltoronto.ca](mailto:elaimer@cltoronto.ca)

Contact Information  
Etobicoke/York  
Regional Office  
295 The West Mall,  
Suite 204  
Etobicoke, Ontario  
M9C 4Z4

T: 416.236.7621  
F: 416.236.7673

**Next Council Meeting:**  
**Tuesday March 11th,**  
**6:30 pm**  
**295 The West Mall**  
**Suite 204**  
**Boardroom**

## ADP Debuts Massage Therapy

By: Eric Laimer



*Trevor White and Isabell Cyrklaff.*

Over a year ago, Violet Atkinson, Etobicoke/York Region Manager, contacted Centennial College with the idea of creating a field placement for college Massage Therapy students to provide an innovative alternative to support the sometimes complex needs of the people attending the Etobicoke Adult Development Program (ADP). The ADP provides training in basic work related and life skills for adults with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities who require extensive support. With Centennial College being at the other end of the city, travel time was an issue for the students. However it was recommended to approach Humber College about the proposed field placement.

Support Worker III Derek Feltz followed up and successfully coordinated a field placement with students from the Humber College Massage Therapy course. Humber agreed to provide five students for ten-one hour massage sessions every Friday at Etobicoke ADP.

The massage therapy started in mid-January and has so far been a great success. Currently five people at ADP have been enjoying the benefits of their free weekly massages.

Each person receives a one hour massage from a student who is supervised by a Registered Massage Therapist. The students are typically in their last semester of their Massage Therapy program and receive credit towards their required field placement hours.

A few individuals at the ADP were hesitant at first, not having had any experience receiving massage therapy, but staff helped the students to create a relationship of trust and comfort with them. All ADP staff have been very supportive of the program and have even adjusted their lunch schedules to make it work.

In a short time, staff have seen the benefit of the massage sessions to the individuals supported. Peter is one example. He has daily seizures, is non-verbal, and often spends his time restlessly wandering around the ADP, despite the efforts of staff to keep him

*Continued on page 10.*

## Council Listings

### North York Regional Council

Chairperson  
Nancy Ceci

Board Representative  
Colleen Broadhurst

Alternate Board Representative  
Morris Jesion

Treasurer  
TBD

Members at Large  
Teresa Bhandal  
Shirley Germuska  
Eva Lipa

Regional Executive Director  
Brad Saunders

Membership Coordinator  
Wendy Dyke  
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[wdyke@cltoronto.ca](mailto:wdyke@cltoronto.ca)

Contact Information  
North York Regional Office  
1122 Finch Ave. W.,  
Unit 18  
Toronto, Ontario  
M3J 3J5

T: 416.225.7166  
F: 416.225.8623

### Next Council Meeting:

**March 3, 2014**  
**Employment Training  
Services  
Boardroom**  
**1122 Finch Avenue W.**  
**Unit 16**  
**1:00 - 3:00 pm**

## The Drawing Class

By Stephen Tward



*Stephen makes time in his busy schedule for a photo op*

The North York Employment Training Services (NY ETS) has a new program initiated by Elizabeth, a Community Living Toronto employee. The first drawing class is about cartoon drawings. The second class is basic drawing. It is simple drawing that we do, in step by step instructions.

In the first group of drawing, which is Basic Cartoon, we express our feelings through drawing. We learn different shapes, common letters used in cartoon drawings, and lines. We also learn different shapes of eyes, nose, hair styles, ear, eyebrows and mouth to form the face of a cartoon character.

At the end of our class, we draw our own cartoon character and we give it a name.

The second part of our morning session is the basic drawing. Same as the cartoon drawing, we learn the

shapes, common letter use and the lines. We learn the step by step instructions through our staff effort by drawing on the board, books and we have video shows by professional artists. We have eight individuals in the class.

We draw the simple sea creatures, fruits, and birds. The objective of the program is to have fun, exercise our cognitive and motor skills.

All materials are provided by NY ETS. The program runs from the months January to May, and September to December.



*Stephen enjoys writing stories that he keeps in a binder to continuously work on improving his writing skills. Look for more articles from Stephen about what is happening at NY ETS in future newsletters.*

# Scarborough News

## Council Listings

### Scarborough Regional Council

**Co-Chairpersons**  
Judith Andrenacci  
Alison Thomas

**Board Representative**  
Bonnie Heath

**Treasurer**  
Deborah White

**Members at Large**  
Donna Britten  
Donald Hale  
Kathy Lisle  
Ellen Armstrong  
Robert Shaddock

**Regional Executive Director**  
Sue Lynch

**Membership Coordinator**  
Felicitia Zanatta 647-729-1635  
[fzanatta@cltoronto.ca](mailto:fzanatta@cltoronto.ca)

**Contact Information**  
Scarborough Regional Office  
1712 Ellesmere Rd.  
Scarborough, Ontario  
M1H 2V5

T: 416.438.6099  
F: 416.438.6144

**Next Council Meeting:**  
**Tuesday March 4, 2014**  
**6:30 pm**  
**1712 Ellesmere Rd**  
**Boardroom**

## Thank You Hawks International!

By: Danielle Pittman




Scarborough ETS-HAWKS luncheon 2013

On November 27, 2013 HAWKS International held their fourth annual Scarborough Employment Training Services (ETS) holiday luncheon. Everyone enjoyed the music, pizza lunch, and the gifts that were handed out. HAWKS members attended the party and we all had a great time mingling and dancing.

The members of HAWKS international graciously fundraised for this event. Everyone at Scarborough

ETS looks forward to this annual event as it is a favorite. We would like to give a big THANK YOU to HAWKS International for their continued support. We also need to give a big THANK YOU to Ralda Singleton for making HAWKS aware of us and Community Living Toronto.

We are looking forward to many more years of getting together, having fun, and developing friendships.



## Join the Community Living Toronto Achilles Team !!!

The Annual Achilles St. Patrick's Day 5k run/walk will be taking place on **Sunday March 16, 2014.**

It is the **10th** year that Scarborough Region Council has sponsored this event. To join our team, you must collect a minimum \$45.00 to cover the entrance fee, but all monies collected over that could be directed to any Community Living Toronto program of your choice.

To register and to receive a pledge form, please contact Felicitia Zanatta at 647- 729-1635 or [fzanatta@cltoronto.ca](mailto:fzanatta@cltoronto.ca)



# Self-Advocates Council Update

## Self-Advocates Council Listings

Board Representative  
Paul Cochrane

Community Living Ontario  
Representative  
Peter Marrese

Chair  
Sam McKhail

Vice Chair  
Robbie Cowdrey

### Members At Large

Lorraine Bradley  
Robbie Cowdrey  
Candice Doherty  
Michael Edser  
Caseen Johnson  
Linda Kirmiziyani  
Sam McKhail  
Mark Miller  
Richard Newland  
Nelson Raposo  
Dhonnine Trinidad

Community Support  
Coordinator  
Sue Hutton  
647-729-1205  
shutton@cltoronto.ca

**Next Council Meeting:**  
**March, 19, 2014**  
**1—3pm**

Monthly SAC Meetings  
are the Third Wednesday  
of Each Month at 20  
Spadina. 1pm—3pm.

## Self-Advocates Council Set To Become Film Critics

By: Sue Hutton

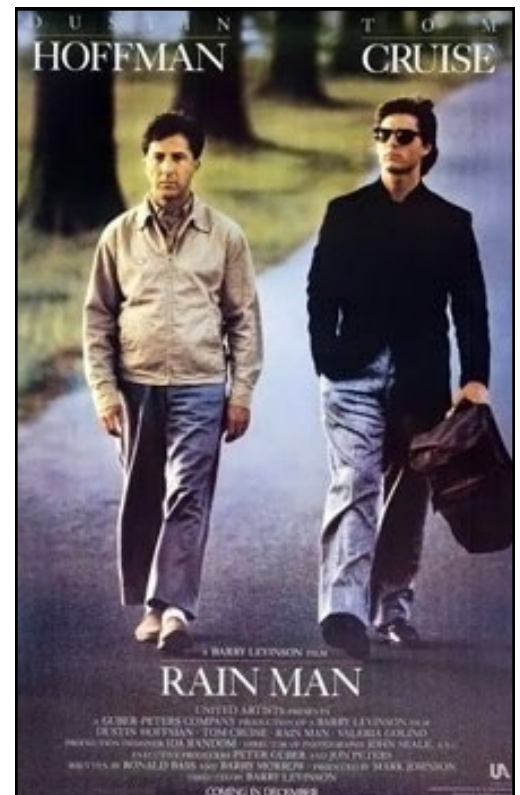
Self-Advocates Council (SAC) member Lorraine Bradley recently shared with the group how much she loves sitting back and watching a good movie. Everybody around the SAC table agreed they also love movies. The discussion then turned to rights, and how SAC members feel about the way intellectual disability is shown in the major motion pictures.

People laughed about some of the movies they've seen, and turned serious, and at times emotional, about others. The thought came up to host some films with disability portrayed, and have a supportive discussion afterwards. "I'll even bring popcorn!" Lorraine offered – so excited to start this project. "Watching movies together will give us a chance to talk about what we think of how they show intellectual disability in movies." It will also give an opportunity for self-advocates to critique how disability is shown on the big screen.

When talking about the right to be in a relationship – the group talked about the movie "I Am Sam" starring Sean Penn. Sean Penn acts as a dad with an intellectual disability, and the big challenges he goes through in raising his daughter. Then we talked about "The Boys Next Door", "Rain Man", and "Riding The Bus with My Sister" among others. The SAC will vote on which movies to view and

reflect on and critique.

We'll have popcorn, and also kleenex in the room, for those emotional moments. The SAC watched several trailers together at a recent meeting, and voted to start their "Film Critic" Movie discussions with the classic film Rain Man, starring Dustin Hoffman. If you have ideas for films with people with intellectual disability on the big screen, please let us know. Contact Sue Hutton for further information: [shutton@cltoronto.ca](mailto:shutton@cltoronto.ca) 647-729-1205.



## ADP Debuts Massage Therapy

*Continued from page 6.*

engaged in activities. Peter has been surprisingly receptive to the massages. “The fact that Peter stayed still for an hour was incredible.” says Derek.

The massage therapy sessions have expanded to include three people supported at Etobicoke Employment Training Services (ETS). An invitation to try the massage sessions has also been extended to

individuals in the Supported Independent Living (SIL) Program.

The inaugural run of the massage sessions is scheduled to end in April. Derek is hoping to make massage therapy a regular field placement with the students of Humber College and expand its availability to more people supported by Community Living Toronto.

## New Best Buddies Chapter

Community Living Toronto and Best Buddies Canada will be starting a new high school chapter. The chapter will be run by Ursula Franklin Academy on the border of Central and Etobicoke/York region. We are looking for participants who reside in Etobicoke/York, especially participants from the areas of Evans Ave/Browns Line to the High Park area who would like to be paired with a buddy.

We are actively recruiting participants between the ages of 14-21. The participants will be paired in a one-to-one ratio for community outings, weekly phone calls and group events.

Interested parties should contact Jackie Fisher (Etobicoke/York) at 647-729-1162 or Matt Poirier (Central) at 647-729-1209. For more information about Best Buddies, please go to their website [www.bestbuddies.ca](http://www.bestbuddies.ca).



## Jump Start Literacy!

Do you know an adult with an intellectual disability who needs help understanding how to bank? Requires additional comprehension skills in reading and writing? Needs support in understanding money? If so, Community Living Toronto has a wonderful program called Jumpstart Literacy for adults with intellectual Disabilities, which assists individuals with life skills such as understanding money concepts, banking process, reading, writing and various other subjects.

We have teachers and volunteers who teach and assist individuals in learning these concepts. We are looking for additional participants who are 18+ to join at 1122 Finch Avenue West, #16 on Saturdays from 9:30 am – 11:30 am. Interested parties should contact Jackie Fisher (Etobicoke/York) at 647-729-1162.

### **Pizza Bingo Night!**

**Thursday March 20  
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

**Victoria Park Hub  
1527 Victoria Park Avenue, 2nd. Floor**

**\$5.00 Admission**

**RSVP by Wednesday March 19th to:  
Flora Nichols 647-729-3645 or  
Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627**

# Resources, Networking And You

## Transitions from Elementary School: Some Tips!

Transitioning your child from elementary school to junior high school or high school can be a daunting task for many parents. For the parent of a child with an intellectual disability, it can be even more difficult. You need to realize that no school is going to be “perfect”. Every parent has a different vision of what they want for their child and for their child’s education. Each child is different and their needs are different.

When looking for a junior high and/or high school, networking with other parents can be useful. You may also wish to consult with your child’s current teacher and principal. Talk to the elementary school principal prior to the Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC).

Remember, you know your child best, but you should try to involve your child as much as possible in the decisions as this is one of the most important decisions that will affect their future.

Decide together what you both would like to see your child doing in high school while keeping the bigger picture of what they may be interested in doing after high school in mind.

The following are some suggestions you may wish to think about when looking for a junior high or high school:

### **Start checking out high schools 2-3 years before your child is going to graduate.**

This will give you an idea of what is available and will help you decide when the time actually arrives. Don’t limit yourself to your community high school. Visit high schools within a reasonable distance from your home. Nowadays, many students diverge out of their community to attend the high school that will best meet their needs.

Watch for open houses at the schools; there are tours and information nights for both parents and students. If your child is not able to attend with their class, make sure they have the opportunity to go with you. Talk to your child about their impressions and

feelings of this new school environment and listen carefully if they are expressing concerns or asking questions. If you can’t answer the questions, try to get the answers from the appropriate school board personnel.

### **Have a list of questions to ask.**

Examples: What types of programs do they have? How many students in the program? Do they offer inclusive as well as segregated settings?

### **Have the current school set up or accompany you on a visit to the feeder school.**

If you are looking to enroll in a school that is not the feeder school, the principal may not be able to facilitate the visit.

### **Plan your visit for first thing in the morning.**

You can learn a lot about a school by the way the students enter the school. Some schools are noisy, some are calm.

### **When going on a school visit, take someone along.**

Write down your impressions and gut feelings then discuss them with your friend. Complete writing about one school before you visit the next one.

### **Develop a relationship with the school you feel is the best choice.**

Establish a contact person for the school.

### **There is the possibility of turn over in staff and funding changes.**

What you saw the first time might not be in place when your child is ready to go. Keep up to date on any changes.

### **Ask what you can do to prepare your child for high school.**

What goals can be worked on at elementary school and at home?

# Bridging Diversity



## Greetings from our Diversity Coordinator

### Defining Diversity

Diversity is commonly understood in terms of dimensions that include but are not limited to race, age, place of origin, religion, ancestry, Aboriginal status, skin colour, citizenship, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, disability/ability, marital, parental or family status, same-sex partnership status, creed, language, educational background, literacy level, geographic location, income level, cultural tradition and work experience.

Source: Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition

It's only been one month since I joined Community Living Toronto as Diversity Specialist, yet it already feels like home. And not just because of a sense of familiarity that comes from previous work in the community support sector, but because the people I have met thus far have made me feel very welcome and have given me a sense of belonging. Whether it was a welcoming e-mail, a smile in the hallway, or an invitation to join the Zumba class, I have felt included. And, I find, it is that feeling of inclusion that really stays with you and shapes your experience. It then seems fitting for the first 2014 issue of Bridging Diversity to feature a story about what I call "inclusion in action," especially since February was National Inclusive Education Month.

So in the spirit of community building, I invite you to visit my little diversity resource nook on the 2nd floor of our Spadina Road office. There



you can find a variety of resources and materials, from human rights definitions to group activities and even a couple of very cool children's books on diversity.

I hope to be a helpful, accessible resource to you in the vital work that you do, because when it comes to creating inclusive communities, we are truly all in this together!

Ilaneet Goren

Diversity Specialist, [ilaneet.goren@cltoronto.ca](mailto:ilaneet.goren@cltoronto.ca)

### Bridging Diversity Team

Sue Lynch, Sponsor

Bob Ferguson, Lead

John Balatka

Karen Bell

Ilaneet Goren

Moreen Grant

Winnie Ho

Layla Ibrahim

Kelly Kearns

Dwayne Shaw

## The Road to Dan Leckie- Krista & Marissa's Story

By Jelena Dangubic

What does true community inclusion mean to you? To Marissa Blake and Krista Lee Bath, it meant moving into their first apartment – together!

When Marissa and Krista learned that they were going to move into their own apartment on Dan Leckie Way with Community Living Toronto last spring, they were thrilled for the opportunity for increased independence and personal growth. But they were also

a little apprehensive because they didn't know each other. They had the opportunity to meet once before moving in which helped break the ice, but they each described the idea of living with someone they barely knew as "weird." Both women had previously lived in small town group homes and were open about the limitations they had

*Continued on the next page.*

## The Road to Dan Leckie...

experienced there, such as having a 9 PM curfew and not being involved in the menu planning or budgeting.

For those who previously haven't met Marissa and Krista, they are two very different people. Marissa is a serious planner who often keeps a close eye on things that need to be done around the apartment like the grocery list and the laundry. Krista is spontaneous and laid back, but when necessary she will jump in to get things done. It took time for the two to get accustomed to each other's differences, but gradually they have learned to work with each other to accomplish things.

Since moving to Dan Leckie, Marissa and Krista have been keeping busy, not just around their apartment but also out in the community. They have been booking WheelTrans and using TTC on their own and attending various Community Living programs such as Community Junction and Foster Connections. The women have also pursued their individual hobbies and have traveled. Krista has joined a hockey league and visited her old group home in Peterborough, while Marissa joined a sailing

program and attended her sister's wedding in Brantford. At Christmas, the two hosted an open house and spent hours at the mall, shopping for their families and friends. They have made a lot of new friends and say they hope to meet more in the future.

Living on their own, Krista and Marissa were able to more fully experience Toronto's diversity while learning about each other's cultures. One of the highlights was watching the Caribbean Carnival parade from the front row, surrounded by the dazzling floats and costumes. For Marissa it was a chance to feel a connection to her family's Caribbean roots.

Marissa and Krista have accomplished a major milestone over the last year. They have overcome obstacles and have learned to collaborate, creating opportunities for personal growth. As they move into their second year of living together, the two women who were strangers a year ago and are now like sisters, continue to learn from each other and build memories that will last a lifetime.

### Learn To Cook!

For Individuals 18+ with an intellectual Disability. Hands on learning, Goal Focused

1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 16  
Wednesdays: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
April 2 to May 28  
(8 weeks- no class on April 16)

For more information and application  
Please contact Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627 or email:  
wdyke@cltoronto.ca

### Sixth Easy Roller Bowlathon

**Saturday April 5, 2014 5:00 to 8:00 pm**

Bowlerama West -5429 Dundas Street West  
\$25 entry fee or pledges per bowler

**Registration deadline: Friday March 28**

For registration & info contact: Eric Laimer  
647-729-0445 or elaimer@cltoronto.ca

All proceeds to Etobicoke/York Council

### TTC Readiness:

*An Introductory Course!*

Sponsored in part by  
North York Regional Council

Location: 1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 16

**Classes - Wednesdays**

**(April 2 to May 7) 6:00 - 9:00 pm**

**Field Instruction - Saturdays**

**(May 3 and May 10) 12:30 - 5:00 pm**

Fee: \$50.00 per participant (for members)  
\$80.00 per participant (non-members)

Note: Participants must also purchase TTC day passes for each field instruction Saturday  
Cost of day passes \$11.00 each

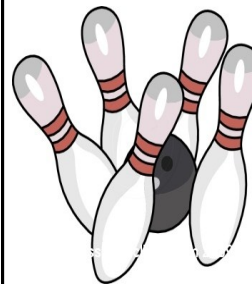
For more information or to apply contact :  
Wendy Dyke  
647-729-3627 or email wdyke@cltoronto.ca

# Events / Workshops

## Thank You Volunteers! Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Wednesday, April 16th, 2014  
Registration at 5:30pm, Dinner at 6pm

The Montecassino Hotel and Event Venue  
3710 Chesswood Drive, Downsview



## 4th Annual Bingo Bowling Extravaganza!!!!

Friday April 11, 2014  
7 to 10 pm

**Parkway Bowl**  
**67 Ellesmere Road**

Please join Scarborough Council for a fun night of Bingo Bowling and help us raise funds to support our great initiatives!

Please contact: Felicita Zanatta  
at 647-729-1635 or [fzanatta@cltoronto.ca](mailto:fzanatta@cltoronto.ca)

## ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU LOVE LIVING WITH A **DISABILITY?**

If so, you may be eligible for up to  
**\$3,500** a year in Matching Grants and  
up to **\$1,000** a year in Bonds!

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) is a unique program provided by the government of Canada to enhance the financial security of people living with disabilities.\*

FREE RDSP INFORMATION SESSIONS

HOSTED BY COMMUNITY LIVING TORONTO

Presented by: Brendon Pooran, a Toronto based lawyer who provides advice on wills and estate planning, Government benefits and disability law.

Wednesday, March 12, 2014  
Etobicoke/York Region 7:00—9:00 pm  
295 The West Mall, Suite 204, Etobicoke  
RSVP to: Eric Laimer  
647-729-0045 or [elaimer@cltoronto.ca](mailto:elaimer@cltoronto.ca)

Monday, May 26, 2014  
Central Region 7:00—9:00 pm  
20 Spadina Rd., Toronto  
RSVP to: Ann-Marie Binetti  
647-729-1210 or [abinetti@cltoronto.ca](mailto:abinetti@cltoronto.ca)

Monday, April 14, 2014  
North York Region 7:00—9:00 pm  
1122 Finch Ave. West, Unit 16, North York  
RSVP to: Wendy Dyke  
647.729.3627 or [wdyke@cltoronto.ca](mailto:wdyke@cltoronto.ca)

Tuesday, May 27, 2014  
Scarborough Region 7:00—9:00 pm  
1712 Ellesmere Rd., Scarborough  
RSVP to: Felicita Zanatta  
647.729.1635 or [fzanatta@cltoronto.ca](mailto:fzanatta@cltoronto.ca)

\* Funding for these information sessions is provided by the Government of Canada.

## Conversations and Recreation

Conversations & Recreation Social Club is a place where people living in Etobicoke can gather to meet friends, participate in activities and increase their computer literacy.

Join for the year for only \$50!  
Mondays 4:00 to 7:30 pm  
102 Advance Road  
(South of Bloor off Islington)

For more information contact Derek Feltz  
at: 416-232-1213  
Or [derek.feltz@cltoronto.ca](mailto:derek.feltz@cltoronto.ca)

# Calendar of Events

## March 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Central Region: Ann-Marie Binetti 647-729-1210	Etobicoke/ York Region: Eric Laimer 647-729-0445	North York Region: Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627	Scarborough Region: Felicita Zanatta 647-729-1635			1 Trihards Bowling
2	3 NY Council Meeting Scarborough Council Meeting	4 Scarborough Residential Alternatives	5 Central Dinner Club	6	7 Lawson Dance	8
9	10	11 Etobicoke Council Meeting Central Council Meeting	12 Central Dinner Club Etobicoke RDSP Session	13	14	15 Trihards Bowling
16 Achilles Walk	17	18	19 Central Dinner Club	20 Pizza/Bingo Night at Victoria Pk Hub	21 Scarborough Bingo	22
23 /	24 /	25	26 Central Dinner Club	27	28 Connections Dance	29 Trihards Bowling
30	31					

## April 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Central Dinner Club NY Cooking Class NY TTC Readiness	3	4 Lawson Dance	5 Easy Roller Bowlathon
6	7 NY Council Meeting Scarborough Council Meeting	8 Central Council Meeting Scarborough Residential Alternatives	9 Central Dinner Club NY Cooking Class NY TTC Readiness	10	11 Scarborough Bingo Bowling Extravaganza	12
13	14 NY RDSP Session	15	16 Central Dinner Club NY TTC Readiness Volunteer Dinner	17	18 <b>Good Friday</b>	19
20 <b>Easter Sunday</b>	21 <b>Easter Monday (offices closed)</b>	22	23 Central Dinner Club NY Cooking Class NY TTC Readiness	24	25 Connections Dance	26
27	28	29	30 Central Dinner Club NY Cooking Class NY TTC Readiness			

# 9th Annual DSTO Information Fair

Developmental Services Toronto (DSTO) invites you to attend the **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Information Fair**

## Don't Miss These Exciting Sessions:

- Information on services and supports for adults with a developmental disability and their families
- Presentations on topics of interest to individuals, families and staff
- Networking opportunities with dsto agency staff, self-advocacy groups, family groups and community resources.

**When:** Wednesday, May 14, 2014  
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre  
6 Garamond Court, Toronto, ON M3C 1Z5  
(Don Valley Parkway and Wynford Drive)

For more information about the fair including this year's presentation topics, visit the Developmental Services Ontario, Toronto Region website: [www.dsotoronto.com](http://www.dsotoronto.com)

Contact: Jennifer Altosaar at 647-729-1217 or email [jennifer.altosaar@cltoronto.ca](mailto:jennifer.altosaar@cltoronto.ca)

***This is a FREE event and NO pre-registration is required.***

