

FEATURED STORY

Agincourt Wal-Mart Recognized as Employer of the Year



Charla Rodak accepting award on behalf of Agincourt Walmart with The Honourable Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services and Chris Stringer

Each year at our Annual General Meeting, we recognize a business that is committed to fulfilling our mission of an inclusive society by providing employment opportunities to individuals with an intellectual disability. These organizations demonstrate true acceptance and make individuals supported by Community Living Toronto feel pride and confidence in their work. While we are extremely lucky to work with many organizations that fit this description, this year we presented Agincourt Walmart with our Employer of the Year Award.

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Agincourt Walmart has employed individuals with an intellectual disability for over ten years now. During this time, management and staff have been incredibly supportive to three individuals who are supported through our Association’s Youth2Work program, ensuring their work life is lasting and meaningful. Staff and management encourage and provide the time required to implement any new teaching plans to ensure each individual thrives and have developed an incredible relationship with our Association.

They are a perfect example of an employer providing competitive wages and equal employment opportunities to people with an intellectual disability and have become valued colleagues and community partners. We are extremely grateful for their support and partnership!

A New Season of Sugar Fun

By Yulia Prudova

Throughout the last year our Social Group had a number of gatherings. We had fun decorating cookies with all sorts of colourful icing, candy and dragée. This included a lot of different craft activities from Valentine's card making to tie-dye t-shirts.

Our tireless volunteers prebake cookies and plan craft ideas for all levels and then we all come together to socialize and have fun. This group is run by volunteers and is geared toward people who live in the community and are looking for an easy-going activity once in a while. It is open to family members too, and in fact we welcome parents and siblings to come and just hang out with us and spend some quality time creating something together. This year we plan to continue with cookies to master our decorating skills as well as lots of crafts - origami, Christmas tree decorations, greeting cards and more. Our next meeting is at the end of October, so join us for some sweet and spooky creations. Registration is required for all gatherings; look for updates in the newsletter, on Community Living Toronto's website or FamilyLink's Facebook page. For more information, contact Yulia at yprudova@cltoronto.ca



Canada Day cookie



Just go for it, sprinkle it up some more!

Upcoming Central Events

Central Region Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 13, 2015
6:00 – 8:00 PM
20 Spadina Rd, Room 2B
All are welcome

Flu Clinic

Tuesday, October 27, 2015
9:00 – 11:00 AM
20 Spadina Rd, Room 1B
First come, first served.
Please bring your Health Card. For more information, please contact Matt Poirier at 647-729-1210 or matthew.poirier@cltoronto.ca

Community Partner Award

By: *Susan Santelli*

The Community Partner award was presented at the Etobicoke Regional Annual Meeting on June 18, 2015.

I met Sandra Bruadbridge when I was working as a Support Worker II at Etobicoke Adult Development Program. Sandy, as we know her, works at Jim's No Frills on Islington Avenue. She is not your regular cashier. She always has a great smile on her face. She has helpful hands not only for the individuals we support but for anyone she serves.

We met Sandy at the cash register while shopping with individuals from our cooking group. Initially, Sandy just observed the individuals and staff from the cooking programs. Shortly after, she started offering support helping individuals pay for their items and packing up their groceries independently.

But what makes Sandy special to people with disabilities is that she recognizes that they might require extra time to do things when they go grocery shopping. Whenever individuals supported by Community Living Toronto come to shop, Sandy always greets them with a big smile and supports them in paying as well as packing away their groceries on their own, but offering help if needed. Sandy also helps with counting and sorting skills. Individuals feel proud to be independent shoppers with Sandy's assistance and look forward to their shopping days.

It is great to have people like Sandy to help us better support our individuals in the community.



Sandra Bruadbridge

Upcoming Etobicoke/York Events

Council Meeting

October 13th, 6:30pm to 8:00pm
295 The West Mall in board room

Monday Night Club

4pm-7:30pm
Etobicoke ADP
102 Advance Road
Call 416-232-1213 for details

Friendship Club

Last Wednesday of the month, 6pm-8pm
295 The West Mall in board room
Registration: Laura Lee Edmiston,
647-729-0440 or ledmiston@cltoronto.ca

North York Sends off Long Time Participant with Best Wishes

By: Wendy Dyke

On Thursday, August 13, North York Supported Work and Community Activities (SWACA) (formerly called Employment Training Services) staff and program participants celebrated with Alex Ashbourne as she embarked on the next chapter of her life. Alex and her family have spent the last few years planning and taking steps to move Alex from her family home into a home of her own. Alex already had lots of experience being away from home as she has been going for many years to Shadow Lake Centre during the summer. It has taken Alex a while to get used to the idea of moving out of her family home, but with support and assurances from Alex's family and Community Living Toronto staff, she slowly warmed up to the idea. To help her prepare for this transition, Alex applied to respite services and spent time at one of our group homes. Alex told staff that she really liked spending the weekend there, particularly as some of the residents of the home were friends of hers from her day program. Understanding a little better what it is like to live in a group home with staff support and perhaps with peers she considers friends got Alex excited about the idea of one day moving out of her family home into a home of her own. When Alex's family got the call in the spring that she was being considered for a residential vacancy in the Etobicoke region, Alex was beyond ecstatic about the possibility of moving into her own home.

After being told that Alex was being considered for the vacancy, a tour of the residence was arranged for the family to see Alex's potential new home. During the tour Alex found out that

one of the residents of the home was someone she knew. This seemed to assure Alex about the potential move. She also went to visit the Etobicoke SWACA and discovered that she had friends attending this day program. Alex was so excited to know that she would have friends at her new day program if she moved. The next step of the journey was for Alex to meet her potential roommate. They had dinner together and seemed to like each other. Finally Alex was told at the beginning of summer that she was chosen for the vacancy and moving plans were started. At the beginning of August the move in date was set for August 16th. The final planning meeting occurred the second week of August and on the 13th her friends and staff at the North York SWACA presented her with a chocolate cake with the message 'Good Luck Alex'. She was also given a painting she could take to her new home and a card with best wishes from everyone at the day program. Alex was wished well with hugs and messages that she will be missed. Alex's response was that she would be back for a visit. Congratulations on this exciting step, Alex!



Alex with her good luck cake!

Remembering Tikvah

By: Wendy Dyke

It was the perfect summer day for a picnic in the park. The North York Supported Work and Community Activities (SWACA) participants and staff spent the day at G. Ross Lord Park on Friday, August 21st to celebrate the summer and remember their friend Tikvah. A donation in memory of Tikvah was received by the NY SWACA program to hold this event. The picnic was held in appreciation for all the staff and Tikvah's friends in the North York Region. It was a wonderful day spent visiting, playing games, listening to music and enjoying a barbequed lunch.



North York Supported Work and Community Activities Participants and Staff gathered around Tikvah's sister, Beth (in blue, centre of photo)

Upcoming North York Events

North York Council Meeting

Tuesday October 6, 2015, 1 pm to 3 pm
North York Regional Office
1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 18
Please RSVP attendance to: Wendy Dyke
647-729-3627 or wdyke@cltoronto.ca



Woodchippers Special Needs

5 & 10 pin Bowling League
2788 Bathurst Street (Bathurst and Glencairn)
Runs Every Saturday Except December 26
September 12, 2015 to April 23, 2016 2016
at 12:45pm

For more information, contact Lynda Mason at
905-731-0926.

Please RSVP attendance to: Wendy Dyke
647-729-3627 or wdyke@cltoronto.ca

Halloween Dance

1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 16
Friday, October 23, 2015
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Admission: \$5.00
To register, please call:
Wendy Dyke at 647-729-3627 or
wdyke@cltoronto.ca

Pizza/Bingo

Tuesday November 16, 2015
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Victoria Park Hub
1527 Victoria Park Ave., 2nd floor
Pre-registration by Monday November 15th
Required – Space is Limited
If you register and then cannot come,
Please Call to cancel - Thanks!
To register please call: Wendy Dyke
647-729-3627 or wdyke@cltoronto.ca

SCARBOROUGH REGION

Plastic Canvas Art

By: Glen Snyder

In the spring of 2015, Scarborough Council provided funding to enable people supported by Scarborough's Adult Protective Service Worker (APSW) to participate in an arts and craft group. For an afternoon twice a month, people were able to come together and enjoy time with new friends who shared the same love and enjoyment of creating.

The group was the brain child of Melissa Turner, a social work student who was doing her field placement with Community Living Toronto. Melissa's placement in Scarborough ended before the group's completion. The friendships made and the enthusiasm of everyone enabled the group to carry on even without her facilitation. People had so much knowledge and when Melissa left, I was worried about having to facilitate on my own as I am not a really crafty person, but I was impressed at how much people brought to the group and their willingness to share their knowledge with the others. I definitely learned a lot!

Participants were able to create new works of art in mediums they enjoyed in the past and were able to develop new skills and interests. People painted, drew, coloured and did bead work among other things. One of the most popular activities was plastic canvas. Plastic canvassers expanded their skills and were able to teach others who were exposed to it for the first time.

Everyone was happy to have had the opportunity to be part of such a fun group and

grateful to Scarborough Regional Council for making it possible.



Plastic Canvas Art

Upcoming Scarborough Events

Council Meeting

Monday, November 2, 2015 6:15pm
1712 Ellesmere Road in Boardroom
All Welcome!

Bingo at Lawson

Friday, October 16, 2015
1712 Ellesmere Road, 7-8:30pm
\$5 for a snack and prizes

Winter Literacy

Saturday, Morning 9 am-noon
1710 Ellesmere Road Program
Starts October 17, 2015
Registration is \$20 plus \$5 each week

For more information on all of these events and to register, contact Felicita Zanatta at 647-729-1635 or fzanatta@cltoronto.ca

Best Buddies

Tuesday Oct 20th 2015

1712 Ellesmere Rd

6-8pm

RSVP to Sarah at 647-729-1633 or

swinter@cltoronto.ca

SELF ADVOCATES COUNCIL

Rainbow Comes to Foster's Club House

By: Sue Hutton

The Self-Advocates Council had a goal to learn more about LGBTQ inclusion. Friend and community partner from Griffin Centre Rainbow Coco Channel was invited to lead a workshop for self-advocates to learn about inclusion and LGBTQ rights. Rainbow talked with self-advocates at Foster Club House about what the rainbow flag means. In a fun afternoon of artwork and self-discovery, self-advocates created their very own rainbow flag for Foster's Club House.

Rainbow has been leading sprOUT workshops around the province over the past decade. Always an inspiration to self-advocates, Rainbow was warmly welcomed for the workshop. Gleeful calls of "RAINBOW!" echoed from all corners of Foster's Club House when she entered with a broad smile which beamed throughout the room. Rainbow literally lights up the room when she walks in.

The art-based discussion was fun and inclusive, and also turned serious at times. The discussion ranged from talking about how we like to be referred to regarding our gender ("he or she", or the more neutral "they" etc.), to

bullying and gay-bashing. Rainbow shared with the group her passion for doing her work:

"I love doing this work! I am a LGBTQ educator and activist. I love creating safe spaces for people everywhere. Everybody deserves a safe space where they are included and loved exactly as they are. I love coming to Foster's, I always feel safe here".

Rainbow wrote a book too – *Rainbow's Disability Survival Story*. "It's about my life, coming out, my real life. There's a lot of pain in there, and I cried and cried writing it. I don't cry anymore- the tears are all in the book now! I actually started doing this work at first, because I lost a really good friend, who took their own life – a beautiful Native person who was gay. That's why I'm working to build safe communities with a rainbow shield to protect us. We need to stick together as a community".

Rainbow urged self-advocates to stand up for friends if anyone makes homophobic comments. We talked about it being similar to how people with intellectual disabilities feel about the R word! "We all need the connection of love. Children are brought into this world as angels – regardless if they have a gay dad or a lesbian mom. We can all be allies".

The Self-Advocates council and friends at Foster's Club House shared stories and had lots of laughs creating a flag for Foster's to help build a safe community. Just like the first rainbow flag that was designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker, the flag has colours that represent parts of the community.

Rainbow's closing words to the group: "I think you're brightening up the rainbow right now!" Thank you Rainbow!

For more information on further Self-Advocates Council workshops on important issues like this; please contact Sue Hutton at shutton@cltoronto.ca all are welcome.



Self-Advocates and friends are proudly wearing these rainbow ally buttons.

NEWS

The Benefits of Inclusion in the Classroom

By: Mia McGowan, Education Outreach and Spinclusion Coordinator

Education for all means:

“Ensuring that all children have access to basic education of good quality. This implies creating an environment in schools and in basic education programs in which children are both able and enabled to learn” UNESCO

Did you know...

An inclusive classroom benefits all students through:

- Greater opportunity for friendships
- Increased social network
- More respect for others

- Shared learning opportunities
- Increased safety by reducing isolation
- Higher academic expectations
- Access to a wider range of school resources
- Increased collaboration and participation
- A more welcoming, positive school environment
- Readiness for inclusion outside of school

Research has found that schools with highly developed inclusive programs had educators who:

- Foster a shared vision
- Collaborate with parents and other professionals
- Engage in ongoing professional development
- Use evidence based decision making
- Understand and implement policies that lead to positive change

This information and more is available for download in brochure format at:

<http://connectability.ca/Garage/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/education-brochure.pdf>



Family Link

Fall Mindfulness for Parents and Caregivers

A 6 week group of Mindfulness practice for parents and caregivers taught for all levels in an engaging way. Based on research and traditional teachings modified for families and facilitated by a trained mindfulness practitioner. Wednesdays, Nov 6 to Dec 9, 6 - 8 PM, 20 Spadina Road, Room 1. To register and for more information contact Yulia Prudova at 647-729-1209 or yprudova@cltoronto.ca

For more information on FamilyLink activities follow us on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/349546215163652/>

www.communitylivingtoronto.ca



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United Way
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