

FEATURED STORY

Become a Holiday Helper to our Holiday Hamper Program

By: *Minyan Cheng*



The Holidays are coming and we are getting ready to assist those less fortunate with our annual Holiday Hamper program, which has been providing Holiday gifts to people supported by Community Living Toronto for over 20 years. Last year, the program supported 86 families including over 130 children by directly providing them with toys, clothing, food, household items, gift cards and more. All this is made possible by the generous support of Community Living Toronto donors, as well as the Chum/City Christmas Wish, who have been a long time donor providing financial support and toys. This year, we have also

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partnered with Toronto Star's Santa Claus. However, we still need your help! Financial assistance goes towards the purchase of department and grocery store gift cards to give families flexibility in addressing their needs. Aside from financial contributions and gift cards, we are also looking for: clothing, unwrapped toys (no stuffed animals please), books, personal hygiene products, hats, mitts, scarves, and gift cards.

For more information about where to drop off your donations, please contact your regional membership coordinator:

Central:
Matthew Poirier, 647-729-1210
matthew.poirier@cltoronto.ca

Etobicoke:
Karen Cheng, 647-729-0445
minyan.cheng@cltoronto.ca

North York:
Wendy Dyke, 647-729-3627
wdyke@cltoronto.ca

Scarborough:
Felicita Zanatta, 647-729-1635
fzanatta@cltoronto.ca

CENTRAL REGION

Friendly Housemates: A New Model for Semi-Independent Living

By Matt Poirier

Erica, a second year student in the Developmental Service Worker (DSW) program at Centennial College, and Paul, a gentleman with an intellectual disability, have been living together as housemates since December 2015 as part of Community Living Toronto's latest innovative housing alternative "Friendly Housemates Research Project", in partnership with Centennial College.

Erica and Paul have been participants in the pilot research project of *Friendly Housemates*, which explores best practices in linking students and people with disabilities in semi-independent living and aims to facilitate social integration and full citizenship of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Erica and Paul moved in together as friendly housemates, breaking the traditional mould of the "staff/individual" scenario, and have developed a respectful friendship based on equality, common interests, trust and empathy. As a friendly housemate who's heavily involved in the research component of the project, Erica receives in-kind accommodations from Paul's family.

In an excerpt from the research, Erica describes how the little things in life have strengthened her relationship with Paul, "Morning coffee is my favourite! I know we both enjoy the company and simplicity of it. We've developed a solid friendship with consistency, boundaries and respect. We've learned a lot from each other."

In addition, Paul's mother has noticed tremendous changes in her son since his involvement with *Friendly Housemates*, "Seeing him happy and so connected to someone in a positive way...he's got a friend. He waits for her, worries if she's not there on time....I almost feel like I know him better after this, because I'm seeing him through another person's interactions with him."

The aim of the research project is to explore whether this *Friendly Housemates* model is a viable option for families and individuals who are seeking semi-independent living; if it's scalable, easily duplicated and if it can be adapted to different types of living situations. All parties involved in the project including CL Toronto staff, the student, the housemate and the housemate's family, participated in recorded and transcribed interviews. The pilot project wrapped up in May 2015, and the results were a resounding success. They will be compiled into a report and will be published in an academic journal to be shared widely with families and the DS sector at a later date.

This past summer, *Friendly Housemates* received a federal research grant to continue examination on this model over an 18 month period beginning in January 2016. The research will follow ten *Friendly Housemates* living situations and will include students from disciplines such as Nursing, Behavior Sciences, Social Service Worker, Community Development and Developmental Services.

Community Living Toronto is excited to bring this project into its next phase, and hopes that it will allow those involved to learn about themselves, improve their social and community connectedness, experience greater independence and develop new, lasting relationships. To learn more about *Friendly Housemates*, contact Matt Poirier at matthew.poirier@cltoronto.ca, or 647.729.1210.



Paul and his Friendly Housemate Erica

Upcoming Central Events

Central Region Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 10th, 2015
6:00 – 8:00 PM, 20 Spadina Road, Room 2B
All are welcome

Mindfulness Information Session for Parents

Wednesday November 25, 6:00 PM
20 Spadina Road, contact Yulia Prudova at 647-729-1209 or yprudova@cltoronto.ca

Cookie Decorating Group (Social Group)

Sunday December 6, 1:00 -3:30 PM,
30 Birch Ave, contact Yulia Prudova

Wine and Cheese Raises over \$1000!

By: Minyan Cheng

Etobicoke Centre MPP Yvan Baker, city councilors Stephen Holyday and John Campbell, and more than 50 neighbors, friends and families came to Creative Village Studio and enjoyed a delightful wine and cheese gathering prepared by members of Etobicoke/York Region Council. The Wine and Cheese Fundraiser featured a variety of cheese, fruit and nut platters, choices of red and white wine, door prizes, and a live music performance by the band Raven Wood. For all their efforts, Etobicoke/ York Region Council members raised \$1,106.55 to help support the life skill programs and initiatives that they sponsor.



Artist Donna with city councilor Stephen Holyday

Upcoming Etobicoke/York Events

Etobicoke/York General Membership Meeting

Keri Hill will be the guest speaker on the topic of Community Participation Supports and Passport Funding. Joins us to learn how to apply, supports offered through Community Living Toronto, and Fee-for-Service options in the community.

November 10th, 7:00pm to 8:30pm
295 The West Mall in board room

Everyone is welcome

Friendship Club

November 25th, 6pm-8pm
295 The West Mall, board room
Registration: LauraLee Edmiston,
647-729-0440 or ledmiston@cltoronto.ca

NORTH YORK REGION

Sibshops (Sibling Workshops)

By: *Wendy Dyke*

Sibshops provide opportunities for brothers and sisters of children with special needs to obtain peer to peer support and education in an informal fun setting. Our sibling workshops are geared to children ages 7 to 12 with mentoring opportunities for older siblings. Sibling workshops are designed to engage the children in fun themed activities while addressing the unique issues that children who have siblings with special need encounters at home, school and while participating in extra-curricular

activities. Sibshops are typically scheduled evenings or weekends throughout the school year.

Community Living Toronto's Sibshop team has planned four workshops for this school year starting in November with one every other month until May 2016. Each workshop will include a meal, along with a lot of fun and inter-active games. The Sibshops are theme based to help create an interesting and relaxed atmosphere for participating children. Past Sibshops have had themes such as Pirates, Safari, Tropical vacation, and Celebrity Day. Activities have included scavenger hunts, team puzzle solving, role playing and crafting. During meal time and activities, we incorporate time for children to get to know each other, share experiences and offer each other advice and support.

For more information about Sibshops, please contact Wendy Dyke at 647-729-3627 or Cate Whiteley at 647-729-3635.

To get on our contact list for Sibshops, please call our Information and Membership line at 647-426-3220.



Upcoming North York Events

North York Council Meeting

Monday November 2, 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

Pizza/Bingo

Tuesday November 17, 2015
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Victoria Park Hub
1527 Victoria Park Ave., 2nd floor

Pre-registration by Monday November 16th
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

Upcoming Sibshops

Where: Victoria Park Hub
1527 Victoria Park Avenue
10:30 am to 2:30 pm
Saturday November 14, 2015

Saturday January 16, 2016

Saturday March 12, 2016

Saturday May 14, 2016

Please call to register:

Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627 or
Cate Whiteley 647-729-3635

JUMPSTART LITERACY

Every Saturday, September 2015—June 2016

9:30 AM—11:30 AM at North York ETS, 1122
Finch Ave. W., Unit 16

Registration fee of \$20.00 plus \$5.00 per class

For more information, please contact: Karla Galvez-Del Rio at 647.729.1162 or karla.galvez-delrio@cltoronto.ca

SCARBOROUGH REGION

Join our CN Tower Stair Climb in Support of the United Way



With Scarborough's Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Winter at the helm of this year's United Way Campaign, Community Living Toronto has already reached its halfway mark for our quest to raise \$50,000.

From painting parties to escape room games, staff at Community Living Toronto have been busy organizing fun activities to raise some serious funds for the campaign.

On November 8, Community Living Toronto staff, family and friends will climb the CN Tower with all proceeds going to United Way Toronto and York Region. You can show your support by creating your own team, joining one of our regional teams, or pledging a team.

For more information how to join, please contact Julie MacInnis at jmacinnis@cltoronto.ca or 647-721-1847.

For information about the climb, visit: <http://www.unitedwaytyr.com/climb>

Upcoming Scarborough Events

Council Meeting and Holiday Celebration

Monday December 7, 2015 6:15pm
1712 Ellesmere Road
All Welcome!

Bingo at Lawson

Friday November 20, 2015
1712 Ellesmere Road, 7-8:30pm
\$5 for a snack and prizes

Winter Literacy

Saturday Morning 9 am-noon
1710 Ellesmere Road Program
Registration is \$20 plus \$5 each week

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

Special Olympics -

Track and Field for Adults

Thursdays from 7:30 to 9 pm.
October to May at Variety Village
Registration is \$35

For more information and registration, call Kathy Corbeil at 905-427-1971 or Flora Ormerod at 416-438-2662.

Best Buddies

University of Toronto Scarborough Chapter
1712 Ellesmere Rd
To register and for more information call Sarah Winter at 647-729-1633 or swinter@cltoronto.ca

Tuesday Morning Drop In

10 am to noon, \$4 each week
1712 Ellesmere Rd
RSVP to Sarah at 647-729-1633 or swinter@cltoronto.ca

SELF ADVOCATES COUNCIL

Emmanuel Chasi - Making a Difference with His Art

By: Sue Hutton



Emmanuel holds up his artwork surrounded by the Self Advocates Council

Emmanuel Chasi is an inspiring young man. He's got talent too! Emmanuel came to the Self Advocates Council recently, and showed the group the art he is working on for Community Living Toronto's Bill of Rights. Emmanuel has been working hard on creating images to update the Bill of Rights. His images are very relatable, and the SAC was eager to let Emmanuel know how much they loved his work. At the meeting Emmanuel was surrounded by excited Self Advocates who asked for his autograph. Afterwards, Emmanuel shared his thoughts about how it

feels to be doing artwork that makes a difference for people with intellectual disabilities.

“I just love doing artwork. I’ve been really into it since I was a kid. I designed my own Halloween Haunt and raised money for United Way. I wanted to make it a little more scary for people. We used the kitchen at Manson, and I designed a space you had to walk through and get really scared. You had to walk through clowns and Chucky and all kinds of scary stuff. I had all kinds of characters. It was cool – and it raised money for United Way.”

Emmanuel is very modest about his talent. He laughs when he remembers starting out as an artist as a kid.

When I was a kid, I was watching a Spiderman cartoon and suddenly got inspired to draw. I grabbed a drawing tool and paper and tried to draw it. It turned out like some kind of toaster spider man. It was really weird, but I was so proud of it. I realized I really had something I wanted to keep on doing. I keep pushing myself and work hard at it. That Spiderman was the start of something big for me. You just have to start something and you never know where it will lead!

At first I felt nervous coming to the Self Advocates meeting. I didn’t really know anybody – only 3 people. Then suddenly I got so much applause when they saw my art work. They really liked it. I was shocked at how many people were there at the Self Advocates Council. I hadn’t had that much applause for a long time.

I want to help people, and am really glad my art work can do that. I want to try and help people with disabilities. I want people to be able to make their own choices. That’s what the artwork I’ve worked on for the Bill of Rights is

all about – making choices. It makes me happy that I’m helping people with my art.

You will be seeing more of Emmanuel’s art in the coming months when the Bill of Rights is unveiled! To learn more about the Self-Advocates Council contact Sue at shutton@cltoronto.ca

NEWS

Community Living Toronto Celebrates Inclusive Education

By: Mia McGowan, Education Outreach and Spinclusion Coordinator



From l to r: Breda Casey-Walls, Uton Robinson, Superintendent, TDSB, Natalie Fleming, Jeff Smith, Juulia Landau, Rita Tsotsikas, Susan Silma, Chair Education Committee, Minister Helena Jaczek, Christine Oliveira

Each year, Community Living Toronto chooses an outstanding teacher, educational assistant, principal, and this year, a team who promotes the inclusion of students with an intellectual disability.

We know that inclusion is so much more than a child just being included in a classroom. It is about each child being part of the life of the school’s community and being able to make choices that are right for him or her in a welcoming positive school environment.

Inclusion maximizes learning, individual development and opportunities for friendship. It increases appreciation and acceptance of individual differences and prepares everyone for adult life in an inclusive society.

Congratulations to this year's Inclusive Education Award winners. Here are some excerpts from their nominations:

High school teacher Breda Casey Walls *"works diligently to support students in her class who have an intellectual disability. The students are included in her regular classroom with age-appropriate peers at Georges Vanier Secondary School. To ensure the students are successful, Breda reaches out to each of them in a manner that does not make them feel that they stand out as different from the other students. Breda displays a belief that all students, regardless of intellectual ability, deserve the right to be successful in a regular high school with their peers."*

Christine Oliveira a Junior Kindergarten teacher from Senhor Santo Cristo Catholic School *"maintained a positive and enthusiastic attitude throughout the year and it rubbed off on the children in the class, the other staff and the community as a whole. It was such a positive experience and so incredibly formative for the entire school. We are grateful, forever, for her care and for setting Percy up for a lifetime of success."*

Winchester Junior and Senior School educators, Michael Jursic, Jeff Smith, Rita Tsiotsikas, Natalie Fleming and Juulia Landau *"understood the challenges of having an autistic child in the classroom and have gone above and beyond to welcome and encourage and support my sons' success. The teachers, principal, Community Youth worker and Educational Assistant focused on their positive qualities and helped them believe that they*

were welcome and that they could be fully included in a regular classroom."

Community First

Community First is a Community Living Toronto initiative funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services to deliver Community Participation Supports for adults with an intellectual disability.

This initiative is for individuals who are looking for support to develop and maintain inclusive community experiences, and who have a goal towards increased independence in the community. Areas of support can include: *Life Skills Training, Community Based Skill Building, Social Recreation, Leisure Activities, Job Readiness Training, Supported Employment, Volunteering.*

Community First is for individuals who:

- Are at least 18 years old.
- Are able to participate in the community with one staff supporting up to 9 people. (Individuals needing more support may bring their own staff or resources).
- Want to work towards a personal goal of increased independence in the community.
- Want an inclusive community experience.
- Are able to perform personal care activities independently in the community.
- Are interested in supported community-based activities.
- Are able to manage their transportation.
- Are waiting for Community Participation Supports with Developmental Services Ontario.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Angela Ricciuti – aricciuti@cltoronto.ca , 416-710-7843

Flora Nichols – fnichols@cltoronto.ca , 416-419-3692

Family Link PRESENTS

Bring Mindfulness into your family life

Mindful Parents Info Night

Do you have a son or daughter (or family member)
with an intellectual disability?

Wednesday, November 25

6pm – 8pm,
Room 1, main floor
20 Spadina Road (North of Bloor)
Community Living Toronto
Parking available in the back
Herbal tea and light snacks provided

Come and learn about Mindful Parents, an upcoming 6-Week Mindfulness Program specifically designed for parents. Participants will learn about what Mindfulness is, and how it increases wellbeing for families.

Facilitated by Sue Hutton, MSW, trained mindfulness practitioner

RSVP to Yulia Prudova

Volunteer Coordinator, Central Region
647-729-1209 or email: yprudova@cltoronto.ca



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