

**FEATURED STORY**

## MyCommunityHub Has Now Launched!



*Thanks to MyCommunityHub.ca, families will now be able to register their loved ones online for a variety of activities and programs, including Shadow Lake camp.*

Community Living Toronto is excited to be a part of MyCommunityHub, an online registration space where people with intellectual disabilities and their families are able to find a variety of activities and programs that reflect their interest.

We sat down with Shawn Ratnasingam, Project Manager and Angela Bradley, Chair of Steering Committee to find out more!

**Q. How did MyCommunityHub come to be?**

**Angela:** We were hearing more and more from families that they were struggling to find the kinds of programs they wanted to register for. They knew they were out there but couldn't

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find them. They were tired of registering with many different agencies, and struggling to track them. Meanwhile, CLToronto was beginning to offer more fee for service options and we wanted it to be easy and fast for families to find, register and pay in this day and age!

Frustrated with how hard it was for families in the Developmental Services to go online and register with a few easy clicks, we started looking into an online tool and asked around other sectors that had registration systems.

After hearing about this particular one, we realized it was a great solution for CLToronto, but we also realized it was much bigger than us. So we threw it out there to Toronto Developmental Services Sector agencies and six others came forward who were committed to making this work. Together, we worked on a collaborative proposal and applied to the Ministry of Community and Social Services' Employment and Modernization grant and were successful!

**Q. Why was there a need for the hub?**

**Shawn:** Families are looking for more individualized, fee for service options in their communities with limited success. Currently they are left searching through websites, phoning, collecting brochures, attending information sessions and touring various facilities.

Agencies are also struggling to navigate the world of fee-for-service options. Many do not have the tools to create and price these services. They also do not have access to marketing and communication resources to reach families and are, at the base, struggling to figure out what families want. All of this, while trying to be collaborative with their partners and not create a competitive, unbalanced environment. MyCommunityHub creates an anytime, one-stop environment where families, individuals and agencies can find what they need, when they need it.

**Q. How many agencies are currently involved with MyCommunityHub?**

**Shawn:** At the moment, there are seven partners; Christian Horizons, Community Living Toronto, Corbrook, Meta Centre, Kerry's Place Autism Services, Reena, and Vita Community Living Services.

**Q. How many programs are currently offered?**

**Shawn:** As of February 17, 48 programs were offered in various categories including activities & programs, camps, classes and workshops, and day respite. The low number of programs being offered at launch is due to some programs already running for the winter season, however come spring and summer, more programs will be available for registration.

**Q. What has the reception for MyCommunityHub been like so far?**

**Shawn:** Overall, the feedback has been remarkable and most families and support staff are registering without any issues. For those having trouble navigating the site and following the prompts, we are addressing this concern by developing an FAQ along with a step by step visual guide on how to create an account and register for the programs. Support is also available through e-mail to the administrator for registration related questions, however if it's about a specific program, we encourage connecting with the direct agency.

**Q. What are the next steps for MyCommunityHub?**

**Shawn:** At the end of 2016, 13 more agencies will be introduced into MyCommunityHub, and finally in 2017, the remainder agencies will have an opportunity to join MyCommunityHub and start showcasing what they offer.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.mycommunityhub.ca>



## CENTRAL REGION

### Happy Retirement, Larry!



After 27 years of hard work at Sunrise Janitorial Services, Larry Bailey has finally decided to retire! And so, on February 16, a party was held in his honour at Foster's Clubhouse which was attended by many friends and colleagues.

Larry, who moved to Toronto from Huronia Regional Centre, has been supported by Community Living Toronto since the mid 1970s.

Many of Larry's friends and co-workers shared memorable stories of first meeting Larry and talked of his cheerfulness, hard work and determination. Not only when it came to his job, but in his volunteering efforts, as well. For the past 10 years, Larry has been volunteering in our Public Relations and Fundraising Department. He comes early to the office just to see if the department needs any help. His efforts have not gone unnoticed and in 2014, he was recognized as the Public Relations and Fundraising Volunteer of the Year.

In addition to volunteering with Community Living Toronto, Larry is also committed to his

volunteer duties at West Neighbourhood House and Word on the Street – where he helps raise money for literacy initiatives.

Even though he is now retired, we know Larry is just a phone call away anytime we need his help – whether that's at our Annual Picnic, Community Rocks or a helping hand around the office!

Congratulations, Larry!

### Upcoming Central Events



#### Central Region Council's Spring Fling Dinner & Dance

Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

Tickets are \$50 each.

Buy tickets online at:

<https://www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=134&EID=19487>

or contact Matt Poirier.

## A Warm Welcome to Joe Persaud

By: Wendy Dyke



In late December, it was announced that the new Regional Executive Director for Etobicoke/York and North York Regions had been hired. Joe Persaud officially joined Community Living Toronto on January 18.

Joe brings an extensive background in the developmental services field. Most recently, he was the Regional Executive Director at Kerry's Place Autism Services, Toronto Region. Prior to this position, Joe was with the Reena Foundation where he held a variety of progressive positions in both service delivery and staff learning and development.

Joe also brings with him various sector involvements; he is the current chair of the Clinical Conference Committee for the Toronto Networks of Specialized Care in Toronto, the Chair elect for the Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities Board, and is involved in various ways with the Ministry of Community and Social Services, as well as the Provincial Network's Human Resource Strategy.

Please help us in welcoming Joe to Community Living Toronto as he learns about our Association and meets staff, volunteers, members and individuals in service!

## Upcoming Etobicoke/York Events

### Etobicoke/York Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 8, 2016  
295 The West Mall, Suite 204  
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm  
Please call to RSVP to:  
Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627

### 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 Boardroom  
Registration: LauraLee Edmiston,  
647-729-0440 or [ledmiston@cltoronto.ca](mailto:ledmiston@cltoronto.ca)



## Eighth Easy Roller

### Bowlathon

Saturday April 23, 2016  
5:00 to 8:00 pm

Bowlerama West– 5429 Dundas Street West  
Silent Auction, Raffles, Prizes and More!  
\$25

Registration deadline: Friday April 15<sup>th</sup>  
For more information contact: Wendy Dyke at  
647-729-3627

## **A Unique Group with Wonderful Moments**

*By: Aida Nitura, Mike Ritz and Janis Edwards*

Our New Horizons Seniors program in North York Region provides meaningful opportunities for adults 55 and over to experience community at its best. The group, which meets on Mondays at the Earl Bales Community Centre, offers many activities, including exercise, board game nights, and bingo. Over the years, our seniors have also attended concerts at Nathan Philips Square, visited the Harbourfront Centre, taken trips to botanical gardens, went apple picking at Chudleigh Farms, spent time at Pioneer Village, and so much more! The group also enjoys walks in the park while capturing our photogenic personalities for our Photo Album project. Picnic lunches in the summer are a bonus, since there is no planning involved. We lunch, play outdoor games and enjoy the time in the sun!

Our program has an educational component with a major focus on health. Speakers from various agencies are invited to address our group on a wide range of topics including dental health, hygiene, nutrition, and financial planning. All special occasions are celebrated by the seniors in their own unique fashion, from designing poppies on Remembrance Day to creating original costumes on Halloween. preparing their own meals.

Those of us who have seen our seniors develop their cognitive, physical and social skills as a result of attending this program hope that the program continues to thrive and broaden its horizons for years to come!



*New Horizon Senior's Group*

## **Upcoming North York Events**

### **North York Council Meeting**

Monday, March 7, 2016  
18 - 1122 Finch Avenue West  
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm  
All Welcome!  
Please call to RSVP to:  
Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627

### **Upcoming Sibshops**

Victoria Park Hub  
1527 Victoria Park Avenue  
10:30 am to 2:30 pm  
Saturday, March 12, 2016  
Saturday, May 14, 2016  
Please call to register:  
Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627 or  
Cate Whiteley 647-729-3635

### **Pizza/Bingo at the Victoria Park Hub**

1527 Victoria Park Avenue  
Wednesday, March 16, 2016  
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm  
Cost: \$3.00 per person  
Call to register your attendance:  
Wendy Dyke 647-729-3627

## SCARBOROUGH REGION

# The Invictones Entertain!

By: Felicity Zanatta



*The Invictones put on quite a show!*

On the evening of Wednesday, January 20, 2016, the Community Support Team hosted a wonderful fundraising opportunity. The special evening was marked with an appearance from the always entertaining Invictones.

The evening began by welcoming staff and community members as the donations and raffle tickets were being distributed, followed by an introduction of the Invictones by Janet Dunne who was the lead on organizing the event. The band's energy packed performance took over the night and was enjoyed by everyone who attended!

The Invictones delivered a wonderful selection of oldies that most people could tap their toes or sing along to, and their wonderful vocals covered many ballads and medleys. The event was fun, entertaining and engaging, and we would welcome the Invictones back anytime.

The evening ended with rousing applause, as the raffle winners accepted their prizes and coffee and dessert was enjoyed by all.

The band has a long standing connection with Scarborough Region through Janet Dunne whose father had been a group member for almost 40 years. They certainly showed their eagerness to participate in the fundraiser by encouraging participation and mingling with show goers after the performance. They are a terrific group of performers who truly enjoy entertaining. Thank you to The Fabulous Invictones for performing at our wonderful evening. All funds raised will be used by Scarborough Region Council for community activities.

## Upcoming Scarborough Events

### Tuesday Morning Drop In

10:00 am to noon, \$4 each week

1712 Ellesmere Rd

RSVP to Sarah at 647-729-1633 or

[swinter@cltoronto.ca](mailto:swinter@cltoronto.ca)

### Scarborough Council Meeting

Monday, March 7, 2016 at 6:15pm

1712 Ellesmere Road in Boardroom

All Welcome!

### Achilles St. Patrick's Day 5K Run/Walk

Join the Scarborough team for

Sunday March 13, 2016 to start at 10:30am

255 Bremner Blvd.; \$50 in pledges

### Bingo at Lawson

Friday, March 18, 2016

1712 Ellesmere Road, 7-8:30pm

\$5 for a snack and prizes

For more information on all of these events and to register contact Felicita Zanatta at 647-729-1635 or [fzanatta@cltoronto.ca](mailto:fzanatta@cltoronto.ca)

## SELF ADVOCATES COUNCIL

# Peter Park: A Lifetime of Self-Advocacy is Honoured by Self Advocates

By: Sue Hutton



*Nelson Raposo tells Peter why he nominated him for an award for his outstanding Volunteer work*

Most people around self-advocacy circles have heard Peter Park referred to as the Godfather of Self-Advocacy in Ontario. It was 1978 that Peter started getting seriously engaged in creating the Self-Advocacy movement in Ontario. That very same year, Nelson Raposo was born. Little did Nelson realize as a babe in his mother's arms that he would grow to learn from and follow in the footsteps of Peter Park in the world of self-advocacy. Peter, Co-founder of People First of Ontario, has been instrumental in helping the Self-Advocates Council learn to speak their minds and put human rights at the centre of their advocacy work. The two sat down and talked recently about the nomination.

Nelson shares: "I nominated Peter Park because he's been doing advocacy since I was a little tyke. I watched the People First History video, and Peter Park made national news doing self-advocacy. I watched a woman not being allowed to have a baby, and Peter fought for her right to have a kid. (Nelson is referring to the famous Supreme Court of Canada "Eve Case", in which Peter advocated for a woman's right to make decision about her own health care; not to be sterilized against her will). I was speechless after I watched that video. I felt so moved because Peter spoke for us. He made the national news standing up for the rights of people with intellectual disabilities. He did that for all of us. That was amazing."

Peter: "I have always been fighting for people to have equal rights. That could mean people having the right to give birth, in the case that Nelson's talking about. Whether we are labelled or not, we have feelings and emotions."

Peter shared what it was like being in the Supreme Court when he was supporting Eve. "Being in the Supreme Court was a different feeling, partly because, I was pushing someone in a wheelchair as we entered. The wheelchair entrance was through the Supreme Court judge's chambers. It was important work and had to be done."

Nelson: "Peter is a great advocate – he taught me that advocacy doesn't happen overnight. It takes some patience and some pulling teeth. It takes knocking down a few walls. I learned to be patient from Peter. Peter's been doing this work since I was in diapers. That's why we call him the godfather. The nickname suits him. Without Peter Park, advocacy would not be born".

Peter: "I would like to think that it would be going, regardless of me. Sometimes part of

advocacy is learning to let things roll off our shoulders. We have to have broad shoulders and stick up for the things we believe in. I know I'm going to continue doing advocacy. I hope I'm going to be going in the right direction and doing something positive".

Peter: "I was nominated by Nelson Raposo and Paul Cochrane and that's why I accepted the award. It was because self-advocates nominated me that I accept it. It's important that our voices are heard, and taken seriously. The fact that the Self-Advocates Council want to offer me this award is what makes it powerful. It's for the self-advocates that I accept this award"

Learn more about the Eve Case:

<http://www.peoplefirstofcanada.ca/priorities/legal-and-political-issues/>

Peter's article on Social Role Valorization:

[http://www.ijdcr.ca/VOL03\\_01\\_CAN/articles/park.shtml](http://www.ijdcr.ca/VOL03_01_CAN/articles/park.shtml)

## Volunteer-Students Voice

## Join Us for our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner!

On Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating our Volunteers at a new venue:

**Sala Caboto, 40 Playfair Ave, Toronto, ON M6B 2P9**



**Check your email for upcoming invites!**

## Welcome Sehrish!

We are pleased to welcome a new member to our team of volunteer coordinators: Sehrish Zehra will be covering both Etobicoke and North York Regions while Karla Galvez-Del Rio is off on leave.

You can reach Sehrish at 647-729-1162.

And a big congrats to Karla on her new baby boy! Mom, Dad, big brother Keanu and baby boy Kole are all doing great!

## Summer is just around the corner.....

## And we are looking for Volunteers!

If you are or know of someone who would like to help out while having a blast at our summer literacy camps or other summer volunteer opportunities, contact your Regional Volunteer Coordinator for more details!

## Training and Information Sessions

As part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring up to date training and information for our volunteers and students, we are now offering update and mandatory orientation sessions. Please contact your Regional Volunteer coordinator to register.

(North York and Etobicoke dates to follow.)

Central Region – 20 Spadina Rd., Room 1

Tuesday March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1:00 to 2:30 pm

Tuesday April 19<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 to 6:00 pm

Tuesday May 31<sup>st</sup>, 9:00 to 10:30 am

Scarborough Region – 1712 Ellesmere Rd.

Boardroom

Wednesday March 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 to 11:00 am



Wednesday April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 to 2:00 pm  
Wednesday May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 to 2:00 pm

## NEWS

### Nominate someone for the National Inclusive Education Awards

*By: Mia McGowan, Education Outreach and Spinclusion Coordinator*

Help celebrate National Inclusive Education month with the Inclusive Education awards.

You can nominate: a Teacher, a Principal, an Education Assistant or a school if they are supporting, encouraging and facilitating the inclusion of children with an intellectual disability **within a full time appropriate grade classroom** in their **neighbourhood** school.

Fill out or download our online nomination form <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M35TGHH>

**Nominations due by Friday April 1, 2016**

### The End of the Membership Year is Fast Approaching – Have You Renewed Yet?

Did you know that the membership year is April 1st to March 31st? This means that your membership is about to expire.

You've probably received communication about this either by mail or by email and if you've already replied – **THANK YOU!**

If not, please don't delay so that you can continue to receive the monthly newsletter and regular communications about important issues and upcoming events happening in your community. With your annual membership donation, you will maintain your voting member status.

Your ongoing commitment is vital to our success and of course, your donation helps us continue important work. We can reach out to so many more people in need.

#### Because of Community Living Toronto Members like you:

- Adults are becoming confident and independent through literacy programs, cooking classes, TTC readiness and literacy programs.
- Hundreds of holiday hampers are delivered to families in need during the holiday season.
- Individuals are being provided with more social and recreational activities like swimming, yoga, dinner clubs and dances.

**These are just a few of the amazing things you are helping accomplish, and with your support, we can achieve so much more!**

Renew online today at [www.cltoronto.ca/membership](http://www.cltoronto.ca/membership) or contact your regional Membership Coordinator.

**Central Region:** Matt Poirier at [mathew.poirier@cltoronto.ca](mailto:mathew.poirier@cltoronto.ca) or 647-729-1210

**Scarborough Region:** Felicita Zanatta at [fzanatta@cltoronto.ca](mailto:fzanatta@cltoronto.ca) or 647-729-1635

**Etobicoke/York or North York Regions:**

Wendy Dyke at [wdyke@cltoronto.ca](mailto:wdyke@cltoronto.ca) or  
647-729-3627

## DSTO Information Fair – A Free Event

Wednesday, May 18, 2016, 10:00am – 6:00pm  
At the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre  
6 Garamond Court, Toronto ON M3C 1Z5

### The Day Includes:

- Information from Toronto based agencies on services and supports for transitional youth (16 years of age and older) and adults (18 years of age and older) with a developmental disability
- Agency and Community Partner presentations on topics such as eligibility, what you can do while you wait for services and supports and how to get involved in self-advocacy groups
- Opportunity for families to speak to DSTO agency staff, self-advocacy groups and family groups

For more information contact Matthew Armstrong at 647-729-1158  
[matthew.armstrong@cltoronto.ca](mailto:matthew.armstrong@cltoronto.ca)  
or visit the Developmental Services Ontario Toronto Region (DSO TR) website at  
[www.dsotoronto.ca](http://www.dsotoronto.ca)



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# CHOICES that can Change Lives Fund

**Where small grants  
provide big opportunities for  
individuals and families seeking  
help to make dreams and goals a  
reality when all other resources  
have been exhausted.**

**Next application deadline  
March 31, 2016**

For info and forms visit:  
[choiceschangelives.ca](http://choiceschangelives.ca)

or contact:  
your Regional Membership  
Coordinator

[membership@cltoronto.ca](mailto:membership@cltoronto.ca)

[www.communitylivingtoronto.ca](http://www.communitylivingtoronto.ca)



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