

Where choices change the lives of people with an intellectual disability

**FEATURED STORY**

## Visitors from Japan!



*The Saitama Council out front at 20 Spadina*

In November, we had a group of people come all the way from Japan to learn about our organization and what we do! The group is part of the “Saitama Council of Social Welfare”. Peter Wakayama, (a past Board member, a parent, volunteer, and the recipient of the 2015 Jim Turner Award for Outstanding Volunteerism), organized this presentation for us. We were so happy to share our knowledge with the council. We spoke about all of our services and highlighted our employment supports. Employment initiatives such as: **Youth to Work, Community First, and IOPEN** (Individualized On-Campus Post-Secondary Experience Network). Flora Nichols, Mike Adair, and Nick Hadjiyianni all presented to the council and Sam Forbes, Public Relations and Fundraising Ambassador, spoke to the council about his employment journey, working at Starbucks, his YouTube viral video, being on the Ellen DeGeneres Show, and taking a trip to Japan! Sam presented gifts to everyone at the council, and they surprised him with a special gift of a traditional cotton shop curtain called a “Noren”. Which was made by people with special needs in Japan!

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*Sam holds up the “Noren”, a gift from the Council*



*Sam Forbes and Peter Wakayama*



*Sam Forbes presenting to the Saitama Council*

## Mindful Parenting – What's It All About?



*Mindful Parents resource booklets*

By: Sue Hutton

As we finish up the holidays and start the new year, self-care can be a helpful friend. If you had passed by the board room at 20 Spadina on a Wednesday night, this past fall you may have been surprised to see a room with dimmed lights, people sitting together with their eyes closed, bellies relaxed, and breathing together in a guided meditation.

This is a Mindfulness program, for parents and caregivers of people with an intellectual disability or autism. These parents were learning techniques to improve their wellbeing, reduce their risk of depression and anxiety, lower their blood pressure and generally find calm in the challenging moments. While learning these mindfulness techniques, parents shared a few laughs, good company, and the odd chocolate truffle.

Community Living Toronto has offered a 6 week Mindful Parents group twice, and each time the feedback was very positive. Parents shared with us that the simple act of taking the time to care for themselves and learn a new skill to was extremely powerful. Parents told us that it is rare to actually take a break to nurture themselves, as so much of the time they are overwhelmed with keeping up with the ongoing care, system coordination, and advocacy that is part of life looking after a child with an intellectual disability. Of course, there is joy and good things that need to be celebrated too – it's not all pure stress.

Mindful Parenting at Community Living Toronto is a 6 week stress reduction program that has been designed specifically for parents of someone with an intellectual disability/autism. It is a program that was customized for parents of someone with an intellectual disability directly from the popular Jon Kabat-Zinn program called **Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)**. MBSR is an 8 week health care program using simple meditation techniques that are taught in class, with daily home practices that come with online links to meditations to do at home. Parents have reported that it's challenging to carve out the amount of time that standard MBSR asks for (45-50 minutes). The Mindful Parents program that we offer is modified to make it accessible for busy parents. Plus, having parents connect with each other in a shared space is therapeutic in and of itself. There's a lovely bonding that you don't see happen in standard MBSR programs.

The development of the program came through research at **CAMH**. Dr. Yona Lunsky was launching a Mindful Parents research study around the same time I had just completed the MBSR professional training. CAMH psychologists Anna Palucka and Margaret Reid also got involved and we researched and developed this program for parents and caregivers of someone with an ID. Our findings were published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

If you're interested in learning more about Mindful Parenting contact Sue Hutton at [shutton@cltoronto.ca](mailto:shutton@cltoronto.ca)

**For more information on Mindfulness and Parenting visit these resources:**

Video on Mindfulness from 2013 by Sue Hutton:

<https://connectability.ca/2013/12/06/mindfulness/>

Mindful Parenting in Huffington Post:

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/lisa-kring/the-5-main-tenets-of-mindful-parenting\\_b\\_4086080.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/lisa-kring/the-5-main-tenets-of-mindful-parenting_b_4086080.html)

## Upcoming Central Events

### Central Region Dinner Club

Every Wednesday  
4:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
30 Birch Ave

### sprOUT Meeting

Monday January 8, 2018  
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
40 Birch Ave

### Central Region Council Meeting

Tuesday January 9, 2018  
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
20 Spadina Rd, Meeting Room 1  
All are welcome!

### Toronto One Direction Social Group

Saturday January 27, 2018  
2:00 pm – 4:30 pm  
40 Birch Ave

### Diabetes Prevention Workshop

January Date and Location TBA

For information on any of the above events,  
contact Michelle Grimley  
at 647-729-1210 or  
[michelle.grimley@cltoronto.ca](mailto:michelle.grimley@cltoronto.ca)



ConnectABILITY.ca

**ConnectABILITY.ca has just released a new resource page for adults on the Autism spectrum!**

Partnered with: Autism Ontario, Community Living Toronto, Geneva Centre for Autism, Kerry's Place Autism Services, ConnectABILITY.ca, and the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services .

**Check it out here:**

[connectability.ca/asd](http://connectability.ca/asd)

## ETOBICOKE/YORK REGION

## “And the Award Goes to Julie!”



*Julie Godfry with her Mark Winkler Award*

By: Dillon Jaworski

The Mark Winkler Achievement Award celebrates the achievements and contributions of a partner who has shown their commitment to improving not only their life, but the lives of others. Julie Godfry was nominated for this award and voted in by the Board of Directors to be the recipient. Julie was presented the Mark Winkler Award at Common Ground's Annual General Meeting held at Surrey Place on October 27, 2017. Common Ground is an organization that offers employment to people who face barriers to finding work opportunities because of their developmental disabilities.

Over the past year, Julie has shown strong leadership skills. She is responsible for opening and closing the coffee shop and also provides guidance to other partners at the co-op. Julie has made big strides in her career this year and has completed a course to become a barista. She enjoys making lattes, Americanos and other specialty beverages for the customers who visit the coffee shed. Julie is supported by the Community First program as well as the Supported Independent Living Program in Etobicoke Region.

**Congratulations Julie!**

# Upcoming Etobicoke/York Events

## Etobicoke/York Region Council Meeting

Tuesday January 9, 2018

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

4895 Dundas Street West (Creative Village Studio)

All are welcome!

RSVP: Georgina Stergiotis

at 647-729-0445 or

[georgina.stergiotis@cltoronto.ca](mailto:georgina.stergiotis@cltoronto.ca)

## Friendship Club

Last Wednesday of Each Month

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

ERO - 295 The West Mall, Suite 204

Registration: LauraLee Edmiston

at 647-729-0440 or

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

## Parent Share Etobicoke/York Region

Thursday January 18, 2018

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

ERO - 295 The West Mall, Suite 204

For information contact: Sarah Winter

at 647-729-1633 or

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

or Bonnie Heath at 416-645-6000 ext. 1311

[bheath@woodgreen.org](mailto:bheath@woodgreen.org)

**Note:** Friendship Club and Parent Share park in the underground on **P2**

Parking at ERO is limited due to construction.

Please park on P2.

Arrange for Wheel trans pick up or drop off at front entrance on The West Mall.

If you are interested in joining our Etobicoke/York

Council contact: Georgina Stergiotis

at 647-729-0445 or

[georgina.stergiotis@cltoronto.ca](mailto:georgina.stergiotis@cltoronto.ca)

## North York

# North York SWACA Participation Celebration



*Group Performance During Celebration*

By: Wilma Nad, Program Supervisor

On Thursday November 23rd, Supported Work and Community Activities (SWACA) North York opened its doors to welcome family and friends of Kimberly, Richard, Nick, Remo, Filippo, and Stuart to celebrate their 30-40 years of participation in the program.

With approximately 75 people in attendance, it was a blast! The celebration recognized 4 SWACA volunteers; Jane, Julie, Vera, and Alba. All four volunteers add so much to the lives of the individuals who attend the day supports program.

Following a warm welcome by Program Manager, Esther Tuohy, the SWACA choir set the tone with a great performance of the 1970s anthem 'Celebration'! The SWACA award winners were then acknowledged by their support staff. Following a performance of "Those Were the Days" the Program Supervisor echoed the sentiments of everyone present by congratulating the awardees on all their contributions and accomplishments throughout the decades. Being told you're appreciated is one of the simplest and most uplifting things a person can hear.

It was agreed by all in attendance that this tribute could not have been more heartfelt!

(See more photos on the next page)



*Vera and Alba, long-time volunteers, receive recognition from Dianne*



*Elaine receives her award from Colleen*



*Pamela receives her award from Georgia*



*Remo is presented his award by Elizabeth*

## Upcoming North York Events

### North York Council Meeting

Monday January 8, 2018  
 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm  
 North York Office Boardroom  
 1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 18  
 Everyone Welcome!

### Sibshop

Saturday January 20, 2018  
 10:30 am – 2:30 pm  
 Victoria Park Hub  
 1527 Victoria Park Avenue  
 For More Information and to register/apply for the above events contact: Wendy Dyke at 647-729-3627 or [wdyke@cltoronto.ca](mailto:wdyke@cltoronto.ca)

### Jumpstart Literacy

Every Saturday  
 9:30 am – 11:30 am  
 1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 16  
 Registration fee:  
 \$20.00 per person  
 Weekly fee:  
 \$5.00 per person

To learn more and to register, please contact:  
 Karla Galvez-Del Rio  
 at 647-729-1162 or [kgalvez@cltoronto.ca](mailto:kgalvez@cltoronto.ca)

## Nominate a Volunteer!

Each year, Community Living Toronto honours a Volunteer of the Year from each of the four Regions, a Youth Volunteer of the Year, the Self Advocates Council, Public Relations and Fundraising, and the Board of Directors.

Nominate someone today! Follow this link:

[surveymonkey.com/r/VolunteerNomination2018](https://surveymonkey.com/r/VolunteerNomination2018)

## 2017 Community Partner of the Year Award Recipient



*Community Living Toronto staff present Reverend Paul Hutchison (far right, back row) and the St. Mark's United Church congregation their award*

By: David Scott

This year's winner of Community Living Toronto's "Community Partner Award" was **St. Mark's United Church** in Scarborough. This Award is given to a corporation, individual, or organization that has significantly contributed to our community inclusion efforts.

The presentation of the award took place at the church's regular Sunday service in front of the congregation on October 15, 2017. Reverend Paul Hutchison began by welcoming Community Living Toronto staff and Brad Saunders, Chief Executive Officer to the service .

There were 7 Community Living Toronto staff present who were acknowledged by Brad and Reverend Paul for their involvement in making the collaboration with St. Mark's a tremendous success.

Our partnership with St. Mark's began in 2008 with the "Circle of Friends" program, which has provided individuals an opportunity to expand their social networks and build meaningful relationships with their peers and members of the community for no charge. St. Mark's graciously offered us kitchen space to run cooking classes, which eventually became known as the Holy Chefs cooking program. This program continues to run three times a year!

The church also has hired the cooking group on several occasions to cater lunches and events!

A Relaxation Group was later established and takes place in the sanctuary every Wednesday. This activity offers individuals the chance to relax, do yoga, practice breathing exercises and talk about worries and anxieties. These types of programs are so very important in helping people to express their feelings. In addition to these programs, some of the individuals can often be found at one of the many holiday parties, movie nights or community yard sales here at St. Mark's, where they are welcomed, respected and included in the congregation.

One funny thing mentioned by Reverend Paul during the presentation was that Terry Dixon, who was the staff that initially ran the groups at St. Mark's, had a participant attend the cooking course whose name was also Terry. Reverend Paul referred to the staff Terry as Terry 1 and the participant as Terry 2. One day the cooking class was helping bring up boxes in preparation of the upcoming church yard sale. Reverend Paul was going down the stairs as Terry 2 was going up. He commented "Great job, Terry 2", at which point Terry responded "Thanks, Reverend 1".

Community Living Toronto could simply not do the type of work that they do without the unwavering support of Community Partners like St. Mark's United Church. As well as supporting Warden Woods SWACA, St. Mark's has also contributed to Scarborough Council activities. They generously contribute gift cards as prizes for the Bingo Bowling Extravaganza fundraiser. Kathy Lisle is on the Scarborough Region Council as well as a member of St. Mark's and is an important link between the two organizations.

Reverend Paul, in his address to the congregation, reaffirmed their commitment to offering a safe, inclusive space for the people we support, and are willing to expand their partnership with us whenever and wherever possible.

**Congratulations to Reverend Paul Hutchison and the entire congregation of St. Mark's United Church in being this year's recipient of Community Living Toronto's Community Partner of the Year award!**

## Upcoming Scarborough Events

### Council Meeting

Monday January 8, 2018  
6:15 pm  
1712 Ellesmere Road  
All are welcome!

### Bingo at Lawson

Friday January 19, 2018  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
1712 Ellesmere Road  
\$5 for a snack and prizes

### Euchre Night Fundraiser

Dambusters Royal  
Canadian Legion  
937 Warden Ave  
Saturday February 3,  
2018; 7:00 pm – 11:00 pm  
\$10  
Cash Prizes

### Achilles 5K Run/Walk

Sunday March 18, 2018  
255 Bremner Blvd  
\$50 to register with the  
Scarborough region team

### Connections Dance

Friday January 26, 2018  
7:30 pm – 9:30 pm  
1712 Ellesmere Road  
\$8 admission  
Call Lester at  
416-566-7252

### Parent Share Scarborough Region

January 11 and 25, 2018  
9:30 am – 11:30 am  
Cedarbrook Community  
Centre  
91 Eastpark Blvd  
Contact: Sarah Winter at  
647-729-1633 or  
[swinter@cltoronto.ca](mailto:swinter@cltoronto.ca)  
or Bonnie Heath at  
416-645-6000 ext. 1311  
or  
[bheath@woodgreen.org](mailto:bheath@woodgreen.org)

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)



MyCommunityHub is an online registration space where people with a developmental disability and their families can find activities and programs that reflect their interests.

## Self-Advocates Council

## A Year End Reflection on Being a Self-advocate Mentor



*Nelson Raposo by the Holiday tree*

By: Nelson Raposo and Sue Hutton

It's been an exciting time at the Self-advocates Council at Community Living Toronto. As we head into a new year, we reflect on the advocacy work we've been doing and what we want to do. Nelson Raposo sat down with me and shared some of his thoughts on how things have been going the past year, and what he's looking forward to coming up in 2018. Nelson is the current Self-Advocates Council representative on the Board of Directors.

*Here is what Nelson Raposo had to say about the year ahead:*

As a mentor, I'm up for the challenge of being the Self-advocates representative on the Board at Community Living Toronto. It's nice because I'm treated like a human being on the Board. The Self-advocates Council pushes the agency to new heights. Being on the Board is giving me a chance to push together for a common goal: to make things better for people labelled with intellectual disabilities – out in the community, or whatever they want to do.

I also love continuing to go to the SAC meetings as a mentor. I always learn something new – especially from the new members who are coming out now.

*Continued on next page...*

I love helping the new Self-advocates get familiar with self-advocacy. It keeps growing at the agency. When I first started many, many moons ago, the Self-advocates Council wasn't that big. Then we got bigger and bigger and got the word out. Now we can hardly all fit in the Boardroom. We are having more and more different people from different programs coming to meetings and learning how to advocate. It's so amazing. We also have such a diversity of people showing up – from Passport programs, to employment programs, to day supports, to Adult Protective Service Worker (APSW) programs and group homes. It's so great!

We help people supported by the agency who have griefs with the agency, and we help solve those griefs. At the end of the day, we want everyone to get what they need and deserve.

People we support are coming forward with their grievances because they are comfortable with the Self-advocates Council. I'm proud of people learning to stand up for their rights and share their stories with us. They are getting comfortable to talk about stuff and we keep it a safe atmosphere. We can tell the agency how to change things.

We welcome everyone and we try to make it comfortable for everyone in the agency. They might not be comfortable only talking to staff – as Self-advocates can relate to the issues. People are more comfortable talking to their peers, and that's what we're here for. The issues we talk about are all up to the SAC – they choose what we talk about and what we should work on. Right now, they want to talk about the Toronto Police and how they treat people. We would love to work with them. Francie Munoz is coming to speak with us next month and we can't wait to hear her story about how she stood up for her rights when the police said not good things about her! We watched that video and felt pretty upset for Francie.

We've been talking about how the agency handles abuse reporting. That's super important for us to know!

The conversations are not easy, but we need to have them. It's our life and dignity we are talking about. People need to treat us with respect.

We are interested in talking about our access to health care – both mental health and physical health. We'll keep you posted on what we get up to with that. We would love Self-advocates to come out and talk with us about what's important to them. We are welcoming all new Self-advocates to come to our meetings as guests.

Please come and join in the fun!

For information about the SAC, please get in touch with our coordinator:

Sue Hutton at  
[shutton@cltoronto.ca](mailto:shutton@cltoronto.ca)

## VOLUNTEER VOICE

### Take Our Kids to Work

By: Kaylee Dunn

I went to the Scarborough Headquarters of Community Living Toronto for my "Bring Your Kid to Work Day" and had a great time!

I started my day by making a Person Directed Plan with the other grade 9 student that was there and we both learned a lot about Community Living Toronto during our visit. We were taken on a tour of the Adult Development Program (ADP) and were able to help out in some of the rooms. I helped in the Seniors room and had a great time talking to some of the individuals.

My Mom then took me to where she works, a residence home in Scarborough, and introduced me to the individuals and staff that were there. Everyone I met throughout the day was very kind and friendly. I had a wonderful time getting to know more about the importance of the work done by my Mom and Community Living Toronto.



## Bob and the Terry Fox Run

By: Carol Bryce, SW-III, Resolution Group Home



*Kathleen Wynne, Bob, and Carol at the Terry Fox Run*

One doesn't know where the inspiration may have come from but it's not difficult for people supporting Bob Davies, who lives at the Resolution Residence, to understand easily how keen he is on the Terry Fox story. It's not surprising, participating at the Terry Fox Run seemed like a natural idea for Bob. With help, Bob has been participating in the Terry Fox Run for the past 7 years. It is such an important part of his life that rarely would he forget to mention "Terry" at his Personal Direct Plan, and then follow it up quickly by pointing his finger to his leg, as he would say, "broken!" – not referring to his but to Terry's.

He enjoys raising money for the cause, and this year alone he raised \$42.00! Bob is a really friendly and social person; he smiles as he walks the 5km loop with passion, greeting everyone he meets along the way with a "Good Morning". This year, he met the Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne! She talked to him about Terry Fox and the importance of the Run. It was a fun day for Bob and the money was raised for a good cause—Surely, it will be on Robert's to-do-list for next year too.

## Renew Your Membership

[cltoronto.ca/membership/](http://cltoronto.ca/membership/)

## Back by popular demand!

Planning for a Secure Future: Info Session with  
Brendon D. Pooran from  
PooranLaw Professional Corporation

Wednesday February 28th

6pm-8pm

Victoria Park hub: 1527 Victoria Ave. 2nd

*This is a free session!*

You must register with **MyCommunityHub.ca**

Search by Registration name or Registration #6490

Can't make it? This session will be **LIVE on FACEBOOK!**

Tune in and ask questions in the comment section. We will read it out for Brendon to answer LIVE!

Contact Wendy for more info:

Wendy Dyke, membership Coordinator, North York  
647-729-3627



## Snow Closure Protocol

### Unsure if we are open on a Snow Day?

When the winter snow gets really bad, we close our day programs. *All of our main offices remain open.*

In the early morning, we announce and notify participants in our day programs by phone, post it on our **website, Facebook, Twitter**, and also notify local news stations and radio. You can check **CP24, CTV, 680 news, CBC news, and Newstalk1010.**

If you are unsure if your day program is open or not due to weather, you can check all of these places that morning.

## Follow Us!



@CLToronto

[www.CommunityLivingToronto.com](http://www.CommunityLivingToronto.com)

