

# Connections



## FEATURE STORY

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Discover My Route

Discover My Route is a travel training program designed to teach people 18 years of age and older with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability (IDD) how to use public transit independently in Toronto.

The program has been created in partnership with Community Living Toronto, Community Access to Transportation Hamilton, Geneva Centre, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Kerry's Place Autism Services, Salvation Army Lawson Ministries, and the Toronto Transit Commission with a two year grant from the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services' Employment and Modernization Fund.

The 18-month pilot program includes in-class instruction to teach safety and transit skills and one-on-one field training to learn a transit route of the participant's choice.

Discover My Route and, a leading Mobility Service provider and the #1 public transit app in the world, Moovit launched their new app earlier this spring. The smartphone app, powered by Moovit, was created to help participants with their training and help coach them during their travels. Download the app on your smart phone now!

The app provides trip planning, real-time arrival information, and GPS-style step-by-step directions including "Get Off Notifications" that let the rider know when their stop is coming. Customized to meet each person's needs, this app will enable people with an IDD to take transit with greater ease and confidence.

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[Discovermyroute.com](http://Discovermyroute.com)



A Discover My Route participant and trainer.

## 2nd Annual Mom's Retreat

By: Tracey O'Regan, Inclusion Coordinator & Education Liaison

This spring on April 12th to 14th, thirty-seven mothers with children of all ages with a developmental disability came together at Shadow Lake Centre for a weekend of celebration, connection and growth. The women were given the chance to participate in a variety of activities, including facilitated group discussions and workshops with an expressive artist.

Although the weather was slightly chilly and at times wet, the mood of the weekend was not dampened. Due to numerous requests, the bonfire went on as planned, though this year many of us donned our winter coats and boots as we stood by the fire telling jokes, dancing and of course roasting marshmallows.

The mothers departed the retreat feeling "less isolated" and thankful that they had developed friendships with others who "truly understood" them.

The 3rd Annual Mom's Retreat will be held on May 22nd-24th, 2020 at Shadow Lake Centre. If you have any questions, please contact Tracey O'Regan at [toregan@cltoronto.ca](mailto:toregan@cltoronto.ca) or 416-371-3162.

We'd like to thank all four Councils for their generous funding for this retreat.



Mom's Retreat 2019 at Shadow Lake Centre.

## Shafquat Hussain Will Be Missed

By: Carolyn Chester, SWILL



It is with great sadness that we share the news that a participant at SWACA Etobicoke passed away on Saturday, April 20, 2019. Shafquat Hussain joined Community Living Toronto's Youth 2 Work (Y2W) program on May 1, 2000.

While he was in Y2W, he worked at No Frills, Walmart and McDonalds. On August 15th, 2006 he transferred to Supported Work and Community Activities (SWACA) Etobicoke, where he joined a group working on contract jobs. Shafquat loved to work and had many friends in his group.

In 2009, Shafquat joined a Monday Night Social Group at 102 Advance Road (ADP) which he loved and attended up until he passed away. Shafquat also went on many trips while at SWACA Etobicoke (Blue Jays games, Pizza Making at Dufferin Park, Riverdale Farm, Woodbine Racetrack, a trip to Detroit).

The week before he passed, he had attended a trip to Medieval Times with 22 of his friends from SWACA Etobicoke. He often travelled with his family to visit family members or to go back to his home country of Bangladesh. Shafquat would return from his trips with many stories that he would share with his friends and staff.

His parents shared that he was very dedicated to attending his day program. Shafquat will be deeply missed by both staff and his friends at SWACA Etobicoke.



*Shafquat Hussain's day at the Aquarium with his best friend, Maria.*

## Heidi Lahtinen's Retirement

*By: Dale Makino, Program Manager*

Community Living Toronto would like to send out a warm and heartfelt **Congratulations** and **Thank You** to Heidi Lahtinen, the Program Supervisor at Etobicoke SWACA. After more than 40 years of dedicated work with SWACA as a Support Worker and as a Supervisor, Heidi has announced her retirement starting in June 2019.

Everyone who worked closely with Heidi will know of her truly exceptional love of animals. Occasionally, this love would cross paths with her work life. Once a year, as a preventative pest control measure, arrangements would be made for a canine unit to come to SWACA; always an intriguing visit for everyone. Staff note that Heidi would always be there for these inspections and have a special treat for the dogs.

SWACA staff will also remember Heidi's many notebooks. Anytime a staff would come with a request or a concern, these would be noted and therefore remembered. We wonder if she does that with her family, Mike and Jamie too?

Heidi's incredible attention to detail was an asset to everyone.

Given all the extra time and work Heidi has put in throughout her years with our organization, this will be a major lifestyle change for not only Heidi but for her husband, Mike and her son, Jamie. Heidi has been an important source of support for so many individuals, families and staff and she will be dearly missed by many.

Lots of time with the trees, animals, water, neighbourly cottage folks and her dog, Nicki will soon take the place of computers, files, meetings, cell phones and staff requests in Heidi's life. Do you really want to do this, Heidi?



*Happy Retirement, Heidi!*

## Sharon Beyer Retires After 40 Years

*By: Heidi Lahtinen, Program Supervisor*

After almost 40 years, Sharon Beyer retired on May 31, 2019. Sharon began her career with Community Living Toronto in 1979, as an Instructor II at “Arc Industries” after she completed a student placement.

Over the years, Sharon has experienced many different roles at Judson. In addition to her initial Instructor II position, Sharon has also been an Assistant Supervisor and Support Worker II and III.

Sharon has witnessed and contributed to the many changes the day program has experienced over the years; from full time contract work right through to full time community activities.

Sharon has always been a strong advocate. For many years, she has supported individuals on a weekly basis at a community site, Brands for Canada.

When asked about Sharon, her colleagues describe her as dedicated, compassionate, kind-hearted, caring and a strong support to new staff.

Sharon has developed an avid following of participants for her weekly baking and cooking program. Her individualized

touch to that activity will be sorely missed!

Sharon, on behalf of Community Living Toronto and all participants and staff at SWACA Etobicoke, our most sincere thanks for your 39+ years of support. You are wished all the best for a happy and fulfilling retirement. You will be missed but we hope you will visit often!



*Happy Retirement, Sharon Beyer!*

## Community Junction

Summer Session Is here! Register on June 17th at 10 am!



## Irish Dance Group Visits North York SWACA

*By: Aida Nitura and Georgia Kurlinas*



*Graham School of Irish Dance Group.*

On March 13th, the North York Supported Work and Community Activities (SWACA) program was entertained with a Gaelic treat for St. Patrick’s Day.

Our Program Manager, Jennifer Warnell arranged for the talented young dancers from the Graham School of Irish Dance to showcase six Irish traditional dances. The participants clapped and danced to the music and enjoyed the show. It was an enjoyable time for everyone.

Thank you to the Graham School of Irish Dance and we hope they will come to see us again next year. Go raibh maith agat!

## Etobicoke/York Council Busy Raising Funds!

*By: Janina Coulthard and Georgina Stergiotis*

Etobicoke/York Council has been busy raising funds to support social/recreational programs for Etobicoke SWACA and other Etobicoke programs.

The Eleventh Easy Roller Bowlathon was held on Saturday, April 27 at the Rexdale Bowlerama. It was an enjoyable and fun evening attended by over 80 registered bowlers. Some new faces attended this year and many regular long-time supporters returned to help raise money for Community Living Toronto.

On May 12, Etobicoke Council along with Etobicoke SWACA held a rummage sale. It was a day of found treasures and



*Competitive Bowlers at the 11th Easy Roller Bowlathon*

good stories to be heard about these discoveries. Thank you to all the volunteers and Council Members who helped; it would not have been possible without you.

Thank you to all who donated. We received an abundance of wonderful items, which in turn helped us to raise \$3,200.00 from the Rummage Sale and over \$4,500.00 from the Easy Roller Bowlathon.

Funds raised by Etobicoke/York Council support various programs such as, Holiday Hampers, IOPEN, Creative Village Studio, Etobicoke SWACA, Annual Fun Fair and bus, Leaders in Philanthropy Event, Mom's Retreat, Annual Holiday party and many more.

If you are interested in making a difference and would like to be a part of Etobicoke/York Council, contact Georgina Stergiotis at [georgina.stergiotis@cltoronto.ca](mailto:georgina.stergiotis@cltoronto.ca)



*Rummage Sale Volunteers*

## Wilma Nad's Retirement

*By: Jennifer Warnell, Program Manager*



After 31 years at Community Living Toronto, Wilma Nad made the decision to retire at the end of May.

Wilma started her journey at Community Living Toronto in August 1988. During this time, she worked at almost all the North York programs at some point or another, spending many years at Brixham, Margaret, Supported Independent Living (SIL) and most recently NY Supported Work and Community Activities (SWACA) program.

Wilma has made a huge impact on the many people she has come into contact

with over the years - staff, peers, families and the people we support.

Wilma intends to enjoy her retirement resting and spending time with her son and family. She then plans to visit her home in the Philippines and enjoy some time with family there.

All of us at Community Living Toronto want to thank Wilma for all her work and contributions over the years and wish her the very best in her retirement. She will absolutely be missed by all!

## From Everyone at NY SWACA

By: Wilma Nad, Program Supervisor



Carlotta at NY SWACA

On April 4th, North York Supported Work and Community Activities (SWACA) program had a gathering of families and friends to wish Carlotta Carmichael **Happy Retirement** after 29 years of service.

The participants serenaded Carlotta with a melody of songs which described how they felt about her. Songs included, My

Girl, We are Family and You Are My Sunshine.

A large gathering of leadership staff, family and frontline staff enjoyed a great lunch, presentation and a heartfelt thank you speech from Carlotta.

We thank Carlotta for all her years of commitment and dedication to her work, the participants and her team.

Happy Retirement, Carlotta and we wish you all the best as your retirement journey begins.

## Bingo Bowling Extravaganza

By: Felicita Zanatta

Scarborough Council's 9th Annual Bingo Bowling Extravaganza event was held on Sunday, May 6, 2019 at Parkway Bowl. It was a fun event with 30 bowlers. We had politicians participate, including MP



MP Salma Zahid, Brad Duguid (Bottom) and Brad Duguid, MP John McKay (Top).

Salma Zahid and MP John McKay. The event raised \$686.00 which will support the wonderful programs sponsored by the Scarborough Council, including dance, literacy and cooking programs.

Lots of desserts provided energy for the bowlers throughout the evening. We had a 50/50 draw and prizes, including gift cards for Mark's Work Wearhouse, Pizza Pizza and Blue Jays tickets!

Thank you to the people who donated prizes and money. Thanks to all the bowlers, friends and families that came out to support this event. Hope to see you all again next year!



## Visiting UN Special Rapporteur

By: Sue Hutton



*Shineeca McLeod presenting to UN Special Rapporteur*

Shineeca McLeod of Community Living Toronto's Self Advocates Council presented to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on April 4, 2019. The Special Rapporteur, Alina Grigoras was in Toronto hearing from several Disability Rights groups on how they think Canada is doing in ensuring people's rights are being upheld. ARCH, Community Living Ontario, CAMH, Sound Times and Dementia Alliance also presented, along with others. All the groups talked about barriers to accessing rights that everyone with disabilities is supposed to enjoy under the law.

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities says that persons with disabilities should "enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life". Shineeca shared stories of the workshops she is delivering with Respecting Rights across Ontario that are about legal

capacity, or people's right to make their own decisions. She talked about stories she has heard from people around the province not being able to enjoy legal capacity in their lives. Across Ontario with Respecting Rights, Shineeca has heard people tell of all kinds of ways they are not able to make their own decisions. Stories of people being stuck in long term care, not being able to participate in programs they want to participate in, choose their own foods were some of the things Shineeca shared. We look forward to hearing what recommendations come forward from these talks.



*Shineeca McLeod, Self-Advocate*

## Celebrating CL Month

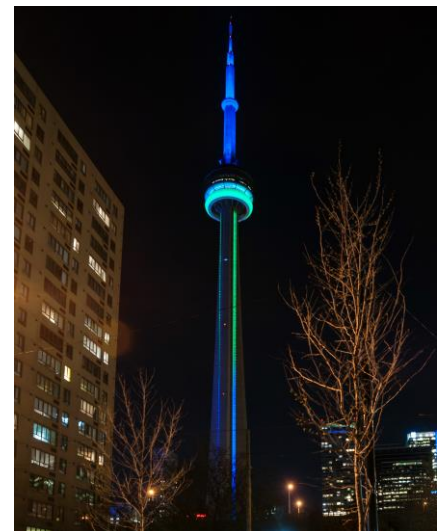
Throughout the month of May, Community Living agencies including CL Toronto celebrated Community Living month, commemorating all that we have accomplished together to foster inclusive communities.

On May 6, 2019 we co-hosted Community Living Day at Queen's Park with Community Living Ontario. The event was attended by over 100 people, including staff/individuals from agencies across the province, Members of Provincial Parliament and government staff. Brad Saunders and Shineeca McLeod from CL Toronto delivered remarks.

We also hosted our annual I Took a Break social media campaign, and invited staff, self-advocates and community members to "take a break" on us by providing them

with a Kit Kat and asking them to post a selfie with our hashtag.

Lastly, we hosted our 31 Days of Community Living video campaign this year, and the City celebrated by Illuminating the CN Tower and Toronto sign in blue and green (below).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### CENTRAL

#### Downtown Parent Share

Monday June 10, 2019  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
38 Regent Street, Second Level

#### Central Council Meeting

Tuesday June 11, 2019  
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
20 Spadina Road, Boardroom

#### sprOUT Meeting

Pride Prom  
Thursday June 27, 2019  
4:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
Griffin Centre  
1124 Finch Avenue West, Unit 1

#### One Direction Social Group

Saturday June 29, 2019  
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
Pub Night at Brass Taps  
493 Danforth Avenue

#### Easy Walk

Neighbourhood Tour  
Sunday July 7, 2019  
11:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Meeting Location TBA

### ETOBICOKE/YORK

#### Etobicoke Council Meeting

Tuesday June 11, 2019  
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
Creative Village Studio  
4895 Dundas Street West

#### Etobicoke Parent Share

Thursday June 20, 2019  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
295 The West Mall, Suite 204

#### Friendship Group

Wednesday June 26, 2019  
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm  
295 The West Mall, Suite 204

### NORTH YORK

#### Summer Literacy Program

Monday to Friday, July 8 to 26, 2019  
Class 1: 9:30 am – 12:00 pm  
REGISTRATION ON MyCommunityHub.ca  
Search Code # 9677  
Class 2: 12:30 pm – 3:00 pm  
REGISTRATION ON MyCommunityHub.ca  
Search Code # 9679  
Note: Afternoon classes are repeats of morning sessions  
Victoria Park Hub  
1527 Victoria Park Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Fee: \$150.00

#### Summer Cooking Classes

July 29 to August 2, 2019  
9:30 am – 3:00 pm  
1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 8

### SCARBOROUGH

#### Council Meeting

Elections and Presentation on Advocacy  
Monday June 3, 2019  
6:30 pm  
1712 Ellesmere Road

#### Bingo at Lawson

Friday June 21, 2019  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
1712 Ellesmere Road  
\$5.00 for a Snack and Prizes

#### Connections Dance

Friday June 21, 2019  
7:30 pm – 9:30 pm  
1712 Ellesmere Road  
\$8.00 Admission  
Call Lester at 416-566-7252

For more information on all of these events and to register contact our Information & Membership Services Line at **647-426-3220** or [contactus@cltoronto.ca](mailto:contactus@cltoronto.ca)



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Charitable registration number: 10769 4143 RR0001

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