

Connections



FEATURE STORY

Minister Smith visits Community Living Toronto!

By: Matthew Poirier

On July 31st, Community Living Toronto was pleased to welcome Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, Todd Smith to Community Living Toronto for a meeting with some of our staff and a tour of the new Foster's Clubhouse at 20 Spadina. Minister Smith has only been in his new position at MCCSS for a matter of weeks, so we were honoured that he was able to take time out of his busy schedule to meet with us and see some of the work that we do here at CL Toronto.

Minister Smith spent an hour with us, meeting individuals who use the Clubhouse, taking the time to chat and take photos with everyone and even took a break to play a quick game of pool.

After spending time at the Clubhouse, Minister Smith and his staff met with CL Toronto staff to discuss the work that we do across Toronto to support people with intellectual disabilities and their families. We also used the opportunity to talk about challenges that our sector faces such as funding pressures, wait lists and aging caregivers. Minister Smith was

eager and open to working with us collaboratively to address these challenges and to improve the critical supports and services we provide.

Before leaving, we invited Minister Smith back for another tour of some of our locations, and provided him with a token of appreciation for his visit - a painting from an artist at Creative Village Studio. Here are some photos of the Minister's visit.



IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Feature Story
- 2 Pride Prom & Summer Respite
- 3 BMO Volunteers/Maxine
- 4 Microsoft Visits Y2W
- 5 Self-Advocates Council
- 6 DSO Fair, AGM, Cineplex
- 7 Family Fun Fair
- 8 Upcoming Events



Minister Smith visited Foster's Clubhouse at 20 Spadina Rd

Pride Prom an Inclusive Success

By: Michelle Grimley

To celebrate Pride Month, sprOUT Toronto Members hosted a Pride Prom event on June 27th. SprOUT Toronto is a group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and questioning (LGBTQ) adults, 18 years and over, with intellectual disabilities.

Pride Prom was a fun-filled evening that kicked off with a shared meal and delicious 'Pride Punch'. After dinner, members walked the red carpet, making grand entrances into the dance hall. DJ Chris got the party started and kept it going strong, encouraging everyone to get on the dance floor!

SprOUT Members shared what Pride means to them on posters displayed around the room. Themes of unity, love, acceptance and self-care decorated the event. Colourful streamers, stickers and glitter lit up the space.

Pride Prom was a great chance for Members to celebrate their ongoing LGBTQ+ and disability advocacy efforts with awesome music and amazing treats!

Door prizes and goodies were enjoyed by all who attended. We'd like to thank Central Council for generously co-funding this event and we hope it will become an annual event each June for Pride Month.



Romeo on the Red Carpet at Pride Prom

New members are welcome to join a monthly meeting! SprOUT Toronto meets on the second Monday of each month between 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm at Griffin Centre: 1124 Finch Avenue West.

For further details please contact:

Onar Usar at 416-347-0795 or

Shayen Henry at 647-523-7063



Positive Space

The Summer Respite Experience

By: Larissa Weredynski

This year I have the privilege of working as a Summer Day Respite Worker for Community Living Toronto in Etobicoke/York. The role includes providing behavioural support to families, researching community resources and giving parents a much-needed break. Throughout the summer I will be assisting four individuals, aged 3 to 24.

For two weeks in July, I am working with Anna and two of her four young children. This busy family enjoys spending much of the summer outside, engaging in activities in their neighbourhood. The children thoroughly enjoy swimming and water play, riding their bikes and visiting parks. When at home, they read together, play games and do arts and crafts. During my time with this family, I am supporting Anna by accompanying them to various activities such as swimming at the community pool. While at their home, I support the children's communication, play and social skills during free time.

Summer Day Respite is a great opportunity for families who require extra support to have a student

work with them in a number of settings. This allows families the opportunity to take their children out to places that might be difficult without assistance. This position is good experience for students like me who are planning to go into the field of education, and I can't think of a better way to spend my summer in Toronto!



Larissa providing Summer Day Respite to individuals and families

BMO Volunteers at North York ADP

By: Jessica Gagnon, Support Worker III

On June 11th the North York ADP was honoured to welcome volunteers from BMO for the annual BMO Volunteer Day. The six volunteers arrived with cheerful smiles and were met with roaring excitement and fun!

The NY ADP provides an enriching environment for 30 adults every day. With the assistance of the BMO volunteers and a grant of \$200 we were able to plan a day full of fun activities. We purchased new supplies for the ADP to explore with the volunteers and for future use. The activities included: painting pots with neon acrylics and then planting a herb, vegetable and wildflower garden in the colourful pots; stimulating puzzles; trying our hands at folding origami and testing out a new outdoor bean bag toss game.

The day also included a pizza lunch and strawberry shortcake dessert, which was enjoyed by all. The volunteers spoke highly about the program and how grateful they were to see what the needs are in their own communities. One volunteer even requested information on how to volunteer for CL Toronto on a regular basis.

We would like to thank all the volunteers from BMO and all the staff who planned activities to make the day a success!



BMO Volunteers at North York ADP



Potting Plants with BMO Volunteers

Maxine H: Sky Rider

By: Sonja Adamu, Support Worker II

If you're lucky to know Maxine H., you'll know: she resides at a Group Home In Scarborough, she's a gentle soul with a beautiful smile, she not a risk taker and she's a foodie at heart. Her Person Directed Plan for 2019 allowed her to focus on achieving one of her goals during the month of May. This included going away on a special holiday, exploring the things she enjoys and those that challenge her and doing a few new things she's never done before - to help her out of her shell and grow her capabilities.

Our destination this year was Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls with me, Maxine's housemate and friend, Jessica, and other staff, Diane. Even though there were a few hiccups in our itinerary, Maxine was a champion and just seemed to roll with all the punches on a not so perfect vacation.

On our second day, we decided to ride The Sky Ride in downtown Niagara. I'll admit, at first I was hesitant for Maxine. I didn't think she would climb into such a shaky ride and one that goes 100 feet into the air but to my pleasant surprise, Maxine proved me wrong.

When entering the ride, Max backed up a few times and made some nervous noises, but with cheering and encouragement from me, Jessica and Diane, Maxine mustered the courage and got into The Sky Ride - Hooray! We were so proud of Maxine in that moment and if you look closely at the photos you can see a hint of a smile indicating that she was pretty proud too!



Maxine on the Sky Ride

Microsoft Visits NY Job Seekers

By: Andreia Alvares, SWIII

On June 20th, we had a special guest speaker: Ricardo Wagner, Accessibility Lead from Microsoft Canada. He shared great information on accessibility in the digital world to job seekers from the

North York Youth2Work program in the job readiness class.

Ricardo works with people and companies trying to make the world a better place. He believes technology elevates the education, employment and living standards for billions of people around the world, especially people with disabilities. It's his personal mission to play a role in that transformation.

Ricardo encouraged the participants to focus on their abilities when applying for jobs. The individuals were very engaged and interactive, and it was a great opportunity for them to learn about jobs at Microsoft Canada and to discover new Accessibility Apps.

[Please click here for more information.](#)

The photo below shows Microsoft Canada Representative, Ricardo Wagner visiting with North York Youth2Work participants.



Self-Advocates Council Gets More Inclusive

By: Sue Hutton

The 2019 SAC Annual meeting was a very special event because members had decided to be more inclusive for more people to attend, with less barriers.

The group decided to not hold elections for people to become SAC members. Instead, this year people were asked to RSVP to reserve a spot at the meeting. There were 18 spots – so there was room for lots of people to get involved!

Elections for SAC began 10 years ago, because there were so many self-advocates who wanted to be on council. Elections made people a little tense, and there were hard feelings sometimes when people were not elected. They wouldn't return to meetings and we missed them. Over the

last couple of years, the SAC has been referring to the group as the SAC "and friends", to be more welcoming for new folks to join in the action! Seeing new faces was exciting and showed our growing network of self-advocacy at Community Living Toronto.

The SAC was thrilled that Etobicoke arrived with a strong group of new self



Self-Advocates Council 2019 Annual Meeting

advocates at the June annual meeting. Support Worker Derek, Suzanne, Chris, Robert and Brian (pictured L-R below) made amazing speeches about how they want to stand up for their rights and help others. Chris talked both about being a comedian and his interest in advocating for the right to have and maintain relationships. His warmth and humour had the whole room captivated. Suzanne talked about her work with theatre and her interest in making sure staff are kind and respectful to everyone. Suzanne said "It is my honour and privilege to stand in front of you representing Etobicoke SWACA! I want to help people with intellectual disabilities because I am one of them. I have Down Syndrome. I want to advocate for my rights and the rights of my friends!"

Robert had a great speech and loved sharing his thoughts with the group. Robert talked about wanting support to write about shows he likes on Netflix!

These are all wonderful thoughts and were so inspiring to hear. Support workers Derek and Sasha have been working hard behind the scenes supporting Etobicoke to spread the word of self-advocacy. Support Worker Venus has also been supporting the Manson group in Central, who closed the speeches with an inspiring group recital of the Pledge of Personal Power. The SAC is looking forward to sharing the word self-advocacy across the Association as much as possible this coming year!

For more information contact:

Tara Bates at tara.bates@cltoronto.ca or
Sue Hutton shutton@cltoronto.ca



Save the Date: CL Toronto AGM

Thursday, September 26, 2019

Alliance Francaise Toronto

24 Spadina Road, Toronto ON

8:30 am - 9:00 am: light breakfast

9:00 am - 10:00 am: AGM

[RSVP on Eventbrite Here!](#)



Employer of the Year

On July 29, CL Toronto presented our Employer of the Year Award to Cineplex Morningside in Scarborough for creating employment opportunities for people with an intellectual disability, and for fostering inclusive work environments.

Cineplex Morningside was nominated by Youth2Work staff, Jade. Jade supports Ryan, who began his placement at Cineplex nearly 5 years ago as a volunteer. Over a year ago, with support from Jade and his family, Ryan was offered a paid position at Cineplex and has been working there, learning new

- ✓ Free event, free parking, Registration not required
- ✓ Agency and Community presentations
- ✓ An opportunity to learn more about Developmental Services and Supports in Toronto for individuals over 18 years old

Developmental Services Information Fair 2019

Formerly the dsto Information Fair

PARKVIEW MANOR

55 Barber Greene Rd N°1

North York, ON M3C 2A1

Contact: Mia Tremblay
Developmental Services Toronto
p. 647-729-1158
e. mia.tremblay@ccltoronto.ca

De l'information sur les services aux personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle sera disponible en français

skills and contributing as a valued team member ever since.

The Cineplex team truly wants to see Ryan succeed in his position and they have all taken the time to work directly with him to improve his skills and build his confidence. Ryan is treated like any other employee on the team with opportunities to participate in employee training and staff events. These little things go a long way in building a culture of inclusion at Cineplex and inspiring the team members to bring this philosophy with them wherever they go. Thank you to Jade and to all staff who submitted a nomination for this award. Please keep an eye out for the Call for Nominations for Employer of the Year this fall.



Ryan presenting his co-worker with Employer of the Year award

Annual Family Fun Fair

By: Matthew Poirier

On June 8th, CL Toronto hosted another successful Family Fun Fair in Scarborough. The fair is a summer highlight for many of CL Toronto's members, individuals and families. It was a warm, sunny day, with enough BBQ, games and fun for everyone. Here are some photos of this year's event. You can see more on our social media pages. We look forward to seeing you there next summer!



UPCOMING EVENTS

CENTRAL

Danforth Parent Share

Wednesday September 25, 2019
Wednesday October 30, 2019
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Woodgreen Community Services
815 Danforth Avenue, Suite 202

Central Council Meeting

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

ETOBICOKE/YORK

Etoibcoke Council Meeting

Tuesday September 10, 2019
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Creative Village Studio
4895 Dundas Street W.

Etoibcoke Parent Share

Thursday September 19, 2019
Thursday October 17, 2019
10:00 am – 12:00 pm
295 The West Mall, Suite 204

NORTH YORK

Pizza/Bingo Night

Wednesday November 20, 2019
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Victoria Park Hub
1527 Victoria Park Avenue East
\$3.00 Cover Charge
Register at MyCommunityHub.ca
Search # 10218

Jumpstart Literacy

Saturday Mornings
Starts: September 7, 2019
Ends: June 20, 2020
9:30 am – 11:30 am
Cost: \$210.00 for year
Register at MyCommunityHub.ca
Search # 10211

SCARBOROUGH

Council Meeting

Monday October 7, 2019
6:15 pm
1712 Ellesmere Road

Bingo at Lawson

Friday September 20, 2019
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm
1712 Ellesmere Road
\$5.00 for a Snack and Prizes

Healthy Cooking Class

Monday September 23, 2019
5:00 – 8:00 pm
10 Monday evenings
Cost: \$175.00
Interview required

Connections Dance

Friday September 27, 2019
7:30 pm – 9:30 pm
1712 Ellesmere Road
\$8.00 Admission
Call Lester at 416-566-7252

For more information on these events
and to register, contact our Information
& Membership Services Line at 647-426-
3220 or contactus@cltoronto.ca



@CLToronto

cltoronto.ca

Community Living Toronto

20 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON, M5R 2S7 Canada
Phone: 416.968.0650

Charitable registration number: 10769 4143 RR0001

Ontario

United Way
Greater Toronto