

horizon

newsletter



Ongwanada

Summer 2017

A quarterly newsletter for Ongwanada's families, partners, and the community.



support respect **choices**

Ongwanada unveils 2016-2017 Annual Report and receives \$5,389 from Legion at 46th AGM

Ongwanada celebrated a year of accomplishments at the 46th Annual General Meeting on June 20 after celebrating a quarter-century relationship with the Royal Canadian Legion who were on site to donate \$5,389 for a walking frame.

“Our AGM is a time to reflect on the previous fiscal year and look back on the work completed,” stated Allan Twohey in his last speech as Board President. “And it’s also a time to celebrate the partnerships in which we have built and have maintained, such as our long-lasting partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion which has donated over \$80,000 to Ongwanada over the years.”

The grant funding received on June 20 was used to purchase a walking frame for individuals who require assistance walking. The frame will allow them to experience movement and mobility which is beneficial for muscle strengthening, breathing, circulation, skill development, participation in the community, and overall fitness and health.

“OT/PT is very excited about our new ‘Grillo’ Gait Trainer which was made possible by the generous donation from our friends at the Royal Canadian Legion,” says Erin Thompson, Occupational Therapist. “This device allows people with poor strength and postural control to be able to walk without hands-on support from staff. It provides them



Allan Twohey, Karen Menzies, and Wade Durling receive funding for a new Grillo Gait Trainer from members of the Royal Canadian Legion (Bev McCormick, Tim Hegarty, and Tom Briggs)

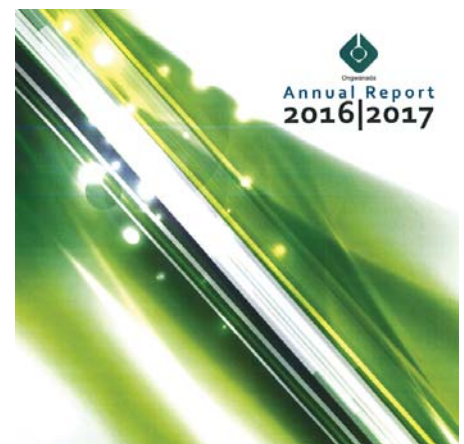
the opportunity to exercise more independently while allowing greater safety for staff that are assisting.”

The AGM which followed the cheque presentation had a strong community focus, as did the 2016/2017 Annual Report released at the meeting.

“This past year, Ongwanada kept the momentum of our five-year Strategic Plan, which we call Vision 2020, going with a strong focus on working with our local community, regional, and provincial partners “ explained Ongwanada Chief Executive Officer, Wade Durling. “The focus of Vision 2020 is simple - put the person first; work with our community to build capacity [in our sector]; work internally to change how we do things; and,

finally, look at accountability and outcomes. All of these are accomplished through working with others to pull the best resources together and I’m happy to report Ongwanada is well on its way to achieving its vision.”

You can pick up the Annual Report at the Resource Centre or go to www.ongwanada.com.



Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) News: Improving Access to Services for People with Developmental Disabilities



Ontario is improving access to services for adults with developmental disabilities and their families by finding better ways to connect them to supports available in their local community.

On June 21, Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services and Ted McMeekin, MPP, Ancaster--Dundas--Flamborough--Westdale, were at Contact Hamilton, to announce supports and resources for adults with developmental disabilities, including:

- Hiring more Developmental Services Ontario staff, who help people with developmental disabilities find services and supports in their community;
- Expanding the Adult Protective Service Worker program, which matches adults who have a developmental disability and live on their own with a worker who helps them with their everyday living needs, access community resources, and set and achieve goals;
- Increasing access to clinical professionals and specialized services at home and in the community for people with an exceptional dual diagnosis or complex behavioural and

medical needs;

- Helping more people gain work experience by partnering with the Ontario Disability Employment Network to better coordinate services and increase capacity across developmental service agencies, Employment Supports service providers, school boards and employers; and,
- Expanding family support networks, which are groups made up of caregivers who help give adults with developmental disabilities and their families a sense of belonging and help connect them with appropriate services and supports.

Through these increased supports, people with developmental disabilities and their families will be better able to find services in their communities -- for example housing solutions -- so that they can live as independently as possible. These investments will also help system partners work better together to coordinate care for their clients.

Ontario will continue to work with people with developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers, agencies and other community partners to increase connections, and help them best determine their own future.

Board of Governors nominate new President: Mr. Jack Thompson



President Jack Thompson

After four years of serving as President, Allan Twohey steps down to allow new President Jack Thompson to take his place.

Jack has sat on Ongwanada's Board for almost 30 years so he is well-versed with Ongwanada's operations as well as the sector.

We congratulate Jack as he starts his new role in September and we sincerely thank Allan for the past four years.

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Ongwanada has been deemed compliant once again

“Ongwanada underwent its annual Compliance Inspection in April and passed with flying colours,” reports Kim McCormick, Manager, Residential and Community Services.

Compliance Inspections are done on an annual basis to ensure organizations are compliant with the many policy directives and legislation set forth by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). These policy directives and legislation are in place to ensure the delivery of safe and set standards to the individuals we support.

The inspection is completed by a Program Advisor and each year the focus changes. This year, along with our Residential Program, there was a thorough assessment of our Host Family Program.

New directives for that program were issued last year which required extensive policy updating. These new directives focus on the safety of individuals living with Host Family providers in the community.

“Kudos to Geoff Gifford (Host Family Supervisor) and his team for tackling this issue and addressing all the standards raised in the new directives,” said McCormick.

The organization received three weeks notice of the compliance visit date in which Ongwanada was then required to produce a host of documents including



all policies and procedures, all board/staff and volunteer records, staff education documentation, water and fire safety records for each home, and more.

It is important to note that many of Ongwanada's policies and procedures are set out by the Ministry to build on proven set standards and best practices adopted to assist the individuals we serve. This is why there are regular visits to the group homes to assess safety items and regulations to ensure a safe environment for both supported individuals and staff.

The final report was extremely favourable and the Program Advisor commented on the feel of Ongwanada's homes and the fact that they are actually homes and not work sites. She was very impressed with our progress with our electronic client information management system (eCIMS) and our Host Family Program

and there was only one non-compliance issue which was addressed immediately.

“I want to thank all of the people who assisted this year. First, the committee members: Cindy Chappell, Jason Hanmore, Geoff Gifford, Alison Treadgold, Mark Slade, Debbie McMullen, and Ronna Dillon,” exclaimed McCormick as Chair of the Compliance Committee. “A big thanks, also, to many others including the supervisors and staff in the homes we visited (Henry, McKeown, Montreal South, Wilson, Seaforth, and Inverness), Peter Gould and Louise Hunter, Shelley Gelineau and her team, Paula Smith, Kate Bearman, and Sophie Chalk.”

So, the next time you enter the ORC's main entrance and see the framed letter on the wall stating Ongwanada is in compliance, you'll know what it is all about.

What's happening within the organization...

Annual Dinner shows how we're all essential pieces of Ongwanada

On May 11, Ongwanada's Board of Governors hosted its Annual Dinner to celebrate the past year's successes and shine light on the people we support.

The event, held at the Italo-Canadian Club, was well-attended by supported individuals, staff, volunteers, families, friends, and community partners coming together.

Highlights of the event included special music by Circle of Friends and Harrison Bull (who was accompanied by his father on the guitar); a tribute to Dr. Fenton Weston for his 40 years of service with Ongwanada (see below); and Dan Pietracupa, parent of Gore Road resident, providing his daughter's story (see story in right column).

Be sure to visit Ongwanada's Facebook page to enjoy all of the evening's pictures.

The Pietracupas provide a family's perspective



Dan and Shelley Pietracupa provided those in attendance at the Board's Annual Dinner with their story of searching and finding appropriate care for their daughter, Daniella. Here is their story which ran in the *Kingston Whig-Standard*:

Many parents of children with a developmental disability would probably prefer to keep their issues with their child private.

But not Danny and Shelley Pietracupa, the parents of Daniella, their 27-year-old daughter who has autism and behavioural issues.

"Just to give hope to other parents going through the same thing," Danny Pietracupa said in an interview on Tuesday about his motivation for publicizing their journey.

"That's what I'm excited about. There are avenues of support and help out there."

The couple gave the keynote address to the Ongwanada board of governors dinner on Thursday at the Italo-Canadian Club.

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Board honours Dr. Fenton Weston for 40 years of service



Board of Governors member, Mr. Roy Smith, with Mrs. Jenny Weston and Dr. Fenton Weston.

Dr. Weston started providing medical care for individuals at Penrose in 1975 and continued providing medical care for individuals supported by Ongwanada until 2015. The Board of Governors thanked him at their Annual Dinner by providing theatre tickets for the couple to enjoy along with a donation made to Bethany Kids on their behalf.

Couple wants “to give hope to other parents” (Pietracupa’s story)

Story continued from page 4

Ongwanada is a non-profit charitable organization that is dedicated to supporting people with developmental disabilities, with a special focus on those with complex needs, and their families so they can lead full lives, effectively supported in their communities.

Its resource centre is on Portsmouth Avenue across from St. Lawrence College.

“We feel for other parents who are going through the same things. A lot of time you feel you’re alone in it, but you’re not,” Danny said.

Only a few years ago, Daniella’s parents were at their wit’s end in dealing with Daniella’s behaviour and outbursts.

She’s autistic with a behaviour element, Danny said, “which made it really difficult. Difficult for respite, difficult for day programs, difficult for a lot of things, difficult at home.

“Unless we got a handle on her behaviour, there were very little options,” her mother Shelley said. “She would have been stuck at home.”

Due to her behaviour, they were not able to get Daniella into a day program.

“If Ongwanada hadn’t gotten involved, she’d be stuck at home with me,” Shelley said.

On many occasions, Shelley took the brunt of Daniella’s behavioural issues.

In 2011, Daniella was moved into

Ongwanada’s Complex Behaviour Home, which has helped her adjust to life.

Ronna Dillon, manager, clinical services at Ongwanada who oversees the treatment home and complex care home, said staff came through to provide a good program for Daniella.

“We had our community behaviour services team involved with the Pietracupa’s prior to Daniella coming into our treatment home, and some of the recommendations they made could not be implemented because it was too dangerous for mom,” Dillon said. “The admission to the treatment home helped us implement what needed to be put in place for Daniella because it was a safe environment.

“We saw and continue to see tremendous growth in Daniella. It’s been wonderful.”

Ongwanada received special funding from the provincial government in 2008 for Daniella’s first treatment home, which can control high-risk clients.

“We have the only treatment home in the area specifically for people with developmental disabilities and dual diagnosis with a mental health issues or severe challenging behaviour,” Dillon said.

Daniella did so well at the treatment home that she was transferred to another home two years ago.

“She’s doing very well,” Dillon said.

Ongwanada has 140 clients living in 23 community residences, as well as one regional treatment home and a complex behavioural home.

Danny Pietracupa said Daniela’s behaviour has improved.

“It’s manageable now,” he said. “There are still episodes and there will probably always will be, but she’s finding ways to cope with her anxieties which cause the outburst and behaviour issues.

“She has the support she needs. She’s very happy there.”

Every Sunday afternoon, her parents visit Daniella and take her for an outing. Once a month, she goes home for a couple of meals or an overnight visit.

The Pietracupa’s also have a 28-year-old daughter and a son who is 25.

Their fears of how Daniella will be taken care of once they’re gone have been alleviated, Danny said.

“It’s been great, and a lot of people have noticed that since she went into the treatment home and Gore Road [home], we are a lot more at ease because she’s safe and well taken care of,” he said.

“That takes the burden off us and it makes us feel there’s someplace for her where she can be safe and have an enjoyable life.”

Working with our community...

Ongwanada's Annual Memorial Service



Candles representing those being remembered sat front and centre at the Memorial Service on June 15, 2017.

On June 15, the organization held its 4th Annual Memorial Service to honour and remember five supported individuals who passed away over the past year, as well as staff members and friends in the community who we have lost, but have not forgotten.

The event included beautiful music by Dr. Mark Sirett and The Cantabile Women's Choir, Madyson Doseger, Jared Mac-Millan, and Ongwanada's Circle of Friends group.

With a full audience in Ongwanada's Joseph Dominik Sensory Garden, various individuals including CEO Wade Durling, Rev. Cathleen Getchell (Kingston Ministerial), Faith Woodland, and Josh Burrige of Simpler Times Cremation Service took time to offer kind words to the crowd.

The event's organizer and host, Monika Cook, started the event in 2014 as a way for dedicated staff, supported individuals, families, and community partners to come together and remember those lost throughout the previous year. The event has grown and has become a meaningful time of reflection for all of those involved.

A nice addition to this year's service were the Memorial Stars. People were invited to make a special memorial donation through purchasing a star in memory of a loved one with the stars being hung in Ongwanada's front lobby. The funds from the star initiative go back to Circle of Friends. If you missed purchasing a star this year, look for other donation initiatives in the future. Thank you to all who donated!

Ongwanada staff participate in 17th Annual United Way Day of Caring



Tom McRae, Lisa Holmes, and Kate Bearman assemble centrepieces for the CMHA Golf Fore Change dinner.

On Friday, June 9, a small, but mighty team of Ongwanada staff went into the community to give back to organizations in need of some extra assistance.

Their first stop was at the Canadian Mental Health Association (Kingston Region) where they helped in preparation for the CMHA's Annual Golf Tournament. After CMHA, the group went to Big Brothers and Big Sisters where they helped organize a storage room, and then made their final stop at the Oak Street Community Garden where they really dug into some hot and dirty outdoor labour.

Bearman exclaimed, "I love the Day of Caring! It's always a great opportunity to get out into the community and see what other organizations do, meet new people, and help out with many different types of projects."

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A quarterly newsletter for Ongwanada families, friends, staff, volunteers, Board members, and Home Share providers.

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Our mission

Ongwanada is dedicated to supporting people with developmental disabilities, with a special focus on those with complex needs and their families so they can lead full lives, effectively supported in their communities.

Vision 2020

By 2020, Ongwanada will be a leading, clinically focused regional resource for Eastern Ontario, recognized for its person-centred approach to services.

Consistent with a servant leadership philosophy, it will be a pro-active partner in building community capacity and providing specialized regional resources to enable individuals with developmental disabilities, including those with complex needs, to thrive within their communities.

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CEO Wade Durling and four Ongwanada volunteers recognized by Ontario Government



CEO Wade Durling receives Ontario Volunteer Service Award from MPP Sophie Kiwala at the June 21 event

On June 21, Wade Durling was recognized for his 10 years of service with Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities at the Government of Ontario's 2017 Volunteer Service Award Ceremony.

Durling graciously received the award from MPP Sophie Kiwala. Other notable recipients included four Ongwanada volunteers: Jennifer Baran, Evelyn Parks, Terry Pennock, and Asha Van Loon.

Congratulations to all of the volunteers recognized at the event. We are very proud of our CEO for the work he does throughout the province, as well as the volunteers who provide support to Ongwanada.

Auxiliary Strawberry Social raises almost \$850



Some Auxiliary members waiting to serve strawberry treats to guests of the Social held on June 28. The event raised \$850.