

SPECIAL ISSUE

CELEBRATING
COMMUNITY
INCLUSION



Community Living South Muskoka

Serving those with a Developmental Disability



Vision

The "Go To" expert for those impacted by a developmental disability.

Mission

Community Living South Muskoka provides lifetime support to all those impacted by a developmental disability, utilizing skilled staff and effective partnerships involving the individual, the family and the community with the result that the individual is accepted as a valued community member.

Values

Excellence

Trust

Respect

Success Factors

A Highly Valued

Community Organization

A Leader in Innovation

Person Centred

Valued, Skilled Staff



Celebrating Our Community Participation & Employment Programs

Celebrating community inclusion is a perfect title for this second special edition newsletter highlighting the changes in our Community Participation Supports program. We are excited to showcase some of the wonderful accomplishments of people in both employment and volunteer settings.

As most of you know, over the past two years, the staff and people we support have been working hard to move from a mostly centre based support model to a fully inclusive community participation model. However, it is not until we hear the stories that we get a true understanding of how important it is to people that they are contributing, valued members of our society.

The staff team have continued their work to identify what is important to people, build community capacity, and support the transition from participation to inclusion. They have been doing terrific work, but we know we still have more we can do to keep raising the bar. To achieve

success, we have also relied on support from families and friends and we share these accomplishments with

you as well. Finally, we could not have achieved any of this without the belief in the positive benefits of including all people by our local businesses. You will see from the stories that they have been instrumental in providing a supportive, welcoming and friendly place for people to work and volunteer in.

Thank you to everyone for all of your hard work, we look forward to sharing more success stories with you in the future.

Krista Haiduk-Collier
Chief Executive Officer



Tamica - Employee at Bracebridge Taxi

Tamica is employed as a Data Entry Clerk for Bracebridge Taxi. She is responsible for entering all Community Living South Muskoka taxi runs into their computer system. She also does filing, sorting of receipts and helps to keep the office neat and tidy.

From Tamica's Perspective

Having this job means that I can get out of the house and into the community a lot more. Before I had my job I barely left the house unless I was with my mom, I didn't even really know the names of streets and locations around town. Since I started my job at Bracebridge Taxi I know a lot more street names and locations, so I feel more confident when I'm out in the community. I recently started leaving our apartment by myself to go for walks and I'm having more conversations with new people. I'm confident now to order my own drinks and snacks at the coffee shop, which used to be a huge issue for me and my mom would usually order for me. I also enjoy the fact that all the people I work with are very friendly and that I'm doing work that I really enjoy.

From an Employer's Perspective

Karen at Bracebridge Taxi says that having Tamica working there has helped the staff out a great deal. "Tamica is a very sweet, quiet girl who enjoys the work she does and is a pleasure to be around."

From a Staff Perspective

I think the reason Tamica has been so successful at her job at Bracebridge Taxi is that she is hard-working, a quick learner, and really enjoys what she does there. She works with a very friendly person who was willing to take the time and show her what needed to be done. I also think she has been successful because she knows that no matter what, there is always someone there to ask for advice or help if she is feeling stuck, confused or overwhelmed.

Initially, Tamica received support from me as her Employment Coach, and she also qualified for a wage subsidy through Employment North to facilitate her training. Once training was complete, Bracebridge Taxi said that if they needed my support, they would call me. I have yet to be called, and I trust that this is a great thing! I still check in with Tamica from time to time to make sure she's doing well and to see if anyone has any questions.



"Having this job means that I can get out of the house and into the community a lot more. Before I had my job I barely left the house unless I was with my mom..."
- Tamica



Tamica is very independent and gets ready for work on her own. She waits outside for a taxi to pick her up and gets to work on time. Once at work she performs all aspects of her job independently and efficiently, with some verbal direction from her Supervisor.

Submitted by,
Kelly Marion
Employment Support Worker

Patty - Employee at Dockside Publishing

Patty has worked at Dockside Publishing for the past four years. Her responsibilities include organizing shipments of magazines, bagging magazines and inserts and preparing them in bundles for delivery, keeping the warehouse organized and clean, signing for shipments and any other duties assigned by her Supervisor.



From Patty's Perspective

The thing I like most about my job at Dockside is the great group of co-workers that I've worked with over the years. We have a lot of fun working together and I'm always excited to go to my job! Going to work gets me out of my house and I think the pay is really good, it's more than minimum wage. The money I earn at work lets me buy the things I need and want. I work in a really fun environment with good hours. I like meeting new people, being part of a team, and all the socializing and laughing we do while we're working.

From an Employer's Perspective

Sandi at Dockside Publishing says, "Patty has been a tremendous asset to our distribution team, and is the longest-standing member of our inserting crew. Our summer staff consists almost entirely of new people each year, so it's wonderful to have Patty there to help people get oriented and learn their jobs. She helps keep everyone organized and focused. Patty is always cheerful and ready to work. Her commitment and dedication to her work is a great asset and is passed along to her fellow employees."

From a Staff Perspective

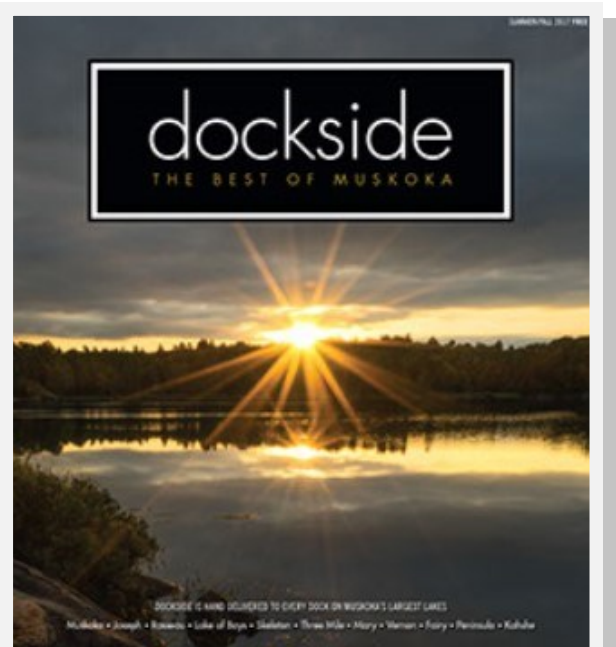
Patty requires very little supervision. She manages her time well and arranges her own transportation to make sure she gets to work on time.

She communicates well with her co-workers and Supervisor and knows who to contact when issues arise.

Patty has been so successful at her job with Dockside Publishing because it's a very inclusive, fun, positive and encouraging work environment. They also provided Patty with some great training. Another factor to her success is the encouragement she gets from her family, as well as the one-to-one support she receives from her Employment Coach.

Submitted by,
Shane Collins
Employment Support Worker

"The thing I like most about my job at Dockside is the great group of co-workers that I've worked with over the years."
- Patty



Michael - Volunteer at Meals on Wheels and James Street Retirement Residence

Michael volunteers with Meals on Wheels, a service that South Muskoka Memorial Hospital offers for seniors and other homebound clients living in Bracebridge. His bright smile is contagious as he knocks on doors to let people know that their meal has arrived. Michael is very caring and conscientious when delivering meals, making sure not to drop the containers. After all his deliveries are done Michael likes to give a big “high five” to everyone. The volunteers at the hospital front desk acknowledge Michael with a respectful greeting when he returns at the end of his deliveries.

From an Employer’s Perspective

Here’s what Kristen, the Bracebridge Meals on Wheels Coordinator, had to say about Michael, “We are very pleased to have Michael as a volunteer with the Bracebridge Meals on Wheels program. Meals are prepared and packaged at the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital, where Michael, among other volunteers, picks them up and delivers them to the clients throughout the town. Michael has been an integral part of the volunteer meal delivery team since November of 2016. He has proven to be reliable and dedicated and truly an asset to the Meals on Wheels efforts here in Bracebridge.”

Michael also volunteers at the James Street retirement residence in Bracebridge, where he cleans all of

the dining room chairs. He does a wonderful and thorough job and the employees and residents at the home enjoy his friendly smile and greeting of, “Hello, how are you?” every morning. Michael has developed a close companionship with Stella, a therapy dog that visits the James Street residence every Tuesday morning. Stella’s owner is amazed at how Michael can calm her down and make her sit or fetch a ball. The residents surround Michael and Stella and watch as they play together.

Michael walks away from both of his volunteer jobs with a smile from ear to ear and a proud walk, knowing that he has done an excellent job and helped contribute to his community!

Submitted by,
Nadine Bowen
Community Participation Support Worker



***“Michael has been an integral part of the volunteer meal delivery team since November of 2016. He has proven to be reliable and dedicated and truly an asset...”
- Kristen Moller, Bracebridge Meals on Wheels Coordinator***

Don - Volunteer at The Pines Long Term Care Home

Don has been volunteering at The Pines Long Term Care Home for one year. He takes the tea cart around to the residents in the Birch wing and offers them refreshments. He also works in the Tuck Shop from time to time.

From Don's Perspective

My volunteer job at The Pines makes me happy because I like helping people and being able to talk to new people. I have a lot of fun and the people there are nice to me. I take the cart around with tea and coffee and snacks. Sometimes I sell popcorn and chocolate bars to the people coming into the Tuck Shop.

From an Employers Perspective

Kim Gibbs, the Community Coordinator at The Pines, says "Don is a delight to have as a volunteer. Many of the residents and staff love seeing Don when he comes in to help us out. He assists with the afternoon tea cart in Birch and will help in the Tuck Shop when the shop volunteers are absent. We all love his infectious laugh and smile and look very forward to when he comes in to volunteer! Thanks Don!"

From a Staff Perspective

Don volunteers at the Pines taking the tea cart around to the residents in Birch with beverages and snacks. He is able to set the tea cart up with minimal assistance to make sure that the juice for that day is included on the cart. Don has become more comfortable pouring the drinks himself and taking the drinks and snacks into the residents' rooms. He is always very polite and respectful of the residents' privacy and wouldn't dream of entering a room without knocking first. Don occasionally fills in for another volunteer that works in the Tuck Shop when she is away. Don knows where to go to get the popcorn machine and enjoys selling snacks to the people that come into the shop. Don thoroughly enjoys his volunteer job and he is always more than willing to fill in when other people are not able to make it in. Don is very proud of the work he does at The Pines. He is a very social person and is well received by the residents and staff, as well as the other volunteers at The Pines.

Submitted by,
Peggy Jeffrey
Community Participation Support Worker



***"We all love Don's infectious laugh and smile and look very forward to when he comes in to volunteer! Thanks Don!"
- Kim Gibbs, Community Coordinator, The Pines***



John - Volunteer at South Muskoka Memorial Hospital

John has been volunteering at South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge for approximately six months. While there he is responsible for delivering the mail and bringing jugs of ice water to the patients.

From John's Perspective

I like volunteering at the hospital because I get to be "John the Boss". I get excited when I'm going because I get to go to work like my Mom and my brother Robert. I enjoy doing the mail and seeing the nurses and doctors. I also like seeing and talking to some of the people my Mom worked with at the hospital before she retired. I like being busy, and I like that I also get to have a break. I enjoy seeing my Doctor and using my badge with my picture on it to open the doors. I like walking through the halls and talking to Sherry the cleaning lady and teasing Sharon! I like that I get to have my own taxi ride when I go to my job at the hospital. While I'm working I deliver mail to the medical records department and switchboard. I get the water jugs, then fill them with water and ice and take them to sick people. I wash my hands a lot. I watch for my taxi to take me home at 11:30.

From a Staff Perspective

John continues to show great energy and excitement while at his volunteer job at the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital. He enjoys having social opportunities with patients, medical staff and other volunteers. He has become more knowledgeable and comfortable with the required tasks of filling and

delivering the water jugs and distributing the mail to different departments in the hospital.

John is able to collect the mail bag and the water cart, then go upstairs and fill the jugs with ice and water with very minimal assistance. He has recently been independently logging his volunteer hours himself. John is proud that he is able to use his hospital ID pass to open doors in the hospital. Staff at the hospital make him feel welcome and tell him how much they appreciate his hard work. John's Mom feels his volunteer position gives him a sense of responsibility and contribution to his community. John enjoys sharing information about his work at the hospital with his family, friends and other workers.

Submitted by,
Rachelle Lawrence
Community Participation Support Worker



"I like volunteering at the hospital because I get to be "John the Boss". I get excited when I'm going because I get to go to work like my Mom and my brother Robert."
- John

Randy - Volunteer at Bracebridge Children's Place Day Care Centre



Randy has been volunteering at Bracebridge Children's Place for almost a year. His responsibilities include washing dishes, helping to make lunches and snacks, washing & disinfecting toys and helping to put away the groceries.

From Randy's Perspective

I love my job at the Day Care centre very, very much. I really love helping the kids. I like Linda and the other nice ladies. I'm a good helper there. The best thing about my job is having fun with the kids when I'm bringing them snacks and cleaning the tables and sweeping up after they eat. I really like to help Linda bring in the groceries and put them away. When I'm at the Day Care it's my job to wash the dishes and toys, help to make lunch and snack and help with putting away the groceries. And to have fun with the ladies and the kids too!

From a Staff Perspective

Randy has had a lot of success over the last few months at his volunteer job at Bracebridge Children's Place. He has gained a lot of confidence and has greatly improved his independence. He is able to do his tasks on his own with very minimal assistance. He has also made great connections within the community and the Day Care centre.

"I love my job at the Day Care centre very, very much. I really love helping the kids. I really like Linda and the other nice ladies"

Randy was able to secure his volunteer job by completing a criminal background check and having an interview at Bracebridge Children's Place. He has developed a great routine where he knows what is expected of him and what his tasks are. Very rarely does he need to ask for assistance.

The consistent routine and assistance from the staff at the Day Care have made him confident enough to do things on his own, and their kind spirits have made him comfortable asking for assistance if he needs it.

Randy is greeted with smiling faces every Monday morning and his volunteer job has become something he looks forward to every week. The staff at Bracebridge Children's Place are very appreciative of his help and really enjoy his company. Randy loves the social aspect of being there and genuinely enjoys helping the children and the staff.

Submitted by,
Taylor Fry
Community Participation Support Assistant



Gordie - Employee at Allport Marina

Gordie has been employed at Allport Marina in Bracebridge for the past several months. His responsibilities include cleaning, detailing and waxing boats, keeping the shop clean, and customer service.

From Gordie's Perspective

Working at Allport Marina gives me the chance to earn extra income. It also gives me an opportunity to expand my skills and it's a great way to get out into the community. The best part about my job is the people I work

with. I like them a lot. The customers treat me well and on occasion I even get tips! Really, I like everything about my job at the Marina - the people, my boss, and it's a great environment to work in. I have lots of opportunities to meet new people.

From an Employer's Perspective

Craig, the Service Manager at Allport Marina said, "Gordie is really thriving here. He has taken on many more duties than when he first started including boat detailing, shop cleaning, maintaining and cleaning the washrooms, customer service and loading and unloading customer boats. He willingly tackles any job he is asked to do."

From a Staff Perspective

I think Gordie has been so successful at his job because he works hard, he has a great employer and he really enjoys being part of a team. When he was first hired I worked alongside him to make sure he was

comfortable doing the tasks he was assigned. I also set up income reporting so that Gordie's pay cheque and ODSP cheques are processed smoothly. I check in with Gordie once a month to see how work is going and answer any questions he or his employer might have.

Submitted by,
Rob Habel
Employment Support Worker



***"Really, I like everything about my job at the Marina, the people, my boss, and it's a great environment to work in. I have lots of opportunities to meet new people."
- Gordie***



Tom - Volunteer at Habitat for Humanity ReStore



Tom has had a volunteer job at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Bracebridge for several years. His main responsibilities there include cleaning and dusting furniture, sorting different items and organizing various areas of the store..

From Tom's Perspective

The best part about my job at the ReStore is meeting people. I like to meet people in the community. I have a nice talk with them. My main responsibility is keeping the store clean. I don't want a messy building. The tables get dusty, so I spray water on my cloth and wipe them down. To get to my job I tell the taxi driver where to go and what time to pick me up. It works out pretty well. I can't wait to tell my sister about that! There are always new things coming into the store. There's no problem about that. I would like my friends from Community Living to come to the ReStore so I can show them

around and tell them what we do. I really enjoy working there.

From a Staff Perspective

Tom volunteers every Thursday morning at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore located in Bracebridge. Tom's main job is cleaning and dusting furniture. He also sorts CDs, DVDs and videos and organizes various areas such as the toy and book sections.

The ReStore staff have been extremely helpful and welcoming since Tom began working there a few years ago. Tom was part of a four-person crew and he has job shadowed Community Participation Supports staff to learn the job. Recently Tom has been taking a taxi to and from the ReStore on his own. He is very proud of this.

Last year Tom began working 1:1 with staff and now he works independently much of the time. Tom takes his responsibility at work very seriously and is always eager to do his best. There is no doubt that volunteering has been a very

positive experience for Tom. His work is important to him, and to others too.

Submitted by,
Gavin McIntosh
Community
Participation
Support Worker



"I would like my friends from Community Living to come to the ReStore so I can show them around and tell them what we do. I really enjoy working there."
- Tom

Shirley - Volunteer at The Nest Family Resource Centre

Shirley has been volunteering at The Nest in Gravenhurst for close to a year. While there, she does laundry, sorts clothing donations, washes toys and books and puts clean items out for display on the retail floor.

From Shirley's Perspective

The thing I like most about my volunteer job at The Nest is helping people. I enjoy folding the clothes and washing the toys. I like being nice to people and they are nice to me. It makes me happy. I also like Kate. She's a nice girl and I enjoy talking to her.

From a Staff Perspective

Shirley is a very tactile person who enjoys touching things. She loves fashion and shiny or "blingy" things. Sorting clothes is something she loves to do, especially the baby clothes. She giggles the whole time, saying baby things are "cute". Doing something she likes and feeling she is helping is important to Shirley. Even though the job tasks are the same, the items are always changing, which keeps things fresh and fun.

Shirley performs her job with minimal direction once she's been shown which bag of toys to wash or what box of clothes needs to be

sorted and folded. When she has completed one job she goes to Kate or her support staff to ask for the next job. Shirley has learned the individual steps involved for all the tasks she performs.

When Shirley has completed her work for the day she really enjoys looking around The Nest at all the items in the store and often gets to choose a puzzle as a "thank you" gift for her help. Shirley enjoys chatting with Kate about what is important to her that day. She is very proud of the work she does at The Nest.

Submitted by,
Nicole Bowser
Community Participation Support Worker



***"I like being nice to people and they are nice to me. It makes me happy."
- Shirley***

Since this story was written Shirley has been on a leave of absence due to illness. We wish her all the best.

Nancy - Employee at YMCA Gravenhurst

Nancy began working at the Gravenhurst YMCA at the beginning of 2017 in the maintenance department and is responsible for cleaning the change rooms, bathrooms and exercise equipment.

From Nancy's Perspective

Having my job at the Y means that I have more money, which allows me to enjoy more recreational activities, like skiing. I love being outdoors. It doesn't matter if it's winter or summer - as long as I can be active and outside, I'm happy.

The best part about my job is that I get to work with great people. I don't always remember their names, which frustrates me sometimes, but I still enjoy working with them. I love the fact that I can work alone and at my own pace.

Now that I work at the Y it will make it easier for me to do some swimming because I'm going to start staying late after work and using the pool there. I also want to take yoga and the aquatics class.

My responsibilities at work are to clean all the windows and mirrors. I'm responsible for the cleanliness of the change rooms and bathrooms, and for cleaning the gym equipment. I would love to learn how to vacuum the pools one day as well.

From an Employers Perspective

Graham Elliott, Nancy's Supervisor at the Y says, "We are glad to have Nancy on our team. She has a great work ethic, is dependable and can be trusted to get the job done!"

From a Staff Perspective

Nancy has a great team of people at the YMCA who support her and appreciate her hard work ethic. They are there to answer her questions and they are very patient and understanding. They also encourage Nancy to work at her own pace and they add to her responsibilities when she feels she is ready for additional tasks.

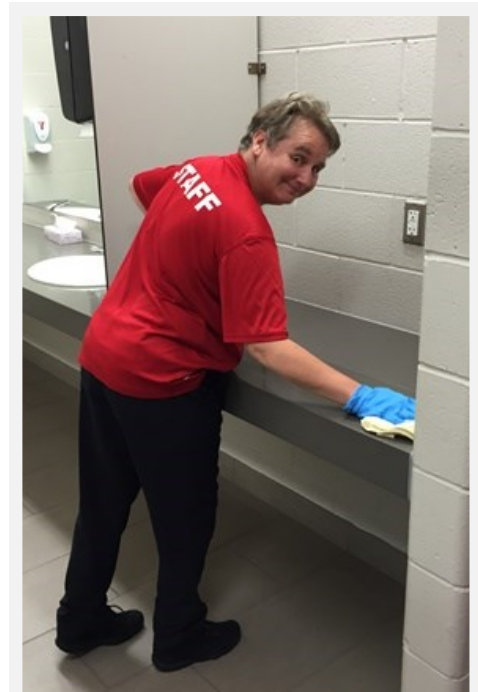
Nancy found her position through a posting on the job bank at Employment North. She expressed an interest in the position and submitted her resume. I supported her through the interview process, as well as with the online training that she was required to do. I also went to work with her for the first few weeks to help her learn her new tasks and responsibilities. Once she was able to do her job independently, I was able to fade out a bit at a time. Now Nancy is working completely independently and has been able to increase her work load and the number of hours that she works in a week.

Submitted by,
Kelly Marion, Employment Support Worker



"We are glad to have Nancy on our team. She has a great work ethic, is dependable and can be trusted to get the job done!"."

***- Graham Eliot,
Supervisor,
YMCA***



Vanessa - Volunteer at Muskoka Shores Care Community

Vanessa has been volunteering at Muskoka Shores for ten years. She recently received an award from MPP Norm Miller for her years of volunteer service.

From a Staff Perspective

Vanessa started volunteering at Muskoka Shores (formerly Leisure World) when she was still in high school. She started by cleaning tables after lunch and now helps the residents with Bingo and also helps out in the Tuck Shop. Vanessa enjoys the company of her friends at Muskoka Shores and often helps the residents to get to and from their different activities. She enjoys helping set up for Bingo and calling out the numbers. She also likes helping out in the Tuck Shop and interacting with the people who stop by to purchase items at the shop. She has helped out with different special events such as the Spring and Fall Fairs, as well as the "Zoo to You" event, where she helped take pictures.

Vanessa currently volunteers two days per week. She independently signs herself in and picks up her name tag from the reception desk. She makes the rounds to check and see which residents would like to attend Bingo, then helps them with the elevator to get to the games room. She enjoys asking the players

what numbers they would like on their Bingo cards as many have favourite numbers and she likes helping them look for their lucky numbers.

From an Employers Perspective

The staff at Muskoka Shores commented that they are "always happy to see Vanessa and it is nice to have her there. She is punctual, organized and dedicated. She is happy and excited to be there. Vanessa is helpful and takes directions well."

Vanessa says, "I am happy to help at Muskoka Shores."

Submitted by,
Carmen Yeo
Community Participation Support Worker



**Need more
information?
Contact us at**

**Community Living
South Muskoka**

15 Depot Dr.
Bracebridge, ON P1L 0A1
Ph: (705) 645-5494
Fax: (705) 645-4621
www.clsm.on.ca
www.morrisonmeadows.com

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Krista Haiduk-Collier
Chief Executive Officer

Kelly Miles
Chief Financial Officer

Gene Greenhalgh
Chief Operations Officer

*Send your
newsletter story
ideas to Amanda at
abrown@clsm.on.ca*



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