



ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020





Contents

President and Chair's Report.....	4
Executive Director's Report.....	6
Treasurer's Report.....	11
Condensed Financial Statements.....	13
Statistical Highlights.....	14
Founders' Award Recipient.....	16
Board Members.....	18
Staff.....	22
Remembering Sandra Carpenter.....	23
CILT in the News.....	26





Jacques LeBlanc

“

In most difficult of times is when we stand closer together.”

President and Chair

Jacques LeBlanc

Since February of 2018 I have had the honour and privilege to work with CILT's active and informed Board and staff who have been committed to our issues and programs while diligently applying Independent Living principles to all decisions and programs. While much has changed over this past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, what has remained constant is the positive impact CILT's programs have had on so many in our community.

It has once been said, "In most difficult of times is when we stand closer together". This statement cannot be truer than of our incredible staff and Board who collaboratively worked together to ensure that we continued to grow, mature and respond to a rapidly changing economic and political climate. I would like to give recognition to CILT's passionate leader and Executive Director of the past two years, Wendy Porch. Wendy has done an exceptional job this year, she has led CILT's many successful actions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, a couple of these actions include:

- Moving CILT to remote work mode to protect CILT program participants, members and staff; and,
- An immediate allocation and distribution of one-time funding of \$550 to all Direct Funding program participants (known as Self-Managers) across Ontario to use for COVID-related expenses, including personal protective equipment.

This is just a sliver of Wendy's, and staff's response to the pandemic. The Board is extremely grateful for Wendy's thoughtful insights, perspectives, and vision for the future of CILT. As you can only imagine, in a very short

time Wendy has had a positive impact on our organization.

For the 2019-2020 year, our Board members include myself as chair, Donald Barrie as vice chair, Lisa Melo as secretary, Ken Connors as Treasurer, Joshua Tayar, Cathy Samuelson, Darren Cooper, Neil Mercer, Rod loi, Vincenza Ronaldi, Maayan Ziv and Julia Gonsalves. Please join us in thanking everyone for their time, expertise and passion they have brought to CILT. We regrettably will have to say goodbye to board members Donald Barrie and Rod loi, who have completed all three of their two-year terms; along with Maayan Ziv and Julia Gonsalves. We thank them all for their dedication and commitment to the governing body of this organization.

And I would like to take a moment to recognize a sector who found the courage to move forward through this difficult time and, without whom, life would have been tougher for many of us. For those who have put their lives on the line to help maintain our IL principles, the personal support workers and attendants who unselfishly work with the nearly 1,000 Self-Managers under the Direct Funding program, we thank you.

This is also the Board's opportunity to formally acknowledge and thank all of our hard working staff and volunteers for all their contributions over the past year. We couldn't do what we do without them. Please join me in thanking them for all their hard work!

We would also like to acknowledge and thank our funders, without whose generous support we would not be able to address any community or members' needs. Our primary funders are Independent Living Canada, the

City of Toronto, the United Way Greater Toronto, and the Ministry of Health.

This past year we lost a giant within the CILT family, in our community and friend to many, Sandra Carpenter. Sandra was a fierce advocate, having spent many years challenging ableism through ground-breaking work as one of the founding members at CILT. Disabled people everywhere have lost a champion and a powerful voice in our community. Sandra embodied CILT's mission and vision; she undoubtedly exemplified and advanced IL philosophy in the spirit of its founders. Sandra may no longer be with us, but her spirit will live on.

In closing, as CILT enters its 36th year, we have so much to be proud of. We hear time and again that our programs have life changing impacts on the lives of our consumers. As you can see in our Financial Report, with the hard work of our staff and Board, we were able to continue our work and conclude the fiscal year with a balanced budget. This is my first year as President and Chair with CILT and I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve. I have learnt so much from my time participating with our CILT staff, Board and the members of CILT who make this all possible in what we do. While CILT continues to accomplish so much, I feel we still have ways to go moving forward, for what we do now will echo for many years to come.

On behalf of the CILT Board of Directors, it is our privilege to serve our membership throughout Ontario. Thank you! 



Wendy Porch



CILT is an extraordinary organization comprised of people who truly know the importance of independent living.

Executive Director

Wendy Porch

In January of 2020, CILT experienced the profound and sudden loss of CILT's founding Executive Director Sandra Carpenter. It still strikes me as deeply unfair that Sandra was only a year into retirement when she passed away. Sandra was a friend, a mentor and someone I greatly admired. Sandra was funny, canny and audacious. Without Sandra there would no CILT. She is deeply missed by CILT staff. As I expressed to staff on the day Sandra passed away, as long as CILT continues its work and continues to fight for the dignity, empowerment and equality of people with disabilities, Sandra is still with us. We have included a memorial to Sandra in this report.

Then, March 2020 brought the COVID-19 pandemic to the world and disabled peoples' hard-won independence has been at even greater risk ever since. I am very proud to tell you that CILT's commitment to Independent Living has remained unwavering and steadfast as we have worked to support consumers in responding to the pandemic. Please see page 10 for a list of projects and initiatives undertaken by CILT staff and programs.

While it may be unusual to report on these activities in an Annual Report, I believe it is important to demonstrate CILT's comprehensive commitment to supporting our community through the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and the ableism it has unearthed in its wake.

CILT staff have demonstrated courage and commitment in pivoting quickly to new and unprecedented ways of working. They have steadfastly engaged with consumers on their needs and have worked through numerous complex challenges daily to maintain CILT's

essential programs. I am extremely proud of everyone.

CILT's Board has also been unwavering in its support and guidance, steering the organization to navigate a crisis of unprecedented proportions, in a time without a clear path. I'd like to thank the Board for its leadership and sound advice in these difficult times.

While it has been a challenging year, it has also been a year in which our commitment to the principles of self-governance, self-help, self-determination, community (grass roots) based, choice, control, autonomy, and empowerment has intensified. CILT's incredible Board and staff have pivoted to function in new and necessary ways. Thank you to everyone for your flexibility, patience and guidance in navigating these unprecedented challenges.

Below, please find a brief update, program by program, of CILT's 2019-2020 accomplishments prior to COVID-19. Despite a harrowing end to the year, we have much to be proud of! A full listing of CILT's staff and Board is provided later in this report.

Core Programs:

The Core team continued their important work supporting consumers in raising awareness of IL. The year began with the culmination of CILT's partnership on the Toronto 4 All Campaign. Working with the City of Toronto to raise awareness of the exclusion of people with disabilities, the campaign won several

international advertising awards for raising public awareness.

#RepresentationMatters continued to be important work for the Core team. The D-Next Project, through Seed Grant funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, continued the development of the D-Next Media lab through media development and storytelling training for people with disabilities.

The Core team also continued to advance the civic inclusion of consumers through several important events. CILT hosted several consultations, with City of Toronto support, including one on the city's Housing Now strategy and another on the city's Anti-Poverty Strategy. These consultations provided an important opportunity to elevate the voices of people with disabilities on two areas - housing and poverty – that still disproportionately affect our community.

The Core team has also expanded our Parenting with a Disability Network (PDN) activities. The PDN co-hosted several events with the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, including an evening for prospective parents with disabilities. The PDN supported the annual SPIN Conference, and also developed a partnership with Sunnybrook Hospital's Accessible Care Pregnancy Clinic.

Another exciting partnership was established with Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, when we co-hosted a pop-up on CILT programs for parents and youth with disabilities. Getting the IL message out to young people with disabilities, and their families, will continue to be a priority for the Core team going forward.

The Core team has managed to continue supporting consumers with empathy and respect throughout the year and well into the pandemic. I thank you all for your dedication to IL and to consumers everywhere.

Direct Funding:

Direct Funding has continued to support the 1,000 consumers on the program throughout 2019-2020 with hiring and maintaining their own attendants to assist with activities of daily living. DF has made significant upgrades to the Self-Manager online reporting system and to methods for communicating with Self-Managers. As well, the DF team has had a number of staffing changes. Hadeel Dajani and Danielle Vinciguerra are both on maternity leave; Peter Judge is also on extended leave. This year Abdullah Duranai also moved into the role of Acting Financial Assurance Manager. The DF team said goodbye to two valued staff members – Elisabeth Harrison and Samantha Walsh, both of whom moved on to new opportunities this year. New staff joining the DF team this year include Josephine Hui and Murray Haines. DF has continued to fully support Self-Managers while also responding to new and increased needs related to COVID-19. Thank you to everyone on the DF team for all of the long days and your hard work that is above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Attendant Service Application Centre (ASAC):

The ASAC team continued supporting consumers to access vital supportive housing and attendant services this year. ASAC also continued to work to support the diverse range of attendant service providers through developing increased opportunities for

collaboration and partnership. I thank the ASAC team and our attendant sector partners for working together to streamline processes and support agile responses to attendant service needs across the GTA.

Operations:

Small but mighty, CILT's administrative/operations team continued to keep CILT humming along this year. The Ops team successfully led CILT's transition to Office 365 this year, all while we continued to function as usual. There were some staffing changes in the Ops team. This year saw Jamie Wong move on to new opportunities after many years leading the team. We wish Jamie all the best in her new endeavours. Thank you to the CILT Operations team for your unending perseverance and patience this year.

CILT's dedicated and hardworking Board has also undergone some changes this year. Jacques LeBlanc is now CILT's Chair/President. I'd like to personally thank Jacques for his guidance, commitment and clarity of vision for CILT. The Board is also losing several long-standing members who have fulfilled their term limits. Rod Ioi and Don Barrie, thank you for your many years of commitment to CILT. We will miss your insights and abilities (both of you!) to bring smiles even as we consider difficult and complex concerns. Maayan Ziv and Julia Gonsalves are both stepping away from Board duties this year. Thank you also to Maayan and Julia for all you have offered CILT over your many years as Board members.

Thank you to the entire CILT Board for your sustained guidance and direction over this year. Your steadfast leadership has been much appreciated, particularly in the unprecedented times we find ourselves now.

CILT is a member organization. I sincerely thank our voting members for supporting

us in all we do. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted people with disabilities. That you continue to support us even through these most difficult of times is so appreciated.

CILT's primary funders are the City of Toronto, the United Way Greater Toronto and the Ministry of Health. CILT also receives a grant from Independent Living Canada. Thank you to our funders for their ongoing support for IL and for CILT.

In closing, it is important to acknowledge the ongoing and profound impact the pandemic is having on disabled people across the country. The pandemic has brought with it a wave of ableism unlike anything seen before. Triage protocols have been developed in Ontario and elsewhere around the world dictating that people with disabilities should be restricted from receiving life saving treatment in times of increased demand, based only on them having a disability. Disabled people living in long-term care homes and/or supportive housing have been isolated for months, and many have still not been outside at all. Guidance that restricts support people from accompanying people with disabilities into

hospitals has meant that consumers have had to rethink even going to hospital at all in the event that they are ill or require help. People with disabilities do not officially constitute a 'vulnerable population' in terms of Ontario's current response to COVID. To date, there are no guidance documents directly relevant to any independent living setting and service providers have been forced to determine for themselves what parts of official guidance apply to their settings and how to keep people safe.

What keeps us going when things are hard? Knowing the transformational impact CILT's programs have on consumers' lives drives many of us to do what we do. Feeling heard and included and free to live your own life with dignity and choice – these are sentiments shared by consumers about CILT's work. Fighting to support consumers' rights to equality is what we do and there has never been more of a need for CILT's work.

So, quite often lately, I wonder to myself, "*What would Sandra do?*"

And, imagining the possible answers to that question, our fight continues.

CILT's response to COVID-19 pandemic

Starting in March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CILT initiated:

- Moving CILT to remote work mode to protect CILT program participants, members and staff
- Immediate allocation and distribution of one-time funding of \$550 to all Direct Funding Program participants (Self-Managers) across Ontario to use for COVID-related expenses, including personal protective equipment (PPE). These funds were drawn from CILT's reserve funding
- Authorizing the use of additional funds under Direct Funding for Self-Managers with additional COVID-related needs
- Development of tracking mechanisms for these additional funds
- Participation in numerous community forums and discussions including those organized by the AODA Committee, TVOntario's The Agenda and various other news outlets
- Survey of consumers about their program needs during the pandemic and adjusting programming accordingly
- Distribution of information regarding Direct Funding as an "essential service" including letters for attendants to use as identification
- The development of PPE guidance and COVID resources for consumers
- The establishment of CILT PPE supplier relationships in the absence of any previous supplier relationships
- Survey of Self-Managers regarding their PPE needs
- Extensive fundraising with private donors for funds to use towards PPE acquisition for consumers
- Acquiring PPE through the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, suppliers and other partners for Self-Managers requiring emergency access to PPE
- Providing ongoing guidance to Self-Managers, including encouraging Self-Managers experiencing PPE shortages to contact DF for assistance
- Contributions to Ministry of Health and other health sector documents to ensure representation of IL principles
- Developing and providing webinars related to the needs of consumers during the pandemic, including "Nothing About Us, Without Us: Disability, Advocacy, and COVID-19" and "ODSP and COVID-19"
- Participation in ARCH Disability Law's Advisory Committee on Ontario's Clinical Triage Protocol
- Administration of the province's Temporary Pandemic Pay to Self-Managers and their attendants
- Advocacy related to Bill 175 and related regulations, including a presentation to the Legislative Standing Committee, written submissions and meetings with MOH staff – Contributing to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee Rebuild and Recovery Consultations
- Hosting a Toronto Office of Rebuild and Recovery Survey and Community Consultation

CILT also continued its pandemic response into the 2020-21 fiscal year by undertaking:

- A series of regional Zoom calls across Ontario hosted by DF staff for Self-Managers to connect, share strategies for PPE sourcing and purchasing and to answer questions related to COVID needs

Treasurer's Report

Ken Conners

A condensed version of CILT's audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020 is included in this annual report. A complete version of the report is available on request.

CILT's finances were audited by Kriens-LaRose, LLP Chartered Professional Accountants. As usual, CILT received a "clean" report from its auditors. They also noted, however, that CILT departed from Canadian generally accepted accounting principles in this fiscal year to meet the accounting requirements of the Ministry of Health, Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). This relates to the late approval and receipt of \$1,910,400 in funding for Personal Support Worker (PSW) Training. While this funding was recognized as revenue for the year, it was also included in our Statement of Financial Position as a receivable as of March 31, 2020 and as a payable to the participating agencies. Such a large post-year-end entry is not normal accounting practice.

The Statement of Financial Position (the top part of the condensed statement) shows CILT's assets and liabilities as of March 31, 2020 and covers the funds for all CILT's programs. Our Net Assets/Reserves were \$449,339; this amount is what would be left over if all CILT's liabilities were paid out from its assets. This figure does not normally change from year to year, since our funding agreements require CILT to have a balanced budget and return any excess funding at year-end.

The bottom part of the report – the Statements of Operations (Consolidated) – shows revenues and expenses for each of CILT's three programs, a total for all three



Ken Conners



CILT received a
"clean" report
from its auditors.

programs together, and a comparison to the totals from the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Core programs

The first column shows the revenues received to carry out CILT's core programs. Last year's income totalled \$1,301,727 from the various funders listed, from the recovery of the costs of administering the Direct Funding and PSW programs, and from fundraising and other self-generated incomes. The annual expenses equalled the revenues and consisted mainly of personnel expenses along with program and administrative expenses to cover CILT's core operations.

Direct Funding program

Revenues and expenses for the Direct Funding program are shown in the second column. This program had total income of \$45,672,433 almost all of which came from the Ministry of Health, Toronto Central LHIN. The largest expense item (\$43,969,101) represented payments to Self-Managers (participants) on the program as well as to other Independent Living Centres across the province that

provide program and administrative support. Other expenses covered personnel along with program and administrative expenses for a total spending equal to revenues.

PSW Training Funds

The third column shows the Personal Support Workers (PSW) Education and Training Program. CILT acts as the "paymaster" for this project; the funds are provided to CILT by the Ministry of Health, Toronto Central LHIN, and CILT in turn enters into contracts with the participating agencies, distributes the funds, monitors the reports from the agencies and returns any surplus funds. For these activities, CILT receives an annual administrative fee. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the funding for PSW training for 2019-20 (\$1,910,400) was not approved until after the year end, and the training programs will take place in the current fiscal year.

We acknowledge the excellent work done by Sylvia Draper-Fernandez in the day-to day accounting and preparation of CILT's budgets and reports and by Wendy Porch and the CILT management team in their management of our financial resources. 

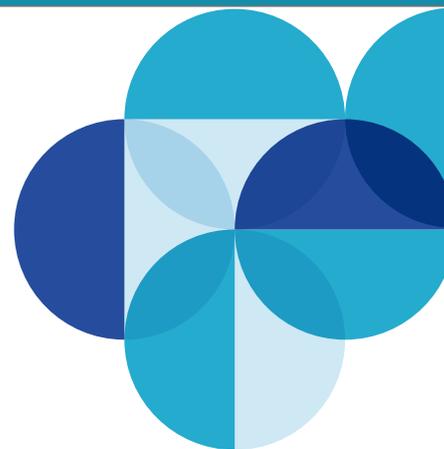
CILT Condensed Financial Statements

CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING IN TORONTO (C.I.L.T.) INC.

Condensed Version of Audited Financial Report - March 31, 2020

Statement of Financial Position

	Total 2019-20 \$	Total 2018-19 \$
ASSETS:		
Current Assets	11,028,783	11,993,776
Capital Assets	101,032	111,426
Total Assets	11,129,815	12,105,202
LIABILITIES \ NET ASSETS:		
Current & Deferred Liabilities	10,680,476	11,655,863
Net Assets \Reserves	449,339	449,339
Total Liabilities \Reserves	11,129,815	12,105,202



Statement of Operations (Consolidated)

	Core Funds \$	Direct Funding Program \$	PSW Training Fund \$	Total 2019-20 \$	Total 2018-19 \$
REVENUES:					
Min.of Health\Toronto Central LHIN	552,860	45,467,015	1,910,400	47,930,275	47,463,305
Self-Generated Income \ Other	543,350	183,064	-	726,414	654,699
United Way - Program Funding	114,890	-	-	114,890	132,595
Ontario Trillium Foundation	52,664	-	-	52,664	-
City of Toronto Grants	37,963.00	-	-	37,963.00	41,677.00
LHIN's (formally CCAC)	-	22,354.00	-	22,354.00	141,129.00
Total Revenues	1,301,727	45,672,433	1,910,400	48,884,560	48,433,405
EXPENSES					
Subsidies to Participants	-	43,969,101	1,802,593	45,771,694	45,129,775
Personnel	879,974	1,131,778	-	2,011,752	2,018,409
Purchased Services	193,928	112,631	-	306,559	274,692
Administrative Expenses	34,269	295,380	107,807	437,456	442,376
Program Expenses	37,771	17,865	-	55,636	32,565
Building Occupancy	134,564	135,667	-	270,231	247,819
Staff\ Board Expenses	10,761	10,011	-	20,772	77,879
Amortization of Capital Purch	10,460	-	-	10,460	10,460
Total Expenses	1,301,727	45,672,433	1,910,400	48,884,560	48,233,975
Unspent Funds due to MOH (PSW)	-	-	-	-	(199,430)
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	-	-	-	-	-

2019-2020



26,517

homepage contacts
on **CILT.ca** website



477

Tweets /
1,772 retweets
@CIL_Toronto



338

Facebook
followers

Statistical



36,454

inquiries received
& answered



129

DF interviews
conducted



581

DF applicants
served



1,033

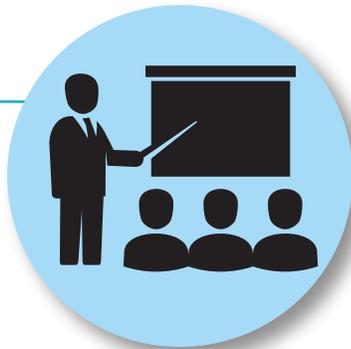
participants served by
Direct Funding

Highlights



233

completed applications received for DF



509

people attended training events & groups



active participants on DF (as of March 31, 2020)

962



participants on DF more than 5 years (58% of total participants)

557



participants on DF more than 15 years (35% of total participants)

333



96

age of oldest DF participant

Meghan Hines

2019–2020 Founders' Award Recipient



By Wendy Porch, Executive Director CILT

CILT is very pleased to award the 2019-2020 Founder's Award to Meghan Hines for her significant contributions to Independent Living and her embodiment of the IL philosophy.

Even at a young age, Meghan was always a consummate professional. Leisa DeBono, CILT'S Manager of the Direct Funding program, recalled to me Meghan's initial interview for Direct Funding at the ripe old age of 21, when Meghan showed up with a 52-page manual on 'How to be a Self-Manager'! Leisa said of Meghan: "In addition to being the best prepared applicant we've ever met (no one has shown up with a 52-page manual before or since), she was generous too and let us keep a copy of the manual she created and use any parts we felt would be useful to other participants." And this work all took place before Meghan was even officially on the DF program!

It was a natural progression then when Meghan joined the CILT Board in 2012, as a recent graduate of the Honours Bachelor of Commerce program at McMaster University. In 2014, Meghan was elected Chair and President of the CILT Board, a role she maintained for the remainder of her time with the board.

Meghan has always been willing to jump in and help CILT in any way she can, even when it is a very big ask. In 2015 a decision was made to make a commercial about Direct Funding to promote the program to consumers across Ontario. When the request went out to Meghan to be featured, she agreed immediately and without hesitation. It wasn't even an issue that she then had to have a film

crew invade her home for more than a full day to shoot the commercial. Meghan made the perfect spokesperson for the program; the commercial raised awareness of Direct Funding across the province and allowed a large population of people, who would never have otherwise known about Direct Funding, to discover and apply for the Program. The DF commercial is still featured on the program's website, and no doubt continues to help consumers who are new to IL to see the possibilities afforded by the DF program.

In her many years on the CILT Board, Meghan guided the Board to apply IL principles to everything we do. Meghan regularly offered wise counsel to both former Executive Director Sandra Carpenter and me. Meghan could always be counted on to remain calm and logical in an emergency. She is a creative, out-of-the box thinker who is willing to explore all options. She is truly someone you want in your corner, no matter what.

Even while Meghan dedicated so much of her time to CILT, she also supports IL in so many other ways. Meghan has always been active on multiple Boards. She co-founded and is Vice President of the PowerHockey Canada Board. She co-founded PowerHockey Toronto. She is an accomplished athlete and she supports the Lions Foundation/Dog Guides Canada. She is also bringing IL to human resources leadership as a Senior Manager, HR Initiatives, Function at RBC.

Meghan's example and advancement of IL is unmistakable to anyone who knows her. Thank you, Meghan, for your many years of service to CILT and for moving the needle on IL in so many ways.



2019–2020 Board Members



Cathy Samuelson

Cathy Samuelson has worked in the community of supporting persons with physical disabilities for 30 years. She is currently the executive

director of North Yorkers for Disabled Persons, which provides supportive housing, attendant services and augmentative communication facilitation.

Darren Cooper

With more than 15 years of experience in the accessibility field, Darren currently serves as an accessibility consultant with the City of Toronto. Prior to this role, Darren was the Accessibility Project Manager with the Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University, and continues to serve as the Academic Coordinator for its Leadership in Accessibility and Inclusion program.

Darren has also served as the Accessibility Specialist for the City of Mississauga and the Accessibility Coordinator for the Town of Milton.

In addition to serving on the CILT Board of Directors, Darren also currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors for Theatre Passe Muraille, a professional independent theatre company in Toronto.

Darren holds an Honours B.A. in Communication Studies from the University of Windsor, a certificate in Municipal Administration from the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of



Ontario, and the Canadian Certified Inclusion Professional designation from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion.

Donald Barrie

Vice-President

Donald, who has served on CILT's board since late 2014, is completing six years on the board. Two of those years were served as Vice-President (non-consecutive).

Donald has a background in journalism, web design and social media. He is a graduate of Carleton University and Ryerson University's journalism school. Donald also has a web design certification from Selkirk College (British Columbia).

An active member of the disability community, Donald received a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013, in recognition of his volunteer work. He maintains a large network of contacts in the community. He also has a membership with the Canadian Osteogenesis Imperfecta Society (COIS).

Outside CILT, Donald is a customer service representative for an online business called StickerYou. He also does occasional freelance writing. You can read his personal blog at unbreakabledb.blogspot.ca.





Jacques LeBlanc

Chair

Born in Moncton, N.B., in 1958, Jacques' family moved to Tarrytown, N.Y., along the Hudson River, 30 minutes north of New York City, the same

year. This is where he found a propensity for architecture and the fine arts. In 1976, the family moved back to Moncton and he designed houses for three families in the Moncton area. Two years later he was accepted into the School of Architecture at Carleton University, Ottawa. A rare form of Spinal Muscular Atrophy known as Kugelberg-Wellander required his use of a wheelchair to navigate Carleton's campus. He graduated in 1982 with a degree in BSc Urban Geography/ Planning before pursuing post graduate studies in Environmental Studies at York University.

After graduation Jacques worked for a small company in Toronto called Direct Access Design. Its responsibility was barrier-free design projects throughout the city. With the economic climate declining in 1987, he made a career change and joined the *Toronto Star's* editorial department which allowed him to pursue a childhood passion: the world of sports. He remained with the *Star* until retirement December 18, 2009, his "greatest Christmas gift ever".

He also wrote for many publications focusing on travelling with a disability, including *Reader's Digest*, *Spyker* (Holland), *The Daily Observer* (Antigua & Barbuda) and *The Times Picayune* (New Orleans).

Since retirement he has remained involved with real estate, consulting in barrier-free designs for local businesses, and even tried his hand in the stock market ... not recommended. He felt an emptiness because he knew he could do more, not for himself but for others. He approached CILT asking if there was anything he could do to help on a volunteer basis. He has served as a consumer

panelist interviewing applicants for the Direct Funding program and, in 2018 he was asked to join CILT's board. In 2018-2019 he served as vice-chair of CILT and this past year proudly as chair.

Joshua Tayar

Joshua Tayar is a graduate of the University of Toronto, Faculty of Law and is licensed to practise law in Ontario, New York, and Massachusetts. He is the principal lawyer at The Law Firm of Joshua Tayar. The firm's focus is in the area of commercial arbitration.



Julia Gonsalves

Julia Gonsalves is director of operations at a multi-service neighbourhood centre in Toronto's west end. In their career so far, they have spent significant periods of



time overseeing child and youth programs, LGBTQ programs and homeless services. They recently completed a certificate in Fundraising Management at Ryerson. They are passionate about accessibility, especially where public spaces and community services are concerned. In their personal life, they are an enthusiastic parent and the proud owner of a new ukulele.

Ken Connors

Treasurer

Ken is starting the second year of his term and is CILT's Treasurer. He previously served on the Board from 2008 until 2014 and was Treasurer during those years.



He has a wealth of experience with non-profit organizations and their Boards and

has served as treasurer for the Evangel Hall Mission, his condominium board, and the Mariposa Folk Foundation.

Now retired, his professional experience included providing accounting, financial management and day-to-day bookkeeping services to a variety of not-for-profit organizations in Toronto.

For many years, Ken served as the Executive Director of Three Trilliums Community Place, a non-profit organization providing attendant services to adults with physical disabilities who wish to live independently in the community and direct their own care.

More recently, he provided payroll and bookkeeping services to people with physical disabilities on the Direct Funding program.

His background includes work in the Northwest Territories for the Fort McPherson Incorporated Band Ltd. and for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and international work in South Africa and the Ukraine.

His education includes a Master of Public Administration, a Master of Arts (Russian Literature), and a Bachelor of Arts (Political Studies).

As a volunteer, Ken continues to provide annual income tax preparation for seniors and people with low incomes at West Neighbourhood House (formerly St. Christopher House) and at Ukrainian Canadian Social Services.



Lisa Melo

Secretary
As Vice President, Reimagine HR at RBC, Lisa has a program mandate to invest in the organization's people, processes and platforms, and differentiate RBC as a digitally-enabled relationship bank while relentlessly improving the human experience at work. Lisa has been with RBC since 1987, most recently in

the role of VP Human Resources, Functions. Previously, VP & Head of Human Resources for RBC Investor & Treasury Services, leading a global HR team for a business servicing clients from 17 countries. Lisa brings a unique perspective to Human Resources having held both business and functional roles, beginning her career in retail banking before assuming progressively senior roles. An advocate for continuing education, Lisa earned her Masters of Business Administration from Dalhousie University in 2001. Lisa has also attended the Emerging Leaders Program for Women in Business at the Rotman School of Management (University of Toronto).



Maayan Ziv

Maayan Ziv is an activist, photographer and entrepreneur. She is the founder of the Access Now app, which is an interactive map that uses crowdsourcing to share accessibility information. Maayan is a graduate of the masters of digital media program at Ryerson University and her goal is to bring awareness to disability matters. Maayan's work has been recognized with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Neil Mercer

Neil Mercer is a graphic designer who works on a freelance / voluntary basis; some of his notable projects have been for Tobias House Attendant Care Inc., AYAAA a youth AIDS organization in Africa, Spectra Talent Showcase and Action Sports Coalition, a youth sports organization.



Besides his artistic talents, Neil served nine years as a board member of Tobias House and three years on the board of Spectra / Rainbow Association of Canadian Artists. He is also a

successful event organizer with projects such as DreamsAway, in which a group of friends raised \$8,000 to provide attendant care while on a Caribbean cruise, a fundraiser for Tobias House, and the Sean Ross Memorial Summer Classic, an outdoor power wheelchair hockey game in memory of a friend.

Neil has dabbled in public speaking over the past few years, discussing his educational experiences as a disabled student to students in the teaching program at Queen's University. Recently Neil has been lending his support to Tecla, a hands-free assistive device giving people with upper-body mobility impairments the ability to access smart devices and technology; he assists by actively testing and appearing in promotional videos.

In his spare time, Neil is a goaltender in the Toronto Power Wheelchair Hockey League, as well a founding member of Equal Grounds, a social enterprise dedicated to creating opportunities for people of different abilities.

Neil's interests are music, art, film, food and travel.

Rod Ioi

Director

Since Rod's retirement, most of his free time is centered around three activities: 1) visiting a friend who now lives in a long-term care facility; 2) spending time with "sponsees" who, like him, are members of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous; and, 3) practicing tai chi. He also spends time with his teenaged son Dexter, whom he home schools in two languages, Cantonese and Persian.

His latest (and longest) term of work was with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, where his most recent responsibilities involved mediating human rights complaints.

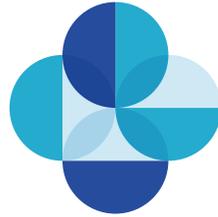


Vincenza Ronaldi

Vincenza Ronaldi resides in Pickering with her husband and two sons. She is an experienced senior executive with the Ontario Public Service with a demonstrated

history of policy analysis and program development and delivery. After graduating from the University of Toronto in 1991, Vincenza began her career with CILT as the Peer Advocate where she embraced the principles of the Independent Living philosophy and has been actively promoting the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of persons with disabilities ever since. Currently, she is the Vice President of Corporate Services and Operation for Destination Ontario, a provincial agency responsible for marketing Ontario as a travel destination in partnership with the tourism industry and other levels of government. As the Chief Financial Officer and Controller, Vincenza provides strategic direction and leadership in the planning and delivery of all corporate services including the areas of finance, human resources, information technology and facilities management.

2019–2020 Staff



Abdullah Duranai

Direct Funding (DF) Acting Financial Assurance Manager

Adina Ilina

Attendant Service Application Centre (ASAC) Program Support

Adriana Gutierrez

Operations Assistant

Andrea Rae

Service Engagement Coordinator

David Meyers

Senior Manager IL Programs

Danielle Vinciguerra *

DF Review & Audit Administrator

Elaine Chu

DF Bookkeeping Report Reviewer

Hadeel Dajani *

DF Bookkeeping Review Coordinator

John Mossa

Independent Living Skills Coordinator

John Tam

DF Database Administrator

Josephine Hui

DF Bookkeeping Report Reviewer

Katherine Janicki

DF Intake Coordinator

Kathleen Odell

ASAC Manager

Leanne Larmondin

DF Provincial Program Coordinator

Leisa DeBono

DF Program Manager

Louis George

Senior Workplace Personal Attendant

Margaret Githuku

Senior Workplace Personal Attendant

Marisa Falzone

DF Regional Report Coordinator/Advisor

Melissa Azore

DF Program Facilitator

Melissa Graham

DF Community Facilitator

Melissa Haigler

Senior Workplace Personal Attendant

Murray Haines

Bookkeeping Report Reviewer

Nadine Azore

Operations Customer Service Representative

Patrick Tang

DF Bookkeeping Report Reviewer

Peter Judge *

DF Financial Assurance Manager

Rebecca Wood

Parenting with a Disability Network Coordinator

Robin Simmons

Inquiries Generalist

Wendy Porch

Executive Director

Zdravka Gueorguieva

ASAC Program Assistant

* On leave

Sandra Carpenter

March 19, 1954–January 23, 2020



For reflections on Sandra's life, see pages 24-25.

A Celebration of Life

Reflections by Kathleen Odell

Sandra was many things to many different people: friend, mentor, visionary, leader, activist, rebel. To me she was all of those things, but also my aunt. All these months later I still lack the ability to express the magnitude of her unexpected loss. I try to form the words, to say the right things, but I cannot summon the vocabulary. Instead I conjure her memory to imagine what she might say about current events, I can see her quite clearly in a fuzzy sweater, with her salt-and-pepper hair cut short, her teacup tilted back and straw askew as she moves her hands while talking over lunch. She's telling me once again that as much as the world changes it remains the same; sometimes planting seeds and waiting for them to take root is all we can do.

The loss of Sandra has reverberated across the community and is shared collectively. CILT was her life's work, what we carry forward is the culmination of everything she fought for throughout her lifetime. Sandra knew what many of us also know: the work will never be over until there is equality and justice for persons with disabilities and all other people forced to live in the margins. Sandra saw the value in asking people to confront why we as a society are comfortable with asking people with disabilities to accept less than what they deserve. She told me once that the most important lessons we learn in life are the most painful; it is through pain that we learn and grow. The things we do not work for are the things we do not fully savour. This principle, while simple, illustrates for me how Sandra found the fortitude to carry on work that was endless and often thankless – the lessons are not in the easy victories but in the journeys where we must move constantly uphill. 

Reflections by Jeff Noonan



In January, Canada lost a leader in the struggle for equality and freedom. Sandra Carpenter was in the forefront of 1970s disabled rights activists who demanded the right and means to independent living. Thousands of people have been assisted in their struggle for freedom by CILT, which Sandra headed for two decades.

It is easy to overlook but impossible to overestimate the scope of the changes that movement has brought about. Led by courageous iconoclasts like Sandra, people with disabilities have demanded and won the right to do what non-disabled people have taken for granted: to live in their own home, manage their own care, move freely in public space, find work, and contribute to the societies which had reduced them to objects of the medical system.

Sandra said many things that have transformed my way of thinking about these issues, but the one that stands out sums up the problem of the medical model of disability. Over dinner one night she explained the difference between being ill and being disabled. "When I have a cold," she said, "I am sick." Full stop. Nothing more needed saying. The wheelchair she used to get around was not sign of an illness, it was as much her as my legs are of me.

Sandra's work over the years to facilitate the transition of disabled people from institutions to freedom in their own homes and the wider social world helped everyone see that disabled people are not unfortunates awaiting cures by medical miracles but people, who, like all of us, face limitations which society can either reinforce or alleviate.



Sandra's life was an extraordinary contribution.

Everyone can imagine being able to do more than they actually can do. Being a body – any body – comes with limited powers. These limitations are part of being human; the important barriers are the ones we can change. They are social, political, and economic. No one does me an injustice because I cannot flap my arms and fly. However, if buildings are designed without ramps and elevators, the society that allows that to happen does an injustice to all those who cannot navigate them.

Sandra was a leader in the movement that proved that disabled people had been the victims of injustice. Like other historically oppressed groups, the profound changes that people with disabilities have brought about proves that victimhood is an imposed, not a natural condition. They have proven to society what they knew all along: they were as able and capable as anyone else. What was lacking was not ability, but opportunity and space.

Disabled activists have revolutionized architecture and opened up public space more widely for everyone. They have transformed our understanding of health and illness, the body and its capacities, the relationship between bodies and assistive devices, and the social conditions of free activity. From the time Sandra left Bloorview Hospital Home and School when she was 18, she rolled at the forefront of the movement.

“The first subversive thing I ever did was live,” she said. In her last years she worried about the implications of changes to the euthanasia laws would have for people with disabilities. Those concerns were the occasion for us to connect in deep philosophical arguments about choice, death, and the value of life.

Perhaps hers ended too soon, but we think too much of loss at the end of people's lives, and not enough of the way death makes a life whole, and, in making whole, allows us to value the complete contribution.

Sandra's life was an extraordinary contribution. One day after I heard that she had died, I was scrolling through my phone and came upon a picture I had forgotten about. She sent it to me from a dinner party in Toronto which I could not attend. Anyone who knows her would recognise the look: a sidelong Elvis sneer, playfully contemptuous. On her outstretched middle finger was a ridiculous kitten ring with glowing red eyes. The particular image expresses the whole of her personality. She was both fighter and joker: courageous enough to give the finger to a world that wanted to shut her away, but revelling more in laughter than a fight.

At the end of the day, what is any struggle against oppression but a struggle to enjoy life? 

Jeff Noonan is a member of Sandra's family.



CILT in the news 2019-2020

“Advocates call on Toronto to address accessibility challenges” – *Toronto.com*

<https://www.toronto.com/news-story/9340596-advocates-call-on-toronto-to-address-accessibility-challenges/>

“Why parents with disabilities often become advocates for themselves – and their kids”
– *CBC’s The Doc Project*

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/docproject/why-parents-with-disabilities-often-become-advocates-for-themselves-and-their-kids-1.5073533>

“Demanding Disability Rights during COVID-19” – *TVO’s The Agenda*

<https://www.tvo.org/video/demanding-disability-rights-amid-covid-19>

“People with disabilities excluded from re-opening plans, advocates warn”
– *Healthy Debate*

<https://healthydebate.ca/2020/08/topic/disabilities-excluded-re-opening>

“Where Is The Disability Beat In Canada? – The news doesn’t focus on disability issues often, and when it does, it often focuses on the wrong things” – *CanadalandShow.com*

<https://www.canadalandshow.com/where-is-the-disability-beat-in-canada/>

“Toronto accessibility campaign calls for removal of barriers – TTC transit shelter fully enclosed to illustrate lack of access”
– *Toronto.com*

<https://www.toronto.com/news-story/9330353-toronto-accessibility-campaign-calls-for-removal-of-barriers/>

AODA Committee’s Town Hall on COVID-19

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJ23it9ULjc>



“Advocates say coronavirus planning leaves out people with disabilities” - *CITY news*

<https://toronto.citynews.ca/2020/04/22/advocates-say-coronavirus-planning-leaves-out-people-with-disabilities>

“What you can do to make Toronto more inclusive” – *Toronto Star*

<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2019/05/11/how-will-they-eat-alarm-raised-over-revamp-of-ontarios-welfare-program-for-disabled.html>

“How will they eat?” Alarm raised over revamp of Ontario’s welfare program for disabled”

– *Toronto Star*

<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2019/05/11/how-will-they-eat-alarm-raised-over-revamp-of-ontarios-welfare-program-for-disabled.html>

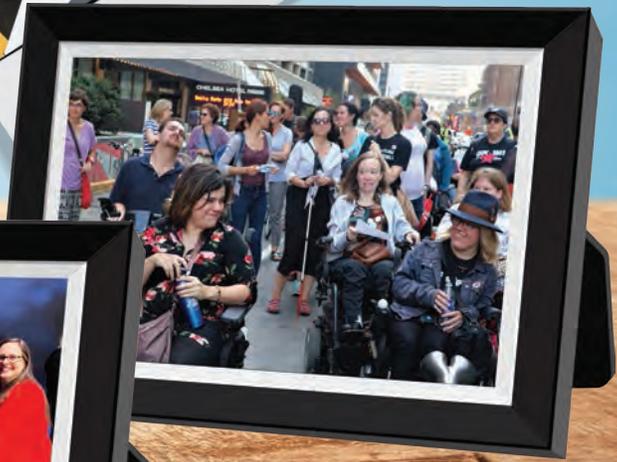
“Creating a new standard for engagement that includes people with disabilities”

– *Maytree Foundation*

<https://maytree.com/stories/creating-a-new-standard-for-engagement-that-includes-people-with-disabilities/>

How the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto is navigating COVID-19 - *Client profile, Iler Campbell LLP*

<https://ilercampbell.com/blog/2020/07/client-profile-centre-independent-living-toronto-navigating-covid%e2%80%9119/>





**365 Bloor Street East, Suite 902
Toronto, Ontario M4W 3L4
Tel: 416-599-2458
Fax: 416-599-3555
Email: cilt@cilt.ca**

www.cilt.ca