



Fall 2019



### **From the desk of the *Interim* Executive Director—Laura Thies**

It is difficult to believe that September is already behind us. Before you know it we will be into the holiday season. As we launch our first newsletter, I am excited to be in the role of Interim Director of Sunbeam Centre.

For over 60 years we have been providing strength-based person-centred services & supports to people in Waterloo Region living with a Developmental Disability or Autism Diagnosis.

In my 18 years at the Sunbeam Centre I have held a variety of roles, primarily with the Developmental Services Resource Centre. I have witnessed many changes over the years and have watched the agency grow in leaps and bounds to keep up with the demand for local services. New supports and programs have been introduced & our capacity to support individuals in a personalized way has increased dramatically.

Sunbeam is comprised of four main divisions – Community Living Services, Developmental Services Ontario (DSO), Developmental Services Resource Centre (DSRC), and our Human Resources/Administrative Services.

Each one has a critical role to play in order for us to continue to provide the supports necessary to help families receive an individualized plan to ensure that their loved one can thrive.

Sunbeam is a very busy organization with many projects & programs on the go. I encourage you to check out our website and follow us on Facebook to see what we are up to & maybe join us for an event!



*Laura*

#### **Have you ever wondered what we do at Sunbeam and how you can be a part of it?**

Here are a few opportunities to get involved & learn more:

- ◆ On the 3rd Thursday of the month we host public tours of our Kingsway site. For more information contact us at [fundraising@sunbeamcentre.com](mailto:fundraising@sunbeamcentre.com).
- ◆ Our first online auction will run from November 18th to the 25th. Funds raised will allow for the continuation of enhanced programs. Auction site will be available on Nov 18th. <http://www.32auctions.com/sunbeamcentre>
- ◆ Join us for our holiday event “Lighting of the Green” on December 4th from 6 to 8 pm.. Family activities will run in the gym, with the official “lighting” at 7 pm. Details will be available at [www.sunbeamcentre.com](http://www.sunbeamcentre.com).

#### ***Do you know that:***

- ◆ Sunbeam has 17 residential homes throughout Kitchener, Waterloo, & St. Jacobs.
- ◆ We have 90 culturally diverse residents from ages 6 to 80 that call them home.
- ◆ Ministry funding does not cover all of the costs associated with providing enhanced programs and additional support.
- ◆ Seven organizations in Waterloo Region utilize our programs.
- ◆ Sunbeam offers support services to children, youth, & adults living with Autism.

# Community Champion saving lives!



From left : Stephanie Pollard — VP of Operations, Toyota, Laura Thies—Interim ED, Sunbeam Centre, Lynn Hall — Toyota, Communications Specialist.

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada “Toyota” is well known for their generosity to the community and a commitment to creating a positive impact that provides opportunities for others to thrive.

The Sunbeam Centre was recently on the receiving end of that generosity with a gift that will fund the purchase a Bladder Scanner, 5 Suction Units, and 4 Vitals Units.

Lynn Hall, Communications Specialist at Toyota, shared that Sunbeam was chosen because we fit the mandate of TMMC—to give locally in the regions where their two facilities are located (Waterloo Region and Oxford County). Major donations focus on capital or one-time investments that will make an immediate and visible difference to an organization. Toyota’s first priority is on basic needs, and education that will impact the greatest number of people possible. We are so thankful that our equipment needs checked all of their boxes. On behalf of those we serve, thank you Toyota!

## Bucket list thinking...what Dreams are made of.

Do you have a bucket list? What types of adventures are on it? Many of the people we support have similar lists but to them they are Dreams and what is on those lists might surprise you. Things that you might take for granted as everyday occurrences like camping, fishing, art classes, music lessons & going to a concert are often grand dreams for people living at Sunbeam. Realizing their dreams is often dependent on the generosity and kindness of a community champion.

Recently Chris was able to experience not one but two of his Dreams! He wanted to go fishing on a big boat and catch a real fish. He not only caught one, but 12. The captain cleaned and packaged the fish so that Chris was able to share his dream with some friends in a very tangible way. The one that truly got away was large enough it might have won the fishing derby.

A few weeks later he had an opportunity to realize another dream - to camp in a tent, sleep on an air mattress that he blew up with an air pump and make smores over a real campfire. Although it rained the first night it did not dampen the excitement that he felt. Chris shared that he wore goggles in the water and did more handstands than he could count. He is hopeful that he will have the opportunity to camp again next year.



Left: Chris & Captain Greg, Centre: Chris enjoying his smores. Right: Chris pumping up his air mattress.



## Supporting Autism services at Sunbeam.

In April 2019, 15 year old Chiara had just learned of the changes to the Ontario Autism Program. Chiara herself is on the autism spectrum and has participated in activities with Sunbeam Centre through the Developmental Services Resource Centre. "I don't like to think that something will happen to the Sunbeam Centre. I want it to keep working or else people will be sad. It's important to me and a lot of people," said Chiara.

Chiara is no stranger to fundraising and advocating for herself and for others – she has done a lot of it at school. "We want to make sure that no one will be left behind. I'm already pretty active when it comes to Autism awareness, like at school. A lot of people at school were using Autism as an insult. I did a persuasive argument in English class about how it's not one."

Chiara rallied her sister and friends to go around the neighborhood to ask for support and raised over \$200.00 for the Sunbeam Centre! "It feels good to make other people happy. We had one lady dump out her whole change purse!"

Chiara told us that people need to be brave and take action. "You don't always want to be the first one to jump in and do something, but we have to start the conversation to make the world a better place". You could always do what she did and ask a friend to provide support along the way. Thank you Chiara for making a difference!



Chiara is pictured in the middle, with her sister and friend who helped with fundraising!

## Camp fun for all!



Summer is always an exciting, busy time here at Sunbeam Centre. This year we were fortunate to have 10 summer students that made it possible to run programs that we do not have the staffing to run during the school year.

Our regular programs focus on clients 18 and older but this summer we held a summer camp for medically fragile, technology dependent children. Over a 6 week period we had 12 excited little campers who were able to experience the same camp fun that their siblings might have.



We also hosted a two week adult day camp open to the community and a full two week respite camp, where campers live on site for that period. Day campers went bowling, swimming at Kiwanis Park and other outings. Camp was capped off with a Family Fun Day!

