# APRIL 2019 MAGAZINE

2019 Recipient of the Canadian Helen Keller Centre Award Apple Inc.



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CHKC Award Issue



#### WhyNot. Magazine / APRIL 2019

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Canadian Foundation for Physically **Disabled Persons**, a charitable organization founded in 1985, assists people with physical disabilities to live fuller lives. Its mission is to create awareness in the public, business communities and government of the abilities of persons with disabilities and their needs in the areas of housing, employment, education, accessibility, sports and recreation and research. In the past thirty-five years, the Foundation has raised substantial funds, which it has distributed to a wide variety of organizations and events. These include the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame. the Eternal Flame of Hope, Rotary Cheshire Apartments, the Canadian Helen Keller Awards Luncheon, the Great Valentine Gala, the King Clancy Awards, the Corporate Awards, the WhyNot Marathon, the first Canadian Marathon for the Paralympics, Jeff Adams' CN Tower Climb and Rampage on the Hill.

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CHKC AWARD CHAIR
Philip Corke



2018 Outstanding Foundation Award Recipient

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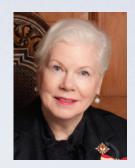


The road to success is a deliberate one, paved with high intention, sincere effort and intelligent execution. It represents the wise choice of many alternatives. For it is through our actions that we determine our destiny.

Congratulations to Apple Inc. on receiving the Canadian Helen Keller Award for contributing to the deaf-blind community and for providing financial support to persons with disabilities. Such actions by prominent corporate citizens are invaluable and truly make a difference in the community.

Thank you as well to the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons and to all the supporters in attendance not only for providing deaf-blind Canadians with essential services they need and recognition they deserve, but also for giving us all hope for the future.

Julie Payette
The Governor General



Over 15 years, successive recipients of the Canadian Helen Keller Centre Award have embodied the highest ideals of altruism. Thanks in no small part to their efforts, countless people living with deaf-blindness have been empowered to achieve their full potential, leaving a lasting and profound impact on our schools, businesses, and communities.

I add my voice to the chorus congratulating this year's honourees. May this recognition encourage them to persist in their drive to build a more just and resilient society, and may it cause us all to strengthen our resolve to foster equity and inclusion in all things.

I commend the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons for its long record of success in in raising awareness of the talents and needs of people of all abilities, and for organizing this happy celebration.

This comes with my best wishes for an enjoyable afternoon.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario



Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC) has built an incredible legacy over the past 27 years. Since the doors first opened at Rotary Cheshire Apartments in 1992, we've built a proud reputation in the deafblind community, providing training and fostering greater independence for consumers. We accomplish this by providing barrier-free housing, training, intervenor services and seniors services.

Today, we remain Canada's only residential training centre. We are honoured that so many individuals have placed — and continue to place — their trust in CHKC. In doing so, we are helping to create positive change for them, their families and communities.

Once again in June, we will host JuneFest at Nathan Phillips Square. JuneFest is an annual awareness event that celebrates Deafblind Awareness Month and this year marks its 17th anniversary. The CHKC team is also proudly raising awareness nationally by working with agencies, consumer groups and consumers across the country. This coordinated effort is helping more Canadians to learn about the dual disability of deafblindness.

These national efforts are possible because of a man who has been extremely dedicated to creating equal opportunities for all Canadians. Back in 2015, Honourable Vim Kochhar spearheaded a national proclamation, which gave us a high-profile springboard from which to launch awareness efforts from coast to coast. We remain so very grateful to Honourable Kochhar for his unwavering commitment to improve the lives of people of all abilities through CHKC and the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP).

On behalf of CHKC, I would also like to pay tribute to Apple Inc. as this year's recipient of the CHKC award. As you will learn in this issue of WhyNot, Apple Inc.'s forward-thinking vision and strong accessibility features are making a real difference in the lives of people who are deafblind.

In closing, thank you for joining us today in support of CHKC. We appreciate the continued support of our loyal patrons, guests and volunteers. We hope to see you again next year.

Jennifer Robbins
Executive Director, CHKC



As founding chair of Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC), I am delighted to welcome you to the 15th annual CHKC awards luncheon.

Over the years we have paid tribute to many deserving honourees who have made significant contributions to help people with disabilities, including the deafblind community. This year is no exception as we recognize Apple Inc. for its inclusion and innovation in accessibility. As a true pioneer, Apple Inc. is ensuring that everyone can use its products to communicate and access information. Many people who are deafblind use iPhones, iPads and other Apple Inc. devices to connect directly with family and friends. This increases independence, eliminates barriers and reduces isolation.

CHKC continues to do incredible work as a single agency, following its historic amalgamation with Rotary Cheshire Homes in 2016. The organization is strong, united, committed and making a huge difference in the lives of people who are deafblind. This is being accomplished by providing training, affordable housing, intervenor and seniors services to deafblind Ontarians. Each person that CHKC serves has a dual sensory loss, which impacts both their hearing and vision. The severity differs for each individual, leaving some with residual hearing and/or vision, while others can be 100% deaf and/or blind. Regardless of the level of deafblindness, CHKC remains committed to focus on each person's abilities. This helps create more welcoming communities where people feel safe, supported and excited to achieve their goals.

On behalf of the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP), I extend our sincere thanks for taking the time to join us today and for your generous, ongoing support. As a community, we are making a very real difference in the lives of all Canadians.

Honourable Vim Kochhar Chairperson, CFPDP Founding Chair, CHKC



I am proud of CHKC's important work providing essential support and services for Canada's deafblind community. Our impressive track record dates back to 1992 when we began building our legacy through the introduction of barrier-free housing and intervenor series. In doing so, we became the first organization in the world to offer apartments that were designed specifically for people who are deafblind.

Nine years later, in 2001, we expanded our offerings with the opening of the CHKC training centre a few blocks away. Over the years, many have contributed their time, expertise and financial support to help us realize these milestones. For that we are grateful.

We thank the business leaders, private citizens and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for their ongoing commitment to our cause. The deafblind community is small but has considerable needs.

I would like to pay tribute to Apple Inc., this year's honouree, for recognizing the importance of creating technology that is equally accessible to all of us.

Accessibility is not an afterthought at Apple Inc.

Instead, it is a central and foundational part of all their devices.

Lastly, I would like to recognize the outstanding work of Honourable Vim Kochhar. As founding Chair of CHKC and the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons, he continues to be a champion of change for Canadians with disabilities. In doing so, he is helping to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live a full life while leveraging their unique abilities.

Thank you for being part of the community that is making Canada a more wonderful place for all of us every single day.

#### **Philip Corke**

Gulfcom Inc., GoneViral TV Chair, CHKC Award Luncheon

# WORKING TOWARDS A GLOBAL Canadian Helen Keller Centre WAVE OF AWARENESS

It is not unusual for big things in life to start on a smaller scale, with many individual steps leading to the realization of a significant goal or dream. This is exactly how both JuneFest and National Deafblind Awareness Month (NDBAM), celebrated each year in June, grew from local events to land on the national agenda in 2015.

#### IT HAS BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE

Canada's Parliament passed a national proclamation recognizing June as a month for reflection on the issues and common needs facing Canadians who are deafblind. This proclamation, which was spearheaded by Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC), Honourable Vim Kochhar and three of his Senate colleagues, helped bring agencies and consumer groups together in a coordinated, national effort.

This year, CHKC is once again laying the groundwork to dream even bigger – this time, by leading a coordinated global drive to raise awareness of deafblindness and the issues encountered by people who have a dual loss of hearing and vision.

#### National Deafblind Awareness Month

Each year, JuneFest and NDBAM are celebrated in June, which is the month when Helen Keller was born. Keller is unquestionably the most famous person who was both deaf and blind. Many people are familiar with her story but they do not know that deafblindness impacts an estimated 65,000 Canadians, including many who live in the Greater Toronto Area and across Ontario. These consumers can choose to receive training and intervenor services through CHKC, which expanded its service area to cover the entire province in recent years thanks to ongoing funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

"In Ontario, we're extremely fortu-

nate to have funding for intervenors, who are specially trained professionals that act as the eyes and ears of a person who is deafblind," says Jennifer Robbins, Executive Director of CHKC. "Other provinces have little to no funding for intervenors, which means that people who are deafblind and living in those areas can experience isolation and an inability to participate fully in their community. Part of our national initiative aims to educate government officials and the general public about the importance of

equal access to intervenor services regardless of where you choose to live."

In Toronto, surrounding areas and communities across Canada, NDBAM will shine the spotlight on deafblindness when dozens of iconic landmarks are cast in a blue light on June 3, 2019. Among the landmarks to help raise awareness, the CN Tower will be lit in a signature blue light as members of Toronto's deafblind community — including consumers, intervenors and agency representatives — come together to hand out information and





CHKC employees attend 2018 JuneFest at Nathan Phillips Square

speak with the public about the dual disability that impacts tens of thousands of Canadians. Other Ontario landmarks taking part include the TORONTO sign and City Hall towers at Nathan Phillips Square, Port Credit Lighthouse (Mississauga, ON), Niagara Falls, the Niagara Peace Bridge, London City Hall and the London Life Dufferin Building (London, ON).

National Deafblind Awareness Month continues to make a wave across the country as well, with the lighting of additional landmarks including BC Place, North Vancouver City Hall, Penticton South Okanagan Convention Centre, the Calgary Tower, the TELUS Sparks Building (Calgary, AB), Edmonton Bridge, the Forks Market Canopy (Winnipeg, MB), Olympic Stadium (Montreal, PQ) and Charlottetown City Hall in Prince Edward Island.

"Many individual Canadian communities have historically recognized and celebrated Deafblind Awareness Month, but the 2015 proclamation helped CHKC lead a unification of these efforts. As we continue to work together, the lighting of landmarks across the country is building even more momentum and growing significant awareness," says Robbins. "We are proud to once again have members of our team on the NDBAM committee and helping to lead these initiatives, which are growing from year to year and from coast to coast."

The national committee is also working to increase the number of cities and towns that declare June as Deafblind Awareness Month in 2019. While this is an important initiative in each province and municipality, it has an even greater impact in smaller communities where services are limited or nonexistent.

"Our hope is that these efforts will give consumers who are deafblind a voice and make them feel part of something bigger," adds Robbins. "Many of these areas are too small to have an organization like CHKC, but we are encouraging and supporting the drive to have existing organiza-

tions open a branch or department of intervenor services. Working with their government's department of developmental services is another option that could expand the reach of intervenor services into less-populated areas."

### Celebrating JuneFest on June 10th

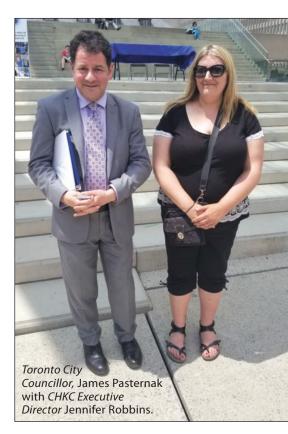
This year, CHKC's JuneFest celebration will be held on June 10, 2019 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Nathan Phillips Square in downtown Toronto. The Province of Ontario first set aside the month of June as a time for awareness of the issues facing the deafblind community in 2000.

Many of the traditions of past years will continue, with a flag raising as well as information booths hosted by various organizations and agencies to increase awareness about deafblindness, the latest technology and assistive devices, and the services and resources that are available. Consumers from the Deafblind Adventurers will also run simulations using blindfolds and specialized earphones to give the public a firsthand experience of what it is like to live with a loss of both hearing and vision. Any proceeds from the event will go to CHKC.

#### **Raising International Awareness**

In future years, CHKC hopes its leadership in raising awareness will resonate around the world. To that end, several representatives from CHKC are traveling to Australia in August to share their expertise and help further unite the global deafblind community.

CHKC's participation at the 17th Deafblind International World Conference includes several workshops and poster presentations, with one of the posters focused on encouraging an international deafblind awareness month. These workshops will delve into aging and dual sensory loss as well as a recent partnership success story, which saw trainers from CHKC and DeafBlind Ontario Services travel to Nicaragua to help teachers and deafblind individuals learn how skills used



in Canada may be beneficial in their communities. Other poster sessions include behavioural competencies for intervenors, sexuality and deafblindness, and CHKC as a model for accessible services.

"There are so many important issues to address on a global scale. We believe that making June a truly international month to recognize deafblindness would be a great way to initiate coordinated dialogue, advance conversations, share information and create inclusive communities," says Robbins. "It's difficult for many people to imagine what it would be like to live with deafblindness, so we are always looking to showcase the abilities of people with this dual disability. Just like each of us, they are beloved family members, cherished friends, valued participants in their communities and important employees with tremendous potential. We are dedicated to raising awareness, both here at home and around the world, to emphasize the full, meaningful lives that people who are deafblind are living when the proper support services are in place."

# CHKC 9th Annual JT Award

The "JT Award" recognizes significant contributions to the Canadian deafblind community by a deserving individual, consumer group or service provider who has demonstrated excellence in at least one of the categories of:

- Awareness to the disability of deafblindness Expansion to available services and programs
- Involvement of individuals who are deafblind at all levels.

Joyce Thompson was awarded the JuneFest Award of Excellence in 2010. Thereafter, in her honour, the award was re-named the JT Award.

#### Past winners were:

2011- Jane Sayer
2012- Elio Riggillo
2013- Eddy Morton
2014- Joan Mactavish
2015- Roxanna Spruyt-Rocks
2016- Cindy Accardi
2017- Megan McHugh
2018- Warren Wakefield

#### CANADIAN HELEN KELLER AWARD



**IN 2005**, the Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC) began recognizing pioneers and leaders in the fields of Visual Impairment, Deafness and DeafBlindness with The Canadian Helen Keller Centre Award. The annual awards ceremony is a key fundraising event for the CHKC's many programs that help people who have become deafblind. Here are the Award recipients

2018 Royal Ontario Museum was recognized for its impressive reputation to equally welcome all audiences, including people with disabilities and specifically the deafblind community regardless of their accessibility needs. "Deafblindness: Connecting Through Touch" offers attendees an opportunity to redefine what it means to use their senses in

a hearing and sighted world.

**2017** Honourable Dr. Helena Jaczek was recognized for her work assisting Ontarians who are deafblind by creating efficiencies to allow for more services, implementing a policy framework, and developing operational guidelines that ensure consistency and equality across the intervenor services program. A true advocate and supporter of individuals who are deafblind and all individuals with disabilities in the province of Ontario.

**2016 York University** was recognized for its leadership in initiating programmes in Critical Disability Studies for research and professional training leading to post graduate degrees.

**2015** Ryerson University was recognized for their programs in disability studies and becoming a proud leader in disability research, education, arts and culture.

**2014 George Brown College** was recognized for its long standing commitment to train professional intervenors to communicate with people who are deafblind and provide access to the world in which we live.

**2013 Canadian National Institute for the Blind** (CNIB) was recognized as the country's leading provider of rehabilitation services and support for people living with vision loss. Between its research, public education, advocacy and rehabilitation programs, CNIB's goal is not only to improve the lives of Canadians who are living with vision loss today — but those of future generations.

2012 The Honourable David C. Onley, Lt. Governor of Ontario was recognized for his enormous contribution to build a barrier free community for people with disabilities. Since being the Queen's representative in the Province of Ontario he has devoted his vision on adopting accessibility as the overall theme of his term in office.

**2011 IBM Canada.** Throughout their 100 year history, diversity has been a part of their culture having hired the 1st disabled person 98 years ago. IBM's long commitment to diversity and accessibility has made them a well respected leader for the disabled community.

**2010** The Honourable Vim Kochhar received the award for founding the Canadian Helen Keller Centre and Rotary Cheshire Homes. Vim has spent 30 years removing barriers for persons with physical disabilities and recognizing them for their abilities.

**2009 ICICI Bank Canada** decided early on to assist organizations that work in support of physically disabled individuals. This important commitment reflects the shared values of the bank, its employees and Canadians to ensure inclusive communities where we live and work.

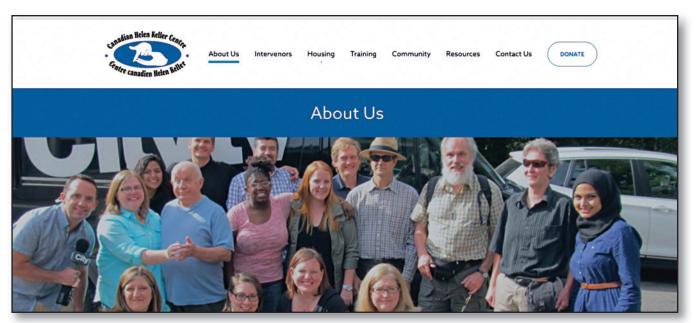
**2008** Microsoft Canada has made an enourmous contribution to the disabled community in Canada. They were responsible for assisting in many innovative initiatives including Children's Discovery Portal at CNIB.

**2007** Reverend Robert L. Rumball, Founder, The Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf. The Reverend Robert L. Rumball received the award for his more than 40 years of working with people who are deaf.

**2006** Jim Sanders, President & CEO, CNIB. Jim Sanders received the award for his achievements in the field of visual impairment. Jim spent 35 years with the CNIB, working to increase the quality of life for people with visual impairments.

**2005** Joan Mactavish received the inaugural award to recognize 38 years as a pioneer and activist for the development and delivery of specialized services for people who have become deafblind.

# CHKC LAUNCHES A NEW WEBSITE



CHKC HAS PROUDLY launched a new website – and we're excited to introduce you to the new look, feel and content. Currently available in English with French coming soon, the site's introduction coincides with CHKC's expanding role as a leader in the deafblind community and mission to "empower the deafblind community through consumer-driven services and opportunities that maximize independence."

"Our new website is fully accessible and works with all the latest technologies," says Jennifer Robbins, Executive Director of CHKC. "Deafblind consumers can change the text size, colour schemes and it works with accessible technologies like screen readers."

The new CHKC website was built by Guelph-based Sandbox Software Solutions, which also developed the Deafblind Network of Ontario (DBNO) website and the Access Intervenor Services portal, which was developed in partnership with DBNO and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

"While developing these sites for other organizations, Sandbox Software Solutions did a lot of testing with consumers. This was a significant advantage to CHKC as it helped to fast track the development of our new website. We were also able to leverage their knowledge and experience to adopt accessibility options that have been finetuned and are already in use within the deafblind community," adds Robbins.

The new website provides a clear and detailed overview of CHKC and its incredible work. This includes barrierfree housing where deafblind adults live independently in their own homes as well as training in skills of daily living, technology, adapted communication, Braille and safe travel. The website showcases what the organization stands for, the values through which it empowers and leads, the Board of Directors and leadership team behind the organization as well as the integral role that CHKC's skilled intervenors play in providing daily, outreach and emergency services. CHKC's website is also fully responsive for mobile, making it easy to navigate on a wide range of browsers and devices.

"We are extremely proud of our new website and believe it provides the experience that consumers and the community at large expect from CHKC as a leader in deafblind services," adds Robbins.

To experience the new website and learn more about the organization, please visit CHKC.org.



## APPLE INC.

"Technology is most powerful when it empowers everyone." These are the very first words you'll read when visiting the accessibility page on Apple's website

"TAKING A FAMILY PORTRAIT. Catching up over Face-Time. Raising the blinds to let in the morning light. We want everyone to enjoy the everyday moments that technology helps make possible, so we work to make every Apple product accessible from the very start. Because the true value of a device isn't measured by how powerful it is, but by how much it empowers you."

The inclusivity behind the company's communications is indicative of Apple's positive attitude towards people of all abilities. Accessibility isn't an afterthought following a product's initial innovation. Instead, it is part of its foundation from the beginning.

In recognition of its inclusion and innovation in accessibility, Apple is the winner of the 2019 Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC) Award. This award honours individuals, corporations and institutions that have made outstanding achievements and contributions to the deafblind community. It will be presented at the 15th annual CHKC Award Luncheon, which is being hosted on May 1, 2019 in conjunction with the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP).

"Apple is a true pioneer in accessibility," says Honourable Vim Kochhar, founder of CHKC and CFPDP, and winner of the CHKC Award in 2010. "The company has gone to great lengths to make its iPhone, iPad and other products accessible and barrier-free so that anyone can use them to communicate, access information and connect with the world around them. They offer a variety of features that can be

easily activated to meet the usability requirements of each individual user. We are proud to honour Apple for its groundbreaking efforts and to recognize the company with this well-deserved award."

"The majority of our consumers use Apple products because of the built-in accessibility features," says Jennifer Robbins, Executive Director of CHKC. "They use iPhones and iPads to communicate with friends, reach out to their families, reduce isolation and access information. The fact that they can communicate directly with others just using technology has been a huge advantage when it comes to independence."

Apple's commitment to accessibility spans every product line from iPhone to iPad, Mac to Apple Watch, and AppleTV to HomePod. The accessibility features engineered into each include VoiceOver, Apple's revolutionary screen reader which describes what's happening on each device, allowing users to navigate by listening, or by using one of over 90 supported models of braille displays. Available in over 35 languages, including French Canadian, VoiceOver is built into the foundation of each operating system so that blind and deafblind users have access to all the fun and functionality that each device provides.

"Apple devices let you write a text or email without seeing the screen. You can take a perfect group selfie just by hearing how many faces are in the frame. Using these features may feel like magic, but it's very much by design," Apple explains in its accessibility communications.

For people who require display accommodations, Apple offers the ability to change font sizes, adjust the background colour, create changes in contrast and magnify anything on the screen.

And for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, Apple provides a range of built-in features to support their needs. For example, Apple has worked with many of the top hearing aid manufacturers on Made For iPhone hearing aids which provide a direct Bluetooth connection between hearing aids and iPhones and iPads. This provides outstanding sound quality for phone calls, music and more, as well as easy set up and pairing. Users can "cut through the noise with Live Listen," which makes it possible to use the built-in microphone on your iPhone or iPad as a directional mic with hearing aids and AirPods.

Additionally, closed captioning support helps Apple users enjoy various entertainment options, including movies, TV or streaming programming. The LED light on an iPhone can also be activated to flash so users will never miss a call, text message, email or app notification.

This is just some of the functionality that members of CHKC's iOS club may discuss during their monthly meetings. The peer-to-peer learning group was founded more than four years ago and remains extremely popular to this day.

"Once a month, consumers come together to talk about Apple products, their accessibility features and the new apps they have discovered and use in their daily lives," says Mélanie Gauthier, Provincial Programs Manager for CHKC.

"It's a discussion-based group and there is also training, where they will test an app together. They'll go through its challenges and what they've learned, which is helpful for advanced and new users alike."

CHKC also offers one-on-one training in a variety of areas, including iOS technology. These courses focus on devices made by Apple – such as iPads, iPhones, iPods and Mac computers – and how they can be adapted for those with vision and hearing loss.

"If somebody gets a new Apple product and they want training, their first step is to contact me," explains Gauthier. "I facilitate an introduction to the instructor who best meets their individual training needs. The choice of an instructor is also based on whether or not the consumer has any residual vision. Once a consumer is paired with the appropriate instructor, there's an initial class where goals are set, including timelines to learn what they want to learn on the new device. There is no waiting time – it's just about coordinating the instructor and student, then getting them together. This is individual learning versus peer learning."

"Apple technology makes an incredible difference for people who are deafblind, helping them to lead fuller, more independent lives," adds Kochhar. "We look forward to future innovations from Apple so that people with disabilities can continue to reach for their dreams, participate in their communities and emphasize their unique and individual abilities."

"Apple is honoured to receive this award from the Cana-

dian Helen Keller Centre and the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons", says Sarah Herrlinger, Apple's Director of Global Accessibility Policy & Initiatives. "We appreciate all the work that these organizations do to support people with disabilities in Canada and celebrate their long history of promoting inclusion."

Other companies and organizations previously honoured with the CHKC Award include IBM Canada, ICICI Bank, Microsoft Canada and CNIB. The Royal Ontario Museum, George Brown College and Ryerson University are also past honourees. Individuals previously honoured include Dr. Helena Jaczek, who was formerly Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and Minister of Community and Social Services, Joan Mactavish, a pioneer of intervenor services, Jim Sanders, former President of CNIB, the late Bob Rumball, founder of the Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf, and Ontario's former Lieutenant-Governor David Onley.



# ANTONY SADDIK: MAKING THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE

Finger puppets. Hand puppets. Shadow puppets. Stick puppets. After 15 years volunteering in puppet shows, Antony Saddik knows his stuff. And, since emigrating to Toronto from Cairo, Egypt in July 2017, he has been looking to use his knowledge and talent to help children learn, socialize and communicate with the help of puppets and characters.

"WE WERE VOLUNTEERS [in Egypt] and we would travel all over the place with our equipment. We brought fun to all the children and youth in hospitals, schools, churches and conferences, making them very happy," explains Saddik. "We were a team and we created the shows...and the stories all together. We made everything with our own hands including the puppets, the art, the sounds, the lighting, the electrical work and the backgrounds."

Now, as CEO of his own Torontobased start-up called Fantasticanta, he is hoping to do the same here, not only for children but youth of all ages.

"We want to help children and young adults to...grow in confidence and maturity. This is to make them more outgoing, [and to foster] positivity and creativity," he explains. "I believe that when you respect and love others you make the world a better place. And when you make others happy, you feel happy in return. I like to make young adults and specifically people with disabilities happy through different activities and different shows."

Antony is pursuing his dream; mak-

ing what he calls the impossible possible, while living with both limited hearing and vision.

"I still have some vision in both eyes but am able to see better with the left than the right," says Saddik. "I have had numerous surgeries for retinal detachment and I also have glaucoma in both eyes. I have a cochlear implant on the right that helps with my hearing and at times I will wear a hearing aid on the left, but it doesn't always work."

Like many Canadians who are deafblind, Antony lives independently and uses intervenors to assist him with his daily activities. He says the Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC) has been there for him right from the start. Intervenors are specially trained professionals who act as the eyes and ears of a person who is deafblind, providing them with information about the environment around them and helping them to communicate.

"[Intervenors] help me to see better and to hear better. They support me for shopping and for activities, games, meetings and trips," explains Saddik. "CHKC has helped me to improve communication with organizations, and they are supporting me for interviews and communication. They have workshops that teach me...and a lot of activities that I've enjoyed doing. They are able to support me with my hearing and vision as it has continued to decline. [CHKC also as-

sists] me in applying for a number of things that I didn't know about. Since I came to Canada, they have supported me with many things, and I have built a good relationship with all management, intervenors and consumers."

Since graduating, Antony has gained 10 years of experience as a senior software developer. He is interested in database development and management, web development and IT networking. However, having just recently become a permanent resident, he has not yet found a permanent job, which he admits can make life somewhat difficult.

"I need an income so I can pay for my apartment and other things that I enjoy or need, like a second surgery for a Cochlear Implant," he says, "And of course, I am looking forward to having a girlfriend and later a family and home."

Unable to wait for that perfect job to come along, Antony used his entrepreneurial spirit to help get Fantasticanta off the ground along with Katrina Clifford, a writer, author and lyricist originally from the United Kingdom. He has received assistance from CHKC intervenors and has

been in touch with the Toronto Business Development Centre and the Canadian Council for the Arts.

"They are all supporting me for my project, to be able to start it up and to achieve my goals," says Saddik. "Impossible things became possible and nothing is now impossible."



Nancy Longo, Intervenor and Antony Saddik

# A Space at the Table



The Canadian Foundation for Physically
Disabled Persons (CFPDP) challenges
Corporate Canada to offer a space at the boardroom
table, for the first time, to persons with disabilities
who already possess the required competence,
professional credentials, and proven business
acumen that a corporate board requires.

The CFPDP can provide interested corporations with a list of qualified candidates to help bring about this pioneering change and inclusion at the board level of Corporate Canada.

We are also seeking persons with disablities who have the qualifications and interest to be included in this growing list of capable potential board members candidates.

To learn more, please visit

www.cfpdp.com/aspaceatthetable

Help us on social media to get themessage out:

#ASpaceAttheTable



Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons

www.cfpdp.com









### 2018 JT Award Winner

In June 2018 Warren Wakefield was the recipient of the 8th annual JT Award which recognizes significant contributions to the Canadian deafblind community by a deserving individual, consumer group or service provider.

Warren became involved in the Canadian Helen Keller Centre in

1992 when he joined the Rotary Cheshire Homes Board of Directors. He helped influence the service provided to not only the tenants



of Rotary Cheshire but also the eventual expansion of programs and services available to Ontarians who are deafblind.

In 1997 Warren became Chair and immediately provided leadership to increase the apartment building's reach and expand the variety of services available.

This lead to the development of a training centre, a home located at 210 Empress Avenue in Toronto where those who are deafblind receive rehabilitation skills and training to increase their independence and safety as they navigate life with a progressive hearing and vision loss.

Warren personally financed almost 100% of the cost of the property at 0% interest.

It is because of this commitment and dedication to the CHKC that Warren received the 8th annual JT Award last summer. He helped shape the centre in its infancy, and beyond, benefiting generations of persons who are deafblind.





**DEAFBLIND AWARENESS MONTH** *Make a wave from coast to coast* 

MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION À LA SURDICÉCITÉ Créez une vaque d'un océan à l'autre





www.chkc.org

# FILL THE PIGGY BANKS FUNDRAISER!

For over 10 years, the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP) has been raising money for CHKC at its annual Hall of Fame awards luncheon. Piggy banks are placed on each table and Honourable Vim Kochhar, founder of both CFPDP and CHKC, encourages attendees to see who can contribute the most "bacon" to help CHKC in its mission to improve the lives of people who are deafblind.



Kochhar's call to contribute is always successful, raising several thousand dollars for CHKC. At the 2018 luncheon however, the piggy banks were particularly "well fed" thanks to five sponsors who stepped up to match the contributions. With the generosity of Canada's 18th Prime Minister, Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, the late Honourable Michael Wilson, IBM, Scotiabank and CIBC, CFPDP's 2018 piggy banks fundraising totaled more than \$30,000.

The annual Hall of Fame luncheon

provides permanent recognition of outstanding Canadians who have made extraordinary contributions to enriching the quality of life for people with physical disabilities. Founded by the CFPDP, this Hall of Fame was officially opened February 11, 1994 at Metro Hall (55 John Street) in downtown Toronto. It is open to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Nominations to the Hall of Fame come from sources across Canada – community groups, private citizens,

associations and organizations of and for people with physical disabilities. Nominees are chosen each year by the Hall of Fame's Selection Board in the category of Builder, Achiever or Athlete. The inductees are individuals who truly have made a difference – those who have opened doors for people with disabilities in the areas of sports, education, employment or housing. Nominations for this year's inductees are open until May 10, 2019 and can be found on www.cfpdp.com.





### Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons thanks you for your support

### HJF HAL JACKMAN FOUNDATION











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### Philip Corke Elected as Chair of CHKC

In October 2018, the Board voted to have Philip Corke become Chairman of Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC). He began his service on the CHKC Board in 2012 and



continues to work in partnership with his fellow directors to advance CHKC's strategic vision for enhanced deafblind services and expanded housing.

Philip is a graduate of Northwestern's Kellogg Schulich MBA program and received his Honours Bachelor of Commerce from McMaster University. After graduating from McMaster, he was recruited into Maple Leaf Food's management trainee program where he rotated through various divisions and roles helping to establish new businesses and departments. Philip later moved through various management roles within the poultry division, driving efficiencies while expanding capabilities. Then, after graduating with his MBA, Philip moved into his family's telecommunications business to help expand their various product lines and interests.

When he is not working in telecommunications or serving his community, Philip loves spending time with his wife and three young kids. He enjoys being outdoors and going fishing, playing tennis or golf, and skiing. Philip also takes great pleasure in projects and the challenge of building. As an example, he recently completed a communications teleport buildout at his company's commercial property.



### Canadian Helen Keller Centre AWARD LUNCHEON 2018

Held at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel on April 27, 2018 honouring Royal Ontario Museum



Al Kowalenko, Vice Chair, CHKC, Cindy Accardi, Program Analyst, Program Management Unit, Ministry of Community & Social Services, Dorothy Price, Executive Director, CFPDP, Joan Mactavish, First CHKC Award Recipient, Hon. Vim Kochhar, Chair, CFPDP, Jennifer Robbins, Executive Director, CHKC



Dr. Mohammed Lachemi, *President, Ryerson University,* Hon. Vim Kochhar, *Chair, CFPDP*, Cecil and Alan Tonks



Robert Hampson and Cheryl Hampson



Jennifer Robbins, Executive Director, CHKC, Hon. Vim Kochhar, Chair, CFPDP, Josh Basseshes, CEO, ROM, Philip Corke, Chair, CHKC



Bonnie Mactavish and Joan Mactavish, First CHKC Award Recipient



Nazar Strejko and his intervenor



CHKC raffle prizes



2018 CHKC Luncheon



Deb Lewis, Dorothy Price, Rob Snoek, EMCEE

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



The Hall of Fame recognizes distinguished Canadians who have made a significant contribution in assisting, or enhancingthe lives of persons with physical disabilities.

Both physically disabled and non-disabled persons may be inducted into the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame. Individuals are inducted in one of three categories: **Builder**, **Achiever**, **Athlete**.

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Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons

PLEASE SUBMIT A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S BACKGROUND TO:

The Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons

6 Garamond Court, Suite 265, Toronto, Ontario, M3C1Z5
Phone: 416-760-7351 Fax: 416-760-9405 • whynot@cfpdp.com • www.cfpdp.com

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER.

NOMINATIONS TO BE RETURNED NO LATER THAN MAY10, 2019



# CHKC MOVES FORWARD WITH DREAMS OF EXPANSION

"WE CAN DO ANYTHING we want to if we stick to it long enough" are wise words from Helen Keller that embody the enduring dedication of her namesake organization, Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC).

Over the past several years, CHKC has channeled this spirit to lead the way in many areas. Among them, increasing the agency's profile while creating a strategic plan to build a new training centre. To achieve this ambitious goal, CHKC is continuing to raise awareness so it can attract the donors and sponsors needed to help make their dream a reality.

"It's a very exciting time for our organization and our community of deafblind consumers," says Philip Corke, Chair of CHKC. "Our board and staff have been working extremely hard to lay out our strategic vision. It has led us to develop our expansion plans, which are greatly needed for all of our stakeholders. These plans will further secure our consumer services and housing needs into the future."

"The wonderful thing about sharing our vision for an expanded training centre is that we can show supporters the difference their dollars will make because we are already succeeding on a smaller scale," says Jennifer Robbins, Executive Director of CHKC. "We have been a trusted provider of barrier-free housing, training programs and intervenor services to Ontario's deafblind community for more than 25 years."

There are many reasons why CHKC's Board is moving forward with its expansion plans. Among them, the existing training centre is not physically adequate from an accessibility standpoint. While a retrofit project several years ago ensured that basic re-



quirements were met, it remains difficult for many deafblind consumers to navigate on their own. Hours of service for consumers have also recently been increased by the government, so CHKC is providing more assistance than ever before. At the same time, Ontario's deafblind population is growing, so CHKC anticipates ongoing demand for training and intervenor services. The new facility would also act as a gathering place and community centre for the deafblind community, where friends and peers can meet to socialize, network and learn from each other.

"We are quite literally bursting at the seams," adds Robbins. "CHKC has more staff and a bigger mandate to fulfill than we've ever had. We also need more space for our staff, which now exceeds 60 employees, as well as more parking."

CHKC's Board includes the necessary financial, legal and real estate development experts to oversee a project of this size and see it through to a successful completion. The organization's leadership team is also passionately supportive and excited to work towards making this project a reality. To do so, the Board has determined that it must raise between \$10 and \$12 million.

"The meaning of this project is immense for the deafblind community," says Al Kowalenko, Vice Chair of CHKC and Chair of CHKC's Strategic Planning Committee. "It would crystalize in a very significant way the services and assistance that could be provided to the deafblind community in a focused center similar to CNIB. The deafblind community would have a place that they could call their home, their own. In addition to serving as a national training centre, it would provide excellent space for administration of our programs, larger classrooms, social spaces and areas to hold fundraising events. It would also help focus more attention on CHKC, which could then attract more corporate sponsors,

community support and volunteers. Ultimately, it would be a win-win and I can't emphasize strongly enough how this would transform the awareness, understanding and services for Canada's deafblind community."

Among the options being considered, CHKC is proposing to construct a new building on two adjacent sites in Willowdale, the area of Toronto where the RCA apartment building and CHKC training centre are located. The organization is also looking at the possibility of securing a parcel of land from the City of Toronto, which is being made available to communitybased organizations for construction purposes. Other options include securing and retrofitting a surplus school in the Greater Toronto Area or entering into a rental agreement for a commercial property.

"Even with the greatest of plans, there is no guarantee that we can move forward without help from the community or key groups," says Corke. "Our largest hurdle to date is the cost of land in Toronto and it has been very difficult to compete with developers for a property that would suit the needs of our consumers. That's why we are so excited about the potential to be part of Toronto's Housing Now initiative, which will offer incentives to nonprofit housing providers that build affordable units. This type of opportunity would provide the type of financially responsible, long-term outlook that is so important to our deafblind consumers. That being said, if there are other potential partners reading this article that could help us execute on our vision, we're very interested in a discussion of what could be done."

"This has been my dream for many, many years," adds Kowalenko. "I've been a volunteer in the deafblind community since 1973 and I've seen transformative change over the years. This dream however would be a quantum leap for CHKC, and our Board and leadership teams are committed to making this dream a reality."

# NEW CONSUMER RELATIONS ROLE

AT CHKC Community and the cultivation of meaningful relationships are at

the heart of CHKC's core values. These types of connections reduce isolation and help people who are deafblind to foster a sense of

belonging and inclusion.

TO INCREASE CHKC's reach and ability to support Ontarians living with dual hearing and vision loss, the agency recently created a new consumer relations role. Working from CHKC's offices and in the community, the successful candidate will foster strategies to promote programs and services to deafblind consumers and other stakeholders across the province. Everyone was encouraged to apply for the position and CHKC was excited to receive significant interest from applicants in

the deafblind community.

"Everybody who submitted an application has been incredibly passionate. This energy and the possibility that the role will be filled by a consumer who is deafblind are extremely exciting," says Mélanie Gauthier, Consumer Programs Manager for CHKC. "We believe that adding a consumer to the CHKC team would increase our credibility and make us more relatable. It may also make it easier for new consumers to approach our agency because they will have the option to speak with a peer who is already receiving services from us."

The successful candidate will have a variety of important responsibilities as he or she settles in to make a difference



Consumer and intervenors attending Deaf-blind Adventures at Blue Mountain

at CHKC. These include reaching out to potential clients to help increase CHKC's consumer base, promoting the services of the agency on a user level, and representing CHKC at various events, fairs and expos.

"We are extremely excited about the creation of this new role," adds Gauthier. "Strong ties and existing connections to the deafblind community, which have been established over the years, will help CHKC's new Consumer Relations Coordinator thrive. Having increased representation from the community is also important. Knowing that our team will include somebody that the deafblind community can relate to and see as a mentor is yet another important step forward for our organization."



Real Estate Developers & Financiers

# Kothari Group is honoured to be a sponsor of the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual CHKC Award Luncheon







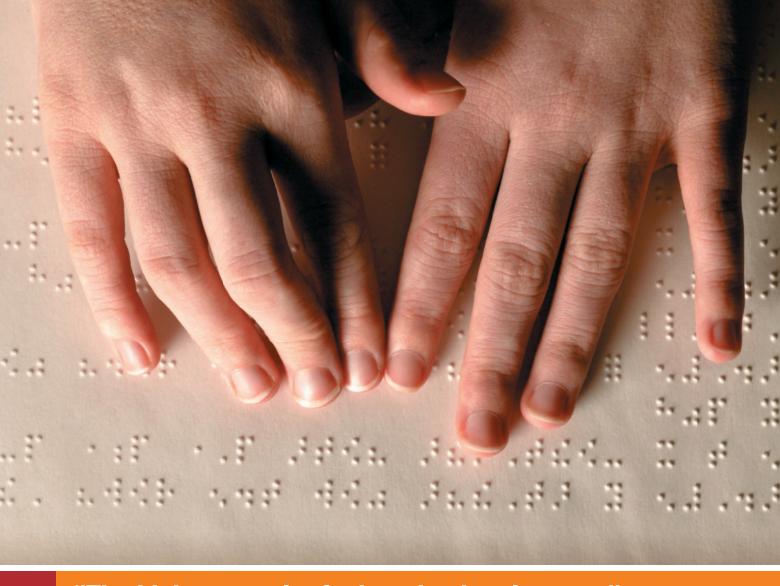








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### "The highest result of education is tolerance." - Helen Keller

ICICI Bank Canada is proud to support the Canadian Helen Keller Centre for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

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