



For people with intellectual disabilities

# The Spark

Spark the unlimited potential of all people

**February 2018  
Issue #08**

The Spark features inspirational stories of accomplishments people have achieved and the Personal Outcome Measures related to these achievements. Personal Outcome Measures are the foundation of everything Simcoe Community Services does to support people.



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## **Simcoe Community Services Hockey Night in Orillia with the NHL Alumni All Stars**



Shawn Ladouceur is all smiles to meet the world's most famous hockey dad, Walter Gretzky.

Some of hockey's greatest heroes came together on December 21st to square off against the Orillia Law Enforcement All-Stars, and Simcoe Community Services had a front row seat for all of the fun. The 2017 Scotiabank NHL Alumni Benefit Tour, in support of Special Olympics entertained a sold out crowd at Rotary Place in Orillia, but those in attendance from Simcoe Community Services got to go behind the scenes to meet some of their favourite NHL players. Special thanks from Simcoe Community Services to Coyer Yateman of the Ontario Provincial Police for making these hockey dreams come true.

To see more images from the game, please visit page 4 of The Spark.

**Outcome - People participate  
in the life of the community**

# CEO'S MESSAGE

## An Open Letter from Simcoe Community Services CEO Claudine Cousins

Could anyone enjoy their job any more than I do? I don't think so. To me it is not a job, it's my ongoing pursuit to impact the lives of others for the better. I get goose bumps just thinking about the many lives that can and will be impacted from the opportunity to be part of a dedicated, skilled and committed team such as yours. One of the priorities for me is to get to know the culture or what I call "how things are done around here" in my first few months of onboarding.

My onboarding as you can imagine, given the breadth of programs and services here at Simcoe Community Services, will be more of a cross-country trek versus a mad dash. I have started that trek with a focus on meeting my team at all levels of the organization. I have begun to see the various programs in Accommodations such as the Maple Street Supported Independent Living (SIL) homes; Preschool Services on Ferris Lane and Bradford where I was privileged to have time with a parent of the EarlyON program and Community Support Services at 4 King in Orillia and 40 Fraser Court. The preparation for the Valentine's dance at Community Support Services at 40 Fraser was a bee hive of, dare I say, red and white. The pride taken by the team members I met along my short trek to date has been nothing short of inspiring. I met individuals in their homes and heard directly from them that it is you; yes I am talking to you, the staff that makes the difference.

I have also met the team that are working very hard to provide excellence in customer service to you, the team directly providing supports to individuals. You have met them too: Finance and Operations; Human Resources and Stakeholder Relations. I have experienced firsthand the work that our Property team does to keep the homes individuals live in at a standard that they should expect. I have experienced first-hand the work of Human Resources and Finance in pulling apart and reviewing of a payment process to make it more efficient, or as I call it, "Lean". And I have experienced first-hand the collaboration of Stakeholder Relations with IT to ensure we have the tools and capability to bring technology into our communication in order for us to not be irrelevant.



So I continue to listen, hear and experience. I have already communicated to the staff I have met the importance of hearing from you and other stakeholders. Part of impacting people's lives also includes developing and nurturing meaningful relationships with community partners. We know that in this climate of partnerships, we can achieve more together than apart, and I am committed to seeing that we elevate our connections with our community partners as we move forward together into the future.

I value everyone's voice, and I want to first listen before anything else.

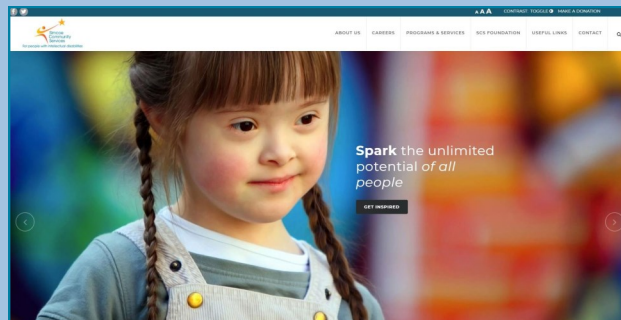
I look forward to many conversations.

# THE SPARK

## Simcoe Community Services launches its new website

Simcoe Community Services is excited to announce the launch of our redesigned agency website at [www.simcoecommunityservices.ca](http://www.simcoecommunityservices.ca).

The website has a fresh, new dynamic look offering users improved functionality and navigation, the latest job opportunities at Simcoe Community Services, as well as the most essential and up to date news on our many programs and supports. According to Simcoe Community Services I.T. Supervisor Brad Hooper, "Our new website has positioned us with the technology that will continue to grow with Simcoe Community Services for years to come. We can even offer event registration for our Fashion Show and Golf Tournament using mobile technology."



The new website also allows quick access to the agency's social media channels. Don't forget to like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) so you can be even more up to speed on all the happenings at Simcoe Community Services.

**Outcome - People are informed**

## Shelby's best friend



Simcoe Community Services and C.O.P.E. Service Dogs was excited to see Barrie's Shelby Cookson and her service dog Big Mac featured on the television show Collar of Duty on Animal Planet. Collar of Duty is a documentary series that showcases the incredible stories of service and therapy animals that are transforming people's lives. "Since I got Big Mac, I've been independent and confident. He is my best friend" says Shelby.



One of the highlights of the show was seeing Big Mac's 8th birthday party with many of his C.O.P.E. doggy friends along for the celebration. You can see Shelby and Big Mac's Collar of Duty episode [here](#).



(Top left) Shelby and Mom Connie enjoy the Collar of Duty viewing party with family and friends at Hooligans. (Left) Big Mac and Shelby show why they're the best of friends.

**Outcome - People realize personal goals**



# THE SPARK

## More images from Simcoe Community Services' Hockey Night in Orillia with the NHL Alumni All-Stars



Clockwise top left: Brad Sears sports his collection of NHL autographs with pride, Dave Western shares some on ice strategy for the next period with former Habs great Mark Napier, Shawn Smith rounds out his program of autographs with former Leaf Rick Vaive, and former Washington Capital Bryan Muir gets some pointers from Jamie Whyte, Jeff Bassel and Shawn Ladouceur.



Outcome - People participate in the life of the community



# THE SPARK

## Go Leafs Go!

The Toronto Maple Leafs, a private suite at the Air Canada Centre, with food and beverages included? It doesn't get any better than that! For Leaf fans David Farquhar and David Cotton, it was an exciting evening to cheer on their beloved Leafs.

Thanks to Simcoe Community Service friends **HUB International Inc.** and **Northbridge** for providing the tickets and a night to remember. A thrilling, come from behind 3-2 shootout win by Toronto over Vancouver didn't hurt either!



David Cotton (above right) and his brother Lloyd meet Leafs mascot FourKay, while David Farquhar (below left) and Simcoe Community Services SSW David Williams show their Leaf pride!



**Outcome - People participate in the life of the community**

# THE SPARK

## The Best Seats in the House by Amy Daynard



Alan Johnston loves hockey and cheering on the Barrie Colts. On January 4th, Alan had the best seats in the house with a clear view of the game and all its excitement as the hometown Colts took on the visiting London Knights. Alan loved the bright lights that dashed across the rink and the energy that filled the Barrie Molson Centre as he anticipated the puck drop to start the game. Even though winter winds prevailed outside, the atmosphere was warm and friendly inside the Barrie Molson Centre. Once the game began, the excitement ramped up with every goal

scored by the Colts, complete with flashing lights, horns and horse sound effects. During intermission we had a very special mascot gallop on by and say hello! The Colts mascot "Charlie Horse" stopped for a visit with Alan to grab a picture. It was one of the evening's highlights. The Barrie Colts may not have won that game but it sure was a win for Alan.

**Outcome - People participate in the life of the community**

## Shane lends a helping hand by Bernadette Kaczmarczyk

Shane Craftchick loves to stay busy and be helpful, so this past Christmas season Shane decided to lend a helping hand to those less fortunate in his community. As a volunteer for the Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Campaign, Shane enthusiastically manned his kettle location once a week and greeted donors with a big, friendly smile, thanking everyone and wishing them a heartfelt "Merry Christmas". Thank you Shane for helping others have a brighter and merrier Christmas.



**Outcome - People perform different social roles**



# THE SPARK

## How do you spell fun? It must be B-I-N-G-O!

Thanks to the Oro District Lioness Club, the third Thursday evening of every month at O'Brien House is Bingo Night. It's a social evening that was the brainchild of Dianne About Fadel's mother as a member of the Oro District Lioness Club. Now Dianne is President of the Club. She proudly points out they've only missed one night of Bingo in six years. The Lioness members even provide the prizes and the evening treats.

From the first number called, players point out some friendly cheating might even be allowed. It's all part of the night's fun.

"I was brought up to give back to the community and I just love it here" says Dianne. "This gives us joy. We're thankful to be able to provide this bit of happiness for everyone at O'Brien House".

Thanks to the Oro Lioness Club, happiness is yelling B-I-N-G-O at O'Brien House.



(Clockwise top right) Yvonne Azevedo with Dianne About Fadel are close to having a winning card, Shelley Best helps Lioness Wendy Gilchrist call out the numbers, and Paul MacDonald channels Santa for a little Bingo luck.

**Outcome -  
People interact  
with other  
members of the  
community**

# THE SPARK

## It's All About Giving Back by Emily Healey



"I am Emily Healey. I decided to donate to the hospital these baby hats I crocheted. I did this because I want to help. I like to help people who are in need. I hope people in the community will help out one day too. It's easy all you have to do is do something for someone else. It's a good thing to do. I feel happy that I donated these hats. It makes me feel good inside. I also got to meet some nice people at the hospital and see the birthing unit where these baby hats are going. This made my day. It makes me feel good and accomplished".



### Outcome - People perform different social roles



Emily's latest donation recently came in the form of a dozen winter scarves for the Barrie Police Mitten Trees. The annual campaign has been a 19 year labour of love for Barrie Constable Janet Schefter (pictured left). Many families, including seniors, are faced with low income, high rent and everyday living expenses, meaning necessities such as mitts and scarves fall by the wayside. "This is a donation of Emily's generosity and love for the community and it comes from her heart. We're so grateful for this gift," said Constable Schefter.



# EMPLOYMENT

## Why This Coffee Break Tastes So Good

At first glance, the Bayfield Street North Tim Hortons in Barrie doesn't appear any different than other Timmys. The constant buzz of activity at the drive-thru appears the same. The familiar chocolate brown and maroon corporate colours are the same as other Tims locations. Front and centre is the usual gleaming display case that beckons with the day's fresh selection of boston cream and apple fritter donuts. What sets this Tims apart is the inviting sense of community that greets you once you enter the restaurant. Smack dab in the middle of that hospitality and customer service is Johnathon Fallows.



Proving that customer service is his number priority, Johnathon helps customer Donna with some coffee break cleanup.

About to place her order, a customer by the name of Donna approaches. "Johnathon is always nice and polite. We love him here." On a coffee break in the corner are the East Bayfield Community Centre Aqua Babes. Connie speaks on behalf of the Babes saying, "Johnathon is always very attentive and always smiling. He's our ray of sunshine". It's safe to say that Johnathon knows all the regulars, and they know him too.

For Johnathon, this dedication to customer service is just part of the job. On top of busing tables, washing dishes and taking out the garbage, checking on the customers is his specialty, adding proudly, "I like to think of it as my responsibility".

Through the assistance of the Simcoe Community Services Employment Supports Services Program, and the collaboration with Tim Hortons restaurant owner Len Goodhand, Johnathon has found a home here. According to Goodhand, "Johnathon's role is vital because many times he's the first point of contact with our guests. It's also rewarding to our team to know individuals like Johnathon, who may have some challenges, can also contribute to our restaurant's overall success."



# EMPLOYMENT

## Why This Coffee Break Tastes So Good (continued)

Simcoe Community Services Employment Support Services Coordinator Sandy Calvert knows this is a win-win situation. “It’s about making employment work with people’s skill sets” says Sandy. Through preliminary job carving meetings, she and Goodhand found what was valuable for both Johnathon and Tim Hortons. Goodhand adds, “Having Johnathon as part of our team shows our guests we not only care about our restaurant, but we also care about giving an opportunity to team members of all skill ranges.”

“This job means a lot to me,” adds Johnathon.

For any customer who has satisfied their coffee fix at the Tim Hortons on Bayfield Street North, Johnathon Fallows means a lot to them too.



Johnathon makes sure every one of the East Bayfield Community Centre Aqua Babes are taken care of during a recent coffee break. “He’s our ray of sunshine,” say the Babes.

**Outcome - People choose  
where they work**



# THE SPARK

## Christmas Cheer at Andy's Place

For Cindy Yau and her family, hosting Christmas dinner for Simcoe Community Services is her way of giving back. For the fourth consecutive Christmas, Cindy opened the doors to her restaurant, Andy's Place on Hart Drive in Barrie, to people living in Simcoe Community Services' Group Home and Supported Independent Living locations. Everyone in attendance enjoyed a fabulous Andy's Place Christmas dinner with all the fixings, festive karaoke entertainment and a take home gift. Simcoe Community Services graciously thanks Cindy and her family for their outstanding generosity and for showing us once again, the true meaning of Christmas.



(Above) Pancho Aiyede anxiously awaits a delicious Christmas dinner with (clockwise) Natasha Brown, Danielle Franklin, David Jackson, Darlene McPhee, Jean Hart and Cindy Hayes. (Right) On behalf of Simcoe Community Services, Lynn Duncan thanks Cindy Yau and Andy's Place for making this Christmas one to remember.



**Outcome - People participate in the life of the community**

# THE SPARK

## The Tale of Tae Kwon Do by Steven Gibson



When I was 11 years old my mom thought I needed to learn how to defend myself. So she spoke to Jim Morrison who runs a martial arts school called Champs Taekwondo Academy. It was in 2005 my mom signed me up so I could advocate more for myself.

At first, I struggled to understand the belt system. A ceremony takes place and belts are handed out. I felt like I was being left out, and I was mad and jealous because everyone else was getting new belts before I did. I knew I wanted a belt too, so I trained hard. Training is like codes that unlock a level to a video game. By practicing, I can show my skills to the teachers, and if they think my skills are great, I can get my new belt. You have to achieve 3 different colored belts to reach the black belt.

Master Jim Morrison has been teaching taekwondo for over 23 years. He's a really nice guy and teacher. He showed me and the other students how to do a kick and how to do the patterns correctly. The reason why I go back to taekwondo every week is because I like to advance my skills and I feel very proud of myself.

You need to train really hard to get a new belt, but it's easy to get your first belt: the white belt. It's the first belt you get when you get your uniform. Your next belt level will take over a month or two, and when it's time to get your black belt it can take over a year.

I am very proud of how much work I put in to get my first black belt. I can face anyone now. My parents are proud of me too as I continue my passion for martial arts. The belt that I am working on now is the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree black belt. Master Morrison says, "To get your 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, you need to train two more years". It's hard work, but it's also exciting when I learn something new.

I want to reach my full potential in martial arts and see how far I can go in defending myself. I know it will make me a better, stronger person.

**Outcome - People realize personal goals**



Master Jim Morrison of Champs Taekwondo Academy and Steven know that a black belt is not something you wear, it's something you become.



# THE SPARK

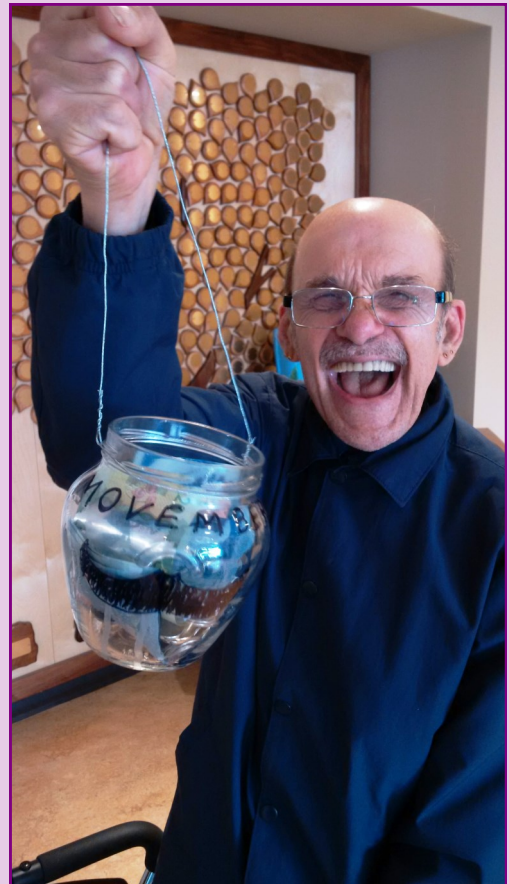
## Gary's 'Stache Bash

November is one of Gary Black's favourite months. For many of Gary's friends, it was also a sweet and tasty month! To help raise awareness for men's health issues, Gary hosted a cupcake and coffee party with all the proceeds going towards his Movember goal of \$300. We're happy to tell you Gary has raised over \$341.00 and counting! Thank you for inspiring us Gary. This 'Stache Bash tasted great.



(Top right) Gary's Movember cupcake celebration with friends (left to right) Perry Tambosso, Joe Hughes, Ben Warnar, Les Salin, Amy Laurin, Tony Severin, Christina Gaines, Chris Ironside and Joe Deitch

**Outcome - People perform different social roles**



# VOLUNTEERS

**For close to 15 years, Mavis Gallifent (right) has been volunteering with Simcoe Community Services thanks to a special bond with good friend, Danielle Collyer. Over coffee, Mavis and Danielle recently spoke to The Spark about their friendship.**



***How did this friendship come about?***

We met through the Monday Night Jesus Walk at Collier Street United Church a number of years ago. Even though we talk on the phone every day, we meet up every two weeks. Sometimes we'll go out to supper. Scotty's Restaurant is a favourite place. So is Swiss Chalet. Sometimes we'll go out window shopping to browse for birthday presents, or to simply go to Tim Hortons for coffee. Danielle is very diligent about marking our next get together down in her day calendar that she carries in her handbag.

***What do you like the most about getting together with Danielle?***

It's so nice being with someone so straightforward. I like talking to Danielle because she's totally honest and says what's on her mind. It's a very easy friendship and we have great trust in each other.

***Danielle, what do you like the most about getting together with Mavis? (Great laughter erupts between the two).***

I love that Mavis has a car!

***I see you both laugh a lot when you get together.***

We've known each other a long time and enjoy each other's company. We'll buy each other Christmas and birthday presents, however what we value most is spending time with each other.

**THANK YOU MAVIS and DANIELLE for showing us that both good friends and volunteers are priceless.**

**Outcome - People have friends**

Volunteers are the heart of Simcoe Community Services and play a vital role in our mission to ensure we support people of all ages and abilities to realize their full potential and to enhance their quality of life. With many different skills and experiences, volunteers can give of their time to Simcoe Community Services in a variety of ways. Learn more about volunteering with Simcoe Community Services [here](http://www.simcoecommunityservices.ca).



# YOUTH

## Get O.U.T.'s Dinner Club by Sonia Lauzon

The Simcoe Community Services Youth Program features a variety of recreational and social inclusion events available to all youth currently in high school. In Barrie, W.E.B. (Wednesday Evening Bash) offers many activities including movie nights, bowling, swimming at the Holly Recreation Centre and dance parties! In Orillia, Get O.U.T. (Orillia Ultimate Thursday's) hosts events at the local youth centre, visits to the Orillia Public Library and movie and craft nights. In addition to the endless recreation and social programs, Get O.U.T. has added a Dinner Club to its list of program activities.

The goal of Get O.U.T.'s Dinner Club is for Orillia youth to prepare and share a meal together. Not only does the Dinner Club provide the opportunity to develop some new culinary skills, it also provides a sense of accomplishment and pride upon dishing up and digging in.

On the menu at the first Dinner Club event, it was spaghetti and meatballs, complete with a brownie dessert. For many of the youth, this was their first time getting their hands dirty in the kitchen. Some were reluctant to mix the ground beef with their bare hands, while others embraced the cooking experience. The spaghetti and meatballs turned out fantastic; however our dessert may not have been Mariposa Market material. When dinner was served, we all got carried away enjoying this delicious meal and forgot to keep an eye on the oven! Unfortunately our brownies were a little darker than we hoped, but none the less still delicious and an excellent learning opportunity. The most impressive part of the first dinner club was everyone's willingness to help with the clean up. Everyone pitched in washing dishes, sweeping, and wiping down the counters.

The Dinner Club program will be hosted three more times before the end of June. The lineup of dinners include shepard's pie with rice krispies, chicken caesar salad wraps with oatmeal cookies, and turkey taco cheeseburger dinner and a yogurt parfait dessert. We would like to thank St. Paul's Church in Orillia for the use of their kitchen space in order to provide this opportunity for youth in our community.

Bon Appetite!

(Above) Branson Mahler and Alex Larmant exhibit perfect form on meatball making duty. (Right) Cameron Houston knows this Get O.U.T. Dinner Club has a sweet tooth.

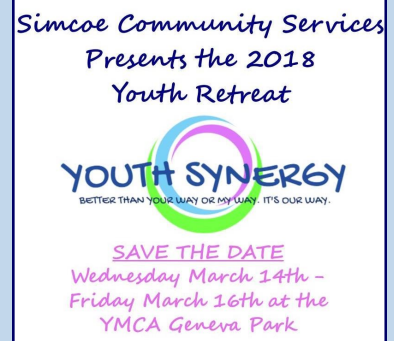


**Outcome - People participate in the life of the life of the community**

# THE SPARK

## March Break Fun with Simcoe Community Services

What features creative and active workshops, motivational guest speakers, and an Olympic Sports Carnival? It's the 2018 Simcoe Community Services Youth Retreat! This year's Retreat promises to be another fun, three day, two night for high school aged youth over March Break at Geneva Park, Orillia. This year's theme is **Youth Synergy- Better than your way or my way. It's our way.** Youth will learn to work together in collaboration as part of a community while making new friends and social connections.



You can find registration details [here](#), but hurry space is going fast.



Youth Synergy guest speaker **Scott Hammell** (left) is a four time Guinness Record holder. Whether it's magic, escape artistry, stunts or speaking, his goal is to entertain and inspire. **The Unstoppable Tracy Schmitt** (right) has earned the title of #1 motivational speaker. She's climbed Himalayan mountains, captained a 110-foot tall ship, and won paraskiing bronze. Oh, and she was also born a 4-way amputee. Come meet Tracy at Youth Synergy at Geneva Park.



**Outcome - People participate in the life of the community**

## Career Opportunities

Established in 1953, **Simcoe Community Services** now employs over 550 full-time and part-time staff in a wide range of programs and services, making it one of the largest employers in Simcoe County. Services are offered in Barrie, Orillia, Bradford, and surrounding Townships.

Simcoe Community Services is a respectful, caring and inclusive workspace. By embracing diversity, we gain strength through people and different perspectives.

**Join Our Team.** If you wish to be a part of this great organization, that believes in team work and individual growth, [click here](#). Applications can be delivered via mail, email or in person.





# SCS MILESTONES

## Saying goodbye to Vi Bradshaw

After 31 years, Simcoe Community Services said goodbye to Community Support Services Supervisor Vi Bradshaw. On her last few days on the job, The Spark had the chance to reflect with Vi.



Vi's family left to right: granddaughter Chelsea, daughter Leanne, grandson Griffin and husband Doc.



***You've been so busy every day at Simcoe Community Services. What's going to keep you busy in retirement?***

I'm excited to do more travelling with my husband, Doc. We want to travel west through the United States on Route 66. We're also looking into an Alaskan cruise. I'd also like to go to England to visit my granddaughter. Closer to home, I'm finally going to get to work on my fish pond and garden which needs some TLC. It's been neglected over the years.

***Is there one highlight that stands out in your time here?***

When we became accredited as an agency in 2007. Prior to that, we were caregivers and made most of the decisions for people. People didn't have many rights. When we became accredited, it changed everything and gave people rights and freedoms. It was a big shift in the way we supported people. People now have a voice. I'm proud of that.

***What will you miss the most about Simcoe Community Services?***

It's the people we support who I'll miss the most. I've watched many people come to Simcoe Community Services as young people and have watched them grow. That's been very rewarding.

**Thank you for everything Vi! Simcoe Community Services will miss you.**

**Outcome - People realize personal goals**

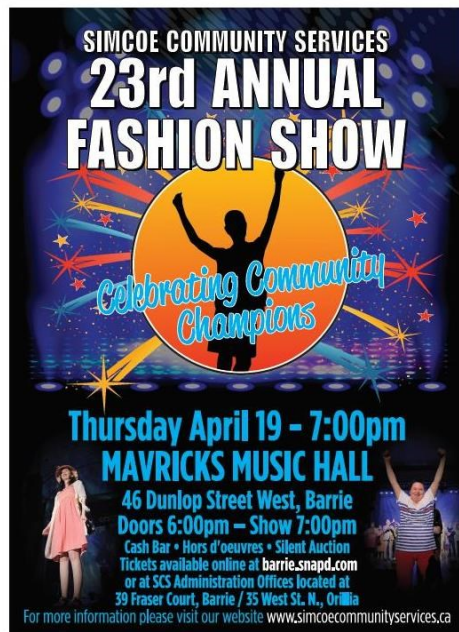
# FOUNDATION UPDATE



## Tickets available now

Get your tickets now for the 23rd Annual Celebrating Community Champions Fashion Show and Silent Auction taking place at Mavrick's Music Hall on April 19th. Tickets are available [on-line here](#), or at 39 Fraser Court in Barrie.

Proceeds go towards enhancing the lives and making dreams come true for people supported by Simcoe Community Services.



Simcoe Community Services Thanks Our Great Sponsors



## Dump That Junk!

Got an upcoming move or renovation project in March? Want to purge some existing junk in your life? Call Jeff's Junk.

Jeff's Junk is paying it forward in March to the Simcoe Community Services Foundation. Book your BIN in March and \$10.00 will go towards improving the quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities.

Thank you to Jeff and Barb White for their ongoing commitment to give local and support the Simcoe Community Services Foundation.



**DUMP THAT JUNK!**

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**Jeff's Junk Pays It Forward!**





# FOUNDATION UPDATE



## Your Simcoe Community Services Foundation at work



Simcoe Community Services Stakeholder Relations Manager Jamie Hall (centre) accepts this generous donation from Kempenfelt Rotarians Michael Smiley and Monique Vaillancourt. These funds will be used to purchase specialized accessibility equipment, contributing to a better quality of life for someone with an intellectual disability. Thank you to the Kempenfelt Rotary Club for helping spark the unlimited potential of all people.



It was on Giving Tuesday that Simcoe Community Services Preschool Manager Michele Kapteyn and Grandparent System Support Navigator Trish Longo accepted this generous gift from Kiwanis members Jennifer Armstrong-Lehman (far left) and Doug McDermid. These funds will be used to provide much needed respite for grandparents who are parenting again in Simcoe County. Thank you Kiwanis Club of Barrie!



Simcoe Community Services Foundation raises funds to significantly improve the day to day quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities. For more information and to discuss additional ways to contribute, please contact Jamie Hall at (705) 726-9082 ext. 5280, or at [communications@simcoecommunityservices.ca](mailto:communications@simcoecommunityservices.ca).



# THE SPARK



## Mission Statement

We support people of all ages and abilities to realize their full potential and to enhance their quality of life.

*As a community, not-for-profit, multi-service organization we provide:*

- Services for children and adults with intellectual disabilities and their families;
- Programs that promote the healthy development of children of all abilities;
- Services that respond to community needs.

## Simcoe Community Services Board of Directors

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*Raising funds to improve the quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities*

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When you make a financial contribution to the Simcoe Community Services Foundation you will make a difference in the lives of those you care about today and in the years to come. Consider making your donation today. For more information and/or to make a donation, please contact the Simcoe Community Services Foundation at (705) 726-9082.

**The Spark** promotes acceptance of people with different abilities in our community. We celebrate successes and embrace new ideas, approaches and opportunities.

**Editorial team:** SCS Stakeholder Relations Manager Jamie Hall, Robyn Pugsley and Vanessa Ellerton.

Have a comment, question or story idea?  
Contact: Jamie at (705) 726-9082 ext. 5280, or at  
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