



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2018-19







## Contents

President and Chair's Report.....	4
Executive Director's Report.....	6
Financial Report.....	11
Founders' Award Recipient .....	16
Board Members.....	18
Staff .....	22
What a year! .....	30



Meghan Hines

## President and Chair

Meghan Hines

**F**OR THE PAST six years I have had the honour and privilege to work with the amazing CILT board and staff who have a keen commitment to our issues and programs, while diligently applying Independent Living (IL) principles to all decisions and program operations. While much has changed over the years, what has remained consistent is the positive impact CILT's programs have had on so many in our community. CILT has achieved all it has to date because of our incredible staff and board who work together collaboratively to ensure we continue to grow, mature and respond to a rapidly changing economic and political climate. This year's Toronto For All campaign, for which CILT was a key advisor, is just one example of how our unique IL perspectives have been sought out by news, media, government and international partners.



As CILT enters its 35th 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 clients."

## Recognition

As announced in last year's annual report, Sandra Carpenter, CILT's passionate leader and Executive Director of 13 years, retired after a very successful career. With big shoes to fill, and after an extensive search process, CILT appointed its new Executive Director, Wendy Porch. Wendy has done an exceptional job this past year coming up to speed in a short time and is already having a positive impact on our organization. The board is extremely impressed by Wendy's thoughtful insights, perspectives, and vision for CILT's future.

## In memoriam

This year we lost a great leader in our community and friend, Ing Wong-Ward. Ing



was a fierce advocate, having spent many years challenging ableism through ground-breaking work at the CBC before coming to CILT as Associate Director in 2016. Disabled people everywhere have lost a champion and a treasured voice in our community, and many have lost a close personal friend as well. Our deepest condolences to Ing's family.

The CILT Board unanimously selected Ing as recipient for this year's Founders' Award. Ing embodied CILT's mission and vision; she undoubtedly exemplified and advanced IL philosophy in the spirit of its founders.

## **Board members**

For the 2018-2019 year, board members include me as chair, Jacques LeBlanc as vice chair, Warner Clarke as secretary, David Demchuk, Donald Barrie, Fady Shanouda, Julia Gonsalves, Maayan Ziv, Neil Mercer, Rod Ioi, Stefanie Marinich-Lee, and Vincenza Ronaldi.

Please join us in thanking everyone for their time, expertise and passion they have brought to CILT this past year. We regrettably say goodbye to board members Warner Clarke, who has completed all three of his two-year terms; Fady Shanouda, Stefanie Marinich-Lee and David Demchuk. We thank them all for their dedication and commitment to the governing body of this organization.

## **Thank you**

This is our opportunity to formally acknowledge and thank all our hard-working staff and volunteers for all their contributions over the last year. We couldn't do what we

do without them. Please join me in thanking them for all their hard work over the past year, or in some cases, years!

We also want to thank our funders, without whose generous support we would not be able to address any community and member needs. Our primary funders are Independent Living Canada, the City of Toronto, the United Way Greater Toronto, and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

## **In closing**

As CILT enters its 35th 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 clients. As you can see in our Financial Report (page 11 of this Annual Report), with the hard work of our staff and board, we were able to continue our work and come out with a balanced budget.

This is my final year of term with CILT. I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve as your president and chair these past five years. I have learnt so much from our CILT staff, board and you all, the voting members of CILT who make this all possible and inform what we do. While CILT has accomplished so much I feel this is only the tip of the iceberg. I can't wait to see what's in store for the future!

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



Wendy Porch

# Executive Director

Wendy Porch

I'M VERY PLEASED to be writing this, my first Executive Director's Report for CILT. This past year has been a whirlwind! It has been a year of significant change and opportunity for CILT and I can tell you I feel very privileged to have joined this amazing team.

The most significant change at CILT this year is that the inimitable Sandra Carpenter, both founder and long-time Executive Director of CILT, retired from her role in January 2019. Sandra's leadership had steered CILT on a steady course for more than 18 years total. It was my great pleasure to work with Sandra from October 2018 until she officially retired in March 2019. I would like to thank Sandra for her support and encouragement since starting here at CILT. Sandra knows that I have her on speed dial and will continue to seek her wise counsel when needed. Everyone at CILT wishes Sandra well with her retirement and know she has more than earned it. Thank you, Sandra, for everything!

More change is upon us as this year we see several long-standing board members fulfilling their term limits and leaving CILT's Board of Directors. Meghan Hines, the current president of CILT, will be leaving as of our October 2019 AGM. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank Meghan for her leadership and guidance as I took on the job of trying to fill the enormous shoes left by Sandra as Executive Director. Meghan, your thoughtful and considerate advice will be very missed! Also leaving the board this year is Warner Clarke, our long-time board secretary. Warner has supported CILT, and in particular the Direct Funding Program, since



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



he was a policy analyst within the Ontario government many years ago working towards making direct funding a reality for consumers across Ontario. Thank you, Warner, for your steadfast support of independent living over these many years! Throughout the course of the year, David Demchuk, Fady Shanouda and Stefanie Marinich-Lee have had to step away from their role on CILT's Board. We wish all of them success in their future endeavours and thank them heartily for their significant contributions to CILT.

CILT saw a number of staffing changes this year as well. Rolita Sui resigned from her role as Program Manager of the Attendant Service Application Centre (ASAC) in January 2019. We thank Rolita for her many years of service at the Program Information Centre and later ASAC. In January 2019, Adina Ilina joined ASAC as Program Facilitator, and in March 2019, Kathleen Odell joined as the new ASAC Program Manager. Zdravka Gueorguieva is also a valued member of the team. I am very pleased to say ASAC is continuing its fine work in bringing together diverse service providers to streamline and coordinate the application process for consumers looking for attendant services and/or supportive housing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

CILT also saw our dedicated Direct Funding team grow this year. Patrick Tang and Elaine Chu joined the dynamic DF team in May of 2019. Danielle Vinciguerra added to the growing list of CILT babies this year with the birth of little Leo! The Direct Funding team is led by DF Manager Leisa DeBono and also includes Leanne Larmondin, Abdullah Duranai,

Katherine Janicki, Melissa Graham, Marisa Falzone, John Tam, Melissa Azore, Elisabeth Harrison, Peter Judge, Hadeel Dajani and Samantha Walsh.

CILT's Core team also saw some changes this year. David Meyers, formerly of Birchmount Bluffs Community Centre, joined CILT as Senior Manager of Independent Living Programs in April 2018. David brings many years of program management and advocacy experience to this role. A significant accomplishment of David's so far has been the development of the GTA Disability Coalition, a network of disability organizations from the Greater Toronto Area all working together to improve access and inclusion for people with disabilities. The GTA Disability Coalition fills a gap at the municipal level and will continue to amplify the voices of people with disabilities through contributions to civic consultations and events. The Core team also engaged a new peer and parenting coordinator. In March 2019, Rebecca Wood was hired to continue CILT's peer programming and to expand CILT's parenting programs. Rebecca also organized our 2019 Summer Social, this year held at the 519 Community Centre. A great time was had by all! The Core team also includes John Mossa, Andrea Rae and Robin Simmons.

CILT's work continues to be supported by the Administration team of manager Jamie Wong, Adriana Gutierrez and Nadine Azore. Thank you to the Administration team for keeping CILT on track again this year.

Thank you also to CILT's support attendants:

Margaret Githuku, Melissa Haigler, Joyce Leung, Louis George and others! Your important presence here enables many to be able to do what they do. All staff profiles and pictures are included in this report.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank all our dedicated volunteers for their hard work and commitment over the last year. Thank you for being an important part of CILT. We couldn't do what we do without you. Thanks Luigi Lisciandro, Taryn Allen, Alnoor Nanji, Suzette Yearwood, Miriam Chong, Susan DeLaurier, Mary Henderson and Taryn Nolan!

While, it was a year of significant staff changes, it was also a year of noteworthy program accomplishments. The DF team had much to celebrate this year as it was the 25th anniversary of the start of the Direct Funding program. For 25 years, DF has been providing consumers with flexibility and autonomy through the opportunity to become self-managers and to take on the organizing and administration of their own attendant services. A quarter of a century is a significant milestone and the impact of the program can be plainly seen in the stories that self-managers tell about the effect DF has had on their own lives. I highly recommend checking out the 25th anniversary newsletter produced by DF to hear their stories of being part of their communities.

This year, the Core team continued its excellent tradition of providing opportunities for consumers to engage in independent living skills development and civic engagement. In March 2018, CILT partnered with numerous community organizations to produce the Province-Wide Parties Debate on Accessibility and Disability Issues 2018 as part of the provincial elections. The debate exceeded the capacity of the room graciously donated by Ryerson University and an overflow room had to be opened. It was also simulcast on the web. CILT dramatically raised the profile of disability in the election through this event

and ensured that Ontarians heard from each of the parties on their plans for increasing the inclusion of people with disabilities.

CILT's Core team also developed several opportunities for consumers to contribute to civic consultations. CILT hosted both a City of Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Consultation (August 2018) and a City of Toronto Housing Strategy Consultation (June 2019) aimed at people with disabilities. These are extremely important consultation opportunities as people with disabilities face inordinate levels of poverty and ongoing difficulties in securing accessible and deeply affordable housing. These are issues that CILT will continue to address through ongoing contributions to collective efforts and through the work of the GTA Disability Coalition.

Recognizing that #RepresentationMatters, CILT has been working to raise the profile of people with disabilities in the media. CILT was the community partner in this year's Toronto For All campaign. CILT partnered with a dynamic advisory committee of consumers and people with lived experience of disability alongside the City of Toronto and Public Inc. to develop a thought-provoking awareness campaign. The campaign's centrepiece was a completely glassed-in bus shelter at King and Bathurst Streets. Inside the shelter a poster asked people if they were feeling left out and reminded them that this is how more than 400,000 people with disabilities feel every day. The campaign attracted a great deal of media coverage and social media interest through #LeftOutTO and was a conversation starter for Torontonians to consider inclusion in their day-to-day lives. The campaign went on to win an international advertising award.

CILT has also been working to raise awareness of people with disabilities in the media through the D-Net and D-Next projects. Working with a volunteer advisory committee, the D-Net project saw the digitization and upload to YouTube of the many episodes of



the Disability Network TV show produced throughout the 1990s by the CBC. While work continues augmenting this collection to make it more searchable and adaptable for educators and researchers, getting these materials up onto the web is a significant accomplishment. The Disability Network still stands alone as a television show produced by people with disabilities and for people with disabilities and as such is an important example of what can be accomplished when people with disabilities fight for representation in the media.

The D-Next project aims to increase the opportunities for people with disabilities to tell our own stories through two program initiatives. First, the D-Next project received Capital Grant funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to purchase video and podcast making equipment for use by consumers to tell their own stories. Second, the project received an additional Seed Grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in order to develop and offer training to people with disabilities on using the equipment in order to make programs that authentically convey our stories as people with disabilities. We thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for its investment in supporting people with disabilities to be better represented in our current media landscape. In September 2019 we welcomed our Member of Provincial Parliament Suze Morrison to join us for a screening of a video about representation developed and produced by our exceptional D-Next advisory committee, all of whom are people with disabilities.

It is hard to mention the D-Net/D-Next projects without talking about two of our community's biggest losses this year. Don Peuramaki and Ing Wong-Ward both passed away this year, leaving behind huge legacies of raising awareness of people with disabilities in the media. Don was a regular fixture here at CILT, coming in every two weeks to meet with the D-Net team on strategies for

taking advantage of the Disability Network shows he managed to hold onto from his days as a producer at the CBC. The loss of Don in 2019 was a great shock to everyone at CILT. His incredible contributions to the media representation of people with disabilities cannot be underestimated.

Ing Wong-Ward joined CILT as Associate Director in 2016, after many years at the CBC. Ing was on leave from her duties at CILT when she passed away due to complications from colon cancer in July 2019. The CBC said of Ing's passing, "a mighty force has left us" and we certainly feel that way at CILT. Ing was part of the Disability Network show at the CBC and worked on many other shows, including Metro Morning. Ing significantly raised the profile of discussions of disability in the media and in recent years contributed to the national conversation on the need for access to palliative care. In recognition of Ing's contributions to independent living, CILT's Board of Directors has awarded her CILT's Founders' Award posthumously. Ing will be missed by many here and in the broader disability community for a long time to come. We send our deepest condolences to Ing's family, Tim and Zhenmei.

Another significant loss from our community this year is the loss of community organizer and advocate Kevin Jackson. Kevin was one of the key organizers of the Disability Pride March and a well-known and widely respected advocate within the disability community. Kevin's work as an academic focussed on uncovering Mad people's histories. Kevin's partner, Melissa Graham, works with CILT as part of our Direct Funding program. May you rest in power, Kevin.

While it has been a year of significant change, CILT looks forward to continuing to support people with disabilities across Ontario. CILT's strategic plan renewal was launched online in November 2018. It reflects months of consultations with consumers,

partners, board members and staff and clearly demonstrates a renewed path forward to supporting independent living for consumers. Our stakeholders have urged us to continue to empower people with disabilities including through amplifying the voices and influence of people with disabilities on policies and legislation that relate to us. We are also encouraged to enhance our strategic partnerships, in part by partnering with different health and social stakeholders and communities (e.g. Indigenous, Francophones, ethnic communities, LGBTQ, newcomers and others) to influence policies that improve the lives of people with disabilities through an intersectional lens. Finally, our stakeholders have directed us to leverage opportunities to participate in research to (re)design research projects to be more inclusive of people with disabilities.

In my first year here at CILT, I have worked to broaden our understanding of who people with disabilities are through broadening our circle of prospective partners to include organizations representing LGBTQ2S communities and people with episodic disabilities. I have sought to develop strategic partnerships at the national, provincial and citywide level with policymakers and legislators. I have also partnered CILT with innovative academic initiative, like the Mobilizing Disability Studies initiative undertaken by Dr. Karen Yoshida at the University of Toronto, which will see Disability Studies academics and community members come together to discuss how to integrate disability studies more broadly within the academic world. CILT has also partnered on work related to ensuring that people with disabilities are included in artificial intelligence initiatives as AI technology marches swiftly on.

CILT is an extraordinary organization comprised of people who truly know the importance of independent living. Our landscape in Ontario is currently changing. We are moving towards new ways of organizing

and thinking about healthcare services. In this shifting environment, the importance of maintaining consumer choice and dignity at the core of what we do cannot be overstated. Centres for Independent Living across Canada must maintain and expand our understanding of what it means to be truly consumer focused. This includes having the right to live our lives in the community, make our own choices and even make mistakes.

I'm pleased to be able to wrap up this Executive Director's report with news of the Accessible Canada Act becoming law in 2019. Bill C-81 is significant as it is the first federal accessibility legislation in history and as such outlines a number of accessibility and inclusion benchmarks that must be met within the federal jurisdiction. It is also significant because it is largely due to the work of the community of people with disabilities that this legislation came about. When we work together, we can move mountains. We must ensure that Independent Living stays in the minds of policy makers and legislators as we continue to move forward into 2020.

Thank you to our funders for your generous support. Our primary funders are the City of Toronto, the United Way Greater Toronto and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. CILT also receives a grant from Independent Living Canada.

CILT is a member organization. Thank you to you, the voting members of CILT, for making all of this possible and for informing the work we do. We couldn't do this without you! I'd like to say, finally, a personal thank you to all of CILT's staff, board members, members and partners for the support and guidance you have shown me in my challenging, and exhilarating, first year. I'd like to also thank Sylvia Fernandez Draper, CILT's mighty bookkeeper of many years, and Marion Langford, for your wise counsel and hard work. You have all been very gracious with your time and advice and for that I sincerely thank you.



# Financial Report



**A** CONDENSED VERSION of CILT's audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2019 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.

The Statement of Financial Position (the top part of the condensed statement) shows CILT's assets and liabilities as of March 31, 2019 and covers the funds for all CILT's programs.

The net assets (reserves) were unchanged at \$438,514 for many years, since our funding agreements require CILT to have a balanced budget and return any excess funding at year-end. For the first time last year we managed to add \$10,875 to this reserve and bring it to \$449,339 by convincing the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to forego recovering an old liability they had not collected on. So these funds were added to the reserve which consists of historical CILT core funds.

The bottom part of the report shows a

consolidation of the various statements of Operations, broken into three sections of Revenues and Expenses, a total and a comparison to the prior fiscal year amounts.

## **Core**

The first column shows the revenues received to carry out CILT's core programs of networking, peer support, skills training, Attendant Service Application Centre and other service programs. Last year's income totalled \$1,230,774 from the various government sources listed, fundraising and other self-generated incomes and recoveries. The annual expenses equalled the funds raised and consist mainly of personnel expenses along with program and administrative expenses to cover CILT's core operations.

## **Direct Funding**

Revenues and expenses are shown in the second column, with most of the funding coming from a contract with the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) with a total income of \$45,759,201. The largest expense item shows the payments to participants/other centres. These (\$43,974,265) represent payments to self-managers (participants) on the program as well as other service centres across the province, that provide program and administrative support to the Direct Funding program. Other expenses cover personnel along with program and administrative expenses for a total spending of \$45,759,201.

This is the first year since the program started that Direct Funding finances showed a balanced report and no funds needed to be returned to the LHIN.

## **PSW Funds**

The third column shows the financial activities of the Personal Support Workers Education and Training Program. This program is funded by the Ministry of Health, Long-Term Care Division. It operates under a contract with CILT being the "paymaster" of the project. It is strictly a flow-through project, i.e. funds are provided by the Ministry to CILT, and CILT in turn enters into contracts with the participating agencies, distributes the funds, monitors the reports from the agencies and collects any surplus funds. For these activities CILT received an annual administrative fee. In the past year the Ministry approved a total contract of \$ 1,443,430 and after distributing funds and collecting surpluses returned, a total of \$ 1,244,000 was spent. The surplus of \$199,430 will be returned to the Ministry of Health.

We need to acknowledge the excellent work done by Sylvia Draper-Fernandez in the day-to day accounting and preparation of CILT's budgets and reports, by Leisa DeBono, Manager of the Direct Funding program and her financial team for monitoring the difficult finances of their program and by Wendy Porch, Executive Director, and Operations Manager Jamie Wong in their management of CILT's financial resources.



# CILT Condensed Financial Statements

## Condensed Version of Audited Financial Report – March 31, 2019

### Statement of Financial Position

	2018-19	2017-18
<b>ASSETS:</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash & Investments	11,233,653	12,510,586
Accts. Receivable & Sundry assets	760,123	463,160
Capital Assets		
Net Leasehold & Equipment	111,426	142,292
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>12,105,202</b>	<b>13,116,038</b>
<b>LIABILITIES \ NET ASSETS:</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Accts. Payable and Sundry Liabilities	3,171,440	4,043,524
Direct Funding Payable (Reserves)	8,432,817	8,569,498
Deferred and in Trust Liabilities	51,606	64,502
Net Assets\Reserves	449,339	438,514
<b>Total Liabilities \Reserves</b>	<b>12,105,202</b>	<b>13,116,038</b>

### Statement of Operations (Consolidated)

For the Year ended March 31, 2019

	Core	Direct Funding	PSW Funds	Total 2018-19	Total 2017-18
<b>REVENUES:</b>					
Min.of Health\Toronto Central LHIN	552,860	45,467,015	1,443,430	47,463,305	47,918,716
Admin & Program Recoveries	424,209	-		424,209	555,760
LHINs - Individualized Funding Program	-	141,129		141,129	251,108
United Way of Greater Toronto	132,595	-		132,595	184,956
Independent Living Canada	44,215			44,215	44,215
City of Toronto Grants	41,677	-		41,677	24,045
Fundraising & Other Self-Generated Income	35,218	151,057		186,275	182,159
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>1,230,774</b>	<b>45,759,201</b>	<b>1,443,430</b>	<b>48,433,405</b>	<b>49,160,959</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>					
Payments to Participants/other centres	-	43,974,265	1,155,510	45,129,775	45,753,287
Personnel	868,235	1,150,174		2,018,409	2,034,295
Administrative Expenses	51,457	302,429	88,490	442,376	434,715
Purchased Services	179,786	94,906		274,692	318,638
Building Occupancy	83,438	164,381		247,819	254,036
Staff\ Board Expenses	23,093	54,786		77,879	45,190
Program Expenses	14,305	18,260		32,565	81,296
Amortization of Capital Assets	10,460	-		10,460	5,230
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,230,774</b>	<b>45,759,201</b>	<b>1,244,000</b>	<b>48,233,975</b>	<b>48,926,687</b>
<b>Unspent Funds to be returned to MOH\LHIN</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(199,430)</b>	<b>(199,430)</b>	<b>(234,272)</b>
<b>Excess of Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

# 2018-2019 Statistical Highlights



**74,956**

pages viewed on the  
CILT.ca website

**109**

drop-ins/visitors  
to the  
CILT office



**3,398**

individuals were  
served at our  
speaking/selection  
panels & events



**72,338**

inquiries received  
and answered



**23,475**

pieces of  
information mailed  
or handed out



**739**

tweets/retweets  
at @CILT\_Toronto



**246**

Facebook  
followers



**442**

individuals attended  
our training  
workshops



**1,023**

participants served  
by the Direct  
Funding program



**538\***

participants on  
Direct Funding  
more than 5 years

(\*more than 1/2  
DF population)

**95**

age of oldest  
participant starting  
on Direct Funding  
(ever!)

**327\***

participants on  
Direct Funding  
more than 15 years

(\*more than 1/3  
DF population)



**610**

hours of services  
provided by CILT  
volunteers

**325**

completed  
applications  
received for the  
Direct Funding  
Program



**154**

Direct Funding  
interviews  
conducted

**657**

applicants  
served



# Ing Wong-Ward

2018–2019 Founders' Award Recipient



THE FOUNDERS' AWARD was established in 1995 on CILT's 10th anniversary to recognize the significant contribution of individuals who both exemplify and have advanced the Independent Living (IL) philosophy in the spirit of its founders. This year, the board unanimously named Ing Wong-Ward posthumously for this award.

Ing, who died from complications of colon cancer in July 2019, had most recently served as CILT's Associate Director since the start of 2016. Prior to coming to CILT, Ing worked for more than two decades at CBC Radio and Television after graduating from Ryerson University's Journalism program. Shortly after graduating, she was hired as associate producer and co-host with the program *The Disability Network*, a co-production between the CBC and CILT.

She then worked on a number of CBC Television programs, first as a researcher and eventually, as a producer. She produced stories for *Midday*, *The National* and other CBC News Network current affairs programs. Prior to joining CILT, she spent more than a decade as a story producer with the local CBC Radio programs, *Metro Morning* and *Here and Now*. She spent her days connecting to Torontonians with a variety of perspectives, to share their stories about life in the city.

Ing was also active in her union, the Canadian Media Guild. She was former chair of the Human Rights Committee and was the inaugural director, Human Rights and Equity with the CWA/SCA Canada, the Media Guild's parent union. She was the winner of the 2004

City of Toronto Human Rights Access Award, a recipient of a Gabriel Award for broadcasting and served as a member of the CILT board in 2000.

Ing's obituary noted that her appointment as CILT's Associate Director gave her the opportunity to "follow the wheel tracks of her mentors, Sandra Carpenter and Catherine Frazee," who were previous recipients of CILT's Founders' Awards – Sandra, who was presented with the inaugural award in 1995, and Catherine, who was honoured in 2006.

"Ing embodied IL perfectly, in my opinion," says Leisa DeBono, manager of the Direct Funding program, who notes that Ing was a Direct Funding pioneer, starting as one of the first five Self-Managers in 1995 when it was still in pilot program phase. "She was unapologetic, never afraid to share her views, confident in a way most of us wish we could be, and she ALWAYS spoke her mind. I'll never forget when the CBC came to CILT to interview Ing for a story that would appear on the news later than night – the cameraman set up the camera to shoot her from the ground up and without even blinking she said, 'You don't shoot able-bodied people from the ground up so you won't shoot me that way either.' Kind of quietly, under his breath, the cameraman said, 'well I do,' but Ing did not hear his retort since she'd already headed off in the direction of the shoot."

Ing, who is survived by her husband Tim and daughter Zhenmei, was vocal about her dislike of being called "inspirational" or "brave." In a 2018 CBC radio interview, she commented,

“The reality is every single one of us is a mortal human being with human bodies and will have to face something ... And so, I think when we use labels like brave or inspirational or strong, we’re trying to separate ourselves from what is a fulsome conversation around what it actually means to be human.”

Her obituary noted that although Ing’s cancer diagnosis resulted in her effectively retiring from professional life, she continued her lifelong work for disability rights and recognition with radio interviews, articles and ongoing calls to action in her widely circulated social media posts. In the last

year of her life, she actively participated in conversations about options for end-of-life care. “Although Ing suffered a great deal with cancer, she worked hard to find meaning in her increasingly compromised life. She believed that dying with dignity existed in many forms and wanted Canadians to consider all aspects of this complex discussion.”

Ing will be remembered as someone who embodied the IL philosophy and expressed her uncompromising views for the entirety of her life. She will be remembered and respected as a champion of Independent Living, always.

In Loving Memory  
**Ing Wong-Ward**  
June 15, 1973 - July 6, 2019





# 2018–2019 Board Members



**David Demchuk** is the manager of employee communications for CBC, responsible for sharing the Corporation's strategies, successes, and challenges with some 4,000 English Services

employees. He has been with CBC's employee communications unit for 17 years, and with the public broadcaster for nearly 25 years. In addition, David is an award-winning playwright as well as screenwriter/filmmaker, fiction writer, critic and journalist. His work has been published in numerous anthologies and textbooks. He has been a staff writer for the online magazine *Torontoist*, and past contributor to the *Toronto Star*, *Toronto Life*, *Xtra!*, *What Magazine* and *Prairie Fire*, among others. His first novel, *The Bone Mother*, was published in 2017.

David has a relatively rare genetic disorder (1 in 100,000 people, most of them Asian) called Hypokalemic Periodic Paralysis, which disrupts the electrolytes, breaking the electrical contact between the nerves and the muscles. Triggered by diet, exercise or sleep/lack of sleep (and sometimes by nothing discernible), the condition itself is permanent but the effects are occasional and vary in degrees; he has been told to expect gradual irreversible myopathy throughout his 50s, 60s and onward. His disability is invisible until it's not, and he lives life prepared for the possibility that he will be disabled in the short-term — and the likelihood that he will be disabled in the long-term.



**Donald Barrie**

Director-at-Large

Donald, who has served on CILT's board since late 2014, is entering his final year on the board after six years. Formerly the Vice Chair of CILT, he 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.

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

Outside CILT, Donald is a customer service representative for an online business called StickerYou. He also does occasional freelance writing.

His personal blog is at [unbreakabledb.blogspot.ca](http://unbreakabledb.blogspot.ca).



**Fady Shanouda** Fady received his doctorate from the University of Toronto in Public Health Sciences in 2019. His research draws connections between the eugenic history of higher education and the contemporary disclosure

requirements for disabled and mad students. In response to the violence of disclosure, Fady's work reveals that students, alongside their



allies, work around the system to create crip assemblages that ensure disabled and mad students' continued existence and survival in higher education. Currently, a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow at City, University of London, Fady is researching the technology-based solutions that have emerged in response to international students' mental health in the United Kingdom, and globally.



### **Jacques LeBlanc**

Vice-Chair

Born in Moncton, N.B. in 1958, I lived in Tarrytown, N.Y., until 1976.

This is where I found a propensity for architecture and the fine arts. I moved back to Moncton in 1976 and

designed houses for three families in the area.

In 1978 I was accepted into the School of Architecture at Carleton University in Ottawa. A rare form of spinal muscular atrophy known as Kugelberg-Wellander required me to use a wheelchair to navigate the campus. I graduated in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science in Urban Geography/Planning before pursuing post graduate studies at York University in Environmental Studies. I worked in planning departments for all three levels of government from 1983-86. As well, I worked at Direct Access Design helping to transform non-accessible public and private buildings.

With economic times declining in 1987, I made a career change and joined the *Toronto Star* editorial department which allowed me to be involved with a passion I had since childhood, the world of sports. I stayed with the *Star* until retirement. I've also written for many publications about travelling with a disability, including *Reader's Digest*, *Spyker* (Holland), *The Daily Observer* (Antigua and Barbuda), and *The Times-Picayune* (New Orleans).

Now that I'm retired, I would like to give back by helping CILT and its community. In 2017 I did a piece for CITY-TV on real estate and the disabled community. In 2018 I was interviewed by CTV National on the benefits of direct funding.



**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.



**Maayan Ziv** Maayan 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.



### **Meghan Hines**

President and Chair

Meghan is entering the third year of her third term as a CILT board member and sixth year as Chair. Upon graduating from the Honours Bachelor of Commerce

program at McMaster University in 2014, Meghan joined RBC's Talent Management COE as part of its Executive Recruitment team. She then moved on to work with the Thought Leadership team where part of her role was helping to manage the #RBCDisruptors speaker series. Meghan is currently a Human Resources Initiatives Manager.

While working with RBC, Meghan has been actively seeking ways to become involved in RBC's strategies for Persons with

Disabilities, as well as other community initiatives. Meghan has been actively involved with various employee resource groups, including co-chair of REACH which is aimed at supporting employees with disabilities and their allies. She has worked with the Human Resources Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) as well as the National Office DLC, where she co-chairs the Persons with Disabilities work stream.

Meghan has been involved in the community from a very young age, beginning with the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides, which has provided her with her three service dogs. She has also been active within her wheelchair hockey association. In 2012, Meghan's commitment to the community was recognized when she was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Meghan has been a participant of the Direct Funding (DF) program since November 2011. DF has had such a significant positive impact on her independence and freedom that Meghan is eager to give back to CILT in any way she can. Her key objective is to work with CILT to ensure DF and other programs and services offered can continue to improve the lives of other individuals with disabilities.



**Neil Mercer** Neil 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 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.

## **Stefanie Marinich-Lee**

Former Treasurer

Stefanie has dedicated both her professional career and volunteer associations toward the advancement of services and rights for persons with disabilities. She has lived with spinal muscular atrophy from birth and has

lived and has work experience from both the public and private sector.

Stefanie attended Osgoode Hall Law School and completed her articles of clerkship at ARCH Disability Law Centre. Prior to entering law school, she worked in finance. Her work has always intersected with current disability issues and she is considered a subject matter expert in this field.

She has assisted with employment, education and human rights policy development, strategic planning and is interested in furthering the advancement of Independent Living for people with disabilities.

She has lived in Toronto for more than 20 years and loves dogs.



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



## **Warner Clarke**

Secretary

Warner's early work experience included serving as a Grade 2 teacher, working in a group home for youth and a singer/guitarist. He attended

the University of Toronto, then worked in the field of children's mental health as a residential counselor. In 1982, after completing a Master of Social Work degree, he accepted a three-month contract with the Ministry of Community and Social Services as a vocational rehabilitation counselor. This was his first encounter with working with people with physical disabilities. He later supervised some seniors' programs in Toronto and eventually took on a portfolio focusing on services for adults with physical disabilities in 1987. Warner was working for the provincial government when it embarked on a review of the attendant service system that resulted in a significant research paper; that document provided direction to organizations providing services to persons with physical disabilities, but also laid groundwork for the establishment of the Direct Funding pilot project. Warner was a member of the implementation team. Later, after serving in the corporate policy branch of the Ministry of Health, Warner worked from 2007 until his retirement in 2010, managing a small portfolio of provincially funded services, including the Direct Funding program.

Lately, he has been spending much of his time working with his musical projects, The Deloraines, the Wild Walker Band, The Lost Boys, and Willin' & Abel, and volunteering with a number of other organizations and initiatives in his community.



# 2018–2019 Staff

*If I could be a cartoon/comic character, I would be...*



## **Abdullah Duranai**

Provincial Support Co-ordinator  
Direct Funding Program

I started working with CILT in October of 2011. I work with Self-Managers from all over the province on various matters.

The best part of my job is starting new Self-Managers (Direct Funding program participants) on the program. Outside work, I volunteer with a community not-for-profit organization assisting newcomers to Canada. I enjoy long walks with my wife. I also enjoy watching Bollywood movies and dramas. If I could be a cartoon character, I would be SpongeBob SquarePants because he is smart, hardworking, and has flipped as many burgers at Krusty Krab as I have at Mickey D's (McDonald's).



## **Adriana Gutierrez**

Operations Assistant

I've been at CILT for about three years. My job includes assisting with the Personal Support

Worker Training Fund program,

human resources administrative support and website maintenance. In my spare time I enjoy reading, watching soccer, dancing tango, learning kung fu and planning trips that might never happen. If I could be a comic book character, I would be Proinsias Cassidy, because he is Irish and because he is a vampire, and basically I'd be a lucky charm for eternity.



## **Andrea Rae**

Service Engagement Coordinator

I have been working at CILT since 2005. I have a Bachelor of Music degree from Queen's University and a Master of

Arts degree in Canadian Studies

from Carleton University. I coordinate the volunteer program and I help people navigate services available to them. I am fortunate in my role to work with our eight volunteers, who help program staff with a variety of administrative tasks. I respond to inquiries from consumers and provide information regarding Independent Living and disability services. I perform community outreach on a regular basis to ensure that CILT maintains a coordinating role regarding disability-related services in the city. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with friends and family (and, attempting to keep up with my energetic seven-year-old,) playing the flute and knitting. If I could be a comic book character, I would be Daria.



## **Adina Ilina**

Program Support  
Attendant Service Application Centre (ASAC)

My background in clinical practice and human resources makes me a natural fit for the

Program Facilitator position with

ASAC. My main responsibilities include conducting orientations and screenings with new and existing applicants and responding to various inquiries related to attendant services. This inspires me. Through my past experience, I developed an understanding of various situations and needs in order to help people. I enjoy knitting, gardening, and organizing events as the co-chair of the Professional Development Committee of the Toronto Chapter, Human Resources Professional Association.

**Danielle Vinciguerra \***

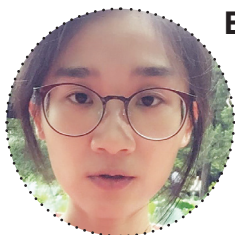
Review and Audit Administrator  
Direct Funding Program

I have been a member of Team CILT since early 2015. Prior to CILT, and moving to Canada, I completed graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh focusing on Human Security and acted as a refugee resettlement employment case manager for three years. In my spare time I love to travel, try new restaurants, and am an extremely dedicated aunt. I am currently on maternity leave with my son Leo.

**David Meyers**

Senior Manager, Independent Living Programs

I joined CILT in the role of Senior Manager in April of 2018, and manage our Independent Living Programs. A long-time accessibility advocate with an acquired physical disability, I've coordinated neighbourhood and disability inclusive programs since 2007, and before joining CILT, partnered with the core team on many projects, and served on our board of directors. I enjoy fostering CILT's work of advancing Independent Living, in partnership with disability stakeholders and coalitions. I'm a civic activism nerd, enjoy amateur photography and tend to cartoon during overly-long meetings. If I were a cartoon character, I might be Hobbes, the stuffed tiger in the Calvin and Hobbes comic. Like me, Hobbes often ponders the meaning of life, but he gets more useful insights. Also like me, he is lousy at math.

**Elaine Chu**

Bookkeeping Report Reviewer  
Direct Funding Program

I started working at CILT in May 2019, with the Direct Funding Program, where my role is to review quarterly reports from Self-Managers and to assist them in utilizing their funding. I feel privileged and honoured to be a part of DF and working with amazing people who care about the work they do

every day. I am a shy and quiet person, but I love to share experience and knowledge with others and help people in any way I can. In my spare time, I like to read books and practice meditation. If I could be a cartoon character, I would be Ice Bear (from We Bare Bears), because Ice Bear has a beautiful heart and cares for everyone deeply.

**Elisabeth Harrison \***

Administration and Agreements Facilitator,  
Direct Funding Program

I started working at CILT in April 2018, with the Direct Funding Program, where my role is to update Self-Managers' Direct Funding agreements and provide administrative support. I have an invisible, episodic disability and I am a proud member of the disability community. I hold a Master of Arts in Women and Gender Studies from the University of Toronto and I am working toward completing my PhD in Critical Disability Studies at York University, where my dissertation research focusses on the implications for health and social policy of trans, genderqueer and non-binary people's experiences with mental health care. My other research projects seek to advance the inclusion of people with episodic disabilities in education and employment, and to foster body equity and diversity. I have lived in Toronto for more than 10 years, but I am originally from Brockville, Ont. I am a devoted fan of questionable '80s pop music, a trivia nerd, an aqua fitness enthusiast, and have been a full-on cat lady since early childhood. My secret dreams are to write mystery/thriller novels and/or become an eyebrow technician.

\* On leave



### **Hadeel Dajani**

Bookkeeping Review Coordinator  
Direct Funding Program

I started working with the Direct Funding Program in 2018; my role is to review the quarterly reports from program participants. I also review and audit some self-managers accounts. In addition, I'm responsible for wrapping up the accounts for participants exiting the program. If I could be a cartoon character, I would be Winnie the Pooh, because he is a cuddly, loveable and quiet teddy bear, he is a friendly, thoughtful and sometimes insightful character who is always willing to help his friends and try his best. In addition to all that he's a chubby creature who can't resist his honey! Who doesn't love food?!



### **Jamie Wong**

Operations Manager

I have been working at CILT for more than 20 years. My current job as operations manager involves overseeing various back office functions such as finance, information technology, human resources, office admin, and project management. My role keeps me busy with different kinds of challenges at different times of the year. It also gives me the opportunity to explore, procure, and deploy new technology which helps the staff work more efficiently and effectively. This in turn helps provide better services to the disability community. If I could be a cartoon character, I would like to be Doraemon because I'd love to have a four-dimensional pocket with all types of cool gadgets available 24/7 to help others whenever and wherever needed.



### **John Mossa**

Independent Living Skills Coordinator

For the last 19 years, I have been working at CILT with consumers with disabilities on developing their skills to self-advocate for their rights and responsibilities on a wide

range of issues, from attendant services to Wheel-Trans. Also, I provide short-term crisis peer support, facilitate skills development workshops and make CILT presentations to consumers and service providers. I have led and/or supervised several participatory action research projects on disability and safety issues within Toronto: Safe Engaged Environments Disability, Safe Toronto Action Now Disability, Disability and Rights for Citizens and Civic Literacy – Disability Project. I am a member of the Aging with Disability working group. I enjoy movies, music, sports, online games and love to read social justice articles and books. If I could be a comic book character, I would be Wolverine / Logan / Old Man Logan, because he is Canadian with the following abilities: to heal virtually any injury, adamantium-covered bones and retractable claws, skilled hand-to-hand combatant and master martial artist. He also has an unmatched capacity for violence and finely-honed animal instinct but is capable of tempering his highly emotional reactions with cold-blooded calculation where required.



### **John Tam**

Database Administrator  
Direct Funding Program

I joined CILT 6 years ago as an auditor in the Direct Funding Program. Currently, I maintain and support the Direct Funding database and website, which provides a portal to our new online self-manager's reporting module. I enjoy that my work and volunteer goals of being able to enhance the lives of people with disabilities can both be met at CILT. When not at work, I volunteer with Toronto Trailblazers Tandem Cycling Club (blind tandem cycling). Any further free time is spent enjoying summer outdoor street events in the city. If I were a comic book character, I would be Spiderman, because he acts locally ("friendly neighbourhood Spiderman"), and is often over-extending himself to help others, often complicating his personal life in the process. More importantly, because his niece's son adores him.



**Joyce Leung**

In-Office and Special Events Attendant

I've been working as part of the attendant team at CILT for close to 2.5 years now, and I'm happy to be working alongside such a great team of attendants. I enjoy being able to meet people in the community and participating in events and workshops that CILT puts together. When I'm not at CILT or working with private clients, I'm usually swimming laps, reading a good book or trying to stop my dog from eating garbage. If I could be any cartoon character, I'd probably be Garfield, simply for the fact that he gets to sleep all the time and eats all the lasagna he wants: dream come true.

**Katherine Janicki**

Intake Coordinator,  
Direct Funding Program

I have been with CILT and the Direct Funding program since 2011. As DF Intake Coordinator, I enjoy working with people who are preparing to become Self-Managers. I'm passionate about the Independent Living philosophy and promoting equity and choice. Outside the office, I am studying psychotherapy and several languages, go to live music shows as much as humanly possible, and I foster cats for adoption. If I were a comic character, I'd be Jean Grey because a Phoenix always rises.

**Kathleen Odell**

Manager  
Attendant Service Application Centre

I joined CILT following my graduation from York University with a bachelor's degree in Children's Studies, where my research focus was children with disabilities. I have spent much of my career engaged with various stakeholders from a variety of different backgrounds and diverse circumstances. I am a strong

proponent for autonomy and choice for people with disabilities. In addition to my strong professional ties to community, my passion for Independent Living has been lifelong as my mother has a significant physical disability and has always used attendant services. I grew up understanding independent living as central to how my family operated, and as integral to the inclusion of people with disabilities. If I were a comic book character, I would want to be Domino because who wouldn't want to be really, really, really, ridiculously lucky?

**Leanne Larmondin**

Provincial Program Coordinator  
Direct Funding Program

There are truly no two days alike when you're working for Direct Funding. On any given day, I interview program applicants anywhere in Ontario, help participants problem solve, liaise with program staff across the province, consult on legal issues, review payments to participants and coordinate and write promotional materials. When I'm not at work, I run (for fun) and row (competitively) and I love to read obituaries. I am the mother of two daughters, both of whom are in post-secondary education. If I were an animated character, I would probably be Lucy from Peanuts, because I tend to be bossy and am occasionally a-bit-too-generous with my advice.

**Leisa DeBono**

Program Manager  
Direct Funding Program

I started working at CILT with the Direct Funding Program in July 1994 and have been fortunate enough to stick around for the past 25 years. During my early years at CILT, I worked as the DF Administrative Coordinator until I was promoted to the DF Program Manager position in 2011. It has been very gratifying to watch the program

grow from 75 participants in 1995 to nearly 1,000 individuals today. I never tire of hearing from people whose lives have changed in a good way because of Direct Funding.

If I were a cartoon character, I would be Johnny Bravo because he makes me laugh every time I watch – I love the fast, twangy way he talks, and the brilliantly idiotic things he says.



### **Louis George**

In-Office and Special Events Attendant

I'm known as the resident joker – although I know I can be one joke over the line sometimes, most of the time people appreciate the

humour. I like working at CILT because of the variety of the work; most workshops I've helped out at are also of personal interest to me. In my other life I do a lot of work with on poverty issues and working at CILT has provided several opportunities for mutual learning in that area, too. I like riding my bike, writing my family history, camping and getting into deep discussions on the web.



### **Margaret Githuku \***

In-Office and Special Events Attendant, CILT

I'm now in my eighth year working at CILT. In addition to the in-office work, I've been to more workshops and meetings than I can count. I love being part of the staff team at CILT and knowing how valued and essential my services are to many staff. I am also a member of the Health and Safety Committee.

I am regularly called upon to “counsel” other staff, in fact I have been told I am the “resident mom” of the office. In my spare time I love reading, going for long walks and helping others in my and the attendant community.

\* On leave



### **Marisa Falzone**

Regional Report Coordinator and Advisor  
Direct Funding Program

I review the quarterly reports from Self-Managers (participants on the Direct Funding program). I have the privilege of working with Self-

Managers to assist them with independent living and making the most of their funding. I train bookkeepers and new staff and I support other Independent Living Resource Centres across the province on compiling Self-Managers' quarterly reports, Employment Standards Act questions and other issues. Additionally, I am responsible for generating the bank direct deposits for program participants in the Toronto and Kingston area. When I'm not at work, I enjoy gardening, event planning and share my passion for art with family and friends.



### **Melissa Azore**

Program Facilitator,  
Direct Funding Program

I identify as an ally and passionate supporter of the Independent Living movement.

I have worked in the private, education, and government sectors, holding positions at TELUS Mobility, Seneca College, and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. I also taught English in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for 8 months. When not at work, I like to sing. I could not be more pleased to be working with Direct Funding. If I could be a comic book character, I would be Black Panther, because “Wakanda Forever”.



### **Melissa Graham**

Community Facilitator  
Direct Funding Program

I spend my day working with people who are on Direct Funding or just about to get started. I'm fortunate to work for a program that has such an impact on people's lives, and work with amazing people

who really care about the work that they do. Outside the office, I spend most of my spare time in community organizing. I also like to travel, and I'm a very proud aunt to four adorable nephews and nieces. I'm also one of the organizers for the Toronto Disability Pride March, an event I founded back in 2011. If I were a cartoon character I'd be Leela from Futurama because I'd live in the future, save the day, and drive a spaceship.



### **Melissa Haigler**

In-Office and Special Event Attendant

I've been working at CILT for around 10 years! This is only one of my jobs; another is as a dog groomer. I have groomed CILT staff pets, too (including former Executive Director, Sandra Carpenter's cats). People find me pretty quiet in general, but I do love to help in any way I can. I love to travel, including taking road trips to see family in the United States. If I could be a cartoon character, I would be Tigger, because Tiggers are cuddly and awfully sweet and fun, fun, fun, fun, fun!



### **Nadine Azore**

Customer Service Representative

I have been a member of the CILT team since 2017. I completed my Bachelor of Arts at Trent University in English Literature and Cultural Studies and my Social Service Worker Diploma at Fleming College. Prior to joining CILT I worked as an English teacher in South Korea for three years. I enjoy travel, food and movies. If I could be a cartoon character, I would be Spinelli (from the Recess cartoon), because she has a no-nonsense attitude.



### **Patrick Tang**

Bookkeeping Report Reviewer  
Direct Funding Program

After graduating from both the advanced diploma in Accounting and Finance program and the International Accounting and Finance degree program from Seneca College, I have been pursuing the Chartered Professional Accountant designation for the past several semesters. I enjoy reading and music; I also have extensive interests in a wide array of subjects including astrophysics, psychology, philosophy, astronomy, history, geography, interior design, cultures and religions. In my free time, I also volunteer at the temple of three religions (Taoism, Confucius & Buddhism) and enjoying practising tai chi and other different branches of kung fu. I am passionate about the preservation of the natural environment and wildlife, healthy diet and balance between life and work.

If I could be a comic book / cartoon character, I would be Ratatouille, because of all of the inspirational lessons he has learned throughout his journey: "One must try things that may not work out and not let anyone define your limit because of where you come from & remember that your only limit is your soul;" and, "Not everyone can become a great artist, but a great artist can come from anywhere because the only thing predictable about life is its unpredictability."



### **Peter Judge \***

Financial Assurance Manager  
Direct Funding Program

I have more than 20 years of experience in the independent living community at Three Trilliums (3Ts), a community-based attendant service provider in Toronto working with both supportive housing as well as Outreach attendant services. Beginning as a front-line attendant, I worked

\* On leave



at several positions in the organization, most recently as a senior manager overseeing some 50 staff. I have extensive management experience, including human resources (interviewing, hiring, firing and scheduling), consumer independent living and attendant service issues, as well as a strong interest in financial matters. I began at CILT in the role of Assistant to the Executive Director on a contract basis, and later joined the Direct Funding Program as the provincial Financial Assurance Manager.



### **Rebecca Wood**

Peer and Parenting Program Coordinator

I recently joined the core team and am excited to coordinate programs for the CILT community. I hold master's degrees in Women and Gender Studies from the

University of Toronto and Early Childhood Studies from Ryerson University. Disability and inclusive education have always been at the heart of my academic work. When I am not at work I like to create through ceramics, knitting, crochet and needle felting. I have an episodic disability (which is often invisible) and creates unexpected challenges on a regular basis. I navigate challenges moving through the world while often having access to able-bodied privilege. I strive to acknowledge this privilege and recognize the ways in which it can be used to amplify the voices of others as we collectively work to break down barriers faced by people with disabilities. If I were a comic book character, I would be Serenity Rose because I often have strange dreams and am drawn to magic.



### **Robin Simmons**

Inquiries Generalist

For the last two years I've been the Inquiries Generalist at CILT. I feel very fortunate that I get to spend my work day providing people with information and referrals that could have a positive impact on their lives. In my spare time I enjoy writing

and travelling. If I could be a comic book character, I would be The Flash because I often go super fast in my wheelchair.



### **Samantha Walsh**

Intake and Resource Facilitator  
Direct Funding Program

I proudly identify as disabled. I am a scholar, disability rights activist and currently a doctoral candidate at the Ontario

Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, in the department of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Social Justice Education. My doctoral research is in interpretive sociology with a focus on disability and social inclusion. I hold a master's degree in Critical Disability Studies from York University. The focus of my master's research was disability and beauty (body image). I completed my undergraduate degree in sociology at the University of Guelph. I am passionate about inclusion and access for all. If I were a cartoon character, I would be the Little Mermaid, because if mermaids were on land, they would need wheelchairs just like me. Alternatively, my sister calls me Mighty Mouse, another animated character.



### **Wendy Porch**

Executive Director

I was born with a disability and have learned first-hand of the need to advocate for inclusion.

I started my work life at ARCH Disability Law Centre responding to the needs of people with disabilities across Ontario. I moved on from ARCH to working at the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre at the University of Toronto, where I led several initiatives related to education, accessibility and technology. I moved to the United Kingdom in 2005 and was a research fellow in Accessibility in Educational Media at the Open University UK where I contributed to European Union funded research on accessible, life-long learning. Before joining CILT, I was

the Manager of Episodic Disability Initiatives at *Realize*, a national organization supporting people living with HIV and/or other episodic disabilities. I have an M.Ed. in Counselling Psychology from the University of Toronto and worked with the Body Image Project at Women's College Hospital on mental health initiatives for women living with disabilities and facial differences. I am a proud mom to my six-year-old son Jasper. We love building Lego sets together and adventuring around our neighborhood in search of Pokémon. If I was a cartoon character, I'd be Raven from Teen Titans Go! because I love to meditate and I wear A LOT of black.



**Zdravka Gueorguieva**

Program Assistant  
Attendant Services Application Centre (ASAC)

My role as a Program Assistant is to provide administrative support and update the ASAC database, according to the intake of applications and requests. Responding to program enquiries, I support applicants

in preparing for a centralized assessment and to receive supportive housing, outreach and transitional program services. I feel proud that my work as a member of the ASAC team is dedicated to assisting people from the disability community. Supporting and encouraging people with disabilities to participate in all aspects of economic, cultural and social life in Canada is a goal that CILT staff work hard to achieve daily. It is a great emotional reward, receiving a phone call or an email filled with gratitude, from the person I have been trying to help. Getting services and housing through ASAC is a great opportunity for our applicants to live their lives independently. I enjoy traveling around the world, meeting different people and sharing different ideas. The internet is very helpful offering such resources: I have almost 5,000 virtual friends on Facebook, so I am able to promote awareness of Independent Living ideas outside Canada as well. One of my favourite cartoon characters is the Lion King.



# What a year!









● 365 Bloor Street East, Suite 902  
Toronto, Ontario M4W 3L4  
Tel: 416-599-2458  
Fax: 416-599-3555  
Email: [cilt@cilt.ca](mailto:cilt@cilt.ca)

[www.cilt.ca](http://www.cilt.ca)