



# 2023–2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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CILT staff gathered at Woodbine Beach Park in September 2023 for the first in-person staff picnic since 2019.



Two disability justice video shoots were held in September 2023 with Deaf filmmaker Alexa Hickox and CILT's in-house production team, including Kim, Raihan, and Joyce. CILT and its partners will use the finished videos to advocate on poverty, housing, and TTC inequities.

### Feedback from Black History event

*At the intersections of Blackness and disability: A heritage to celebrate; a future to build"*  
on Feb. 26, 2024

- " So great to see the solidarity among the presenters – thank you!"
- " This was an excellent presentation/event. It seems like some of the panelists were taking this to the next level."
- " I am not the only person who faces barriers in my personal journey."

# President and Chair

Darren Cooper



**Looking ahead  
to CILT's 40th year,  
we will embark on a  
new strategic plan**

—DARREN COOPER

It has been my pleasure serving as the President of CILT's Board of Directors for the past year. During this time, I've had the privilege of working alongside a group of dedicated fellow board members, many of whom have lived experience as people with disabilities. All of them also brought a wealth of skills and knowledge and share the common goal of advancing the organization and fostering the principles and values of the Independent Living movement. This year, we welcomed three new members to the board — Nadia Kanani, Jason Herterich, and Mandi Brace.

As I reflect on the past year, there have been many accomplishments, such as establishing the new Equipment Fund, which provided assistive technology and equipment to 50 members of the disability community, and increasing the hourly wage for attendants employed through the Direct Funding Program. Moreover, as we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, our biggest accomplishment was playing a critical role in advocating for the rights of people with disabilities and equitable access to housing, transit, health care, and other vital social services within our communities.

During my time as president, I've also had the privilege of working closely with Wendy Porch, CILT's executive director. Wendy continues to update me on CILT's operations and provide the board with sound knowledge and advice that has helped guide our governance of the organization. I would like to thank Wendy, the Senior Leadership Team, and all of the staff at CILT for their steadfast dedication and commitment to removing barriers and advancing accessibility and inclusion for everyone CILT serves and supports.

I would also like to recognize and thank our funders, the Ministry of Health, Independent Living Canada, the City of Toronto, and the United Way Greater Toronto for their generous financial support. With the contributions of these partners, CILT can continue to offer important programs and services to our members.

Looking ahead to CILT's 40th year, we will embark on a new strategic plan, which will guide the organization over the next several

years and celebrate this incredible milestone with a fabulous event in the spring. Stay tuned for more exciting details!

Although it has been a successful year, with many notable accomplishments, there is still much work to be done to remove barriers faced by people with disabilities. I've been proud to be a part of CILT over the past five years as we move towards a more equitable, accessible, and inclusive society for everyone. Thanks to all of you for being with us on this journey.



Consumers from CILT's early days, including Vic Willi (far right), CILT executive director from 1989-2006.

# Executive Director

Wendy Porch



## CILT has been honoured with the City of Toronto's Community Champion Award

—WENDY PORCH

This year marks a momentous milestone for CILT as we celebrate our 40th anniversary. It all began right here in Toronto, where nine visionaries came together to form the very first Board of Directors for the newly established Centre for Independent Living in Toronto. Our founding articles of incorporation were rooted

in a powerful mission: to “Assist disabled people to function at their optimum level in as independent an environment as possible.”

From our humble beginnings on Bloor Street, through our days on John Street, to our current hybrid location at the corner of Sherbourne and Bloor Street, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to empowering consumers to lead dignified lives within their communities. Over the past four decades, we have been part of transformative change, always guided by the principles of Independent Living and driven by the passion of our consumers and volunteers.

It is particularly fitting that this year, CILT has been honoured with the City of Toronto's Community Champion Award, recognizing “the extraordinary contributions community organizations make to support the health and solidarity of the residents of Toronto, particularly those from Black, Indigenous, and other equity-deserving communities.”

One of the highlights of our year was the exceptional Black History Month event our Core team developed in collaboration with community partners. This event delved into the rich intersections of Blackness and Disability, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and representation. We also celebrated the power of positive representation by attending the screening of *The Ride Ahead*, a film by consumer Samuel Habib, at the Toronto Hot Docs Festival. This inspiring documentary chronicles Samuel's quest for love and an independent life.

At an organizational level, CILT has taken

significant steps to address long-standing challenges. We have developed an Equity Plan to support our goals of diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation. We have also evaluated our current practices to create harmonized plans for implementation across CILT, ensuring that we effectively communicate our progress and successes.

As the executive director of CILT, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the incredible advocates, partners, volunteers, staff, and board members who have nurtured and guided CILT for the past 40 years. Your dedication has been instrumental in pushing for greater independence, choice, and dignity for consumers. We will culminate our anniversary celebrations with an event in June 2025, which will also mark the extraordinary 30th anniversary of the Direct Funding Program.

To our dedicated Board of Directors, thank you for your ongoing leadership and guidance. A special thank you to our new board chair, Darren Cooper, for your immediate and enthusiastic partnership. It has been a pleasure working with you and everyone on the board. Additionally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Vincenza Ronaldi, who leaves the board this year after fulfilling her term limit. Your insights have been invaluable, Enza, and we hope to stay in touch!

Finally, I am thrilled to announce the introduction of the Sandra Carpenter Legacy Award for Artists. Named in honour of our founding executive director and formidable disability rights activist, Sandra Carpenter, this

award will recognize an artist with a disability whose work exemplifies creativity, originality, and a dedication to the values of Independent Living. We will be looking for submissions starting at the annual general meeting and will announce a winner at our anniversary event next June. We wish you were here to celebrate with us, Sandra, but we feel your presence and your inspiration every day.

Let me now highlight some of our accomplishments this year:

## Operations

Our incredible Operations team, led by Melissa Watanabe, has continued to drive modernization and growth through:

- Launching the inaugural CILT Equipment Fund, which supported 54 consumers, including 22 children, with assistive equipment such as strollers, scooters, lifts and slings, wheelchairs/seating, supportive mattresses and hospital beds, treadmills, laptops, and specialized car seats;
- Leading CILT through a second annual workplace culture survey with WorkWell, demonstrating high trust and value alignment among CILT staff and a very strong Net Promoter Score;
- Enhancing our cybersecurity posture to safeguard consumer information;
- Downsizing our office space to better meet our needs.

Additionally, the Operations team administers the PSW Training Fund, which distributed \$2.1M this year to eligible organizations for training and certification of PSWs.

## Core

Our passionate Core team, led by David Meyers, has supported consumers across Toronto through our core programs and worked towards influencing positive change for disabled people through various systems change projects. Core activities this year included:

- Rebooting our IDE+A Program and resuming workshops for nonprofits, which are developed and delivered by disabled consumers to embrace disability as part of equity and diversity work.
- Hosting events that celebrate intersectionality and diversity, such as:
  - An event marking the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities, centered on the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.
  - A Black History Month panel featuring Black community leaders and consumers, discussing, "At the Intersections of Blackness & Disability: What would a Toronto that prioritizes Blackness and Disability Justice look like?"
  - A Truth and Reconciliation Week event featuring Indigenous Elder Wanda Whitebird, a disabled consumer.
- Continuing systems change work through the GTA Disability Coalition, which engaged with city councillors, contributed to budget consultations, and provided advice on the City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy.
  - A highlight of the GTA Disability Coalition's work this year was the Call to Action Video Series on Disability Poverty, Housing, and Transit, available on CILT's YouTube Channel.

## Attendant Service Application Centre (ASAC)

Led by Danielle Daoust, our dedicated ASAC team has seen an increase in crisis calls from consumers seeking housing. Highlights for the ASAC team this year include:

- Developing the ASAC Senior Leadership Table, which brings together leadership from attendant service and supportive housing agencies in the GTA to support ASAC's harmonious functioning and modernization.
- Centralizing the assessment process by moving to an in-house assessor role, providing more timely follow-up for consumers.

Great job to the ASAC team for continuing to innovate and meet the evolving needs of consumers seeking attendant services.

## Direct Funding

Celebrating 30 years of empowering consumers to hire and manage their own attendants, the Direct Funding Program, led by Senior Manager Leisa DeBono, has been a transformative force. This year, the dynamic DF team has continued to support Self-Managers and achieved several milestones:

- Increasing attendant wages based on the results of a wage survey, enabling Self-Managers to be more competitive in hiring attendants.
- Publishing three *The Self-Manager* newsletters annually for the past two years. We are very proud of this publication because much of the content comes from and is created for Self-Managers.
- Reducing the program's carbon footprint by launching an electronic signing system for agreements, saving paper and postage costs.

## Thank You!

I extend my sincere thanks to CILT's incredible Board of Directors and our amazing and diverse staff. Thank you to our members, partners, and consumers for supporting our work and promoting Independent Living in your own lives. I also extend my gratitude to

our funders – the City of Toronto, the United Way Greater Toronto, the Ontario Ministry of Health, and Independent Living Canada – and our individual donors. It takes all of us, working together in connection and community, to support this important work.

## Disabled Writers' Drop-In

The Disabled Writers' Drop-In group started up again in March 2024. Each month in the Disabled Writers' Drop-In we pick a theme and create a collective poem by brainstorming, writing, and sharing favourite words and phrases from our writing. Facilitator Rebecca Wood then pulls together all of the pieces that are shared to form a collective poem. Once participant shared, "This program creates a sense of togetherness with other disabled writers."

Here is our collective poem about "Dreaming" written in March 2024:

### **Dreaming**

I have learned to quiet my mind  
to get to my dreams.

Peacefulness

Possibilities

Processing

Imagining

Manifesting

Impossibilities

I think some nightmares should be sold  
to script writers.

Some dreams should be made  
into greeting cards.



# Treasurer's Report

Ken Connors



## A clean report

— FROM THE  
AUDITORS

A condensed version of CILT's audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024, 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 top part of the condensed statements — **Statement of Financial Position** — shows CILT's assets and liabilities as of March 31, 2024, for all of CILT's programs. Comparative figures from the 2022-23 fiscal year are also shown.

At year end, our **Net Assets** were \$500,172. This amount is CILT's Reserve Fund and is what would be left over if all of CILT's liabilities were paid out from its assets. The Reserve increased by \$44,459 from interest and dividends earned on the investment of the Reserve.

The bottom part of the report — **Statement of Operations** — shows revenues and expenses for each of CILT's three main programs, a total for all three programs together, and comparative figures from 2022-23.

The first column — **Core Programs** — shows the revenues and expenses for CILT's core programs and operations.

The year's **Core revenues** totalled \$1,529,940. This came from the Ontario Health Toronto Region (the Ministry of Health), from fees for administering the Direct Funding Program and the PSW Training Program, from the United Way and the City of Toronto, and from interest, donations, and other self-generated income.

The main **Core expenses** consisted of personnel, program, and overhead costs.

In the past, CILT did not normally show an excess of revenues over expenses (a surplus)

in Core, but, in September 2022, the board started to invest the Reserve Fund, and the interest and dividend earnings from those investments resulted in a surplus of \$44,459. As noted above, this Core surplus has been transferred to the Reserve Fund.

Revenues and expenses for the **Direct Funding (DF) Program** are shown in the second column. This program had total income of \$57,498,842 from the Ontario Health Toronto Region plus \$322,298 in interest income on cash held by CILT for the DF Program.

The largest expense item (\$55,421,205) represented subsidies to participants (DF Self-Managers) as well as to other Independent Living centres across the province that provide program and administrative support. The DF program covered substantial portions of CILT's personnel expenses, rent, and other overhead costs. DF expenses also included an administrative fee of \$439,012 for CILT's work in running the program; this amount became a revenue to the Core Programs. The DF Program operates on a breakeven basis

so no surplus is shown; any unused funds are repayable to Ontario Health Toronto Region.

The third column shows the **Personal Support Workers (PSW) Training Program**. Under this program, Ontario Health Toronto Region provided \$702,981 of funding. CILT distributed this funding among the various participating agencies that provided PSW training and retained \$112,710 as an administrative fee, which became a revenue to the Core Programs.

The day-to-day accounting and preparation of CILT's budgets and financial reports have been done by Chak Lee and Ye Wang of Envision Accounting and Business Services under the direction of Wendy Porch.

In preparing the audit this year, the auditors did not make any adjustments to the year-end statements prepared for the board by Chak and Ye. It is fairly rare that auditors accept management statements without any changes. We owe Chak and Ye a vote of thanks for a job well done!

## CILT Condensed Financial Statements

CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING IN TORONTO (C.I.L.T.) INC.					
Condensed Version of Audited Financial Report — March 31, 2024					
Statement of Financial Position					
	2023-24	2022-23			
	\$	\$			
<b>Assets</b>					
Current Assets	26,809,564	23,517,622			
Capital Assets — Investments	2,670,163	3,020,056			
Capital Assets	32,157	73,321			
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>29,511,884</b>	<b>26,610,999</b>			
<b>Liabilities / Net Assets:</b>					
Current & Deferred Liabilities	29,011,712	26,155,286			
Net Assets / Reserves	500,172	455,713			
<b>Total Liabilities / Reserves</b>	<b>29,511,884</b>	<b>26,610,999</b>			
Statement of Operations					
	Core Programs	Direct Funding Program	PSW Training Program	Total 2023-24	Total 2022-23
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Revenues</b>					
Ontario Health Toronto Region	674,362	57,498,842	702,981	58,876,185	54,325,905
Administrative / Program Recoveries	342,397	—	—	342,397	445,780
United Way — Program Funding	285,211	—	—	285,211	243,869
City of Toronto Grants	28,182	—	—	28,182	182,760
Self-Generated Income / Other	199,788	322,298	—	522,086	309,766
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>1,529,940</b>	<b>57,821,140</b>	<b>702,981</b>	<b>60,054,061</b>	<b>55,508,080</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Subsidies to Participants	—	55,421,205	590,271	56,011,476	51,576,403
Personnel	1,044,626	1,542,343	—	2,586,969	2,339,513
Administration	30,724	439,012	112,710	582,446	840,905
Purchased Services	96,041	149,734	—	245,775	288,151
Building Occupancy	81,186	202,891	—	284,077	283,594
Program	210,853	47,725	—	258,578	115,305
Staff / Board	12,196	18,230	—	30,426	44,249
Amortization	9,211	—	—	9,211	7,842
Recruitment / Outreach / Other	644	—	—	644	266
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,485,481</b>	<b>57,821,140</b>	<b>702,981</b>	<b>60,009,602</b>	<b>55,496,228</b>
<b>Excess of Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>44,459</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>44,459</b>	<b>11,852</b>



# Jacques LeBlanc

2023–2024 Founders' Award Recipient

The Founders' Award was established on CILT's 10th Anniversary in 1995 to recognize the significant contribution of individuals who both exemplify and have advanced the Independent Living (IL) philosophy in the spirit of its founders.

Ahead of the auspicious 40th anniversary of CILT, we are thrilled to announce that Jacques LeBlanc has been selected by CILT's Board of Directors as the recipient of the 2023-2024 Founders' Award for his contributions to the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto and the broader community.

Jacques has been a dedicated advocate for accessibility and IL for many years. His commitment to these causes has inspired countless individuals to strive for greater independence and self-determination.

During his time studying at the School of Architecture at Carleton University in Ottawa, Jacques used a wheelchair for the first time to navigate the campus due to a rare form of muscular atrophy known as Kugelberg-Welander. It was at that time Jacques felt a sense of liberation that he would carry with him, inspiring a career where he studied and became an expert in accessibility and design. He obtained a BSc in Urban Geography/Planning in 1982, did post-graduate in Environmental Studies at York University and started work with Direct Access Design, a company focused on barrier-free designs throughout the city.

After his tenure serving in public works departments in the municipal, provincial, and federal government in the mid-1980s, Jacques pursued his interests in writing and sports by joining the editorial team at the *Toronto Star*. While enjoying the opportunity to cover sports, Jacques remained committed to

advocating for accessible spaces for individuals with disabilities. He contributed numerous publications on traveling with a disability to various global outlets, including *Reader's Digest*, *Spyker* (Holland), *The Daily Observer* (Antigua and Barbuda), and *The Times Picayune* (New Orleans).

Since retiring, Jacques has actively engaged in consulting on disability and accessibility. Besides advising local businesses on barrier-free design, he approached CILT to offer his help. He became a Direct Funding consumer panelist in 2018, interviewing applicants for the program. He joined the CILT Board of Directors soon after.

The unexpected events of COVID-19 in 2020 took everyone by surprise, and just before the pandemic, Jacques became board chair. He would say, "In the most difficult times is when we stand closer together," exemplifying his leadership that helped CILT maintain consumer support seamlessly during the crisis. Jacques and the board were key in determining a strategy to ensure PPE for Self-Managers at the start of the pandemic and continued to support our staff and community. "We will be measured by our actions, not our intentions," said Jacques.

Today, Jacques is likely spending his time deeply studying baseball statistics, savouring Formula 1 races on Sunday mornings, and indulging in his passion for classical rock music. However, you can bet he is also continuously contemplating ways to share his knowledge about accessibility and promote principles of Independent Living, which truly sets him apart.

Jacques, you will always be a part of CILT, and it is our hope that this Founders' Award honours your legacy and ensures that CILT always remains a part of you.

# 2023-2024 Statistical Highlights

69,248

Number of visitors to CILT website

50,945

Inquiries received

812

Participants in CILT training workshops/  
groups

8

Participants registered for PDN Peer Support Group for Parents with Disabilities

29

Participants registered for CILT Peer Connect (Peer Support Group)

9

Meetings with IDE+A co-leaders

3

Civic rallies

22

Disabled Writers' Group members

2,212

@CIL\_Toronto Twitter /X followers

819

Facebook followers

Independent Living Skills and Self-Advocacy Group members

17

GTA Disability Coalition Group members

28

CILT's Peer Connect Group members

285

# 2023-2024 Statistical Highlights

## Attendant Service Application Centre (ASAC)

389

New ASAC applications received

61

Waitlist applicants placed in supportive housing

6

New supportive housing locations opened



## Direct Funding

129

Completed DF applications received

134

DF interviews conducted

122,688

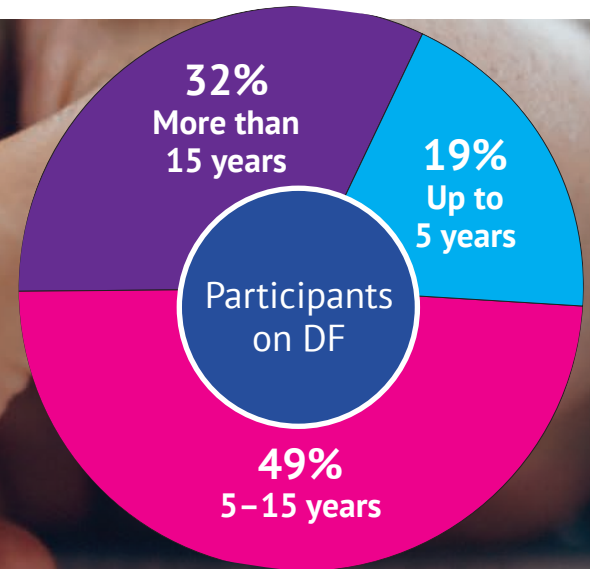
Total monthly hours of service funded by DF

1,793

Total participants funded since 1995

93

Age of oldest DF participant



# 2023–2024 Board Members



**Buvani Sivagnanasunderam**

Buvani is a health equity advocate with more than seven years of experience conducting research and promoting health within diverse under-served and

marginalized communities. She has worked for various Canadian institutions and non-profits in the areas of sexual health, LGBTQ+ health, and immigrant and refugee healthcare. Buvani is currently pursuing a medical degree at McMaster University and also serves on the Accessibility Advisory Committee for Metrolinx and as the EDI board member on the Board of Directors for the Center for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT). Prior to medical school Buvani was a senior analyst with the Ontario Ministry of Health. She believes strongly in equity, justice, and creating inclusive and accessible systems and structures for our communities.



**Cathy Samuelson**

Cathy has worked in the community supporting persons with physical disabilities for more than 30 years. She is the executive director of North Yorkers for

Disabled Persons, which provides supportive housing, attendant services, and augmentative communication facilitation.



**Darren Cooper (he/him)**  
Chair/President

Darren has 20 years of work experience as an accessibility professional, including his current position as the manager, accessibility with the Toronto

Public Library (TPL). In this role, he leads TPL's organizational AODA Program, including the development and delivery of the library's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, its Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities Policy, and various accessibility-related learning opportunities for staff and volunteers. Darren has also held accessibility positions with the City of Toronto, Toronto Metropolitan University, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Milton. In addition, Darren has served as a member of CILT's Board of Directors for the past five years, including his current role as chair/president. Darren holds an Honours BA in communications, a certificate in municipal administration, and the Canadian Certified Inclusion Professional designation.



**Deb Daniel**  
Secretary

Deb has been an allied health professional for 20 years and has a master's degree in health administration, Lean Green Belt, and Project Management Professional

and Change Practitioner designations. She has worked in multiple areas of healthcare, including hospital, community care, laboratory, and home care in both project and quality capacities. In addition, she has served on a social services board and volunteered for various charitable endeavours. Deb enjoys reading, running with her dog, travelling, and teaching fitness classes. She lives in Vaughan with her husband, son, and dog.



### **Jason Herterich (he/him)**

Jason's journey to becoming a disability advocate began after developing chronic illness during his final year at university. As an avid podcast listener, he sought to help improve

representation of people with disabilities in media by producing, hosting, and co-hosting multiple shows on disability and chronic illness. He previously served as an advisory member for CILT's D-Next Accessible Media Lab and was the 2021 TD Fellow on Disability and Inclusion at *The Walrus* where he developed an accessibility improvement plan for the publication's virtual and in-person speaker series. He has also reported on disability for CBC and *The Local*. Jason holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Engineering Physics from Queen's University. He currently works as an energy consultant for Brightly Software's sustainability and energy analytics team. In his spare time, Jason enjoys playing with his six nieces and nephews. On weekends, he can be found running, cycling, swimming, and exploring new hiking trails. Jason has been serving on the Board of Directors for CILT since 2023.



### **Jennifer Hines (she/her)**

Jennifer is a mother of two daughters and is delighted to have a very active grandson and granddaughter! Retired after nearly 25 years in a senior leadership role at a

major financial institution, she has worked to increase her involvement in the not-for-profit realm, focusing on persons with disabilities and youth. As part of the CILT board she is excited to

continue as an advocate and ally for individuals with disabilities by supporting CILT's work facilitating Independent Living.

Always active in the community, her focus sharpened to the disabled community and activities to enable Independent Living because of experiences encountered early on with her younger daughter who lives with a physical disability.

Jennifer has been involved with a variety of community organizations supporting persons with disabilities, including: working with Holland Bloorview Kids Rehab on programs both to support children with disabilities in the public school system and for teens and their families as they develop a transitional path to Independent Living; as board secretary for Silver Creek Pre-School, which serves children with disabilities; fostering 10 puppies as a part of the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides foster puppy program; establishing an Access BOOM sailing program for disabled children at a local yacht club; and supporting PowerHockey Toronto and PowerHockey Canada.

In the corporate environment, Jennifer searched for ways to contribute to strategies for persons with disabilities through Diversity Leadership Councils, particularly focussing on increasing hiring, accommodation, and retention of employees with disabilities.

She brings to the CILT board corporate experience in strategic planning, change management, finance, risk management, and regulatory advocacy and consultation, combined with an MBA (Rotman) and BComm (Queen's).

Jennifer looks forward to continuing as a CILT board member and supporting CILT's vision of social and economic equity for people living with disabilities.



### **Karen Denton**

Karen surrounds herself with the disability community both personally and professionally as an educational assistant in the Toronto District School Board. It makes her happy

and proud when an individual can stand up for themselves and advocate for what they need. Karen truly enjoys being on the CILT board because it doesn't just provide her with the opportunity to learn and grow as a person, but the organization also has the same message to deliver its services as she does.



### **Ken Connors**

Treasurer

Ken is starting the last year of his term as CILT's treasurer. He previously served on the board from 2008 until 2014 and was treasurer during those years. He

has a wealth of experience with non-profit organizations and their boards and has served as treasurer for his condominium board, for the Evangel Hall Mission, and the Mariposa Folk Foundation. Now retired, his professional experience included providing accounting, financial management, and day-to-day bookkeeping services to a variety of not-for-profit organizations in Toronto. For many years, Ken served as the executive director of Three Trilliums Community Place, a non-profit organization providing attendant services to adults with physical disabilities who wish to live independently in the community and direct their own care. More recently, he provided payroll and bookkeeping services to participants on the Direct Funding Program operated by CILT. His background includes work in the Northwest Territories for the Fort McPherson Incorporated Band Ltd., the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, and

international work in South Africa and Ukraine. His education includes a Master of Public Administration, an MA (Russian Literature), and a BA (Political Studies).



### **Mandi Brace (she/her)**

As an individual living independently with a disability, in addition to raising a child with a disability, Mandi is passionate as well as personally invested in

advocating for dignified and independent living for all. Mandi ran logistics for a courier company for several years while obtaining certification in professional sales through Seneca College. A shift in physical capabilities, however, meant a shift in profession was also necessary. This is when Mandi started offering specialized respite for children and adults with disabilities. It was transformative for her, as it is the most rewarding work she has ever been privileged to do – this is also what brings her to CILT. Watching these incredible individuals persevere and fight to adapt to our inaccessible world has helped Mandi realize that so much more needs to be done in the pursuit of equity. By joining CILT, it is Mandi's goal to connect with and give back to the community that has done so much for her family.



### **Nadia Kanani (she/her)**

Nadia is a community worker, organizer, and advocate. Informed directly by her experience in her communities, much of her work focuses on the connections between disability justice, labour solidarity, access to inclusive post-secondary education, and care work. Nadia is the equity officer for CUPE 3903, a labour union representing contract faculty, part-time librarians and archivists, teaching assistants, and graduate assistants at York University. She has campaigned for inclusive education and health justice for migrant communities. Nadia has also created and facilitated workshops on a range of topics including anti-oppression/anti-racism, disability justice, accessible rallies and protests, self-advocacy for students with disabilities, and workplace accommodations. In her downtime you can find her lost in the rich worlds imagined by science fiction and fantasy writers.

### **Tara Gersonde**

Vice Chair/Vice President

Tara graduated from Seneca College with a diploma in social service work. For the past 20 years, she has been an advocate for the Independent Living movement. She has supported and advised both seniors and young adults from differing backgrounds and at different phases in their lives from across the city of Toronto.



### **Vincenza Ronaldi**

Member-at-Large

Vincenza lives in Pickering with her husband and two sons. As a woman with a disability, she brings deep knowledge of the challenges and systemic barriers faced by people

with disabilities and advocates for diversity and accessibility. Vincenza has helped establish the Ontario Public Service Disability Advisory Council and has served on various committees and boards, including the City of Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee, Rouge Valley Health System, Redwood Women's Shelter, and Springtide Resources. After graduating from the University of Toronto, Vincenza began her career at CILT, embracing the Independent Living philosophy and peer support. She then joined the Ontario Public Service, working with the former Advocacy Commission of Ontario to help people with disabilities and seniors defend their rights and improve their quality of life. Vincenza has held progressive leadership positions within the Ontario Public Service, influencing policy, programs, and partnerships to benefit Ontarians. She is currently the acting president and chief executive officer for Destination Ontario, a public agency under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming.

## **Feedback from PDN Vibrant Peer Support for Parents with Disabilities**

- " I really enjoyed the opportunity to experience connection and fellowship with other disabled parents to support through challenge and celebrate successes."**
- " I was very happy because I share my feelings with people like me."**



Toronto Disability Pride March in July 2023.

# 2023–2024 Staff



## **Abdullah Duranai**

Financial Controller  
Direct Funding Program

I have been working with CILT and the DF program since 2011 in various positions. I manage the nine-person Finance

team and work with all administrative centres and Independent Living Resource Centres in the province. Outside of CILT, I volunteer with a settlement agency working with newcomers to Canada. I enjoy long walks, watching Bollywood movies and dramas, and barbecues during summers. I am honoured to be part of a team that enables people with disabilities to live with dignity in their community.

### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Living with dignity.*



## **Amanda Dorter (they/them)**

Project Coordinator  
Core Team

I am a queer, white, disabled, decolonial, diasporic Jewish settler living in the Great Lakes

region, part of the Dish with One Spoon treaty. As a settler I recognize the Two Row Wampum. I've spent my life helping people use their strengths and vision to navigate barriers in the current world, while trying to build a better one. I'm honoured to bring my professional background in education, neuro-re/habilitation, coaching, project management, and equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility consulting to an organization

committed and passionate about Independent Living. I have learned so much by working in both the Core and Operations teams on a variety of programs since October 2023. While I see the interconnectedness of the world overall, I tend to look at human systems through an anti-oppressive, trauma-informed lens, and ecological systems (especially birds) through a variable 35-600mm lens.

### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Autonomy, interdependence, liberation.*



## **Andrea Rae (she/her)**

Service Engagement Coordinator

I have been working at CILT since 2005. Along with Robin Simmons, I do service navigation, responding to inquiries and providing information

regarding Independent Living and disability services available in the city. I do a regular media scan for articles of interest to the disability community and perform community outreach to ensure that CILT maintains a coordinating role regarding disability-related services in the city. I have a BMus from Queen's University and an MA degree in Canadian Studies from Carleton University. I'm pleased to be working more recently with Robin on a reboot of the volunteer program.

### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*The dignity of risk.*

**Bhavya Mehta (she/her)**

Bookkeeping Report Reviewer  
Direct Funding Program

I joined CILT in 2022 as a bookkeeping report reviewer. I completed my BBA at University of Guelph-Humber

with an emphasis in accounting. My role at Direct Funding is to review Self-Managers' quarterly financial reports and assist program participants with any inquiries related to their funds and reports.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Freedom and equal opportunities.*

**Danielle Daoust**

Senior Program Manager  
ASAC

I have worked in the attendant service sector for the past 20 years and was excited to take on the opportunity as the ASAC

program manager. Hence, I am now going on my third year and feel I have made the best decision of my career. We have a great team in ASAC and, despite the challenges we are facing post-pandemic, I feel privileged to work alongside so many dedicated people at CILT. The passion here is infectious, and I am looking forward to what the future holds.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Choice and autonomy are not privileges but a right we should all be afforded. To be completely free and responsible for making our own choices, good or bad, with or without consequence is something that all people deserve.*

**Danielle Vinciguerra**

(she/her)

Financial Assurance Coordinator  
Direct Funding Program

I have been a member of the CILT team since 2015. I enjoy working with Self-Managers

and bookkeepers to ensure everyone has a seamless transition to Direct Funding. Outside of the office, I love exploring locally and abroad and eating lots of (typically) unhealthy food. I find joy drinking a cup of tea while doing a puzzle and listening to a podcast.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Freedom.*

**David Meyers (he/him)**

Senior Program Manager  
Independent Living Programs

I'm a Black, cis, disabled man of Caribbean heritage and have been a settler living in Tkaronto for more than 20 years. I've

been in my current role with CILT since 2018 when I joined the centre. For many years before then, I partnered with CILT on many disability-led projects as an access inclusion manager at Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre. At one point, I had the privilege of serving on the CILT Board of Directors. It's been a wild, rewarding ride working with our amazing CILT team, disabled community members, and our allies to disrupt the ableist societal structures that oppress disabled people's lives. I have a BA from the University of Waterloo. Besides disability activism, I frequent live jazz and blues music and visual art shows and dabble too much in amateur photography.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Freedom. Autonomy. Equity.*



### **Desirée Walsh**

Community Facilitator  
Direct Funding Program

Before joining the CILT team, I was an accessibility analyst at a bank for seven-and-a-half years and have

a master's degree in inclusive design from OCAD University. I also had close ties at CILT and Direct Funding because my twin sister, Samantha, used to be the intake and resource facilitator at the Toronto office. When I'm not working, I am a standup comic. What started with a comedy writing course at Second City in 2016 has led to the release of my comedy album called *Everybody Panic*, which was on NPR's list of Top Comedy Albums of 2023, and an episode of *Comedy Invasion*, a series on Roku, Tubi, and Amazon. Most recently, I have done a few television gigs on AMI including *Breaking Character* and *The Squeaky Wheel: Canada*, and I also do a monthly comedy show. I am happy to have joined the Direct Funding team and assist with making the disabled experience better.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Nothing about us without us.*



### **Elaine Chu**

Regional Report Advisor  
Direct Funding Program

I started working at CILT in 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 work 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.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Autonomy, freedom, choice.*



### **Elizabeth Rodriguez**

(she/her)

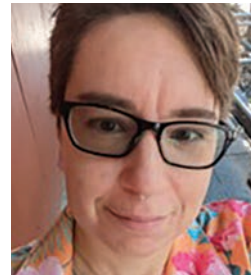
Bookkeeping Report Reviewer  
Direct Funding Program

I joined CILT in 2021 as a bookkeeping report reviewer for the Direct Funding Program. I review

Self-Managers' quarterly reports and assist program participants with any inquiries regarding their funds and reports.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Having control of your own life.*



### **Ellory Manthorpe**

(they/them)

Assessment Interviewer  
ASAC

I joined CILT in October 2023 as the in-house assessment interviewer for ASAC. Prior to this, I

worked as a funeral director for eight years, finding fulfillment in supporting grieving families honouring their loved ones. In 2022, an MS diagnosis and an inflexible workload led me to begin my search for other meaningful work. I sought out work where I could put my soft skills to good use by helping provide support for others, without sacrificing my own well-being. I am grateful to have found this at CILT. I spend much of my spare time crocheting, throwing myself into other crafts, building a hoard of tropical plants and succulents, and caving to the demands of my senior cat. Atticus, a seal point dollface Himalayan, has a face too beautiful to say no to.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Path to inclusion.*



### **Eva Miodonski**

Interview Coordinator  
Direct Funding Program

For the past 30 years, I have been connected to the disability community in Toronto as a volunteer, attendant, art instructor,

facilitator, inventor, attendant finder, coordinator, advocate, program supervisor, case manager, ally, and friend. I am relentlessly dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities to have access to what they want in their lives – by listening, delivering attendant services respectfully, modifying and adapting the physical environment, promoting the Independent Living philosophy, and empowering change within my workplaces.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Working as part of the Direct Funding Intake team at CILT and connecting people to funds that put them in control and allow them to live their lives on their own terms means so much to me both personally and professionally – and is an incredible way to promote the Independent Living philosophy.*



### **Hadeel Dajani**

Review & Audit Advisor  
Direct Funding Program

I was fortunate to join the CILT team in June 2018. I have been working with Self-Managers, reviewing some quarterly reports,

and auditing some Self-Managers' accounts. In addition to that I take care of wrapping up the accounts for the exiting Self-Managers.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*It means freedom and enjoying life with the people you love.*



### **Jennifer Stagg**

Program Administrator  
ASAC

I joined the ASAC team in 2021. I hold degrees in English and psychology and worked as a writer, artist, and educator prior

to working at CILT. My role within ASAC is to respond to general inquiries related to supportive/transitional housing and attendant outreach services, process applications, follow up on missing information, confirm eligibility requirements, explain the application process, and assist applicants who require support in completing their applications. My favourite part of the job is listening to and connecting with applicants. I love helping our community feel supported and heard.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*It means the freedom to choose and to live the life I create for myself.*



### **Jessica Ayoub**

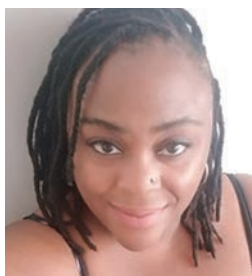
Intake Manager  
Direct Funding Program

I began working for CILT in spring of 2023. While I am new to the organization, I am re-joining the Direct

Funding team after having worked at the Ottawa Independent Living Resource Centre as a DF resource staff member for six years from 2015-2021. My role involves leading the intake team and overseeing many of the functions of the application to interview process.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Allyship.*



### Joella Connaught

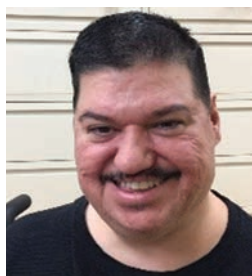
Consumer Experience Advisor  
Direct Funding Program

I first joined CILT in 2022 as a community facilitator on the Direct Funding team and then transitioned to my current

position as the consumer experience advisor in October 2023. I have learned so much from both consumers and colleagues and continue to learn and grow each day. I came to Direct Funding with a bachelor's degree in social work, a passion for working in the disability community, and more than 20 years of experience working in social services – particularly in the disability sector. I am also a parent advocate within the education system. I am a member of the Toronto Schools Caregiver Coalition, the Toronto District School Board Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee, as well as an active school council member at my children's school, championing social, learning, and enrichment opportunities for the student body and their families.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Dignity, choice, community.*



### John Mossa (he/him)

Independent Living  
Skills Coordinator

For the last 24 years, I have been working as the Independent Living skills coordinator at CILT.

I work 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. I also provide short-term crisis peer support and facilitate skills development workshops to consumers. I have led and/or supervised several participatory action research projects on disability issues within Toronto. I am a member of the GTA Disability Coalition.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Choices, rights, empowerment.*



### John Tam

Database Administrator  
Direct Funding Program

I've enjoyed being a member of the CILT team for more than 10 years. Having worked in various positions for the Direct

Funding program, I've finally settled into the role of DF database administrator. When not working, I volunteer with Toronto Trailblazers Tandem Cycling Club (blind tandem cycling). To relax, I enjoy exploring summer outdoor street festivals in the city and watching movies at the cinema or at home.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Independence and dignity.*



### Joyce Leung

Workplace Personal Support  
Attendant and Office Assistant  
Core Team

I started here at CILT as an attendant for staff and my role has quickly changed and evolved to

what it is now. My current role here is being part of the amazing Operations team as the operations assistant. I help ensure things run smoothly on a day-to-day basis for everyone at CILT by doing administrative tasks, assisting with IT, working on the many special projects CILT has, and the list goes on! In my spare time you can find me out by the lake and High Park, fostering dogs, or at various trivia nights around the city.

#### **What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*That you're able to live the way you want, to have agency and control over your own life and decisions.*

**Kate Deacon (she/her)**

Policy Advisor  
Direct Funding Program  
I joined CILT as the  
Direct Funding policy  
advisor in 2022 and have  
been part of the Direct  
Funding team since

2019. I am a person with a disability and a social worker. As policy advisor, I am part of the DF management team and have the opportunity to work collaboratively with staff and consumers across the province. I currently reside in Kingston and originally hail from Sudbury. Outside of work, I spend a lot of time with my dog and might start an Instagram account for her.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*To me, it means building inclusive communities.*

**Kate Welsh (they/them)**

Project Coordinator  
Disability Inclusion Project  
I am a queer, disabled  
artist, community  
activist, and educator.  
I joined CILT as staff  
in 2022 and facilitated

many workshops for CILT in years prior. I am passionate about building communities of care and striving to create safer, anti-oppressive spaces. Living with both visible and invisible disabilities, I navigate complex experiences through art, activism, and community care. I frequently speak on panels at conferences and review academic papers. I am the founder of Equity Buttons and the Community Resistance Intimacy Project – CRIP. I am also a mental health counselor for queer and trans disabled folks and have had a part-time private practice for the past four years. I am really proud of the IDE+A project and the awesome facilitators that I mentor. Feel free

to ask me about my dog Bailey, the current art I am making, or share a TV show with me.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Interdependence, autonomy and choice.*

**Kim Adlard (she/they)**

Project Coordinator  
The GTA Disability Coalition  
I have an evolving  
journey with CILT that  
began during a (seasoned  
adult) student placement  
within the Core team

in 2019 and has since included working as the coordinator of CILT's COVID-19 Vaccine Engagement Project for two years, then my current role as coordinator of the GTA Disability Coalition (GTADC) as of May 2023. Working at CILT and with the GTADC allows me to bring years of past community sector work, my recent degree in Disability Studies at TMU, and my lived experience of critical and chronic illness disability to the table in meaningful ways.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Choice, collaboration, community.*

**Leanne Larmondin (she/her)**

Communications &  
Resource Manager  
Direct Funding Program  
I interview Direct Funding  
Program applicants,  
help participants solve

problems, liaise with program staff across the province, consult on legal issues, review payments to participants, and coordinate and write promotional materials and other documents for the program. When I'm not at work, I row (competitively), run (for fun), and read.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Strength.*

**Leisa DeBono (she/her)**

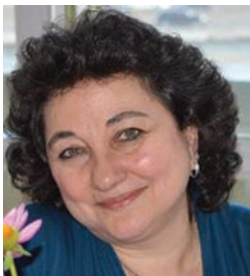
Senior Program Manager  
Direct Funding Program

I started working at CILT with the Direct Funding Program in 1994 and have been fortunate enough to stick around

for the past 30 years. Originally hired as the DF administrative coordinator, I became the program manager in 2011. One of the greatest privileges of my career was to work beside my friend and mentor, Ian Parker, who passed away in April 2021. Ian and I watched the program grow from 75 Self-Managers in the pilot project to almost 1,000 people when the program is at full capacity.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*I have always believed Direct Funding is a program that epitomizes the Independent Living philosophy because it truly offers choice, flexibility, and control over one's life in a way no other program does. I am pleased and proud to have been a part of this amazing program for the past three decades.*

**Marisa Falzone**

(she/her)

Senior Report Coordinator & Advisor  
Direct Funding Program

I have been with CILT and the Direct Funding program since 2012. One

of my roles is to review the quarterly reports from program participants, which gives me the privilege to assist and witness Self-Managers on their journey to living independently. I also provide support to bookkeepers, new DF staff, and other Independent Living Centres across the province on various matters. I'm also responsible for generating the banking direct deposits for the program participants in the Kingston area. When I am not working, I consider myself to be a fun and dedicated

Nonna, who enjoys traveling, gardening, art, life, kayaking, etc.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Exercising choice and control over one's life.*

**Marlene Benedicto**

(she/her)

Intake & Resource Facilitator  
Direct Funding Program

I joined CILT as the intake and resource facilitator for the Direct Funding Program in

2021. I am a graduate of the journalism program at Humber College, and prior to joining CILT I spent several years working as an administrator for a distribution company. Outside of CILT, I enjoy writing, cooking, checking out Toronto's food and restaurant scene, and going to concerts.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Equality and choice.*

**Marlene Ursabia**

(she/her)

Intake Administrator  
Direct Funding Program

I joined the Direct Funding team in 2022 as intake administrator.

I respond to incoming inquiries and help out administratively by inputting new applications, booking online interview meetings, generating and sending legal agreements, and more. I am grateful to be part of this wonderful team. I love how CILT is an organization that gives back directly to the Self-Managers/consumers. I bring more than 20 years of work experience in finance for retail, in various food supply and service establishments, and for the court system in various progressive roles. I am also a transcriptionist with certification in business analysis. I enjoy volunteer work and was Big

Sister of the Year (Group Programs) in 2009 for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto. I enjoy problem solving and finding ways to improve situations.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Freedom, power, choice.*



**Megan Harrison**

**(she/her)**

Review and Audit Advisor  
Direct Funding Program

I have been a member of the Direct Funding Finance team since October 2022. Before

coming to CILT I worked for the Community Support Centre Haldimand-Norfolk for seven years as their financial administrator. When I am not working, I am spending time with my two kids or working on projects around the house or in the yard. *If I had spare time, I would love to spend it working on creative projects and sewing.*

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Choice and being self-sufficient.*



**Melissa Watanabe**

**(she/her)**

Senior Manager  
HR/Operations

I have worked in HR and Operations in the charitable and not-for-profit sector since

2002 and have had the privilege to work alongside CILT staff and its Operations team since 2020. Known internally as “Ops,” we contribute to managing CILT’s people, financial, technological, and office resources effectively, efficiently, and responsibly. We also collaborate with CILT staff to provide the support, resources, and tools that they need to do their work, deliver on CILT’s Employee Value Proposition, and advance CILT’s mission.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Choice, control, CILT!*



**Nadine Azore (on leave)**

Operations Assistant



**Nicola Kay (she/her)**

Bookkeeping Report Reviewer  
Direct Funding Program

I started working at CILT in 2022 with the Direct Funding Program as a bookkeeping report reviewer. I review Self-

Managers’ quarterly reports and follow up on any inquiries about their funding and reports. When I am not working, I am usually outdoors either hiking, gardening, or going for a walk in the beautiful parks around me. I also enjoy staying in and catching up on different TV shows and hanging out with my two cats, Ella and Chloe.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Autonomy, choice, and freedom.*



**Raihan Hussain**

**(he/him)**

Operations and Executive  
Coordinator

My responsibilities are managing CILT’s information technology infrastructure,

administering the Personal Support Worker Education & Training Fund, assisting staff with special projects, and also supporting the work of the executive director. Sometimes I feel like I’m everywhere at CILT, and that’s usually just how it goes! I graduated from Toronto Metropolitan University’s inaugural Sport Media program in 2019, so I’m a diehard sports fan but also regret to inform you that I’m a sad Toronto Maple Leafs fan. I’m also

an avid gamer and love following the genre, particularly Japanese role-playing games.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**  
*Living MY life.*



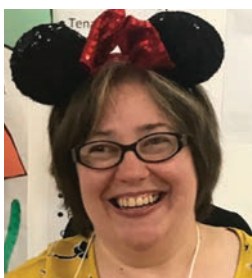
**Rebecca Wood (she/her)**

Peer and Parenting Program  
Coordinator

I am the Peer Support  
and Parenting with  
a Disability Network  
program coordinator  
at CILT. I hold graduate

degrees in Women and Gender Studies and  
Early Childhood Studies. I am a writer with  
publications of poetry and creative nonfiction  
that explore my lived experience of episodic  
disability as a multiply chronically ill woman.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**  
*Possibility, confidence, choice.*



**Robin Simmons**

Inquiries Generalist

I have worked at CILT  
since 2017. As the  
inquiries generalist, I  
respond to inquiries and  
provide information about  
Independent Living and

disability services in Ontario.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**  
*You get to be who you want to be. You get  
to make choices, create your success, make  
mistakes, and grow.*



**Sara Stonehouse  
(she/her)**

Agreement & Resource  
Administrator

Direct Funding Program

I have been a member  
of the CILT team since  
early 2021. As the

agreement & resource administrator, I work on  
communications (including newsletters and

CILT's annual reports), statistics, agreement  
renewals, and many other Direct Funding  
projects as needed. I have a background in  
teaching and information science. Outside of  
work, I love travel, books, music, cross stitch,  
and crochet.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**  
*Freedom of choice.*



**Thomas Chappel  
(he/him)**

Intake Manager

Direct Funding Program

I joined CILT in autumn  
of 2023 after 20 years of  
managing attendant care

in supportive housing and as an attendant.  
After working in countries that were in  
transition and needed support with social  
justice, I returned to Toronto and came across  
attendant care. The idea of Independent  
Living seemed fresh and became a viable way  
to satisfy the need to assist while witnessing  
the growth of a movement that enhances  
society's fabric. I live in Toronto with my wife  
of 30 years and three teenagers.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**  
*You be you.*



**Wendy Porch (she/her)**

Executive Director

I have been working in  
the field of accessibility,  
disability, human rights,  
and education for 30  
years and am a life-  
long disability rights

advocate. I started my advocacy work at ARCH  
Disability Law Centre, supporting people with  
disabilities across Ontario. At the Adaptive  
Technology Resource Centre at the University  
of Toronto, I led R&D initiatives related to  
education, accessibility, and technology. In  
2005, I was a research fellow in accessibility  
in educational media at the Open University  
in the U.K. where I contributed to the

European Union funded EU4ALL project on accessible life-long learning. Before joining CILT, I was the manager of episodic disability initiatives at Realize, a Canadian organization supporting people living with HIV and/or other episodic disabilities. I have an MEd in counselling psychology from the University of Toronto and worked with the Body Image Project at Women's College Hospital. I was a long-serving member of the City of Toronto's Accessibility Advisory Committee and was chair of the City of Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines. I sit on the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Community Advisory Group and am a member of the City of Toronto's Accessible Housing Working Group. I am a proud mom to my son Jasper and work to raise awareness of the needs of parents with disabilities.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Dignity, community, and connection. All of the things we need as humans.*



**Zdravka Gueorguieva**

(she/her)

Program Administrator

ASAC

I am a program administrator at ASAC after starting at CILT in 2010. My role is administration which

includes a lot of customer service, meaning I communicate with applicants and social workers and respond to their inquiries for updating applicants' files. My most important responsibility is the management of the ASAC waitlist, in which I work mainly in collaboration with service providers to assist them to accept the best candidates for vacancies and services. The best emotional moment in my work is when an applicant is admitted for services or housing and communicates their gratitude to ASAC for helping them.

**What does Independent Living mean to you?**

*Assisting the ASAC applicants to find services and housing so they can live their lives independently.*



RALLY 4 ODSP at Queen's Park in April 2023.

# CILT in the news

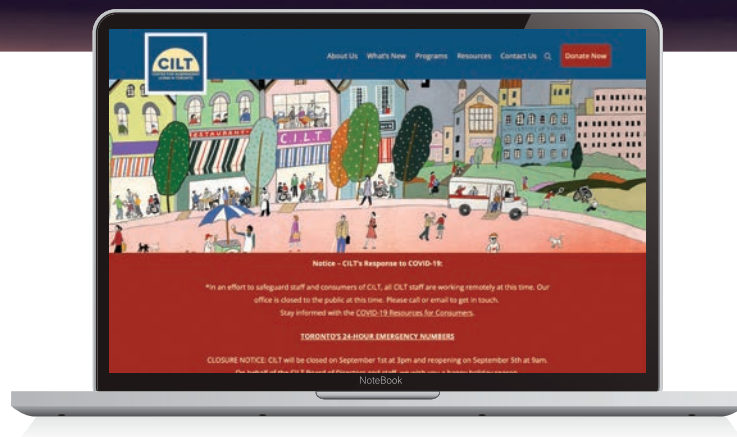
June 5, 2023

**TTC customers with disabilities, advocates call for province to help expand Wheel-Trans**

[www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ttc-wheel-trans-family-services-1.6865905](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ttc-wheel-trans-family-services-1.6865905)

*“We transit users need choice, just like people who voluntarily use the TTC. Using conventional TTC service should be voluntary, not mandatory, and determined by real trends.”*

–David Meyers



Produced in November 2023

**In partnership with CILT, GTA Disability Coalition call to action video series 2024: Disability poverty**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtRvNmYA62w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtRvNmYA62w)

December 4, 2023

**International Day of Persons with Disabilities: History and community action**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uj7L3xK6p58](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uj7L3xK6p58)

February 26, 2024

**At the intersection of Blackness and disability**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6-kWVRK8GQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6-kWVRK8GQ)



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