

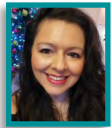
PRESS FORWARD CLIENT MAGAZINE

Quarterly Magazine

Editor: Anjula Assistant Editors: Jessica and Alanna

Winter 2023

WINTER WONDER



• Anjula

In this issue, as we get into winter, our focus is on ‘Comfort & Joy’. We’re also launching into our winter programs!

There are many fun groups and activities to join—something for everyone! If you read about a program or activity you’d like to attend, just send an email to natasha.pastores@mindforward.org and she’ll add you to the list!

Click Below to Link to Articles in this Issue:

[Inspirational Story: Paul](#)

[Holiday Articles](#)

Holiday Favorites at Mind Forward! Adding Holiday “Spice” to Our Lives, Digna—The Essence of the Holiday Season, Xiao—History of the Winter Holidays, Anj—Local Winter Activities

[Congratulations on Your Achievements!](#)

[Question of the Season](#)

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[People & Services](#)

Service Dogs Interview, CARE—Client Advisory Resource Executive

[Spotlight : Interview with Darryl](#)

[Letters to the Editor](#)

Client Magazine Group, Letters to the Editor

[Mind Forward Virtual Calendar \(online link\)](#)

Our Name

We chose the name “Press Forward” because of its connotations of perseverance during struggles, because “Forward” is part of the organization’s name, and because we are “Press”, publishing a magazine.

Letters to the Editor

If you have a question or wish to comment on any of our stories or articles, please feel free to write to us at:

shane.stanissa@mindforward.org

Your questions or comments could be featured in our next newspaper!

Also, if you would like to submit a story, photos, artwork, or achievement for the magazine, send us an email with a description, the pictures, or the article you would like to submit!

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Inspirational Feature

Paul



I felt like something was rattling around in my skull. That was before the surgery.

I had my first brain injury in 1999. I wasn't able to stay awake and felt fatigued all the time. It felt like something was rattling around inside my skull. That was before the surgery. I've been part of Mind Forward since 2005.

I have a good memory for dates of things that happened a long time ago. I was born in 1945, and lived among the Spanish-speaking people in Puerto Rico and Jamaica during my childhood. My father was a Presbyterian preacher, and we sometimes traveled with him. I lived with my father, mother, and younger brother, but also went to boarding school when I was a bit older.

Anj—What were your Christmases like?

There was no snow in Jamaica, and they celebrate Christmas differently. My father took us to church on Christmas Day for the Christmas Fair, and people would come to the grounds or to the house to celebrate.

Anj—What is your favorite holiday memory?

Going to Disneyworld at age 11. We saw "It's a Small World", went on the Teacup ride, and I remember that attractions were breaking down when we were there.

Shane—After you moved from Jamaica, did you think about moving back?

I went back to visit in 1973. The area where I lived had become very run down in the 1950's. The house where I originally lived had caught fire when the next owners were trying to get rid of a wasps' nest, and the eaves caught fire. Thankfully, no one was hurt.

Anj—What are some things about Jamaica that are different to Canada?

The weather is always the same there. We drove on the opposite side of the road. We were on "Island Time", which was very relaxed and meant we were always running late, and we celebrated special British holidays.

What is another special memory?

We had Scott Terrier dogs in Jamaica. They barked too much! We let dogs run loose in Jamaica. We also had a cat named Felix, and another cat named Tina.

Shane—Tell us about your daughter.

We brought her home from the hospital when she was first born, and I introduced her to our cat.



Tell us about your career?

I went to the Radio College of Canada (RCC). I worked in microwave telecommunications, CBC, CTV, FM radio. I also worked on the CN Tower.

Shane—Did your father ever ask you to be a preacher?

[Paul laughs] My mother said it didn't pay enough.

Anj—If there was something else you could tell everyone, what would it be?

[Paul says jokingly] I'm glad I'm here, this side of the ground.

Thank you, Paul, for sharing some wonderful memories from your life with us!

HOLIDAY FAVORITES

Holiday Treats, Activities, and Memories

We interviewed some of the clients and staff at Mind Forward, to see what their favorite holiday treats, activities, and special memories are. Here's what their answers were:



HOLIDAY FAVORITES

- **Ryan**

Treat: Candycanes

Activity: Recently, swimming in Florida at my mom's, plus hot tub

Memory: when I was 8 or 9 and we used to go to Vermont to ski, we'd stop at Montreal overnight. There was a hotel that had an outdoor pool, and you had to swim through a tunnel to get out to it - we swam on the rooftop, looking out over at the city.

- **Marla**

Treat: Caribbean rum cake

Activity: dinner with family then board games

Memory: back home all my friends came to my yard . We had Christmas carols and everyone danced in my yard

- **Dionne**

Treat: Christmas cookies, Sorrel drink

Activity: my mom used to take pics of the snow when we were playing, and pics of Santa

Memory: mom decorating house and putting up the Christmas tree

- **Lubna**

Treat: Christmas cake with lots of nuts

Activity: get together with family friends relax eat enjoy decorations and lights

Memory: family, big dinners. About 10 years back, we were traveling in Sri Lanka and had a huge white Christmas tree with dolls on it. It was very different and beautiful. We also had a holiday dinner.

- **Angela**

Treat: Rice Krispie Squares with Christmas colors

Activity: Dancing with my Family

Memory: My most precious memory is of my six year-old daughter. She was disabled and terminally ill, and Erin oak arranged to have Santa and Mrs. Clause come into our home. It was her last Christmas with us, and it is my most special memory.

- **Anjula**

Treat: making eggnog lattes, anything chocolate!

Activity: being with family

Memory: special times when the kids were little

HOLIDAY FAVORITES

- Carm

Special Memory:

Here is me dressed up as Santa. This is my family my wife Janet, Matteo and Massimo my twin boys and Felicia my angel. When I worked for Shoppers Drug Mart I would dress up as Santa and we would do free pictures with Santa. We would do this to support our community, and was our way to give all children a chance to be with Santa.



Favorite Treat: Candy-cane bark,
Italian Torrone (nougat)

Favorite Activity: spending time with
the family, having fun together



HOLIDAY FAVORITES

Holiday Party Game

Julie shared a fun holiday activity with us!

How to play:

Have guests sit in a circle where they can easily pass the ball to the player on their right. Hand one player a pair of dice. Hand the plastic wrap ball to the player on their right.

Say “Go!” the player with the dice will roll them, re-rolling until they get doubles (two of any number). Simultaneously, the player with the plastic wrap ball will unspool it as quickly as they can to find prizes.

When the player with the dice gets doubles, they will pass the dice to the player with the ball, ending their turn. The player with the ball will keep their prizes, pass the ball to their right, and roll the dice to determine the length of the new player’s turn. Continue until the ball is undone and all prizes are claimed.

What you need to make the ball:

1-5 boxes of plastic wrap

Assortment of prizes like candy, gum, gift cards, party favors, lottery tickets, cash

Place the highest value item in the middle, wrap it a few times, then add another prize. Keep going until all prizes are included. The ball should be as big as a basketball.



• Julie

Treat: anything mint/peppermint, chocolate mint, everything mint

Memory: the year we had our great niece. Whenever there are new little humans, it’s the best Christmas.

Thanks to *Taste of Home* for instructions.

CLIENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations

Congratulations to Sara!

Congratulations on your new job!

Congratulations to Theo!

Congratulations on moving to your new place!

Congratulations to Abel!

Congratulations on becoming a Dad!



Letters to the Editor

If you have a question or wish to comment on any of our stories or articles, please feel free to write to us at:

shane.stanissa@mindforward.org

Your questions or comments could be featured in our next newspaper!

Also, if you would like to submit a story, photos, artwork, or personal achievement for the newspaper, send us an email with a description, the pictures, or the article you would like to submit!

QUESTION OF THE SEASON:

Adding Holiday “Spice” to Our Lives

Here is a little Christmas story. My now husband was invited to my mother’s house for Christmas. My mum is from England and offered my boyfriend some mincemeat pie. He, being Italian and a young man could eat. So he happily agreed to have some mincemeat pie as this would be a new experience for him. When my mother proceeded to put ice cream on the pie I saw the confusion in his face. He was mortified as to what he had gotten himself into with these English girls. He thought he was being served pie made from ground beef. Nevertheless he still married me.



Thank you, Delores, for the above story, and for sending us a beautiful photo of your holiday decorations from a previous year!

We asked how we can add a bit of holiday cheer to our lives, and here are some of the answers:

Sara—Drinking eggnog.

Alanna—Holiday shopping!

Ann—Christmas crafts and making ornaments.

Nigel—Having music on in the background.

Anjula—Hot chocolate, YouTube Christmas light shows.

Digna—Holiday decorations.

Shane—Holiday movies.

Xiao—Holiday soups and salads.

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

The Essence of the Holiday Season



- Digna

The holiday season in Canada runs from late November to early January. This is a time to celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and other religious and cultural holidays.

People celebrate with loved ones – family, friends and significant others. They play holiday tunes, decorate their place, plan gatherings, parties, cook special food, play games, create entertainment, presentations, and themes to make the occasions engaging, fun and memorable. They are everywhere: supermarkets, restaurants, malls, cinemas, indoor sports arenas just enjoying the roar of the crowd and the jolly atmosphere.

The holiday season is also associated with shopping. The Boxing Day (Dec 26) holiday is after Christmas Day (Dec 25). Though this originated as a holiday to give gifts to poor people, today, it forms part of Christmas celebrations, as establishments offer discounts and other promotions.



HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

This season is associated with feelings of love, joy, and generosity. People gather to celebrate and share their blessings. This is a time for reflection, gratitude, and hope. Let's look at some celebrations:

Hanukkah

Hanukkah (also known as Festival of Lights, the Feast of Dedication, or the Feast of the Maccabees) is a Jewish festival that reaffirms the ideals of Judaism and honours the rededication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem by lighting the candles on each day of the festival. It usually falls in November or December and lasts for eight days. The main ritual is the lighting of the menorah, a candelabrum with nine branches, one for each day of the festival and one for the shamash, the helper candle.



Hanukkah is celebrated with traditional foods, games, prayer, and songs. It is a celebration of family, freedom, and light, mainly observed at home. Since this festival involved oil, it is customary to eat foods fried in oil. Examples include potato latke (pancake), jelly-filled sufganya (doughnut). Children receive presents and gifts of money. Card playing is common, and children play a game with a four-sided top called a dreidel.



HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

The Essence of the Holiday Season, cont.

Christmas

Christmas is celebrated on December 25 and is both a sacred religious holiday and a worldwide cultural and commercial happening. People worldwide observe it with traditions and practices that are both religious and secular in nature. For Christians, it is a fitting time to gather and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. As they prepare for the coming of Christ, they sing seasonal songs, attend church, religious rites, pray, put decorations (like the nativity scene, star, tree), connect with family and/or friends, spread the holiday cheer by gift-giving and service to those in need and other intended recipients.



HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa (means first fruit or harvest) is an annual celebration of African-American culture from December 26 to January 1, culminating in a communal feast called Karamu, usually on the sixth day. It was created by activist Maulana Karenga, based on African harvest festival traditions from various parts of West and Southeast Africa.



Families celebrate with feasts, music and dance, and end with a day dedicated to reflection and recommitment to the seven principles: unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

Canada, being the melting pot of different cultures encourages this atmosphere of embracing diversity and different cultures. The holiday season can be an opportunity to recognize and learn about various cultures and religions. This creates a better atmosphere of appreciation, unity, and cooperation.

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

History of the Winter Holidays



- Xiao

Surprising to some, there is no official consensus by historians on how the North American and European winter holidays became a part of the winter itinerary of our current North American lives. Some notable theories have been alluded to more frequently than others.

One is that the beginning and ending of the years are auspicious times in the life of the cosmos because they are the easiest to document and identify on visual maps and architectural tablets, so that the eulogization of real or mythical figures and personalities and creatures, became arbitrarily assigned to the binary designation of new year cycles and end of year celebrations.



Another idea that comes from this theory is that in the previously stratified political system where an oppressive elite controlled a politically weaker servant population, the winter holidays functioned as a release valve to diminish pent up tension and aggression among the oppressed groups in society by giving them a period where they could reverse the leader and servant dynamic, so that an impending riot would not happen from bottled up anger.

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

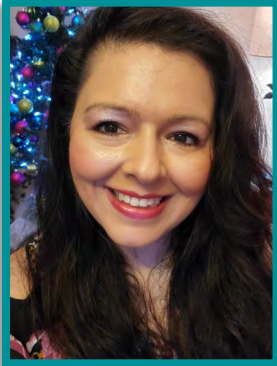


Another theory is that many domesticated livestock were too weak to survive the winter times and fabricating a story about the religious significance of end of year time periods, justified the need to kill the animals that could not survive the winter. It allowed people to celebrate and find meaning in the death of their pork and cattle.

Another theory on the winter holidays is that it is the time where people have the least biological agency due to the inability to visit a beach or apple orchard, so memorializing the winter with a festive holiday, made the somber and lonely winter months, a more joyful and satisfying conclusion to the year.



LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES



Here are some local activities that anyone can attend by themselves or with others. Some events are free and some have a cost. You can click on most of the pics to go to the websites for more information.

Dec. 8-17, 2023

Small Arms Inspection
Building

1352 Lakeshore Road East
Mississauga, ON L5E 1E9

Cost: "Pay what you can"



Date and time

Fri, Dec 15, 2023 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM EST

Location

The Rec Room
100 City Centre Drive #1-705 Mississauga, ON L5B 2C9

General Admission

CA\$27.96 ⓘ

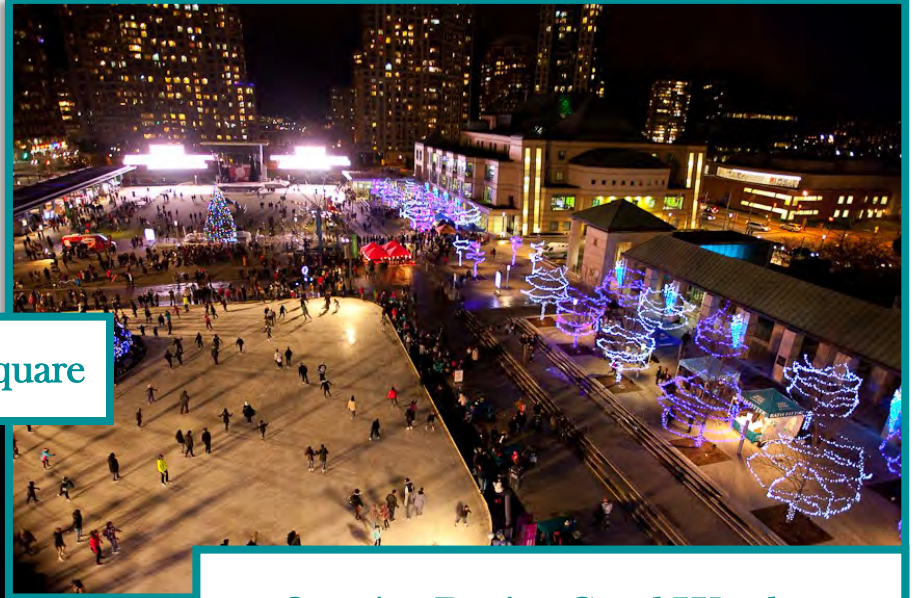
Friday, December 15

iLL XMAS JAM



LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES

Dec 9 Clarke Memorial Hall—Free



Outdoor Skating at Celebration Square



Ongoing During Good Weather

Free

(Skate Rentals, Helmets, Skate Aids,
& Sharpening for a cost)



Kaleidoscope Studios
presents
The Holiday Pop-Up Market
Saturday, December 9
10 am - 5 pm

- Professional Artists and Crafters
- Introducing Teen Artists
- Free Admission
- Free Parking

The Kinsmen Centre
327 Queen Street South
Mississauga

Kaleidoscope
ARTS STUDIO

A promotional poster for 'The Holiday Pop-Up Market' at The Kinsmen Centre. It features an illustration of the building, a holly branch, and two Christmas ornaments (one red with white polka dots, one green). The text provides the date, time, and list of activities: professional artists and crafters, introducing teen artists, free admission, and free parking. The Kaleidoscope Arts Studio logo is in the bottom right corner.

LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES



Ongoing
\$23 (or more)
Tickets must be pre-purchased

Ongoing
Free or \$15 (depends on Date & Time)
Tickets must be pre-purchased



THE DISTILLERY WINTER VILLAGE!

LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES

illuminarium

Ongoing
At the Distillery District
Tickets must be pre-purchased



WINTER WONDERLAND SPECTACULAR

TICKET PACKAGES

GENERAL ADMISSION

\$35

- Entrance to the Winter Wonderland Spectacular
- Does not include admission to the Winter Village during evening & weekends
- Free Hot Cocoa
- Selfie with Santa

Buy GA Tickets

COMBO EXPERIENCE

\$45

- Includes Ticket to Illuminarium's Winter Wonderland Spectacular
- Includes access to The Distillery Winter Village
- Skip the line and enter via Express Entry sign at all gates
- Elfie Selfie

Buy Combo Tickets

LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES



A CHRISTMAS ROCKSTORY: A HOLIDAY CIRCUS SPECTACULAR!

Location: Paramount Fine Foods Centre

Doors: 6:00 pm | **Show Time:** 7:00 pm

Price: \$39 - \$69 + fees

Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023

MSYO: A Merry Little Christmas

Presented by the Mississauga Symphony Youth Orchestra



Event Details

📅 Saturday, December 16, 2023

🕒 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

📍 [Living Arts Centre](#)

🎨 Arts and culture

👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 Family

💰 Tickets: CA\$25.00 + fees



LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES



Yuletide Magic

COMMUNITY MARKET

SATURDAY DECEMBER 16, 2023

CLARKSON ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

10:00AM-4:00PM

Free



New Year's Eve

Event Details

📅 Sunday, December 31, 2023

🕒 8:00 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.

📍 [Celebration Square](#)

🎨 Arts and culture

👥 All Ages

💰 Free



WHAT'S UP?

Highlights and New Things at Mind Forward

Renovated Art Studio, also known as The Woodshop



A big thanks to Darryl and his team for renovating the woodworking room to be used as an Art Studio!

Clothing Drive

We recently held a clothing drive to raise money (by the pound) for Mind Forward! This money paid for some much needed equipment. Thank you to Darryl and everyone else who participated to make this possible!

Next Issue of Press Forward

Have you ever dreamed of horseback riding? Well, now you can! Find out more in our next issue of Press Forward about CARD, the Community Association for Riders with Disabilities.

WHAT'S UP?

Darryl assisting Lei in the Art Studio, also known as The Woodshop.



Creative Writing Novella & Art Contest!

Mind Forward's Creative Writing Group has been brainstorming together and writing a Old Western-themed novella! While we were finishing up the last few chapters, we held an Art Contest for the cover of the book! We hope to have our book ready for printing in the New Year!

New Virtual Group



How to Adult is a group that is geared towards a client who is living on their own or someone who could use help with some of the basics. We will be talking about nutrition, home economics and budgeting to name a few.

WHAT'S UP?

SIL Breakfast

The Supported Independent Living staff hosted a breakfast for its clients. A big thank you to all the staff who worked so hard to prepare this wonderful event!



WHAT'S UP?



MIND FORWARD CALENDAR

PROGRAMS & DAYTRIPS

In Person Programs				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Bowling Classic Bowl 11:00 - 12:00	Café 10:30 - 1:00	Science Simplified <small>Hybrid Program</small> 10:00 - 11:00	Bingo 10:30 - 12:00	Drop In 10:30 - 12:00
	Tech Class 1:00 - 2:00	Holiday Crafts 11:00 - 12:00		
Book Club <small>Hybrid Program</small> 1:00 - 2:00	Tech Office Hours 2:00 - 4:00	Around the World <small>Hybrid Program</small> 11:00 - 12:00	Discovery <small>Hybrid Program</small> 11:00 - 12:00	Brunch and Binge 10:30 - 12:00
Mall Walkers 1:00 - 2:00	Community Meetup 2:00 - 3:30	Games <small>Hybrid Program</small> 1:00 - 2:00	Poker 1:00 - 2:00	Euchre + Dominoes 1:00 - 3:30
Swim Fit 9:00 - 10:30	Sports Heroes <small>Hybrid Program</small> 1:00 - 2:00	Culinary Creations <small>Hybrid Program</small> 2:00 - 4:00	Rec Room Time?	
Mindful Music <small>Hybrid Program</small> 2:00 - 3:30	Card + Tea Making 1:00 - 2:00		Games Galore 2:00 - 3:30	Artistically Yours 1:00 - 2:30
Pinewood Derby 2:00 - 3:30	Movie Mates At Cineplex 3:30 - 6:30			

MIND FORWARD CALENDAR

Head Office Day Services Fall 2023

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Virtual Programming

Virtual groups are accessible through the agency website. Click on 'Upcoming Events' for the Zoom links. The password to access virtual groups is **2021**. Groups are as follows:

Monday:

Weekly Kickoff:	10:00–11:00
Brain Teasers:	11:00–12:00
Book Club:	1:00–2:00
Mindful Music:	2:00–3:30

Tuesday:

Sports Heroes:	1:00–2:00
Water Colouring:	2:00–3:00

Wednesday:

Science Simplified:	10:00–11:00
Around the World:	11:00–12:00
Virtual Games Group:	1:00–2:00
Culinary Creations:	2:00–4:00

Thursday:

Discovery:	11:00–12:00
Drawing with Friends:	2:00–3:00
Movie Club:	3:00–4:00

Friday:

Jumpstart:	10:00–11:00
Giving Gratitude	11:00–12:00
Creative Writing:	2:00–3:00
Client Newsletter:	3:00–4:00



DROP IN SCHEDULE

Head Office is open for supervised unstructured activity as follows:

Monday: 1:30–4:00	Tuesday: 12:00–3:30
Wednesday: 10:00–3:30	Thursday: 10:00–3:30
Friday: 10:00–12:00	

MIND FORWARD GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

Head Office Day Services Fall 2023

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Group Descriptions

*** There are no participation fees for In Person groups unless specified ***

Bowling @ Classic Bowl

3055 Dundas Street West

August 14—November 13

Cost: \$128.82

Bowling has many physical and cognitive benefits such as muscle toning and strengthening, improving social skills, reducing stress and enhancing eye and hand coordination.

Book Club

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

Join this group to explore various literacy works. Participants will engage in an open discussion about the book in relation to life experiences. This group will help to increase communication skills (listening, reading and writing) as well as socialization and interaction.

Mindful Music

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

Through mindful music sessions, discussions, and sharing, we delve into the therapeutic qualities of music, its ability to calm the mind, soothe the soul, and awaken emotions. Together, we explore various genres, sounds, and melodies that resonate with our individual journeys, cultivating a deeper connection to ourselves and the world around us.

Conversation Street

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

Thought provoking discussions on a variety of topics such as current events, pop culture, science and life. This group encourages open-mindedness and respectful exchanges as we explore different perspectives.

Café

September 5—December 19

Cost: \$40 for 8 weeks or \$80 for 16 weeks

Each week, participants will create healthy and budget friendly meals for themselves and their peers. Engage in cooking, teamwork, problem solving and time management skills. Lunches will also be on sale for all clients who attend social club, and staff for \$5.

WWW.MINDFORWARD.ORG

Social Club

One of our most popular programs is making a comeback! This group includes Lunch 'N Learn presentations, interactive games, and socializing. An optional lunch will also be on sale for \$5.00

Sports Heroes

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

A gathering of sports enthusiasts to celebrate the legends of the athletic world. We will discuss the achievements and impacts of your favourite sports heroes across various disciplines.

Movie Mates @ Cineplex Theatre

309 Rathburn Road West

Cost: Pay As You Go

Join your peers for an afternoon at the theatre. Staff will provide options and times each week. Indulge in the collective excitement of watching films together.

Science Simplified

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

Science Simplified is a place where curious minds come together to explore the wonders of the natural world, unravel complex scientific concepts, and foster a deeper appreciation for the beauty of science. We strive to break down complex ideas into digestible and relatable explanations, ensuring that everyone can participate in and benefit from scientific discussions.

Sunshine Stroll

In this group, we come together to embark on group walks, breathing in fresh air and basking in the warmth of the sun. We will engage in meaningful conversation, share stories and celebrate the simple pleasures of being outdoors. This group is open to everyone regardless of fitness level.

Around the World

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

Around the World is an educational journey that takes participants on a global exploration of cultures and traditions. Through interactive sessions and engaging discussions, we dive into the history, geography, arts, languages and customs of different countries and regions.

MIND FORWARD GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

Head Office Day Services Fall 2023

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Client Lunch Hour

Bring your lunch to Head Office and enjoy your meal with peers. Eating lunch as a group brings people together, promotes social interaction, enhances well-being, expands horizons, and contributes to a more enjoyable and enriching lunchtime experience.

Virtual Games

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

This group embraces the power of technology to bring people together to participate in a variety of gaming experiences.

Culinary Creations

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

September 8th—December 22nd

Share your love of cooking, eating and food in general. Participants will be encouraged to share new and creative easy-to-follow recipes (using a maximum of five ingredients). Prior to each group, the facilitators will share the ingredient list required for that week's recipe. There's lots of fun to be had when we roll up our collective sleeves and get something delicious done! **Important:** This is a free group for virtual participants only. \$5.00 for in-person participants— a meal is provided for in-person attendees at the end!

Games Galore

This group is for those who enjoy board and card games. From classic favorites to modern gems, our program will cater to a diverse set of interests and playing styles. Prospective games includes Monopoly, See It Sign It (Sign Language game), Dominoes, Pictionary and more!

Bingo

Cost: Free

Indulge in your love for this classic game. Whether you're a seasoned bingo pro or a newbie looking to learn the ropes, our group offers a welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone to enjoy. We offer a variety of bingo games to keep things exciting.

MIND FORWARD GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

Head Office Day Services Fall 2023

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Discovery

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

Discovery is a community of learners coming together to explore a wide range of topics. Our group values the exchange of ideas and encourages participants to share their insights and ask questions.

Karaoke

A community of music lovers who believe that singing is not just a performance but a form of self-expression and pure enjoyment. Participants can showcase their talents, have fun, and connect with fellow karaoke enthusiasts. Let the applause of your fellow singers fuel your musical spirit!

Artistically Yours

This group offers an environment where various art forms will be explored as means of self expression. No matter your level of experience or artistic background, Artistically Yours invites you to embark on a creative adventure, unlock your imagination, and discover the artist within.

How It's Made

This is a hybrid group (Available in person and virtually)

This group explores how everyday items (such as clothing, accessories, food and industrial products) are manufactured. Video clips are followed with a lively discussion.

Brunch and Binge

September 8th—December 22nd

Cost: \$40 for 8 weeks or \$80 for 16 weeks

This group will support you in prepping brunch for you and your peers. A new menu will be chosen at the end of each group, to be prepared during the following week. After creating a new meal, join us as we binge on Netflix documentaries, biopics, and shows alike!

Community Fall Adventures

This group is all about connecting with one another at various venues. We provide a diverse range of opportunities to explore your neighborhood while building friendships and memories. The Day Service team will provide a list of meet up locations throughout Mississauga.

WWW.MINDFORWARD.ORG

PEOPLE & SERVICES

Service Dogs

Interview with Lions Foundation



The Lions Foundation of Canada has several Guide Dog programs. There are dogs for the visually impaired, those deaf and hard of hearing, people with epilepsy (seizures), people with Type One Diabetes, those with physical disabilities, children with autism, and facility support for those in trauma (example, police officer unit).

We had the opportunity to interview Maria, from Dog Guides and ask her our questions. Here is what she had to say, in our interview with her.

Sara - How do you get a guide dog?

We usually have programs that provide service dogs for people with physical disabilities, seizure response, deaf/hard of hearing, Type 1 Diabetes, children with autism, and facility support for agencies helping people with trauma - for example, the victim support unit with police officers or in court.

You'll need to see which is the right program for you online at www.DogGuides.com

Currently, we have canine vision for the blind (it's the only program right now).

Dylan - What does the application process look like?

On the website, there is a Discovery Package, an "Expression of Interest". It's a big responsibility and the dog needs to be able to give independence to the person. You'll need to give info on your disability — if you're a good fit then we'll move forward with your application.

Carm - how long does it take to train the dogs?

About the same for each program — some dogs are faster — 18-24 months to be fully ready and matched with someone.

Shane - What are some reasons why a guide dog might fail training/certification?

Two main reasons - behavioral or medical. We have a lot of medical appointments to get to the matching process - e.g., eye specialists. We call it “career changed” and available for adoption. If the dog is not able to focus (behavioral), we don’t want those types of dogs. There is a lot of screening of the dogs — they should focus on the person they’re matched with.

Dylan - What’s their criteria for the program for the dogs?

[See above on medical and behavioral] They need to be socialized as well. They go to schools, dental appointments, work, etc. with their foster families, because they’ll go wherever the client goes. Access to as many places/ environments as possible to train is good.

Dylan - Is there anything you shouldn’t do with someone’s guide dog?

Dog guide etiquette - you don’t have to avoid them, just don’t distract the dog. Don’t pet, talk to it, make a noise, etc. If you have questions - ask the individual with the dog. If you think they need help, just ask. If they decline, respect that - independence is important.

Carm - what is the cost of getting one?

We’re a charity - it costs the client \$0. We cover breeding, training, and bringing the client to train with the dog (transportation and accommodation), plus life-long support (e.g., trainer flies out to support somewhere in Canada). The client has to pay for the dog upkeep. \$35,000 is the actual cost per dog the charity covers.

Alanna - is the dog trained from birth or can they be trained later?

They have foster families and are trained right away from birth. Human contact needs to be there right away.

Sara - What kind of breed do they have to be?

We work with lab retrievers, golden retrievers, and standard poodles (poodles are hypoallergenic - they have hair, not fur).

Alanna - Are different breeds used for different tasks?

We use all 3 breeds in all programs. Larger dogs we tend to use for the autism program as they can help with pressure, or can stabilize someone running toward a car (for example). For the hearing program, we use smaller dogs, as they have to make physical contact with a person to alert them to a sound (e.g., fire alarm).

Service Dogs, cont.

Dylan - How do you train the trainers to be the best for the dogs?

We have our own assistance dog school — the apprenticeship is 3 years long, we call them “instructors” as they do classes with people as well. Most accredited schools have their own apprentice program.

Carm - is there a long waiting list?

Depends on the program - autism we stopped in 2019 (too high demand), because we'd halted breeding due to COVID. So there are less dogs to train. Seizure support - we've been open for 6 months, diabetes in January 2024. The best route is to look up our website, and subscribe to our newsletter for info and alerts on when programs start.

Nigel - If the dog is halfway through training, and you take it to a ballpark, and it doesn't do so well, are you back to scratch or do you work on the environment?

Each foster family has a foster family rep. The rep comes to see what's going on then takes steps to correct the behavior. If they have prey drive, it's very difficult to correct. The Ball issue is easier to correct.

We have to see if they are genetically predisposed already to the behavior.

The training facility is in Oakville, the breeding facility is in Guelph.

Nigel - Why would I go with CNIB?

Do your research—you should go with a non-profit so you don't have to pay for dogs. CNIB is new to breeding. As long as the dog is well-trained and provides independence, then that's what you need. Accreditation is important.

Dylan - is there a way to ease loss if someone has lost their dog?

Ad have successor applicants. Some are on their 5th guide dogs. They don't know life without dogs, so they have priority over new clients. The dogs are retired at 8-10 years old.

We are the only ones in Canada that provides seizure control and diabetes alert.

Nigel - What determines the speed of the dog in the program?

Each dog is different — some are quick learners, and personality counts. Poodles are a lot smarter. They're not food-motivated. When completing a skill they get a treat. Poodles like praise, not necessarily food.

Shane - How do you adopt dogs that are retired?

They go into a Foster home, and back to organization. At www.DogGuides.com there are applications for adoption.

All guide dogs need to go into a non-smoking environment , and can't go in if there is a situation like surgery where it has to be sterile.

Carm - Has there ever been a situation where the client doesn't take care of the dog?

In that cast, the organization steps in and takes the dog - for example, when the client is in hospital - then we return the dog, or if it can't return, it goes to another client if it's a younger dog.

If something is wrong with the dog, the organization looks after behavior, the client looks after health.



A big thank you to Maria, who came in and answered our questions!



www.DogGuides.com



Client Advisory Resource Executive: ClientAdvisory@mindforward.org



CLIENT ADVISORY RESOURCE EXECUTIVE

Giving Clients a Voice

Who are we?

We are all clients who have lived with an ABI.

What do we do?

We advocate for positive changes with the senior staff at Mind Forward.

We also are informing and encouraging the community to become more involved with people who have disabilities.



FAQ

How can you get involved?

There is a business letter on how to donate gift cards to MF that will help clients directly.

For example, if someone moves into an apartment and has nothing, they will need basic living items. Sometimes there may be emergency need for essentials for other clients. The staff also likes to hold events with gift cards as prizes.

If you could take a letter and pass it to someone with a business who may want to help, it would be greatly appreciated!

Contact Ashley Budd for more information at: Ashley.Budd@mindforward.org

(905) 949 4411 ext. 240

Client Advisory Resource Executive

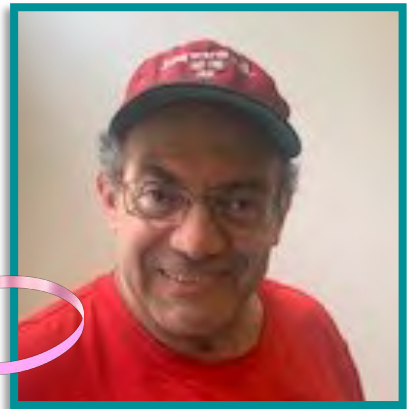
CARE

MIND FORWARD
Brain Injury Services

Are you ready to CARE with us?



Flora



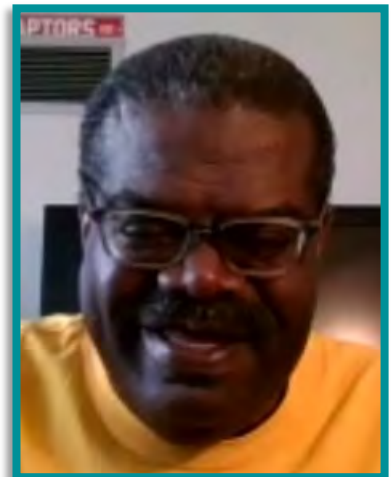
Frank



Alanna



Anjula



Nigel

Spotlight



Program Manager for Day Services

Darryl Clarence

Xiao - What does your job cover?

I have two positions: 1) Day Services Manager which involves overseeing all programs in every area, special events, and virtual events, veto privilege on everything, and a great team of folks to help; 2) Virtual Service Manager - I do digital literacy training for clients across the agency. Using tech isn't easy for everyone, and it's important to provide help and assistance for everyone. I create content and offer support on how to use equipment and stay safe. They benefit Mind Forward and OBIA, so clients across the province will get the training in anti-fraud.



It doesn't matter what anyone else thinks. If the person in the mirror doesn't approve, then you're cheating yourself.

Nigel - In 22 years with the company, from frontline to management, which position have you enjoyed the most?

I feel I got the most out of and my favorite was Halton Day Services. When the program started, we had a grant for a year to see if there was enough interest to sustain a program there. We made connections in Oakville, and made some great partnerships, and fantastic groups. We took the numbers to the Ministry and showed there was a need and desire for the Halton program. Now we get money every year to maintain services in Halton area.

I liked it because Yvonna and I started from nothing and grew it successfully. Plus I enjoyed the woodworking, golf, and things I personally enjoy as well. It's in good hands now.

Xiao - How has your job function changed over time?

The biggest change is the fact that I'm able to influence so many more people now. We started with 9, then 30-50 people, then on virtual we had a massive program, and I got to know people and provide more services to a whole new group of people. It's the largest scope I have now, and it keeps getting bigger and bigger. I like giving more people access to things.

Carmine - What do you find most challenging in your position right now?

Managing both projects. There's a lot coming out of the pandemic and facing things we never faced before. We want to keep the virtual programs going for people. And there's just as many people coming back in person, who want the scope and scale of the programs we had before. Also, being creative in the way we reach people, including those who can't come back, and adapting to meet those needs. Shane's in Allendale/Milton sometimes. We're meeting people in the community, new neighborhoods, wherever people happen to be. Teaching digital literacy as well, with lesson plans. Maintaining grants, and support. I like to keep busy, but all these things are challenging.

Nigel - I know you're very self-made. Have you ever had formal training in technology?

My minor in uni was computer sciences. Between the pandemic and now, in 2022 - I was working on stuff behind the scenes: police cybercrimes division, anti-fraud division, helping those being victimized by fraud, I tweaked their resources so they're good for our population.

Shane - What is the best tech-tip for the clients?

Working together to find ways to keep people safe online. There's a large amount of fraud targeting vulnerable population. The criminals are making so much money off these scams, and I hope on Tuesdays it will help people to stay safe, and help those who have become victims. Come see me on Tuesdays in person or virtually.

Also, "free is my favorite". There's almost always a way to get free options.

Anj - I've seen the art studio downstairs - how do you plan for the clients to use it in the future?

The woodworking room was being neglected. We should be starting it up in mid-November. Anything that can make a mess can be done in there. Woodworking is just one activity in there. It should also be an expression of you and what you want it to be. Myself and other art enthusiasts will be putting together art projects - we will be making Christmas presents in the room this year.

Xiao - What hobby skills do you use in your job?

I always found that if I was interested in subject matter of a course, others would share the same enthusiasm. I enjoy the wood-working, computers, tech, golf, outdoors stuff, fishing trips in Oakville, and we're having another ice fishing tourney in Orangeville again this year. If you're passionate about something, the positivity and energy is infectious.

Digna - what is your guiding principle in life - because you're good at everything you do?

Life philosophies:

The best prize that life has to offer, is to do work on work worth doing (I'd like this chiseled on my tombstone). The reward in my life is doing work that I do, especially knowing it influences people's lives.

The Man in the Glass by Dale Winbrow - the poem says it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks. If the person in the mirror doesn't approve, then you're cheating yourself.



Carm - Who's your favorite wrestler?

Bray Wyatt. It was all about the character. Before that was The Undertaker, my son likes him. The people who took it above, and did it with storytelling. John Cena, because my youngest son loved him (this generation's Hulk Hogan). I get to watch wrestling with my kids, like I did with my dad.

CLIENT MAGAZINE GROUP



Our **Client Magazine Group** (formerly known as Client Newsletter Group) got together for some Hallowe'en fun! Here are (from left to right) Jessica, Ann, Anj, Nigel, Ryan, Digna, Gino, and Shane (in front). Not shown: Alanna, Sanjay, Sara, Alanna, Carm, Enaya, Xiao, Paul, Patrick, and Steve. Oh, and we mustn't forget Jack, our new Jack-o'-lantern! We took turns creating Jack, by choosing a facial expression template, drawing it on the pumpkin with a marker, then carving him. Thanks to Jessica, who took on the job of scooping out our pumpkin!

Our magazine group meets once per week on Zoom, and we each choose a project that interests us. Then we work on our articles and assignments independently or semi-independently. We also invite people to be interviewed into the group so we can ask them questions. Come join us for some fun!

Letters to the Editor

Send in your articles, artwork, and more!

Flora is one of the members of our Client Advisory Resource Executive (CARE). Here (to the right) she advocates to her M.P. for the brain injury community, and also shares about the Ontario Disability Accessibility Act (below).

Today Is the Grass Roots Non-Partisan Ontario Disability Accessibility Movement's 29th Birthday!

November 29, 2023

SUMMARY

Twenty-nine years ago today, a group of some 20 people with disabilities spontaneously gathered in a meeting room at Queen's Park, angry and feeling driven to do something dramatic. That day, they created a new and enduring grassroots non-partisan movement to campaign for strong accessibility legislation in Ontario. We had no idea what we were starting. Our movement remains in full force almost three decades later.

I recd a paper survey from our member of parliament, Iqwinder Gabeer, my priorities are health care, safety and supporting pwd who are vulnerable. Look ahead. One universal STORY we ALL age with or without dignity, with or without worth /identity. Get ready with ODA for pwd /SR groups who require acknowledgment and inclusion

- 1- to help us get physically out of the house free
- 2-to get to SR centres with free gyms. Access2 programs such as recumbent exercise machinery
- 3-accessible digital access free
- 4-wheel trans -free to cross borders between peel and Toronto free

We have earned this human right for freedom not isolation
Be fair and free Step up

Good morning Flora,

Thank you for your email and for reaching out to the office of Iqwinder Singh Gaheer, Member of Parliament for Mississauga—Malton.

We are glad to hear that you received our paper survey and are appreciative of your comments and feedback. We will note your responses down.

Kind regards,

<image002.png>

Office of Iqwinder Gaheer, M.P.
Bureau de Iqwinder Gaheer, M.P.

Mississauga – Malton

Email/Courriel: iqwinder.gaheer@parl.gc.ca

Website: Iqwinder.Gaheer.libparl.ca

Thank you Steve, for allowing us to display
your artwork!



Mind Forward Brain Injury Services

Mind Forward Brain Injury Services is a non-profit charitable organization, completely funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOH & LTC) and Ontario Health to provide community-based rehabilitation and life-long support for adults whose lives have been touched by acquired brain injury.

Since 1992, Mind Forward has been committed to offering services to all individuals touched by brain injury (including clients, family members and caregivers) based on an assessment of the individual's needs and through a team approach to service planning and goal-setting. The client and significant others are welcomed as members of the program planning process, along with our staff and other experts.



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our programs

Mind Forward Brain Injury Services

176 Robert Speck Pkwy.
Mississauga, ON L4Z 3G1

905-949-4411, extension 221

info@mindforward.org

Visit us on the web at
www.mindforward.org

Mind Forward Brain Injury Services

Mind Forward Brain Injury Services

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE