



**OPTIONS  
NORTHWEST**

*live life your way*

# **Annual Report 2019-2020**

**OPTIONS NORTHWEST**

95 N. Cumberland Street

Thunder Bay, ON P7A 4M1

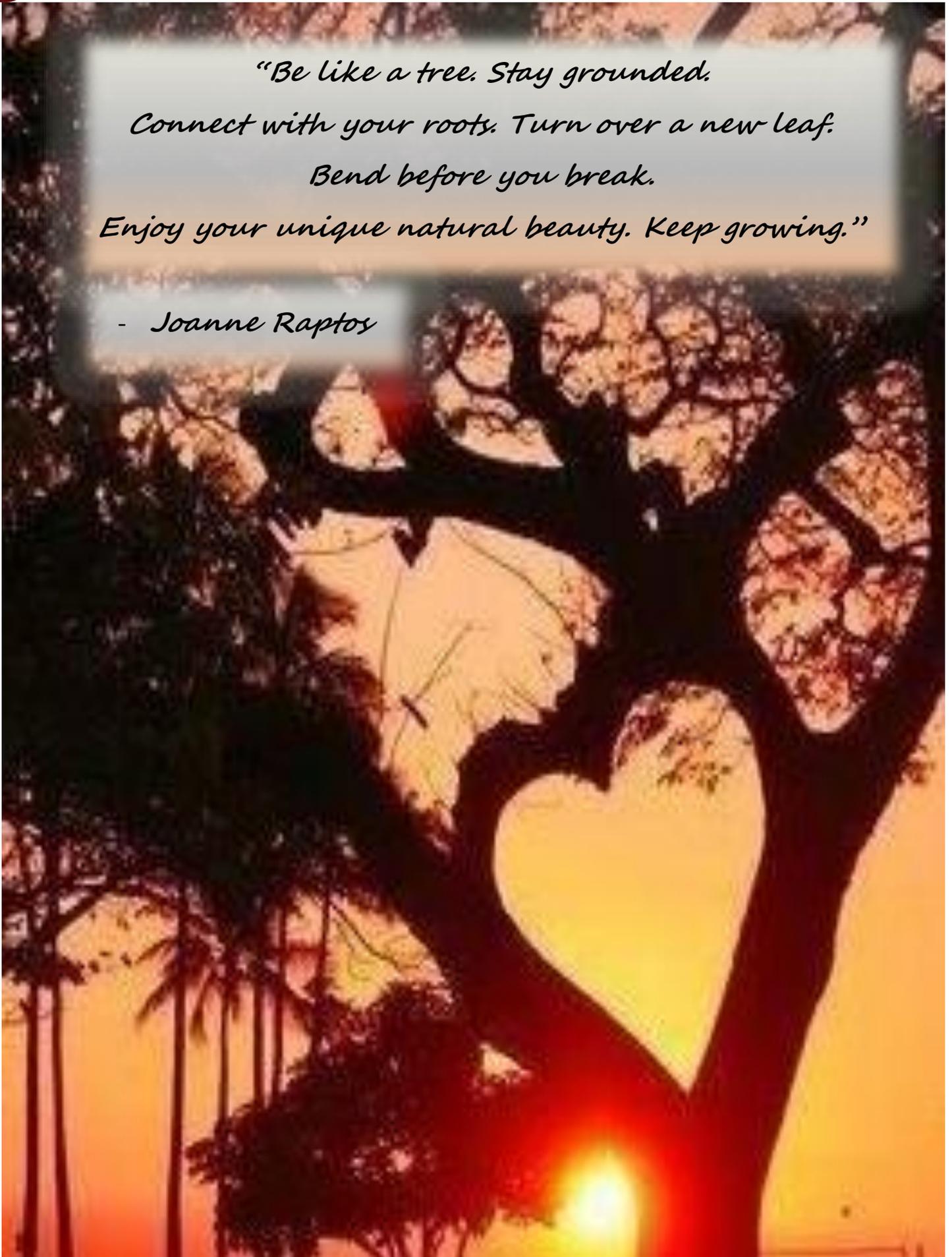
807-344-4994

[optionsnorthwest.com](http://optionsnorthwest.com)



*"Be like a tree. Stay grounded.  
Connect with your roots. Turn over a new leaf.  
Bend before you break.  
Enjoy your unique natural beauty. Keep growing."*

*- Joanne Raptos*





**OPTIONS  
NORTHWEST**  
*live life your way*

## **Our Vision**

Dedicated to respecting the right of people to live life their way.

## **Our Mission**

Through personalized OPTIONS, we collaborate with people and community partners to develop and offer creative personal and clinical services for individuals

## **Our Philosophy**

OPTIONS recognizes people's diverse strengths and believes in the rights of all to:

- 🌳 be respected
- 🌳 be connected
- 🌳 be informed and gain knowledge
- 🌳 be self-reliant
- 🌳 advocacy



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## *A Message from the Executive Director & Board of Directors*

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Management Team of OPTIONS NORTHWEST, we are excited to share the 2019/2020 Annual General Report. This past fiscal year the board and myself realized that I was going into my fifth year as Executive Director with the organization. Each year when we orchestrate this report, I reflect that another year has passed so very quickly. Well, this past fiscal year marks my entrance into 5 years in this position. I am privileged to have met so many employees in this organization who make a difference in the work we do each and every day. It does seem like yesterday that we entered into a real transitional period for developmental services.....and we still remain in the transformation of the system. The individuals we support educate us daily about our vision, “dedicated to respecting the right of people to live life their way.....”

This past fiscal year saw some continued silence from our funding Ministry. At the end of the last year, I commented in the report that we expected to see reductions in funding in the social service areas. And while many areas experienced change, like the Autism programs in the community, our developmental services sector seemed to remain untouched for most of the year. We did not know what the outcome would be as our budget that is typically approved by the summer months, did not get approved until January 2020. This meant the organization worked 10 months of the year not really knowing what the final outcome would be. We took measures through the course of the year to curb spending and only do essential work. For the first time in our history we had no communication on our budget and this, in itself, was a challenge that we did our best to work with. The majority of this fiscal year was untouched by the other challenge that faced us; the Corona COVID-19 virus. It did not affect much of our operations until early March. We decided to celebrate the 11.5 months that were not affected by COVID-19 rather than focus on the last 2 weeks of our fiscal year when COVID-19 shut down the world.

One of the highlights that happened at last year’s AGM was the debut of OPTIONS NORTHWEST’s new logo. At our AGM meeting, the board unveiled the new logo for the organization. When the Board of Directors engaged in strategic planning with the organization a few years back, with input from employees, you may recall several changes resulted from the strategic planning exercises. One of the most notable ones was the change to our Mission, Vision and Philosophy. “Dedicated to Respecting the Right of People to Live Life their Way” has been incorporated in the work that we do each and every day. An updated logo was also on the strategic plan, but it took a back seat with so many other projects on the go and the transitioning of many new individuals to OPTIONS. We wanted a new logo that reflected the changes that have occurred at the agency and that better reflected the work that we do.



The new logo design has been incorporated into this report. The Board of Directors is pleased to present this new logo as part of their vision for the ongoing implementation of the strategic directions of the agency. It symbolizes an agency that continues to “grow and change” with the times. Below is a detailed description of the symbolism behind the logo.



Some of the highlights of this past year:

- We opened our second location at 86 South Cumberland Street. Our administrative departments of Finance and Human Resources moved to the new leased location as part of a bigger plan to develop 95 North Cumberland into a hub for the individuals we support. More details on this plan will hopefully be put into the works once things re-open from the isolation of COVID. A sensory/snoezelen room is also in the works for the main floor of 95 North as funding from a family was gifted for this purpose.
- We participated in the Alzheimer coffee break to show our support for a great cause. Many of the individuals we support have been directly affected by dementia and we were happy to participate in this community endeavor and raise some funds for them.
- In July of 2019, we participated in Ministry led calls to lend our support to evacuees that forced First Nations people from their homes due to fires. Many communities accepted individuals who could not remain in their homes up North due to the devastation of the fires. While we did not have to provide any direct services to anyone during this time of high alert, OPTIONS was a participant on the weekly calls to offer support to anyone with a developmental disability who may have needed assistance.



- One of the bigger tasks that occurred through the spring and summer was the closure of the Collins home. Closing of a home is never an easy decision and while this one was not planned, it naturally occurred with the passing of several individuals from our care and the move of another individual out of our area. With the budget uncertainties of the year, some quick decisions were made to explore our options. In doing this, we also reflected on the changing needs of the organization and the aging of the people supported. We reviewed our Skyline location and the challenges that the physical home posed for accessibility especially in the winter months. With many moving parts and a lot of communication out to all of our locations and the people and families directly affected, the decision was made to close the home at Collins Street, take back our Tuscany home that had been rented out to CLTB and re-locate the Skyline home over to Tuscany. It took a number of months to ensure all of this went smoothly and that this could be accomplished. As a result, one of the individuals still supported at Collins moved over to the Syndicate home and one of the individuals at Skyline moved over to the Langworthy home. OPTIONS is currently working with CLTB to re-purpose the Skyline home by transferring it over to them with the permission of the Ministry.
- A really big change that occurred for us was the new Serious Occurrence reporting portal. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services launched a new format and guidelines for the reporting of Serious Occurrences. There was a great deal of learning that had to occur coupled with new policies and Incident Reports. The new portal which does all reporting online came into effect in November 2019 and the management team is still learning to navigate the system.
- The Fall of 2019 had us lugging rocks.....lots of rocks. Big ones, little ones, flat ones, and round ones. Over 300 rocks were carefully painted by individuals supported and employees in our rock project for the Christmas luncheon. We got creative this past year and didn't bring in anyone to assist us as we were uncertain of our budget at the time.



Snowmen, trees, strings of lights and Santa buckles were the creative patterns that employees helped design to allow the rocks to come to life. 95 North housed all of the beautiful creations until it was time to lug them to the Italian Hall for the Christmas luncheon. Over 200 guests got to enjoy the rock decorations on the tables with the beautiful boughs. Everyone got to take a rock home for their own collections. Many thanks to all of the employees who helped create the rock art with the weekly painting afternoons, for those that donated and helped haul them, Mark Beazley, Chris Wiseman, Jill Thompson, and Lisa Maki (they were heavy), for April Richardson's donation of paint and supplies for the event and for Corrine Ceci and David Giba for cutting and collecting the boughs for the tables at the luncheon.



- In February 2020, OPTIONS underwent a review by the Ministry of Labour Training and Skills Development. Agencies with group living homes were being reviewed in a provincial blitz and 4 of our group living locations were picked. The focus on the review was a little different from our compliance inspections in that the focus was more from an Occupational Health and Safety perspective. We had awesome results from this review. Hats off to all of the employees who participated in these.
- Early March 2020 saw us into another Compliance review by the Ministry.....that sometimes frightening word “Compliance” was back and the team arrived to review our group living residences, Home Share program, Supported Independent Living services and Community Participation Supports. Board, employee and volunteer files were also reviewed at the same time. We were cited for only 4 areas of non-compliance which is a huge achievement/accomplishment for this organization. We were able to rectify the issues within 24 hours to get our letter of Compliance within the day. Awesome work by all considering over 350 items are reviewed in this process.
- Community Services welcomed 2 new youth to our organization: Susanne and Kyler. See more information on them in the report. Through our transitional aged youth planning process, Susanne and Kyler transitioned over from the children’s system to the adult system. We have enjoyed getting to know these 2 new youth.
- Our Human Resources department had a busy year as we welcomed 73 new employees to OPTIONS. That is a healthy number of new employees that were hired across the agency in a variety of positions. We are always excited to hear in our General Orientation process that individuals picked OPTIONS as their chosen employer. A warm welcome is extended to all who joined us. It was also a year that long term Director of Finance and Administration, April Richardson, set her sights on a new adventure; retirement. She began her career with OPTIONS back in 1991 when the agency was a part of Hogarth Westmount Hospital. Her wisdom and financial creativity over the years will be missed but we wish her much success in the new roads she will pave going forward.
- The Community Resource Team provided clinical services to 86 new adults and 9 new children over the past year. It was a busy year for the team and they expanded into some non-traditional areas of service like the garden project and mindfulness awareness, both of which are shared further in this report.

While I write this report after our fiscal year end, I am very reflective of the last few weeks in March that not only changed how we do business for OPTIONS but literally changed the world over night. The COVID-19 virus stopped us dead in our tracks and has made us look at every aspect of our work. As I reviewed the pictures in this report, I am reflective of the “humanness” in all of it, the social gatherings, the sharing of food and fun times and it hits me that this report will look very differently after this upcoming fiscal year. We are grateful for the wonderful TEAM at OPTIONS.



Everyone contributes to the wellbeing of the individuals we support, and the employees have demonstrated the ultimate definition of Teamwork. On behalf of the board and myself, we are grateful for the many gifts this organization benefits from all of you.



- To the **amazing individuals and families** we are privileged to support.
- To all of **our awesome employees**. We couldn't do what we do without your caring and support of our agency.
- To our union partners of **UNIFOR and ONA** for working with us through challenging times as partners in the care we provide.
- To our **partner agencies**. We appreciate your collaboration with us to work together for our community.
- To our funder, the **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services** for your financial support of the work that is so important to what we do.
- To our **Board of Directors** for their gift of volunteer time to support our organization.
- To a **committed management team of supervisors, managers, and directors**.

My role and the role of the board are supported by so many of you working tirelessly each day to make our mission and vision a reality. Thank you for making OPTIONS a place to be proud of.

***"At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us."***

- Albert Schweitzer

Anna-Marie Eckensweiler  
Executive Director

Meghan Hanbury  
Board of Directors President



**Directors**

Anna-Marie Eckensweiler, Executive Director  
April Richardson, Director of Finance & Administration  
Mark Beazley, Director of Community Services  
Jill Thompson, Director of Human Resources

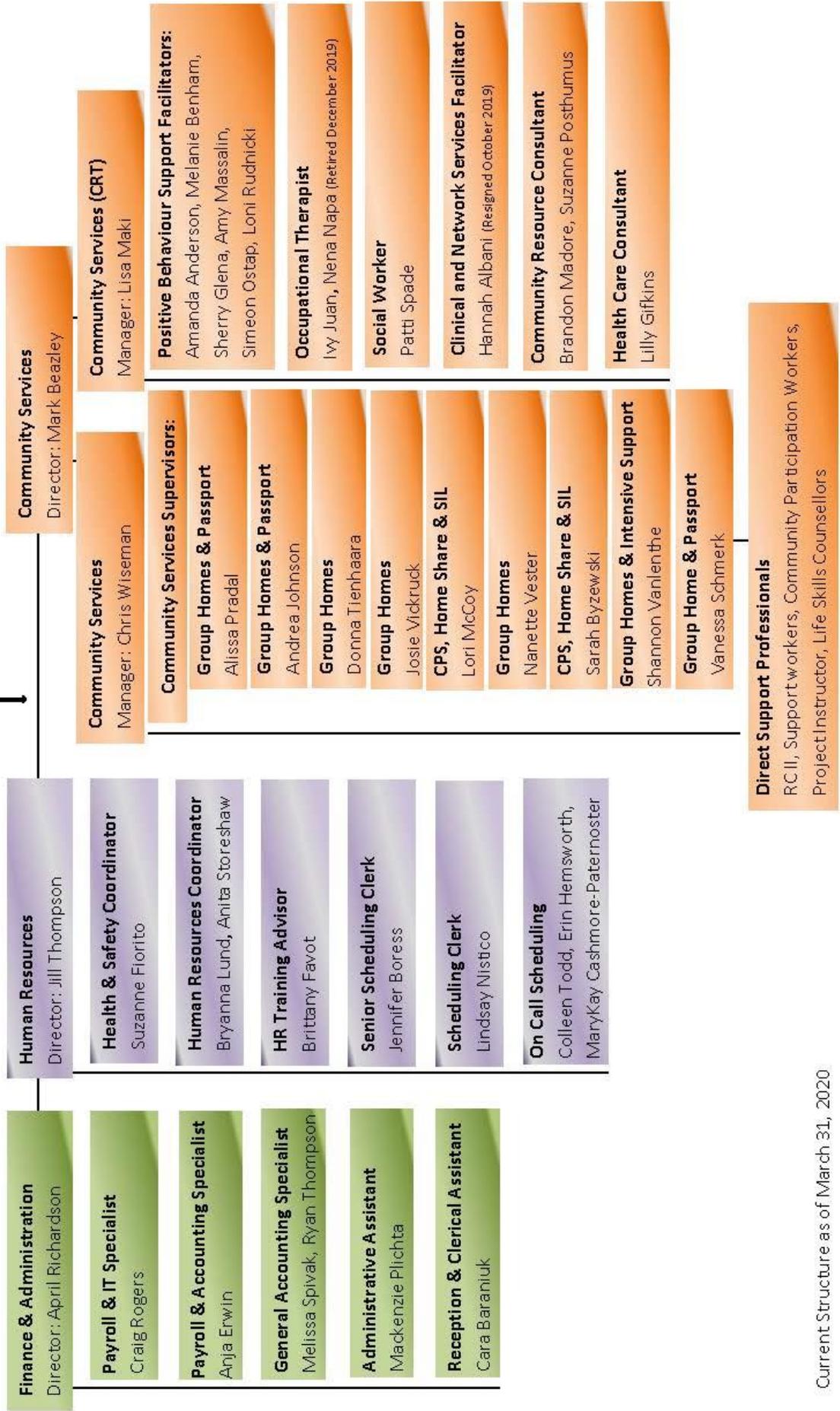
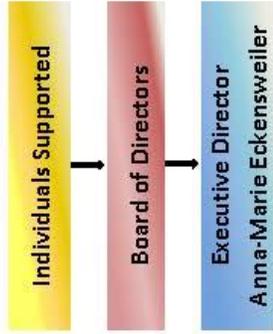


**Board of Directors**

Leigh Abthorpe, Director; Meghan Hanbury, President;  
Karen Kemp, Vice President; Patricia Maxton, Director;  
Sheila Waywanko, Secretary; Anna Gosselin, Treasurer



# Organizational Chart





# Thank You

OPTIONS NORTHWEST would like to Thank...

...Individuals receiving services and their families.

...Employees, students, volunteers, and community partners.

...Everyone who submitted photos and stories for this report.

...Everyone who participated in OPTIONS events throughout the year.

...Cara Baraniuk for her creativity with this report.

It is our privilege to support and partner with all of you!





# *In Memory*



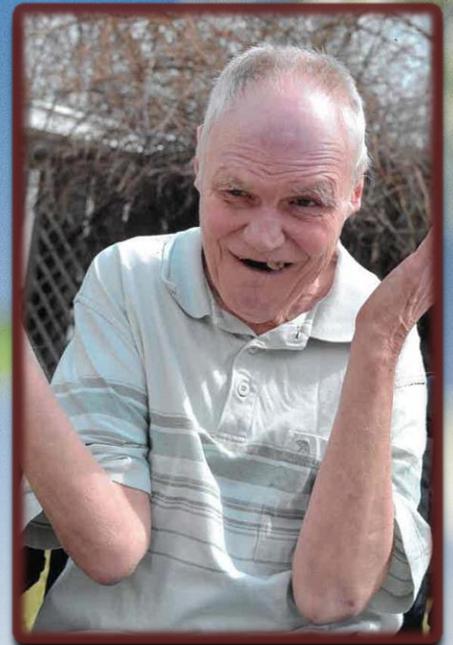
*Jeff Towedo*

*“Wherever a Beautiful  
soul has been  
there is a Trail of  
Beautiful Memories.”*

*- Ronald Reagan*



*Cathy Allen*



*Mark Lewicky*





## *Syndicate Sensory Garden*

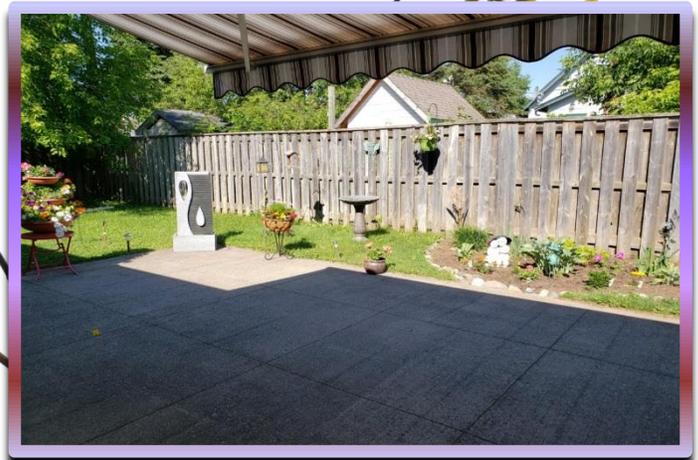


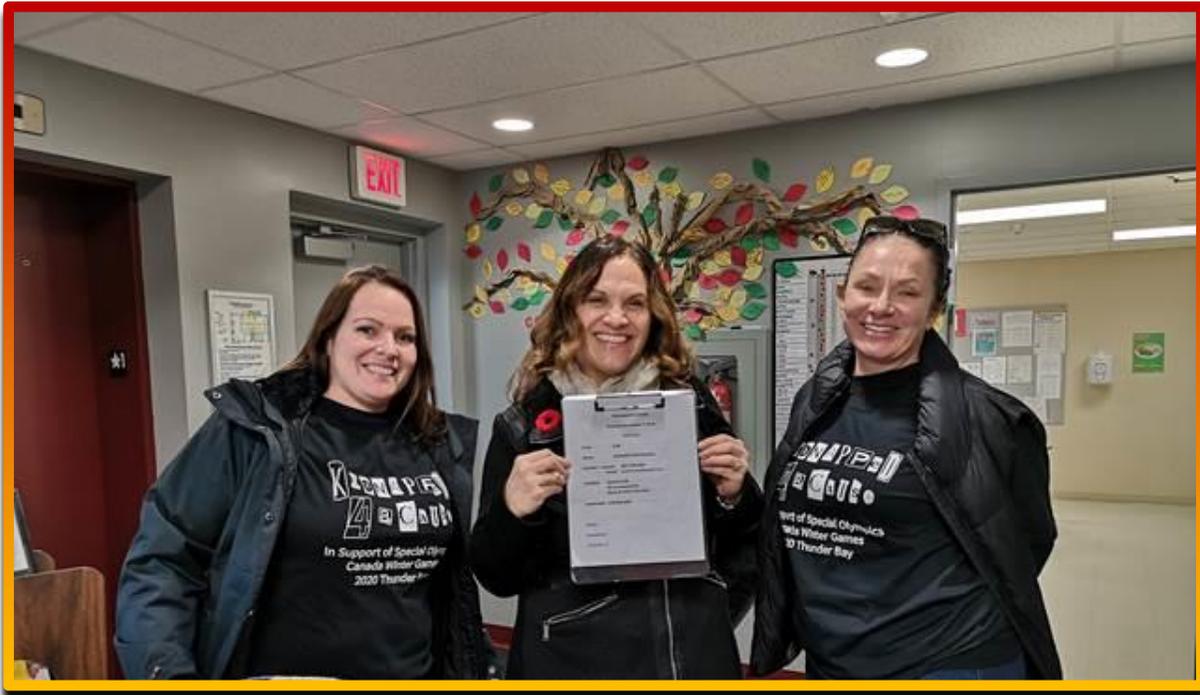
This year all individuals at Syndicate had goals to plant a sensory garden and enjoy more of the outdoors. All had a hand in shopping for the items and plants and learning how to take care of the garden. Some of the sensory items included in the garden were water fountains, wind chimes, colourful flowers as well as various vegetables.

Submitted by Josie Vickruck



*"Flowers Lift  
the Spirit and  
Refresh  
the Soul"*  
- Martha Lever





### *Kidnapped 4 a Cause Special Olympic Fundraiser*

On Nov. 7, 2019, Suzanne Posthumus was “kidnapped” from her workplace at OPTIONS NORTHWEST and held for “ransom”. She was brought to an undisclosed location and needed to call people requesting them to pay money to help get her released. She was able to raise over \$1, 000 dollars for the Special Olympics Winter Games 2020 -Thunder Bay Chapter! Although kidnapping is a very serious topic you can see from the photos that it was all for a very worthy cause and fun was had by those involved in this fundraising event. Thanks to all the people who contributed to the Special Olympics Winter Games!



On a hot summer day Joe reeled in a fish and was quite proud!



High St. Halloween Party!



As part of Cindy's goals last year, she wanted to spread some Christmas Cheer. Staff helped her sign up to volunteer for Salvation Army Kettle Campaign. Cindy had an amazing time, singing songs and shaking the bell!!

Submitted By: Vanessa Schmerk

"Wherever you go, no matter what the weather, always bring your own sunshine."

- Anthony J. D'Angelo

David won a 2-night stay at Kab Lake through a fundraiser for Special Olympics!

He started out the 2019 fishing season with this monster!! In addition to the great fishing, he thoroughly enjoyed the good food, and the company of Nicole and Jeremy!

Submitted By: Andrea Johnson





*“Keep Smiling, Because  
Life is a Beautiful Thing  
and There’s so Much  
to Smile About.”*

*- Marilyn Monroe*





# Painting Christmas Rocks



*" Create with your Heart  
Build with your Mind. "*

*- Criss Jami*





*"You can't use up  
Creativity  
the more you use  
the more you have."*

*- Maya Angelou*





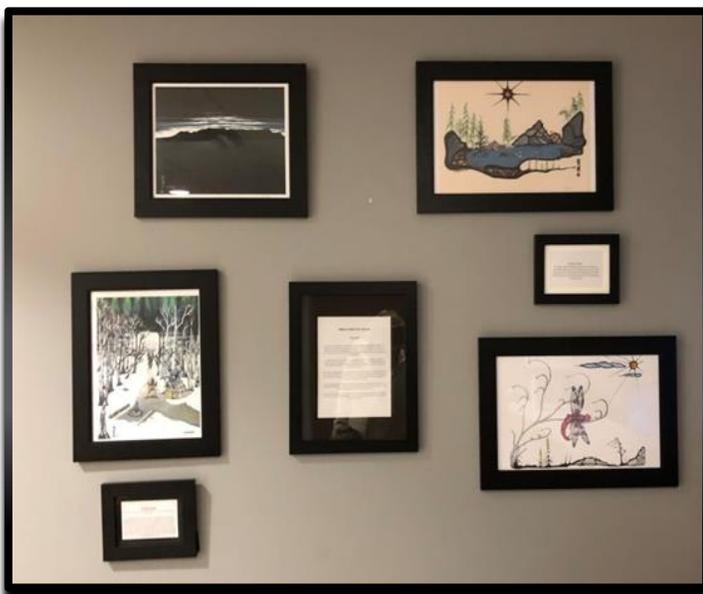
## Maryanne turned 42 this year!

If you don't know who Maryanne is, let us tell you! She is a kind and generous friend, is an active athlete with Special O bowling, and a great artist. She idolizes Elvis, and LOVES Bordercats Baseball! This year to celebrate her birthday, staff members at High Street were able to connect with staff at the Bordercats and have Maryanne throw the first pitch of the game on Sunday August 4th. Maryanne wore a special Bordercats baseball jersey with her name on the back and the number 42 for the special day!

A special thank you to Crissy at Impact Promotion and Brian at Bordercats Baseball for making this happen for a very special Maryanne.



Organized and submitted by Sara Hampel and Monica Pawson



Guy Gagne is a Metis artist who was born and raised as a Metis. He is a self-taught artist and has a passion for nature. His art was recognized in 1982 as one of the Native Woodland styles of art. He grew up in Timmins, Ontario but is a graduate of Confederation College of Aboriginal Law and Advocacy. He has worked with many aboriginal groups and the Federal Government of Canada. OPTIONS purchased some of his art last year, but it waited a bit to be hung as we were doing the moves and just trying to establish ourselves here at 95 as the hub. We are starting to move forward with some of these changes, so thought it was time this lovely art work got hung in the organization.



While Leo mostly enjoys hanging out in his room and listening to the radio, he also enjoys exploring nature trails!

Submitted by: Andrea Johnson

“Let your smile change the world but don’t let the world change your smile”  
- Connor Franta







Last July, Liz, Lacey, Kevin and I had the pleasure of sharing some pizza and wings at Boulevard Lake on a beautiful summer day. Liz and I try to enjoy some of these moments when we can as we got to know each other quite well when she was transitioning over to OPTIONS. I am not sure what was the bigger hit; the wings or the giant cookie for dessert. The sun was shining, and it was a great day to be out enjoying the weather.

Submitted By: Anna-Marie Eckensweiler

*"There are so  
Many Beautiful  
Reasons to  
be Happy"  
- Anonymous*





# PASSPORT

*"Time Flies When You  
Are Having Fun"*

*- Albert Einstein*



Passport Staff

Another year in the books!

Thank you to our amazing Passport Staff who help bring smiles, fun and joy to individuals at OPTIONS NORTHWEST!  
- Vanessa Schmerk



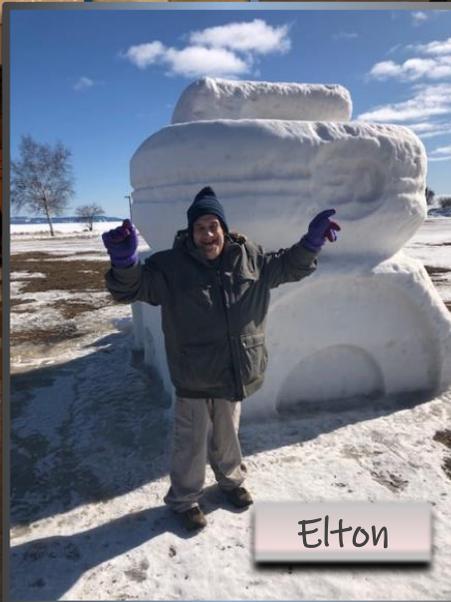
Ricky



Joe



Dawn



Elton



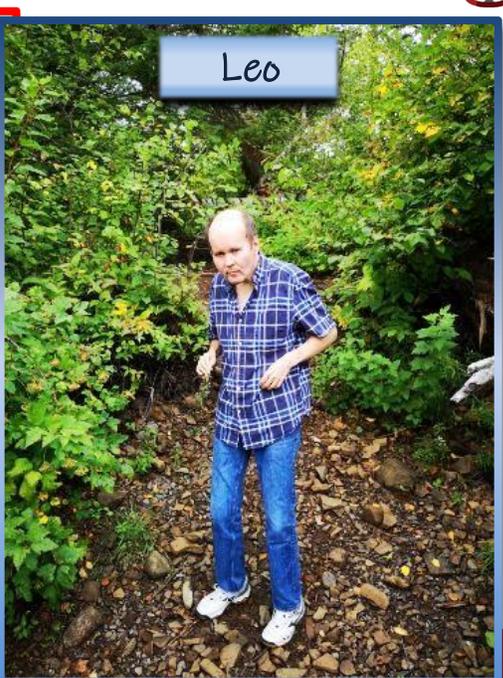
Geraldine



Darlene



Donna



Leo



David



Laurie



Tony



James



Lillian



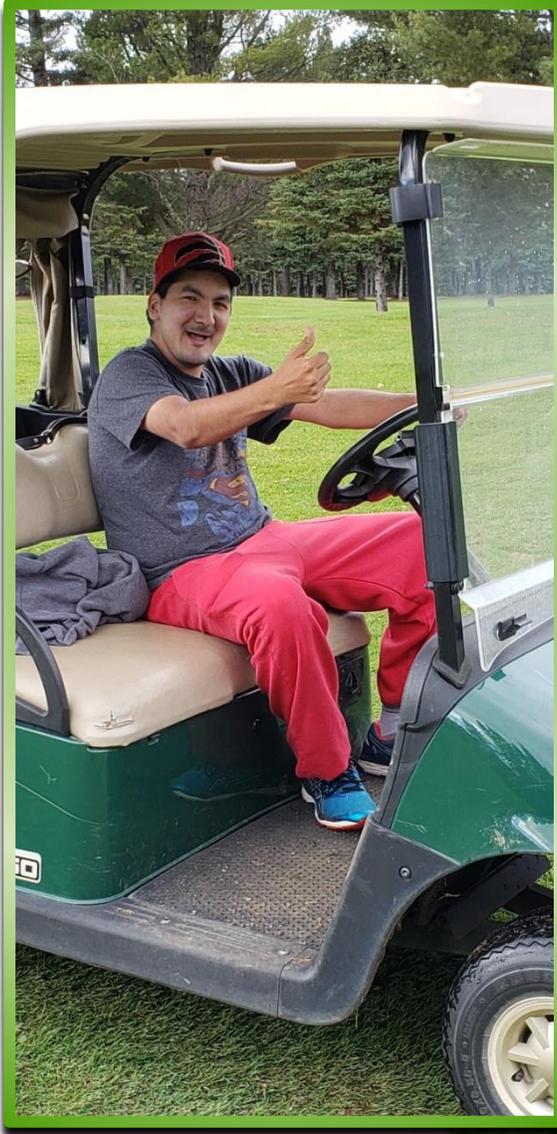
Ananias



I went to Toronto August 19<sup>th</sup> to August 23<sup>rd</sup> with my Passport worker, Christina. It was my first time on a plane and I was a little nervous. The weather was good. We stayed at the Chelsea Hotel. It was very nice. We did a lot of site seeing and shopping. We went to the CN Tower, Toronto Zoo, and Ripley's Aquarium. We spent one day at Canada's Wonderland; it was lots of fun! The Water Park was my favourite. I also enjoyed going on the Zip Zone ride. I would like to go back there sometime again.

Submitted By: Sadie Napash





Ryley had the opportunity on October 1, 2019 to get out to Centennial Pines Golf course. He warmed up on the driving range and then on the course. Ryley was very excited to take charge of the golf cart!

Submitted By: Donna Tienhaara





# Drop Ins



# HALLOWEEN





# CANADA DAY



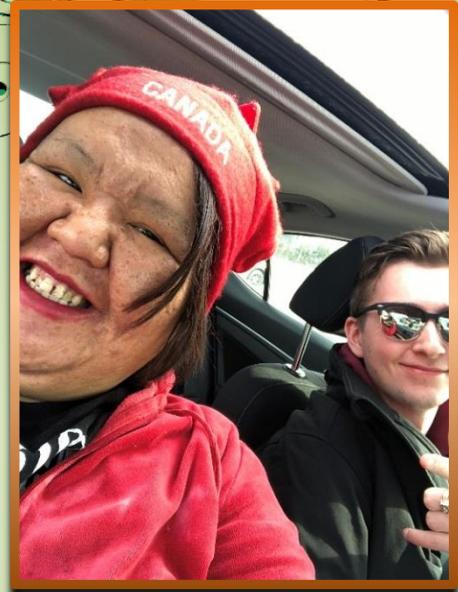


## Supported Independent Living



Daniel enjoys attending boxing classes once a week. Daniel has been learning and practicing new techniques and hopes to compete one day in a boxing match.

Shari was out enjoying a ride with her staff. Shari loves turning up the dance music, grabbing a coffee, and driving on the highway. Shari loves to sing and dance while enjoying the view on their ride.



Nathan is new to our Purchased Services department. Nathan enjoys going bowling, going out to eat, playing sports, swimming, and so many more fun activities he gets to do with his staff.



Damian celebrating his 22nd birthday at Boston Pizza with his staff.



# Welcome to **OPTIONS NORTHWEST!**



Susanne is new into service as of January 2020. She comes to OPTIONS through Transitional Aged Youth to our Home Share Program. Susanne loves to go skiing with family in the wintertime and camping in the summertime. Susanne works part time at Tim Horton's, and she is looking into College in the near future. She enjoys going to movies, bowling and going to Starbucks for coffee, as well as going for walks in the community and learning to cook.

Welcome to the agency Susanne, we look forward to working with you 😊 Submitted By: Sarah Byzewski

Kyler is new into service as of January 2020, he comes to OPTIONS through Transitional Aged Youth to our Supported Independent Living Program. Kyler loves to be active in the community and is always willing to try new things. In the winter he went snowboarding for the first time and loved it and can't wait to try it again. He loves to cook and eventually wants to attend the Culinary Program at the College; in the meantime, he is awaiting to start a casual cook position at Dilico.



Since being with OPTIONS, Kyler and his staff have done lots of activities such as rock climbing, going to the museum, Terry Fox Monument, and bowling!

Welcome aboard Kyler it is a pleasure to work with you 😊



Submitted By: Sara Byzewski



## Grief and Loss Group

“Grief is what you think and feel on the inside, and mourning is when you express that grief outside of yourself. Mourning is grief inside out. Mourning is showing and doing.” Dr. Alan Wolfelt, Centre for Loss and Transition.

The Community Resource Team ran a 6 session activity-based grief and loss group in the fall of 2019. A safe space to mourn was the focus. Participants gathered to learn about what grief is, to share experiences and to practice mourning with others. Participants accepted the challenge of becoming comfortable with the uncomfortable and embraced the process of healing with such strength.

Here is what one participant had to say about the group: “It was very good. It’s a good thing because you are not alone. Everyone has different losses, but loss is loss.” Michelle

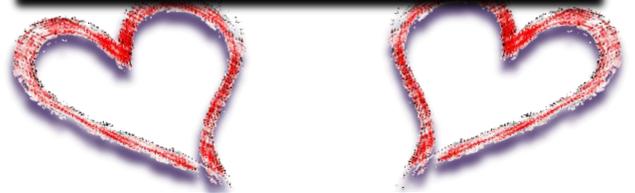
Submitted By: Patti Spade

### Creating through Remembering

A Memory Box captures more than memories; it holds personal objects, expressions of love created by the owner, and provides a physical, concrete connection to someone dear. A memory box can be created to be used as a communication tool with family members, help a person to face their personal grief/pain, and used when missing their loved one. This particular memory box was created during a number of social work sessions. It allowed the person to express themselves creatively using painting, letter-writing, arts and craft activities, and by creating a special book that celebrated an amazing talent of the person being remembered.

Through the process of creating and remembering, there were expressions of laughter and humour, times of quiet and sadness, and always the joy of having shared love. Lastly, a memory box provides a transitional object to take home and to continue to be a resource when missing their special someone.

Submitted By: Suzanne Posthumus



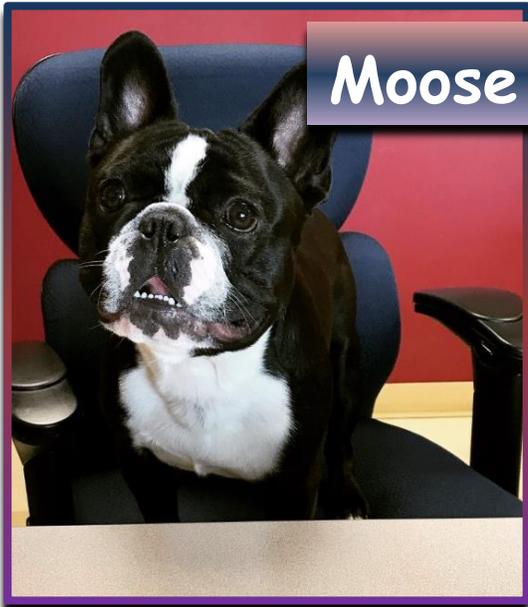
*“Little by little we  
let go of loss...  
but never of Love.”*

*- Unknown Author*



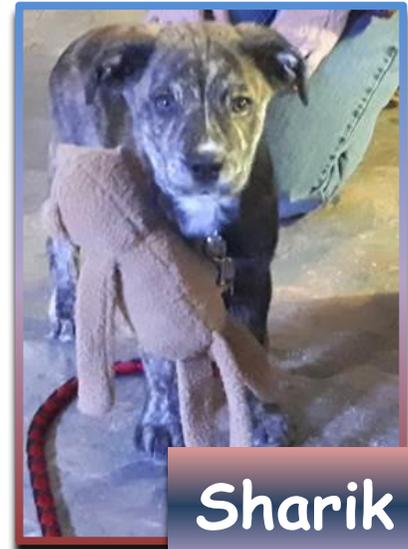


# Dogs Days! At The 95 Office



**Moose**

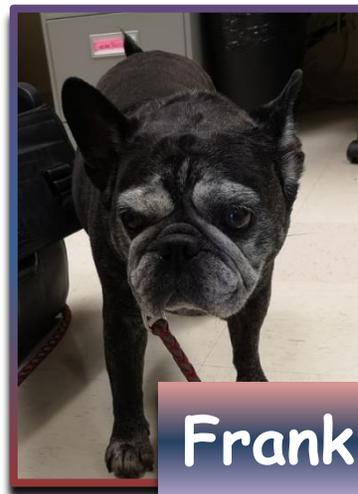
"You can tell by the kindness of a dog how a human should be."  
- Don 'Captain Beefheart' Van Vliet



**Sharik**



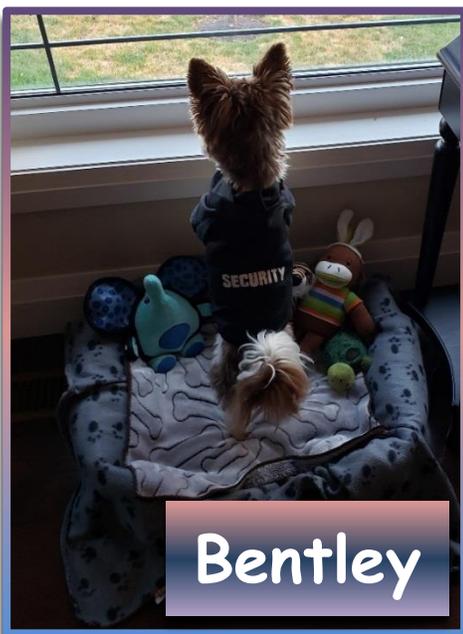
**Abby & Arlo**



**Frank**



**Kash**



**Bentley**



**Misza**

Bentley loves going to OPTIONS NORTHWEST so much he wonders if they will hire him.

Meet the new ED of OPTIONS, "Executive Dog" Misza.



# Well Being in the Garden



*"Gardening is the art that uses flowers & plants as paint, and the soil and sky as canvas."*  
- Elizabeth Murray

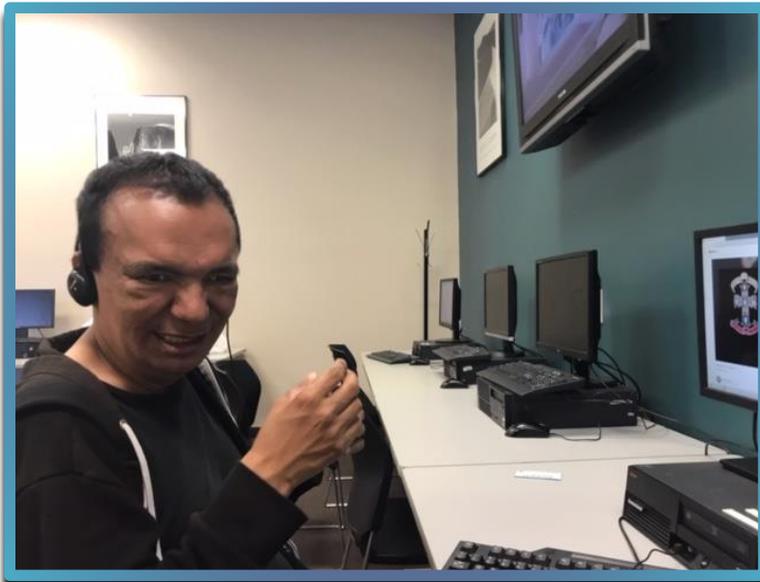
Summer 2019, the Community Resource Team rented garden plot #135 in the Community Garden at Lakehead University (located beside the LU Hangar building). The idea was that the garden/nature setting would provide a hands on, holistic, horticultural, art, and creativity inspired, mindfulness approach in providing non-traditional clinical services. It also created an opportunity for all to come and enjoy the garden.

There are reported physical, social, psychological, and cognitive benefits to interacting with plants and nature materials and using them in activities that enhance the senses. Opportunities to talk happen in a natural way, often while working together side by side, and mindfulness approaches can be practiced through modeling strategies in the garden.

The mailbox by the plot contained activities such as scavenger hunts, creating a garden monster, or making markers for the garden. We invited others from the community to come and experience the garden. Pictured is one of the participants, Tanya who said, "I liked walking through the garden and trying some of the different activities while being in the outdoors". Tanya assisted with weeding, watering, and harvesting produce to take home to enjoy. She tried several different activities and we were able to incorporate mindfulness and grounding techniques naturally during our sessions.

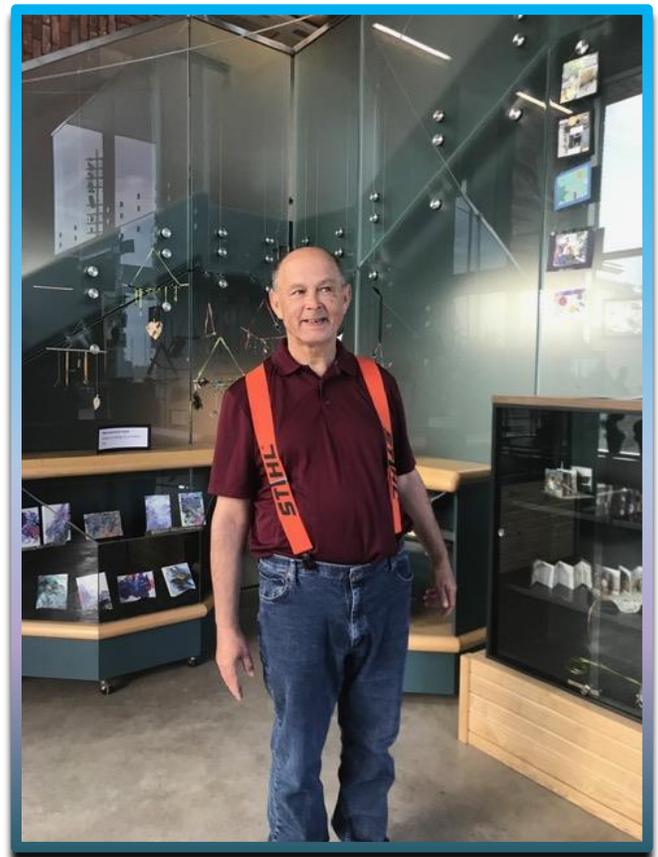
Submitted By: Lisa Maki & Suzanne Posthumus





Ananias' favourite place to visit is The March of Dimes Drop In. There he enjoys a coffee with friends. Ananias often can be found using the computers where he searches for different songs and listens to the music using his headphones.

Submitted By: Donna Tienhaara



**“Being Happy Never Goes Out Of Style.”**

**- Lilly Pulitzer**



## Thunder Bay Coalition to End Human Trafficking

“Thunder Bay is one of the top six hubs in Ontario for Human Trafficking,” said Cindy Paypompee, Co-Chair – Thunder Bay Coalition to End Human Trafficking.

Large red bags were made available at the awareness event this year for people inspired to fill one. People who leave trafficking situations may have nothing when they leave. The goal is to have a bag filled with clothes and toiletries to have on hand when there is a reach out for help. The coalition runs through community partnerships but there is no funding for things like this. What a great community initiative! A bag was filled by the kind hearts at OPTIONS NORTHWEST.



## Connecting through Gratitude

An exercise in the art of positive thinking was planted with a Gratitude Tree being grown in the foyer of our 95 N. Cumberland office. The idea behind its beginning was to create an opportunity for anyone and everyone to write an expression of thankfulness on a leaf and then add it to the tree.

The Gratitude Tree provided a physical opportunity to encourage the expression and practice of appreciation, fill our minds with positive thoughts and resulted in a shared connection. As the tree “grew”, it also grew our own mindfulness habits to use the ability to focus on what we “have” and not what we “have not”.

Research has shown that gratitude is good for you, good for relationships, and good for humanity. The OPTIONS NORTHWEST Gratitude Tree provided an opportunity for all to “grow” and strengthen their gratitude skills.



Submitted By: Suzanne Posthumus



# CAREER FAIR

## Recruitment Efforts Continue for 2019-2020

This year our recruitment drive did not slow down or take a back seat. In an effort to continue to bring on new employees with a passion to help individuals live life their way OPTIONS NORTHWEST Human Resources team took to the College and University in early February to take part in career fairs hosted by the local schools. Over the course of the two days we were able to talk to and encourage many students to consider employment with us and apply to work with us.



The billboards went up, and the radio ads were written and played and with that we hosted a career fair with our partner agencies (Community Living Thunder Bay, Superior Greenstone Association for Community Living, and Wesway) at the Holiday Inn Express. Having multiple agencies attend was a great thing, and we look forward to hosting this type of event again in the future.

“CHOOSE A JOB YOU LOVE AND YOU WILL NEVER HAVE TO WORK A DAY IN YOUR LIFE.”  
- CONFUCIUS

As always, we continue to strive to attract, hire and retain the best employees for the individuals we support so that we live up to our vision, mission and philosophy. In an ongoing effort to keep that at the forefront of our minds, recruitment will always be ongoing.



Submitted By: Jill Thompson



## Spirit of Christmas 2019



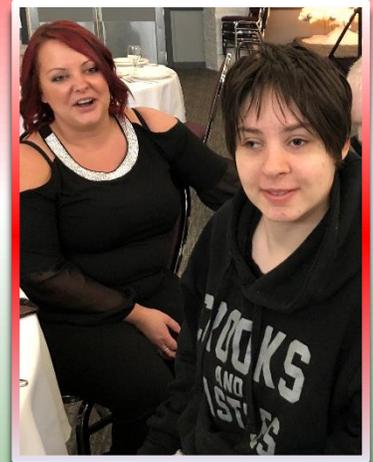
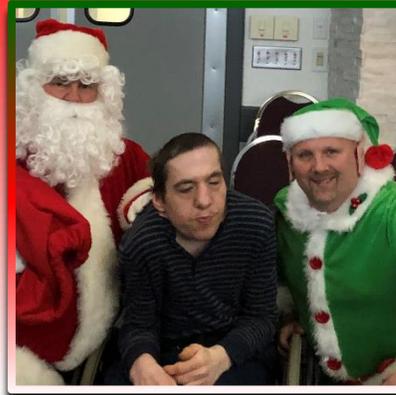
Special thanks go out to this past year's Spirit of Christmas committee for helping with the 15 nominations we received to help spread some Christmas joy. Anita Storeshaw, Mackenzie Plichta, Melanie Benham, Loni Rudnicki, Alissa Pradal, Vanessa Schmerk and Andrea Johnson were all-star shoppers and wrappers for this past year's activities. Nominations provide us with some great information on the individuals and what would bring them joy but the real challenge is to do the shopping at one of the busiest times of the year to find those exact items. A job well done by this committee and for the work you did in packaging everything, so it appears the gifts are plentiful with limited funds. Thanks also to the Cumberland employees who donate to this cause financially and with the items you bring in. We have been doing this for a number of years now and the generosity of all is overwhelming. You truly do bring the "Spirit of Christmas" to many who would otherwise have very little.

As has become a custom, Laura Salini once again donated her beautifully hand knit and colourful scarves for the cause. Her generosity to donate to our organization is something that we really appreciate. We know she is busy all year round knitting these scarves, but we also recognize how much work and love go into her creations. OPTIONS is thrilled to have been chosen as one of your recipients again Laura!!



And retired HR director Carolyn Grgurich also graced us with her homemade baking for each nomination. How lucky were those individuals to receive some of Carolyn's treats!!!! We might have had one or two ourselves while we were packing.....thanks Carolyn for including us in your Christmas baking.





# OPTIONS

# CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Corrine & David brought the boughs



OPTIONS Choir





## Employee Recognition

### Employee Milestone Years

Laura Plexman  
Bill Boucher  
Cherisa Rydholm  
Amanda Lebel  
Deanna Bailey  
Michael Beyer  
Jennifer Kukkee  
Cynthia Prince  
Jennifer Mercier  
Hannah Albani  
Lori McCoy  
Sharon Belanger  
Lesley Parker  
Simeon Ostap  
Honor Wallace  
Nicole Berube  
Fortunato Bossio  
Denise Bernard  
Deborah-Anne Ward  
Susan Mihalus  
Nena Napa  
Cyndy Eaton  
Kelly Robertson  
Robin Zaporzan

### Retirements

Nancy Knight  
Daniella Heerema  
Annette Pugh  
Mike Topp  
Orysia Romaniuk  
Kaye Stein  
Sharon Boyes  
Helen Zawacki  
Jennifer Mercier



Nena Napa



April Richardson

**Congratulations to all employees who celebrated a milestone year of service with OPTIONS NORTHWEST.  
Thank you for everything you do!**



# Employee Appreciation Draw Winners

Nanette Vester

Simeon Ostap

Josie Vickruck

Kerri Kowalchuk

Warren Bruyere

Akhil Arora

Orysia Romaniuk

Luke Doyle

Eva Lowe

Annete Pugh

Craig Rogers

Lindsay Nistico

Kim McBain

Jolie Scott

Kevin Gvora

Kelly Anderson

Andrea Johnson

Mike Beyer

Odile Bernard French

Terri Lacey

Brittney Francouer

Evie Mose

Reenu Jose

Lee Cheonglo

Jennifer Mercier

April Richardson

Cara Baraniuk

Pam Stefanato



Lisa Maki

Melanie Benham

Mark Beazley

Ryley Vesico

Jason Sabotic

Roberta Wolch

Rachelle Davidson

Sheryl Dechaine

Jennifer Lucyk

Corrine Ceci

Vanessa Schmerk

Brittany Favot



## MOVE TO TUSCANY



It was a BIG job for everyone at Skyline; for the staff and residents.

Some of them helped pack the items in their rooms. One young lady even helped move her stuff to Tuscany.

Staff took each person over to Tuscany while their items were being unpacked and put away in their rooms.

Closer to moving day we all came to Tuscany to have lunch.

On moving day 2 people spent the day with their family. The others went for a drive during the busy time. They were then brought to Tuscany. One lady was helpful bringing in boxes and putting items away.

Mark and Chris bought pizza and pop for everyone. It turned out to be a positive experience for everyone.

Submitted By: Twyla Oleksuk





**Folks from the Fire department stopped in to say hi to Brendan!  
Fire truck with lights, horns and all!**

**Submitted By: Sarah Byzewski**

Charlie enjoyed a warm summer day fishing at Kam River fishing docks. Charlie looks forward to the warmer weather and a chance to get out fishing.

Submitted By: Donna Tienhaara





## Mindfulness Mondays

what is mindfulness?

mindfulness is our ability to pay attention to the present moment, with curiosity & without judgment

mindfulness can be cultivated through a formal practice, like meditation...

...and we can bring mindful attention to our daily activities

the benefits of mindfulness include:

- increased empathy and compassion 
- + improved immune functioning
- increased happiness and optimism 
- improved sleep 
- greater focus and concentration 
- reduced stress and anxiety 

mindfulness is a practice you can begin today!

BrilliantMindfulness.com

**“YOU CAN’T STOP  
THE WAVES,  
BUT YOU CAN  
LEARN TO SURF”**

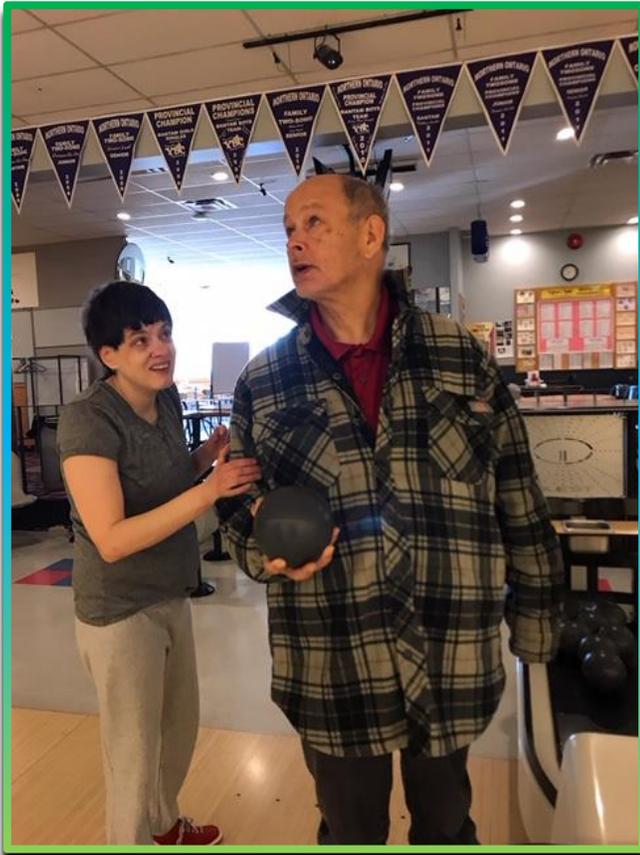
**- JON KABAT-ZINN**



Mindfulness Monday’s was an idea that started with the hope of being able to help people understand what is mindfulness and the amazing ways that it benefits our whole being. Hannah Albani and I both wanted to create something unifying that would be for each and every person involved with OPTIONS NORTHWEST. The process of Mindfulness provides tools and strategies to find our own sense of calm, to manage anxiety and stress, to express gratitude, and to focus in the moment with every part of our being. The simple act of taking a deep breath fills our lungs with air, and then the act of blowing out the air allows for a release of a thought or feeling. Our attention is on the breath which then allows our body to become relaxed and experience a sense of calm.

Throughout the last year, some of the topics included: mindful movement, developing a personal mantra, growing a positive mindset, examples of many different breathing techniques, the gift of giving and kindness, and the importance of self-care. There are so many ways to use and practice mindfulness so stay tuned on the first Monday of each month. ☺

Submitted by: Suzanne Posthumus



Donna and David enjoyed an afternoon at Mario's Bowl, not only do we have fun bowling we enjoy the music while we are there.

Submitted By: Donna Tienhaara



"If You See Someone Without A Smile, Give Them One Of Yours."

- Dolly Parton





**Spring Cleanup**

Fun Times at 95 & 86!

“Happiness is Having Great Coworkers!”



**Jersey Day**



**Christmas Breakfast**



**Happy Halloween from 86 & Larry!**



**Health & Safety Walk**



Be Happy  
Be Bright  
Be You!





## Move to 86 South Cumberland

On a rainy day in May, the Finance and Human Resources teams were on the move. Where do you ask? Why, they moved just 7 blocks south to their new home at 86 S. Cumberland Street. The teams split in two – some remained at 95 to direct the movers to which boxes to lug, and chairs to take while the others headed to their new destination down the street. Ready to greet the movers, the teams became accustomed to their new surroundings and as the boxes arrived, so did the rest of the team. Two long hard days were spent unboxing and setting up everyone's new offices. The move was very successful and a very big thank you is extended to April Richardson for all the background work she did to ensure the move went smoothly. From servers to phones, to movers and boxes. April sure did a fantastic job of managing the move! Everyone is all settled in now, and we are loving our new space. We miss our friends over at 95 N. but we do visit from time to time to pick up mail and supplies! If you haven't had a chance to stop by yet, come on down – just ring the bell and you'll be greeted by the friendly Finance or happy to help Human Resources employees.

Submitted By: Jill Thompson



**“Unity is Strength...  
when there is  
Teamwork  
and Collaboration,  
Wonderful Things  
can be Achieved.”  
- Mattie Stepanek**





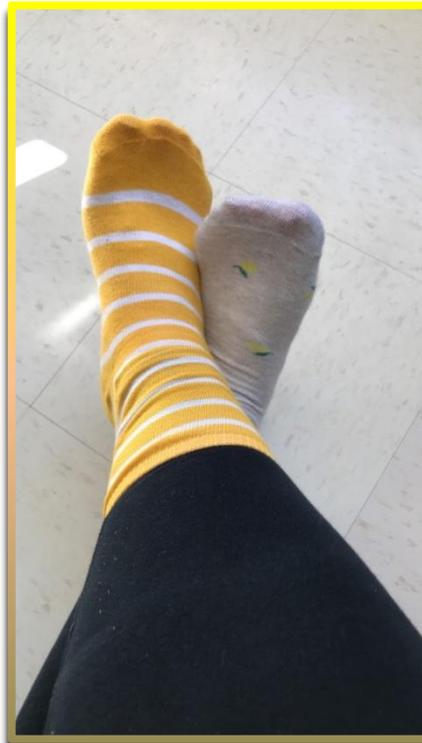
# ROCK YOUR SOCKS

World Down Syndrome Day

March 21, 2020



March 21, 2020





## OPTIONS NORTHWEST Community Resource Team Partnerships



Coordinated Service Planning (CSP) is an exciting initiative that brings together the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to help coordinate services for children with multiple needs and their families. Being involved with this service enables families to have one main contact, which is their Single Plan of Care Coordinator. The launch of this service in Thunder Bay & the District started in May 2018. Within CSP services, OPTIONS NORTHWEST is one of the partner agencies to the lead agency, Children's Centre Thunder Bay. Our agency has committed resources to serve a small number of families under our children's behavioural service budget. The Community Resource Team at ONW is very excited to offer families this support and to collaborate with our community agencies to help improve services for children.

### *Forensics Partnership*

In August 2017, the Community Resource Team entered into a partnership agreement to provide Positive Behavioural Support Services to the Forensic Mental Health Program at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. Approximately 25% of the people currently residing on the Forensic Unit have a diagnosed Developmental Disability. This partnership opened the doors for a behaviour clinician to work within the setting among their large interdisciplinary team for the first time. An outstanding rapport has been built with Nurses, Social Workers, Psychiatrists, Recreational and Occupational Therapists, and most importantly, the patients.

Adding a behavioural perspective from the Developmental Services field has allowed employees within the Forensic Unit to adapt their approach in caring and supporting people with a Developmental Disability. Positive interactions, skill building, and behavioural support strategies have been an excellent complement to the array of programs and opportunities currently accessible through Recreational Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Social Work, and other community supports.

Combining OPTIONS' Mission, Vision, and Philosophy with a medical model of care, while providing Positive Behavioural Support, has been a unique experience that continues to grow and improve. We are excited to continue learning, making positive change, and building relationships through this partnership.

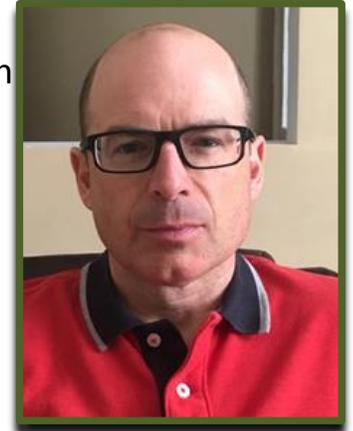


Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences  
Centre



## *Psychological Associate*

As a Psychological Associate, Joel McCartney, consults with the Community Resource Team to provide positive behaviour intervention services and eligibility assessments to help individuals access the Developmental Services Ontario. He works closely with team members to help administer comprehensive assessments and clinical interventions to promote wellness and optimal outcomes for individuals.



While Joel is located out of the Timmins area, he connects with the Clinical Team via videoconference and through in person visits a couple of times per year.

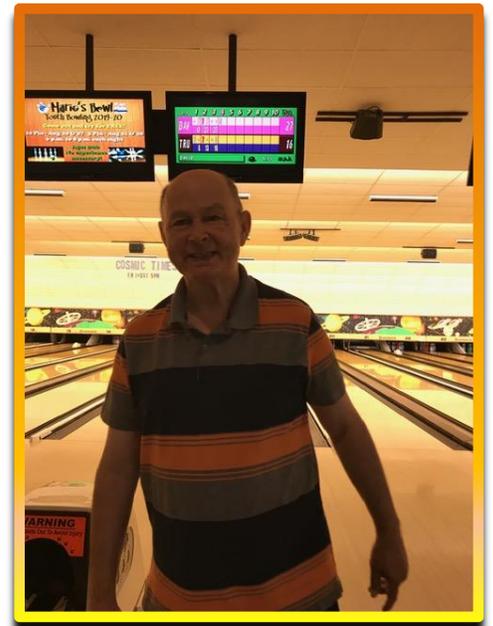


OPTIONS NORTHWEST has a partnership with Partners In Rehab for **Occupational Therapy** (OT) Services. As of February 2020, we have had the pleasure of working with Partners In Rehab to address our OT needs in conjunction with Ivy Juan whom also continues to provide OT services. The work often involves assessment, maintenance, and restoration of the physical function and performance of the body. The OT's actively work on concerns like poor posture, improper techniques, muscle imbalances, and tips to work more safely such as how to lift properly and not strain the body. Any referrals for OT services continue to come into OPTIONS NORTHWEST-Community Resource Team to be addressed.

OPTIONS NORTHWEST has partnerships with Creative Therapy Associates and North Community Network of Specialized Care/HANDS to work on communication needs related to **Speech Language**. Referrals for speech work may involve working on producing certain sounds, understanding/using words, participating in conversations appropriately, organizing information and thinking, and using visual aids or technology to improve communication. Any referrals for speech services continue to come into OPTIONS NORTHWEST-Community Resource Team to be addressed.



Shawna and her family when she had the celebration of life for her sister.



David is all smiles while bowling.



Donna having some fun at March of Dimes.

**“Nothing can Dim  
the Light that  
Shines from Within.”  
- Maya Angelou**



Elton striking a pose at the park.



Joe driving a bumper car.



The guys from Nicholett’s practicing social distancing in March.



*"Never, ever Underestimate the Importance of Having Fun."*

*- Randy Pausch*





## OPTIONS northwest Personal Support Services Schedule of Revenue and Expenses

For the year ended March 31, 2020

	2020 (unaudited)	2019 (unaudited)
<b>Revenue</b>		
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	16,081,191	16,231,501
Northern specialized services	49,182	49,182
Donations	13,042	5,547
Other recoveries	1,179,121	1,267,565
Ministry of Attorney General	19,410	20,047
Individual rent	833,201	878,706
	<b>18,175,147</b>	<b>18,452,548</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Salaries	11,818,792	11,741,767
Mandatory benefits	823,681	834,334
Other benefits	2,063,829	1,972,506
Travel	269,885	287,853
Communication	105,974	88,066
Rent/lease/mortgage interest	201,763	147,267
Mortgage principal	95,951	92,525
Utilities	117,265	85,936
Training	65,089	77,165
Advertising and promotion	6,354	2,248
Repairs and maintenance services	269,353	565,169
Professional/contracted out services	155,494	270,655
Professional/contracted out - IT services	91,071	72,569
Purchased services	1,017,596	1,015,811
Insurance	64,225	58,303
Other services	42,971	45,301
Other supplies and equipment	883,114	831,185
COVID-19 expenditures	8,181	-
	<b>18,100,588</b>	<b>18,188,660</b>
	<b>74,559</b>	<b>263,888</b>

To view the complete set of financial statements, including Independent Auditor's Report, or for any other comments or questions regarding this report, contact the Organization's offices at:

95 Cumberland Street North, Thunder Bay ON P7A 4M1 phone (807) 344-4994 fax (807) 346-5811