



# 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Philip Corke, Chair  
Al Kowalenko, OMC, Vice-Chair  
Vivian Bright, Treasurer  
Anupam Kothari, Secretary

***CHKC Directors:***

Kim Wrigley-Archer, Past Chair  
Mark Albert  
Tina Marano  
Betty-Jean Reid  
David Young

***Honourary:***

Hon. Vim Kochhar

## CHKC REPORT FROM THE CHAIR



**Philip Corke**  
CHKC Chair

Over the past couple of years CHKC has developed a strategic plan to help with our growth and in early 2018 we submitted a well received proposal to the Ontario Provincial Government to assist in the expansion of our organization.

In early 2019 the City of Toronto announced the Housing Now initiative. It is their intention to make available 11 properties to develop affordable housing. The details to date have aligned very well with our strategic vision and need for additional affordable housing, community space, and CHKC offices. As announced at the CHKC awards luncheon, we are aggressively pursuing the property at 1250 Eglinton Ave. W. which should be coming to market in fall of 2019. The vision is for a 70 unit residential building with three levels of community space.

Though it has yet to be finalized we have 1) adjusted our business plan

to reflect what we know about this opportunity, 2) communicated our interest to the City of Toronto, 3) board members have attended community meetings for other properties being made available to help us understand the process better, 4) begun to develop relationships with builders and other stake holders to help advance our preparedness in the bid process.

We continue to recruit members to the board. Please welcome Chris Thomas. Chris joined us in May 2019 to fill a vacancy. He has a sales and marketing leadership background at Telus with volunteer experiences spanning Ovarian Cancer

Canada, Meals on Wheels, and Telus's Marketing Community Committee.

The Executive Director Relations Committee has also been able to implement a new performance evaluation process for our Executive Director. It includes a number of areas of evaluation and criterion and will allow us to properly review, reward and develop the position.

As well, the board has just completed updated Governance Policies for our organization, with a lot of hard work put in by the board and our staff.

Thank you for another great year and looking forward to what lies ahead!

## CHKC REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Jennifer Robbins**  
Executive Director

Another year has come and gone at the Canadian Helen Keller Centre and I couldn't be more delighted with the improvements we've made. We continue to expand consumers' access to services. Thanks to more funding from the Ministry of Children Community

and Social Services (MCCSS), this year we saw an increase of hours. Consumers both at Rotary Cheshire Apartments and in our Outreach program are able to access up to 24 hours per week of service. This has been a long awaited increase and we couldn't be happier for consumers.

Due to these enhanced service levels, we also saw increases to our front line staff, and the addition of Human Resources support and a Marketing and Communications Specialist who has been tasked with building awareness of CHKC and the deafblind

community.

To remain competitive within our sector and to attract new staff we also raised compensation for employees. Salaries and benefits were improved and we added a matching RRSP contribution plan.

Also to more efficiently meet the needs of consumers we streamlined our organizational structure.

We also welcomed a Consumer Relations Coordinator, a member of the deafblind community who is making strides in increasing our profile in the community.

Last year we enhanced

our employee engagement process and consulted with staff members and consumers on policies and procedures to aid us in building an employee code of conduct. Because of these initiatives we recently launched an employee handbook.

I want to express my thanks to the board of directors, the leadership team at CHKC, the staff, and the consumers for all of your hard work and support over the last year.

I look forward to the year ahead as we expand our efforts to build and lead CHKC's future.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER – ELIO RIGGILLO



Elio was born and raised in Toronto. He uses ASL, tactile ASL and pro-tactile communication. Pro-tactile allows Elio to receive the environmental information without having to interrupt the conversation. Elio and his wife have three children. In addition to his

work at CHKC Elio works as an instructor for the George Brown College intervenor program. Elio began using intervenor services when he was 30 to help build his independence and leadership skills while working in the community.

He has been involved in helping to educate people who are deafblind and inform other people about intervenor services. His motivation was to teach his children that even though he is deafblind he could still be an advocate, learn new skills and help others.

## HONOURING CANADA’S WONDERLAND

CHKC is proud to honor Canada’s Wonderland. Consumers have had the pleasure of benefiting from their employment services for years now.



The team at Canada’s Wonderland have supported the deafblind

community in working towards their goal: A JOB! The personal satisfaction

that comes with being a valued part of the workforce is indisputable, and we believe it should not be denied to anyone, least of all because of a disability.

Thank you to everyone at Canada’s Wonderland for

their consistent dedication and commitment to ensuring that people who are deafblind have employment opportunities to be more active members within their communities. We appreciate our partnership.

## WELCOME TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHRIS THOMAS



Chris has served on the board of the Canadian Helen Keller Centre since May 2019. His goal is to help market and expand the services and great work of CHKC, and to ensure members of the deafblind community of the Greater Toronto Area are enabled to live independently in a barrier-free environment. A loving father and devoted husband, Chris enjoys running and cycling

when not working in B2B marketing for a wireless telecommunications company.

CHERYL RAMEY



Cheryl Ramey has worked in the field of congenital deafblindness and multiple disabilities for the past 34 years. In the most recent 18 years she has shared her skills, knowledge and experience through teaching and mentoring students as a professor at George Brown

College in the Intervenor for Deaf-Blind Persons Program. She has held the position of Program Coordinator for the Intervenor Program since January 2017.

Cheryl’s career began with specialized training in deafblindness at the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind and Deafblind in Ontario where she worked as a Resource Consultant for the Ministry of Education. She spent nine years as the Executive Director of a supported independent living program for adults with deafblindness in Manitoba. Cheryl was also the Director of Training for CDBA ON for 1.5 years.

Cheryl has sat on a

number of boards including the Canadian Deafblind Association, National; Canadian Deafblind Association, Ontario Chapter and the Deafblind Ontario Services.

RESIGNING DIRECTOR  
BETTY-JEAN REID



CHKC wishes to thank Betty-Jean for all of her time and expertise. We wish her well in all her future endeavours.

## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Baskits  
 Canadian National Exhibition  
 Casino Rama  
 Downey's Farm Market  
 Dufflets Pastries  
 Frankie Tomatoes  
 Glen Eagle Golf Club  
 GMCR Canada Inc  
 Hockey Hall of Fame  
 Hot Docs Cinema  
 Lindt  
 Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment  
 National Ballet of Canada  
 Noble Estates  
 Ripleys Aquarium  
 Roots Canada  
 Second City  
 The Old Spaghetti Factory  
 The Rom  
 Toronto Region and Region

*Sincere appreciation to the following organizations for their ongoing support of CHKC*



### CANADIAN HELEN KELLER CENTRE

101-422 Willowdale Avenue  
 Toronto, ON M2N 5B1  
 Tel: (416) 730-9501 ♦ TTY: (416) 730-9187  
 Fax: (416) 730-1350  
 Email: [info@chkc.org](mailto:info@chkc.org)  
[chkc.org](http://chkc.org)

210 Empress Avenue  
 Toronto, ON M2N 3T9  
 Tel/TTY: (416) 225-8989  
 Fax: (416) 225-4871  
 Email: [info@chkc.org](mailto:info@chkc.org)  
[chkc.org](http://chkc.org)



Follow CHKC on Facebook