

## Community Living St. Marys and Area Annual Report 2021-2022

**OUR VISION:** A community where everyone belongs.

**OUR MISSION:** To nurture the ability and willingness in our community to welcome and support all people as valued and contributing citizens.



### Message from the President

Another year has come and gone!

I'd like to acknowledge my fellow board members for another year of meaningful discussion, decision making and productive work together. I am proud to work with each and every one of you. In the past year, the board continued to reflect on our processes and activities through self-evaluation, and we will continue to do so to make sure that we are working efficiently and effectively.

The 2021-2022 year continued much in the same way that 2020-2021 did with many ups and downs related to the covid pandemic. This continued to have an impact in many areas for Community Living and I want to again express my gratitude to everyone for their flexibility and adaptability during these unique times.

The Board of Directors has experienced some big changes, especially in the past few months. We have three Board Members who have decided that the time has come for them to move on. I want to express my sincere thanks to Al Slater, Barb Leavitt and Dwayne Hubbard for their many years of dedication and commitment to the board and to the organization. Your presence was a gift and your absence will certainly be noticed. You will notice that we have some new names for nomination to the Board of Directors, and we are looking forward to adding new voices and ideas to our group. If you or someone you know is interested in what being a part of our board is like, please reach out to us!

Community Living St. Marys and Area is also undergoing a big change! After years of leading the organization, Marg McLean has also decided that it is time for a change. It has been a privilege to work with Marg over the years that I have been on the board, and I am certainly sad to see you go. We wish Marg all the best in her new role!

On a positive note, change can be a time of new opportunities. The Board of Directors is actively searching for a new Executive Director and we are eager to see what we can find. Our priority is to find an individual who is a good fit with our organization and our vision, mission and principles.

Overall, I am looking forward to new opportunities in the upcoming year and beyond. It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of the Board and I am grateful for the opportunity.

Thank you,

Emma Blackler

## Current Board of Directors

Emma Blackler - President  
 Allyson Dunseith - Vice President  
 Brenda Holland - 2nd Vice President  
 Alice Mainland - Treasurer  
 Sheila Greason  
 Allan Slater  
 Linda Howgego  
 Dwayne Hubbard  
 Barb Leavitt

Thank you to these three long-term board members who are stepping down this year!

You will all be greatly missed!

- \* **Allan Slater - 19 years**
- \* **Dwayne Hubbard - 17 years**
- \* **Barb Leavitt - 5 years**



## Consider joining Friends of...

- I may be invited to serve on CLSMA committees, engage in planning, fundraising and other Board sanctioned activities.
- I am free to forward questions or resolutions to the membership/board of CLSMA and ask that items be included on their meeting agenda. I may be asked to speak on said items.
- I will be invited to CLSMA's Annual Meeting and will be encouraged to learn about the Association's activities. This will be an open meeting with opportunity to comment on the actions of the Board and other items of interest.
- As a Friend of CLSMA, I do not have voting rights.

## SPECIAL THANKS to members of the:

**Joint Health and Safety Committee** - chair Paul Williams, Kim Monden, Linda Pickering, Jackie Haycock, Jen Leslie (interim)

**Employee Management Relations Committee** - Reda Ali, Edna Willows, Jennifer Costello, Becky Huffman, Kim Monden and Jen Leslie (interim). **This committee is currently seeking support worker members**

**Diversity, Inclusion and Wellness Committee** - Jodi McLean, Kim Melville, Sheri McDonald, Jenna Rankin, Carly Geiger and Laura Cannon

**Gift Guidance Group** - Sherry Pautler, Laura Cannon, Malibe Campantero, Edna Willows and Jennifer Leslie



## The Power of 40 Years – Ruth Lamond

Meet Ruth Lamond who has been an employee with CLSMA for a remarkable 40 years!

Ruth has worn many different hats over the years from starting out as a volunteer/student, an awake overnight worker, working in the contract room of the sheltered workshop, team leader and support worker. She has also sat on the Quality Assurance committee and been involved in several projects over the years.

In 1983, she was part of a team that supported four people to leave Bluewater Regional Centre in Goderich. It was one of the large institutions in the province for people with developmental disabilities. She remembers visiting those places and the slow process of giving people the experiences that led to learning how to make more choices and get control in their lives. “They were often angry” in the beginning and Ruth is clear that “institutional thinking is dangerous and it’s not about a building, it’s about an environment.”

There were so many milestones for Ruth including twin brothers in her neighbourhood that she played with as a child. One had a disability and she remembers noticing the difference but it didn’t really matter to her. This shaped her belief that “we’re all the same.” Once she began her career, she realized she didn’t have to like everyone she work for just because they had a disability. This sense of equality also means believing that having high expectations of people often leads to them living up to it. “We’re not servants or friends; our role is supporting the person to live their own life.” It should be no surprise that Ruth’s core gift is helping people to be self-reliant, to be independent and be who they are!

Ruth was one of the first mentors with CLSMA’s mentor program and she feels this is a good way to nurture new employees. Ruth likes to question things and she feels this is a valuable skill for support workers. “Stand up for what’s right and don’t be afraid to contradict more experienced staff members.” She feels encouraging self-empowerment in the people you work for is the most important thing we can do in your job. Also she advises them to, “get to know someone yourself before listening to reports or other staff.”

Ruth has seen many changes to CLSMA over her 40 years of service! She saw the agency “back up what we preach” in the principles as it has supported people to move out on their own, get married, make hard medical decisions and even someone navigating pregnancy. She hopes this type of support to work through and not take over the situation as well as recognizing the dignity of risk will continue long into the future. Her advice to the association is to “have faith in people that they will grow, mature and gain control over their lives.” She also feels that what sets CLSMA apart from other agencies is a culture of questioning, taking risks and setting high expectations across all levels. She urges the organization to keep listening to people – people supported first, employees and families too.”

Thank you Ruth for choosing to be part of this Association for 40 years!! We are so glad you continue your work as a mentor, agency historian, questioner and holder of all that is important in our mission and principles!





## Message from Support Services

A note from Support Services:

Another year has come and gone, and we continue to be so incredibly grateful to be working with such an amazing team! While this past year continued to provide exceptionally difficult circumstances through an ongoing pandemic, we once again have had the pleasure of witnessing ongoing teamwork and dedication despite any barriers that were faced.

To Support Workers, thank you for being such a solid and reliable support system to the people you support, and to one another. Thank you for all of the little things you do on a daily basis, as those little details can make the biggest difference in the lives of the people you support. Thank you for showing up time and time again, and ensuring that people remain safe, but connected! We appreciate everything you have done (and continue to do) to carry CLSMA's vision, mission and principles forward into the work that you do.

To Team Leaders, we are so proud of the work that has been accomplished over this last year. Your ongoing leadership and support has been invaluable! We appreciate your continuous flexibility and creativity, as well as your ongoing commitment to the people we support, teams, families and each other. We are so lucky to have each of you as part of our Support Services team!

To the people we support and families, thank you for being so patient and understanding as we endured another year of limited resources. You continue to remind us of why we do the work that we do, and make it so enjoyable to provide support each and every day.

*"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean of possibility."* – Ryunosuke Satoro

Thank you everyone for all your hard work and dedication.

Becky Huffman, Kim Monden



## Service Milestones

**Congratulations and thank you to the following employees !!**

### 5 Years

- Kim Melville
- Kathy Brunato
- Dennis Neill
- Michelle Stone

### 10 Years

- Edna Willows

### 15 Years

- Jen McCauley
- Sherry Bradley

### 30 Years

- Angie Clark

### 35 Years

- Chris Bibby

### 40 Years

- Ruth Lamond

## In remembrance:

Bernice Weir (1944-2022)



Ivan Thompson (1936-2021)



## Certificate of Celebration

FOCUS Accreditation congratulates

**Community Living St. Marys and Area**

on another successful year of providing supports and services



*Cheryl Whiteman*  
Cheryl Whiteman, Executive Director

June 2022  
Date

*Ron Coristine*  
Ron Coristine, Board Chair

### Who we are...

CLSMA provides individualized support 64 people within our community

We have total of 92 employees:

61 full time employees

22 part time employees

5 relief employees

4 summer workers providing support to youth this summer

### What does support look like?

Supports are uniquely designed for each person

Most people have some one-to-one paid support, ranging from a couple of hours per month to many hours daily

2 people live full time or visit regularly with a family or friend enjoying a 'share your home' lifestyle

15 people have connected with a neighbour for some measure of care

### Support Services Restructured Continued

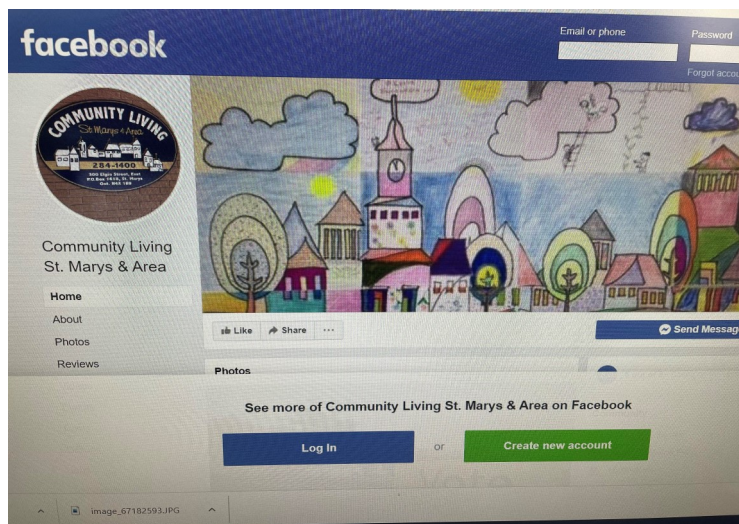
We were excited to welcome Olivia Rutledge to the Support Services team as Team Leader.

Support Services will welcome Shay Marrinan back from maternity leave to return as Team Leader in July 2022.

We have also hired a seventh Team Leader, Megan Penhall-Seyler who will be joining the team at the end of June!







## SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

CLSMA works hard to maintain an active presence on social media. In addition to the agency website, CLSMA hosts two facebook pages--one representing the agency, and one for the annual walkathon--as well as an instagram account. Our posts include a variety of subject matter and information including but not limited to: Agency & Ministry updates, local community events, historical information, stories, quotes, feel good videos, and job postings. Our "Community Living St. Marys & Area" facebook page has a following of 81% women and 17% men (with 2% unidentified).

And with many of our followers coming from Canada, we do reach globally as far as the US, Belgium, India, Lithuania, Australia, The Netherlands, Bangladesh, Croatia, Libya, Uganda, Sweden, VietNam, Romania and New Zealand!

## DIW COMMITTEE

Over the past year, the Diversity, Inclusion & Wellness (DIW) committee has continued to work hard to make CLSMA a welcoming and healthy workplace. The committee is proud to report some of our accomplishments and updates since June 2021:

- Reviewed and made recommendations to further develop CLSMA policies around accessibility

- Reviewed and made recommendations to include a clearer definition of 'sick' in current policy to encompass illness including mental health.

- Provided 12 spin-to-win contests to all employees over the summer of 2021

- Encouraged all employees to adopt a pronoun preference to their email signature line, and provided information about why the committee believes this is a positive change

- Held a booth with free drinks downtown to participate in 'giving Tuesday' initiative

- Provided 9 spin-to-win contests to all employees during winter 2021, with prize focus supporting local St. Marys businesses

- Reviewed PPE mask design options

- Assembled and provided to all employees a mental health awareness resource

- Saw members transition: we said goodbye to Jodi McLean and welcomed Jenna Rankin and Carly Geiger as new members!

**Serving Youth and Families... through planning, resource sharing and a continued commitment that all youth are valued and always belong in our community.**

Community Living St Marys and Area, said farewell to Stephanie Lee and wished her well at her new position with Developmental Services Ontario. We welcomed Amanda Brown to the Youth and Family Support Manager role.

Community Living St Marys continued to provide summer support in 2021 to local youth in St Marys and area. CLSMA was a successful recipient of a Canada Summer Jobs grant. This allowed us to employ six summer youth workers. They supported 14 youth in the St. Mary's community. The youth were supported to have paid employment, volunteer, enjoy safe community spaces and get creative at home.

Voices Perth is a joint initiative between service agencies in Perth County to encourage youth with disabilities to gain self-advocacy skills. The leadership and coordination of this project is led by the Family and Support Manager at CLSMA. Online workshops were offered and well attended by youth 15-25 in the fall, winter. The first in person workshop was held at Stratford District Secondary School in the spring, and it was wonderful getting to know a wonderful group of students and to educate them on Internet Safety.

The Youth and Family Support Manager continues to represent CLSMA as a voting member on the Huron Perth District Catholic School Board and the Avon Maitland District School Boards Special Education Advisory Committee.

Community Living St Marys and Area continue to support youth with and without disabilities to develop their leadership skills. In the past year local youth participated in a variety of online workshops and projects. Four local students were able to attend the Global Student Leadership Online Summit. A group of local youth partnered with the St Marys Pride Day event and they volunteered their time to assist with the Pride Day picnic.



### **Respecting Rights Project**

Community Living St. Mary's & Area brought together a group of self advocates to participate in a series of virtual calls in a project called "Respecting Rights".

This project was in partnership with ARCH Disability Law Centre and explored improvements to be made on the Complaints process.

Participants on the calls learned more about their rights, the current complaint process and were asked for their feedback and input. We had six self advocates begin the series.

## SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYMENT

### A Look Over the Past 12 Months:

Looking back over the past 12 months; June 2021- June 2022, I have been working with 13 people on a full time basis; either working and / or actively looking for work.

1 moved out of province

12 actively working in casual, full time or part time hours

1 in post secondary education full time

### Variety of Workplaces:

Lawn Care, Retail, Customer Service, Delivery, Food Service & Dietary Aide

### CANADA SUMMER JOBS:

Assistance to 4 students to acquire summer employment and or volunteer skills development

Mentoring Summer Support Workers; one to one weekly check in, formal goal setting & skills development for summer staff.

### EMPLOYERS:

The employment market continues to increase in health, providing more opportunities for those we support.

### COVID COMEBACK CONNECTION UPDATE:

Continued meetings the last Friday of the month. Discussion include

Getting back to work

Continued support to job seekers and employers

Embracing the new normal; back to basics of service

Due to the increased health in the workforce and availability of participants, the CCC concluded meeting at the end of 2021.

