



2018-2019  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

**On the Cover:**

Sean O, supported by KW Career Compass. Sean is employed at Vidyad, one of the many partners KW Habilitation is grateful to work with every day.

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Inspiring Abilities.  
Enriching Lives.



### **Our Values**

The values of KW Habilitation are what we believe and guide our actions and our relationships. We strive to reflect our values in all that we do, every day.

Our values shape our decisions and ultimately the impact we have on the lives of people we serve.

### **Equality and Choices:**

We treat each person with respect and recognize their rights, choices and contributions.

### **Inclusion and Community Participation:**

We are committed to promoting inclusion through public awareness, community involvement and citizenship.

### **Collaboration and Partnerships:**

We value collaboration and promote effective partnerships that enable the community to share in the responsibility of ensuring participation for everyone.

### **Leadership and Excellence:**

We believe that dynamic leadership, continuous learning and innovation are essential to achieving excellence.

### **Integrity and Accountability:**

We embrace the values of fairness and honesty in all that we do to ensure our integrity and accountability.

### **Our Vision**

A community where everyone belongs and participates

### **Our Mission**

Together with our community, KW Habilitation inspires abilities to enrich the lives of children, youth, adults and families

### **Our Future**

KW Habilitation seeks to fulfill our mission by inspiring leadership and championing success.



**“Making  
choices is part  
of my life. I  
make choices  
every day  
and KW Hab  
supports my  
choices.”**

Brandon M  
Outspoken Member



# A Message from Ann

Reflecting on the past year I am very proud of the work that KW Habilitation does for children, youth and adults in Waterloo Region. Every program area has experienced significant change to meet the ongoing transformation of how we provide support and services to people who want a “good life”. Certainty vs. uncertainty is the flavour of the day, and as we await funding KW Habilitation continues forward on the path of positive growth.

From Early Learning continuing to expand, to our Affordable Housing building being opened, to Inclusive Living creating new and unique models of living support, change has touched all parts of the organization. From the Employment First motto for KW Career Compass along with the ever “growing” Our Farm project to the ongoing creative options provided in Community participation, KWH continues to be a leading edge organization in all areas.

After 6 years of planning and advocating for more affordable housing in Waterloo Region, people moved in to a brand new apartment over-looking the golf course in July 2018. This is a diverse intentional community for people who are willing to be good neighbours and support each other. It echoes our shift to support what our community needs regardless of a disability.

Guided by our strategic goals and guiding principles we continue to transition to a model that reflects individual choice, self determination and a culture that embeds inclusion in all aspects of a persons life. We have looked beyond our usual structure and living arrangements and inclusive living models have been created with this in mind.

Our employees continue to be the single most important asset at KW Habilitation. Leadership development is very important to our future, and employees have the opportunity to grow and be part of the leadership development initiatives. The newly established Engagement and Representation Council and the Peer Support Network are examples of opportunity to further engage and ensure the employee voice is heard in the operations of KWH.

The work of our Committee for Excellence, comprised mainly of Direct Support Professionals, exemplifies the spirit of our employees. Their tireless efforts have created an atmosphere of positive communication, learning opportunities and encouragement for getting involved and having some fun in the workplace. Having a workplace that values the work of the employees and recognizes these attributes creates a service of high quality for the people supported.

The Board of Directors at KWH continues to be passionate and very supportive which includes taking their fiduciary responsibilities very seriously. Engagement with all activities with staff, volunteers and all fundraising events is ongoing. More importantly, their commitment to the present and future planning for KWH as an organization with an ongoing review of our strategic plan, goals and what outcomes have been accomplished. This fall will be the start of the renewal of the Strategic Plan requiring input from all stakeholders.

I have the privilege of leading this organization, along with the Board of Directors, and we will continue to drive and support innovative ideas and solutions for our future during a time of funding constraints and uncertainties.

Together, with the people we support, families, employees and community partners we will continue to provide a “good life”.



Ann Bilodeau, Executive Director



# A Message From Our President

Wow, well that year went by fast! It felt like only yesterday we were opening the doors to our affordable housing project and now we're nearly a year in and looking ahead to our next project. It is truly amazing to be part of an organization that is willing to take some risks in achieving it's goals, and I couldn't think of a more innovative initiative than building the first modular home in southern Ontario.

Every program in the organization has really stepped it up to high gear this year. KW Career Compass is quickly becoming the gold standard in the industry for creating diverse and inclusive workforces. Our Farm has successfully received funding to have a beautiful community trail constructed on its property. Our Complex Care program, a person-centred approach to meeting the needs of individuals is running successfully. It truly is an exciting time to be part of this organization as we are seeing wonderful things coming out of every corner of every floor.

None of this would be possible without the continued support of the KW Kinsmen Club. From the TV auction, to stringing lights on our homes at Christmas and their generous support at all of our events. It is an honour to be able to thank them publicly on behalf of the board of directors for their tireless work. It certainly does not go unnoticed.



Speaking of tireless work, I would like to say thank you to the staff and volunteers of KW Habilitation. Your dedication, skills and energy continue to drive this organization forward and push us to be as successful as possible. Watching you work together is a true testament to what can be achieved when everyone works towards a common goal. Please keep up the great work.

A huge thank you to our Executive Director, Ann Bilodeau. It's always hard to imagine KW Habilitation without her leadership and this year has been no different. Her enthusiasm and progressive attitude has ensured that KW

Habilitation has stayed at the forefront both locally and provincially.

Last, but certainly not least a thank you to my fellow members of the Board of Directors. Each one of you brings a unique quality to the board and I appreciate you contributing your time to help to shape the future of KW Habilitation. In particular, I'd like to thank Mike Staub, Charlotte Craven, and Marty Bauman who will be leaving the board after countless years of service. Your presence around the table will certainly be missed and we wish you nothing but the best in your future.

It is all of you that I mentioned above which has made this past year the success it was. Thank you for everything you have done and continue to do to make KW Habilitation a community where everyone belongs and participates.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jeff Collins".

Jeff Collins, President



# Board of Directors Report

The 2018-2019 Board of Directors acts within a policy governance model and is responsible for overseeing the execution of our mission and mandate. Elected by the members of the organizations, Board Members meet 10 times during the fiscal year. The board provides leadership within the organization in advocacy supporting our mission to better the lives of the people we support, providing financial accountability and overseeing the planning and implementation of our Strategic Plan.

## **Executive Committee of the Board**

Jeff Collins	President
Jane Tuer	Vice-President
Mike Staub	Secretary
Corey Bechtel	Treasurer
Charlotte Craven	Past President

## **Board Members**

Bill Strachan  
Ian Labelle  
Satish Mistry  
Ryan Snider  
Pierre Fortin  
Rick Willaert  
Mary Cathryn Collins

## **Ex-Officio Members**

Marty Bauman (KW Association for Community Living)  
Chris Van Vliet (KW Kinsmen)  
Ann Bilodeau (KW Habilitation Executive Director)

# Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee's main responsibility is to provide financial oversight for KW Habilitation. These tasks include the review of financial information concerning their annual budget, monitor adherence to the budget, setting long term financial goals and to report and recommend actions concerning the financial position and risk management to the Board of Directors.

During the 2018 – 2019 year, the Finance Committee met regularly to review the financial position of the organization. The Committee met with our financial advisors from Rae Lipski to discuss the contingency fund in order to maximize investment returns. It was a very exciting year as we were able to see the completion of the Affordable Housing Project, changes at DFR and the reorganization of our supported homes. Every year we keep adding to the long list of great accomplishments of KW Habilitation.

In the current year, we continue to see the usual underfunded and financial struggles the not-for-profits encounter, while KW Habilitation still meets and exceeds the needs of children, youth, adults and families in our community. Due to the hard work and dedication of all the staff and our Executive Director's continued pursuit of necessary funds, the organization is in a firm financial position.

Thank you to the Fundraising Committee, donors, volunteers and sponsors for their energy, hard work and continued support of the programs of KW Habilitation. An extra thank-you goes to our funders MCCSS, MCYS and the Region of Waterloo. Most importantly, we must recognize the support of KW Association for Community Living and the KW Kinsmen Charitable Foundation.

We thank the members of the Finance Committee for your dedication and insight over the past year. Your knowledge and financial abilities were invaluable! It was an honour and pleasure to serve as Treasurer and Chair with this committee.

Corey Bechtel, Chair, Finance Committee

## **2018-19 Finance Committee Members:**

Corey Bechtel, Treasurer  
Jane Tuer, Vice-President  
Ann Bilodeau, Executive Director  
Tara Payne, Director of Finance & Administration  
Sue Agley, Controller

Charlotte Craven  
Dave Fallor  
Frank Thompson  
Mike Staub  
Bill Strachan





# Volunteering at KW Habilitation

Throughout the past year we have had 93 individual volunteers contribute their time, talents, energy and passion to our programs. In this wonderful and diverse group, we have students, retirees, professionals, new comers, neighbours, friends, family and community members. We also had the support of 110 volunteers through school and corporate group volunteerism programs.

We are grateful for the 3,300 hours that volunteers have given to help the children, youth and adults supported by KW Habilitation. Volunteers contribute to our Early Learning, Community Participation, KW Career Compass, Weekend Respite, Administration and Our Farm Programs.

Some of the ways that volunteers have contributed this year:

- Helping job seekers develop employment skills
- Engaging with young children to practice social skills
- Teaching fitness classes, baking and decorating for our Christmas Bazaar
- Running Pink t-shirt day activities
- Greeting visitors at our Welcome Centre
- Providing support during recreational programming
- Weeding and harvesting at Our Farm, and selling produce at the Our Farm Market

We were again able to provide a variety of learning rich student placements to 21 students from our partnering colleges and universities. Students brought a wealth of new ideas and enthusiasm from programs such as Early Learning Resource Consultant, Bachelor of Early Learning Program Development, Social Development Studies, Therapeutic Recreation, Developmental Services Worker, Social Service Worker and Psychology.

People choose to volunteer or complete a student placement at KW Habilitation for a variety of reasons. Some to gain skills and experience for their future career, some enjoy working in the garden, some want to develop friendships, and some want to give back to their community. Whatever the reason, we are truly grateful to this amazing group of people.

*Thank you to all of the students and volunteers who joined us in 2018/2019 and to all of our donors who helped us make a real difference in the lives of the children and adults we serve. Your generous support is gratefully acknowledged and is critical in our achievements.*

**93**

Individual volunteers

**21**

Student placements

**110**

Corporate/school  
group volunteers

**3298**

Volunteer hours



**“By attending Mini Staff Development sessions and Five Oaks, I’m able to continue growing professionally and personally so I can provide the best care possible for the people we support.”**

Julianna Krock  
Direct Support Professional

# Inclusive Living

Connecting with family and community is an important aspect for everyone. Supporting a good life for people with developmental disabilities is what inclusive living is all about. Through KW Habilitation's vision and our person centred plans, each person expresses their true desires for an enriched life of choices and self direction. The support for this action is individualized for people who require minimal assistance to those requiring twenty-four-hour support.

Goals, aspirations, statements and processes are important but only if they are put into practice in the best interest of the people supported. A major emphasis for inclusive living continues to include the development and implementation of person centred/directed goals for the individualized plans for people supported.

The following two narratives illustrate the success of having aspirations and connecting with family and community.

## The Family Reunion – There is no place like home!

Christena, her mother and two sisters moved from Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia to Kitchener in 1969. While in care, Christena moved quite a bit and lost contact with her family after her mom passed. When she moved to the David Fisher Residence in 1994, Christena was able to locate and reconnect with two of her sisters. She has always dreamed of going back to Nova Scotia to see the rest of her family and would comment that she had to “save all of her nickels,

dimes, pennies and dollars” to make her dream come true – a dream that seemed impossible to accomplish at times.



It wasn't until 2018, that Christena had the resources to be able to make her dream a reality. Her family and staff worked hard to ensure her physical and emotional needs could be accommodated on such a long trip. On August 13th, 2018, a month before her 67th birthday, a beautiful town car picked Christena up and drove her to the Pearson International airport. There, she boarded the plane to her first class seat where she was treated like Royalty on the flight to Nova Scotia. She was so excited to be going to see her family and she couldn't stop telling everyone she met on the way! What Christena wasn't aware of however, was the surprise her two sister's from London and her niece from Toronto cooked up for her. The day

before, they flew down to Nova Scotia to help the rest of the family prepare for a big family reunion in honour of Christena! It was an honour to share in Christena's family reunion and watch a truly amazing scene unfold on a beautiful sunny day. When we pulled up to Christena's sister's home, there was a yard full of people, decorations, food and music. Christena got out of the car and was immediately surrounded by all of her sisters, nieces, nephews and even old neighbours that she used to play with as a child. There were stories told, cake eaten and tears from fond memories shared. It had been the first time in 50 years that all of the McAuley sisters had been together and it was celebrated in style! Truly, there is no place like home to remember and celebrate a person's legacy – even after a half century of time in between!

During her five-day stay in Sydney NS, Christena was a typical tourist! She visited the Rita McNeil Tea house, The Big Fiddle, and the Cape Breton Miner's Museum. Christena loved walking around the Sydney waterfront and listening to the musicians. She visited the Louisburg light house and the beach she used to play at as a child. It was a time to indulge in all of her favorite foods such as fish and chips, chowders, fries and gravy, and, of course, no day was complete without a couple of stops at Tim Horton's.

Christena ended the week enjoying a great meal with all of her sisters in a small pub. She was able to play the slot machines and listen to the local fiddlers. That trip brought a life-time of fond memories back to Christena who is just as excited today, as she was last summer, to share her experience with others.



## Toronto Maple Leafs – A dream come true!



Richard “Richie” Klatecki is a sports enthusiast and has been a Toronto Maple Leafs fan his whole life. When asked if he could go to any concert or sporting event he wanted to, he replied: “A Leafs Game!”

Tickets were ordered and off he went to his first ever Toronto Maple Leafs Game which included a night in a downtown Toronto hotel. Richie was very clear about his secondary goals and explained how he wanted a beer, purchase cool souvenirs and get his picture on the Jumbo Tron while at the game. Well, 2 out of 3 aren’t bad! (It’s hard to get on the Jumbo Tron.) The Leafs lost a tough game to the Tampa Bay Lightning, but Richie’s favorite player, Auston Matthews scored a goal and Richie came home with a picture of Matthews and a smile on his face! The only thing that would have made this cool event even better would have been to get a chance to talk to Don Cherry – his favourite sports announcer!

Enthusiasm and transformation continue to influence the work of Inclusive Living. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the citizens we assist, their families and friends, staff, volunteers and the Kinsmen/Kinnettes for all their contributions to make the lives of the people we support more enriching.

Chris Gefucia, Director of Inclusive Living

## Complex Care: A New Focus for Inclusive Living

Developmental services have evolved beyond the historic days of isolation. The sector now promotes social inclusion, individual choice and independence. However, as highlighted through the recent Ontario Ombudsman investigation into the adult developmental services system and the resulting August 2016 report *Nowhere to Turn*, there remain persons on the margins, living with complex support needs and faced with extreme circumstances. When they reach a crisis point, service gaps have often left them and their families without any real choice, and dependent on a system that has been unaware and unresponsive to their needs. Without access to sufficient specialized community supports and services, many resorted to hospitals or the police for help. Fortunately the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services has recognized this crisis and continues to collaborate with the Ombudsman’s office and take meaningful and significant actions towards addressing this gap.

*A community where everyone belongs and participates*

KW Habilitation is motivated to be a leader among developmental service agencies in building capacity to meet the needs of persons with complex support needs. In October 2018, Darren René joined KW Habilitation as the new Director of Complex Care and Inclusive Living to lead organizational efforts toward the goal of increasing capacity to provide support to persons with complex support needs. Also at that time, Jenny Lehman moved into the position of Manager of Complex Care and Inclusive Living. Efforts have focused on both practice improvements to the larger organization and also on intentionally building specialized staff teams, specialized environments and clinical resources.

The following efforts have been taken to improve the larger organization’s capacity to provide supports to persons with complexities:

- Improvements to current practice. KW Habilitation Behaviour Support Plans have been assessed using the Behavior Intervention Plan- Quality Evaluation (BIP-QE). Practice improvements have been highlighted and will be pursued in 2019/20.
- Incorporating best practice tools into KW Habilitation supports. As an example the NTG screener, a dementia screening tool useful in establishing a baseline that can help inform assessments, has been introduced and is currently in use.
- Training has been offered to further skills in working with persons with complex needs. In January 2019, approximately 24 people attended Mental Health First Aid; a training curriculum designed to improve skills when supporting a person experiencing mental health problems or having a mental health crisis.

Tremendous efforts have occurred over the last 6 months to develop specialized staff teams, environments and clinical expertise to position KW Habilitation to be a leader in providing complex care.

- In November 2018, a tour of specialized support and treatment environments operated by developmental service partner agencies was coordinated for key KW Habilitation representatives to highlight examples of the environments the agency will need to develop. An environmental scan was conducted at the recently renovated wing at the David Fisher Residence and in addition to the recent improvements, subsequent environmental upgrades were identified and were completed prior to March 31 2019.
- Over the last six months, a specialized team of Complex Support Professionals has been hired and trained. This team brings and offers a wealth of experience in supporting persons with complexities. Their skills have been further enhanced while with KW Habilitation through in-depth training including Safe Management crisis intervention and training specific to individual Behaviour Support Plans.

KW Habilitation recognizes the importance of access to clinical resources in providing complex care. In January 2019, Sarah Drexler joined the agency as a Behaviour Analyst and will act as a clinical resource and also assist in leading the provision and growth of clinical supports. Sarah brings with her extensive experience collaborating with developmental service agencies to successfully complete assessments and treatment of behaviour(s). In addition other clinical resources like Occupation Therapy and Speech Language Pathology have been accessed as needed to compliment efforts.

As of April 01 2019, KW Habilitation has developed a highly skilled Complex Care team, expert clinical resources and specialized environments; positioning the agency to provide effective supports to a person starting on April 01 that presents with highly complicated behaviour support needs. It is the intent to continue to grow this team and provide support to additional persons moving forward, including a second person that will begin receiving support in summer 2019.

With continued success it is our long term vision that this team will continue to grow and become an invaluable multi-disciplinary resource in Waterloo Region offering assessment and treatment supports to persons whose complexities are exceeding the capacity of their current support system.

Darren René, Director of Complex Care and Inclusive Living





***“A community where everyone belongs and participates is everyone’s responsibility. So partnering with other organizations and businesses around services, supports and opportunities just makes sense. We expand our own knowledge through working with others and as a result, the community develops and benefits as a whole.”***

Stacey Mitchell  
KW Career Compass  
Supervisor



# Community & Employment Supports

2018-2019 has been a banner year with many accomplishments and successes. Here are just a few highlights that capture the good work that is being done to assist people to achieve their goals. I would like to express a sincere thank you to the staff at the Vibe, ADS, Our Farm, The Studio, LEG Up! and KW Career Compass for their dedication, commitment and positive spirit.

KW Career Compass has become a well-established and recognizable brand and model of high quality and reputable employment supports creating a diverse and inclusive workforce across Kitchener Waterloo. Simply put; KW Career Compass assists job seekers to meet their employment goals and businesses to hire great candidates.

In September, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Waterloo Region invited KW Habilitation to participate in the Fall “Pitch In” Event hosted by Communitech. It was an opportunity to “pitch” a project idea to over 100 attendees from the local tech sector looking for a cause to volunteer their time to. Jeff Collins, our very own board president, pitched on our behalf, sharing the impact of KW Habilitation and KW Career Compass and inspire those in attendance to donate their time. As a result of Jeff’s amazing pitch, we are now working with tech volunteers to create LinkedIn profiles with our job seekers.

## Jeff told Shawn’s Story



Sean is 27, he grew up in Waterloo and attended Bluevale high school. He’s into cycling, reading and video games. A few years ago he got a job as an office assistant at Vidyard with coaching support through KW Career Compass and he absolutely loves it. He loves the people, the atmosphere, the company trips - he even got his picture with Justin Trudeau when he visited their office.

Vidyard is now a huge part of who he is. He considers the team there family and it’s clear they feel the same way. His manager talks about his work ethic, infectious attitude and that the place just doesn’t feel the same when he’s not there. This is just one of the success stories that have come from partnerships developed by KW Career Compass.



## The Rockway Connection

An inclusive, experiential learning opportunity was created in the spring of 2018 when Our Farm invited students from Rockway Mennonite Collegiate to join our Green Thumbs program.



Through hands-on learning, the curriculum focused on gardening basics such as: planning a garden, safe use of garden tools, and the care of tools. The group learned how to read a seed catalogue, participated in horticultural therapy, built garden trugs and self-watering containers out of recycled materials. They also learned about planting and care of vegetables and flowers.

Field trips to Our Farm gardens promoted exercise and healthy living and provided opportunities for both groups to “get their hands dirty” planting crops like onions, potatoes, carrots and flowers. These were later harvested to help supply KW Habilitation’s Our Farm Community Market.

Building community over the course of the 9 weeks, students experienced inclusive practices, and increased awareness and respect for diversity. Learning about growing healthy food and environmental stewardship brought the diverse group together to learn through horticulture.

This project was funded in part by a City of Kitchener Community Environmental Improvement grant. We gratefully

acknowledge the generous funds received which enabled us to expand our green space with the trugs system and to grow food without pesticides, as well as demonstrate preservation and preparation of what you grow.

## Our Farm

Many Our Farm projects require lots of helping hands and Corporate and Community Groups provided Our Farm with 383 volunteer hours at the gardens. In addition to some planting and weeding, the tasks of digging and preparing 12 new



beds, painting the trailer and picnic tables, moving water tanks and building a new compost area were accomplished. A big Shout Out and Thank You to: Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Bank of Montreal, Desire 2 Learn, Alcon Canada, Equitable Life, WLU Hockey Team and Community Support Connections.

*Celebrate what you’ve accomplished, but raise the bar a little higher each time you succeed - Mia Hamm*



## A Partnership with the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery is Waterloo Region's leading public art gallery, connecting people and ideas through art, with a focus on the best of contemporary culture. The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery collects, preserves, researches, interprets, and exhibits the visual arts and offers dynamic public programming relating to the visual arts, all with a view to inspiring creativity and an appreciation of the visual arts in the Region. They are a valued community partner with whom we have recently had the chance to collaborate on a truly original project.

The goal of this collaboration is to have professional artists work with the people we support and create exemplary art that will go on display at the City Hall Rotunda Gallery in November 2019. Great art challenges suppositions and inspires thought and the work created so far lives up to that description.

The first theme explored was weather and landscapes. People in this class learned how to make clouds using the diluted ink method, how to draw moving and still water as well as artistic elements such as balance and movement. A large piece will be assembled by the artist which will be displayed.

The second half of the class will be taught primarily at the KWAG gallery space with a focus on "art from the body". In this set of classes art is the medium that will spur discussion about consent, pride in self and self-discovery. The feedback on this innovative province-first program has been extremely positive with wait lists for both sets of classes. We'll send out invitations for the gallery show closer to November!

Tracy Franks, Director of Community & Employment Supports



**2948**

Kilograms of food  
harvested at Our  
Farm. (6500 pounds)

**22**

New jobs through  
KWCC

**70+**

Weekly programs  
available at The Vibe

**\$4225**

Our Farm Community  
Market Sales

# Early Learning, Child Care and Family Resources

We continue to work with our partners in the Special Needs Resourcing Collaboration of Waterloo Region. Our partners include, KidsAbility, KW Habilitation and the Region of Waterloo, as the funder. KidsAbility provides all kinesiology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech and language services to licensed early learning and care programs in the region through their SPOT program. KW Habilitation provides all resource consultant, enhanced staffing on a 100% Purchase of Service (POS) model, volunteer and student placements, as well as psychology services to licensed early learning and care programs throughout the Region, for all specialized needs. The Region of Waterloo manages the funds provided by the Ministry of Education, as set out by Provincial legislation.

The past year has been a busy one for Early Learning at KW Habilitation. With the introduction of expansion funding for our program in early 2018, we have continued to maintain this support as our Early Learning and Child Care programs throughout the Region continue to grow. We currently provide support to over 165 licensed child care programs. In addition, we have added the support of two new positions in Early Learning. Our region's Special Needs Access Point (SNAP) program came aboard to KW Hab in the autumn of 2018 and expanded further in the spring of 2019. We also currently have the privilege of sharing a Communication's Coordinator with the Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region. All of these roles have been an outstanding addition to our Early Learning team at KW Hab and we look forward to another successful year in growth and progress.

Excellence continues to be our guiding principle in practice. We continue to grow and expand thoughtfully, as we plan to support children, families and educators in the work that we do each and every day.

## Opportunities for Professional Development

### A Day with Shelley Moore

We laughed, we loved, we learned. In October of 2018, ten Resource Consultants from KW Habilitation were given the opportunity to spend a day in the presence of Shelley Moore, basking in her brilliance. Shelley Moore is a PhD student in Education at the University of British Columbia and a member of her district's inclusion support team, which by no means exhausts her contributions to the inclusion community. Shelley is based out of Vancouver, British Columbia, but travels across North America to spread her message and hopes for our inclusive future.

On October 27, 2018 Shelley Moore brought her ideals to Stratford, Ontario as part of the Early Childhood Resource Teacher Network of Ontario's (ECRTNO) initiative to have Resource Consultants access professional development locally. As indicated by Brianne Soundy, Resource Consultant in awe of Shelley, it was reported that throughout the day



Shelley shed light on ways we can push the inclusion agenda forward. She regaled us with stories of her triumphs and successes, while humbly and entertainingly sharing stories of her failures. Her underlying message for the day was "we need to do better", while inclusion has progressed beyond what it used to be, there is still "moore" to be done. She shared her ideas on how we can further the progress of inclusion in our schools, and how this can be adapted to our preschool programs as well. Shelley graciously worked with the large group assembled to spread the idea that inclusion is a continuum and while we have progressed, we are not done yet. Her messages are both inspiring and have a simplicity to them that make them seem so attainable. With visionaries like her leading the way we just might get to where inclusion should be!



## SNAPping things into place! Here we grow again!



In our Early Learning program at KW Habilitation some changes have occurred over the last few months. Working with our Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) Collaborative, Waterloo Region, we receive referrals from the Special Needs Access Point (SNAP) at the Region of Waterloo for the work we complete in

licensed child care centres. Over the past year, especially with the closure of the Preschool Support Program at Family and Children's Services in May 2018, referrals and outreach to the SNAP program have increased.

To continue to provide support to families of children with special/social needs in licensed child care, KW Habilitation became the host to two SNAP Coordinators supporting child care centres and families seeking childcare in Waterloo Region, since our last annual report. With 24 Resource Consultants and still growing in our supports, we are able to use our SNAP coordination to maximize efficiencies in our system and to provide seamless supports for children, families and the educators and specialists.

We are excited about working with our partner KidsAbility in hosting the SNAP access point for families. Both KidsAbility and KW Habilitation will continue to ensure all children, regardless of their abilities, are supported to safely participate in quality, inclusive licensed child care.

## Gratitude is an Attitude!

We know that Gratitude is the feeling of being grateful or thankful. Research informs us that people who regularly practice gratitude by taking the time to notice and reflect on the things that they are grateful for have positive health outcomes. These include positive emotions, feeling more alive and engaged in their daily routines, they sleep better and have stronger immune systems. Practicing gratitude has become part of our daily routine.



In December our Early Learning team participated in a workshop on Mindfulness. Since this experience, our staff have become more mindful of the work we do and how we complete it. This includes our new Gratitude Wall, located inside our Early Learning office.

Inspired by our partnership with the Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region and spurred on by our favourite "IT" guy, an impromptu Gratitude Wall was set up in a high traffic area of our office. Post-it

notes and markers are left below the Gratitude Wall and staff are encouraged to jot down a thought or idea that they are grateful for. Once they do this they post it to the Gratitude Wall and the message is there for all to see and appreciate. This is an anonymous effort and the messages are heartwarming. A central theme playing out here in messaging is that our staff are in appreciation of each other, specific attributes and talents that people possess and the overall gratefulness of our ability to support children and families to inspire abilities in enriching the lives of all. It is working, we are Being Mindful to be Grateful! This has become a wonderful testament of our appreciation of each other in our professional lives and the gratefulness that we have in making a differences in the lives of children and families, each and every day. Just walking past the wall you cannot help but to take a moment in pause, to read these wonderful positive messages. If you have never tried it, I would highly recommend you set up your own Gratitude Wall under your terms and see what a difference it makes each and every day. I am grateful to be part of such an outstanding group of people. To them I say, Thank you!

John Martin, Director of Early Learning, Child Care and Family Resources



**52**  
Workshops conducted

**165**  
Licensed child care  
programs supported

**631**  
People provided with  
PD opportunities

**1242**  
Families and Children  
supported throughout  
Waterloo Region



**“I feel  
included  
when I am  
respected  
and treated  
fairly.”**

Katherine R  
Outspoken Member





# Facilities

As KW Habilitation continues to grow and support our community, it makes for a continuously busy year for the Facilities and Property Management Team.

In July 2018, we were able to move tenants into our new 22-unit Affordable Housing Building at 108 Sydney St. Although the role of “landlord” was new to us, we welcomed the challenge! Our last tenant moved in March 2019. We have singles, couples, and families living in the building, which helps us to live our Vision: a community where everyone belongs and participates.



108 Sydney Street

Buildium software has expanded beyond repairs and maintenance. We are now using the program as a significant piece of the Affordable Housing property management and moving towards Buildium based purchase orders and standing service contracts for the agency.

We have also renovated David Fisher Residence. We worked alongside Edge Architects and Dakon Construction to complete and create a Complex Care section of the home. One wing of the house was renovated from five bedrooms for six people to two apartments for three people: 1 one-bedroom, and 1 two-bedroom. We will be supporting individuals with complex needs with the new format, and look forward to being able to support the community in this way.

There have also been a lot of moves for individuals this year. Some have moved to our Affordable Housing building, some have moved to a new Affordable Housing Building in Waterloo, and some have switched houses. All of the moves went smoothly and everyone is settling in to their new homes.

Even with all these changes, work continues on all of our other properties. We continue to prioritize costly renovations, upgrades, and address accessibility issues. The continued support of the Kinsmen Charitable Foundation to address the needs of the Kinsmen Foundation owned homes is greatly appreciated. The projects continue!

The last twelve months were busy, but exciting for us—and 2019/20 does not look like it is slowing down any either! KW

Hab, Edge Architects, and Z-Modular have come together to develop some very exciting, new, creative housing for the future. Look for our “eMOD” project at 710 Frederick Street this summer! We would not have been able to complete all of these projects without the continued support from the community and our partners.

Brian Pitts, Director of Facilities and Property Management



**22**

Apartments occupied  
at our Affordable  
Housing Building

**5**

Renewed Caravan  
leases

**3**

Sprinkler systems  
installed

**\$260,000**

Facility Renewal and  
Fire Code Projects

# Human Resources

As we review the past year in Human Resources, it would be fair to say that 2018-2019 represented a season of positive changes at our organization. This is especially true for me personally because last year I was excited to join the organization and become a part of the valuable work we do in this community. The following information highlights a number of the changes that have helped us advance the vision and mission of KW Habilitation.

## Growing Our Team

In September 2018, we welcomed three new directors to our leadership team. As previously mentioned, Steven Plaum resigned as the Director of Human Resources after ten years with the organization. I am thankful for his investment in our workforce and wish him well in his future endeavors. We also said goodbye to Lori Detta and welcomed Tara Payne as our Director of Finance. We're grateful for Lori's contribution's to our mission and look forward to the ways Tara will build on this foundation. Lastly, we were privileged to add Darren René as our Director of Community and Complex Care, which is a new position/department at KW Habilitation and an integral part of our work to create a community where everyone belongs and participates.

## Employee Engagement and Support

It's an essential component of our human resources programs to ensure that our team members feel informed and valued as they navigate their careers with KW Habilitation. It's also important that our employees have the opportunity to shape and influence the policies that affect them most. With this in mind, we partnered with our employees to start an initiative that focuses on engagement, representation, and peer support. Specifically, we created the "Engagement and Representation Council" and the "Peer Support Network". These committees provide leadership opportunities for their members, facilitate the representation of their coworkers, and increase open lines of communication between managers, directors, and employees from the various departments of the organization. I look forward to working closely with these committees and seeing the positive impact this initiative will have on all members of KW Habilitation for years to come!

## Investment in Leadership

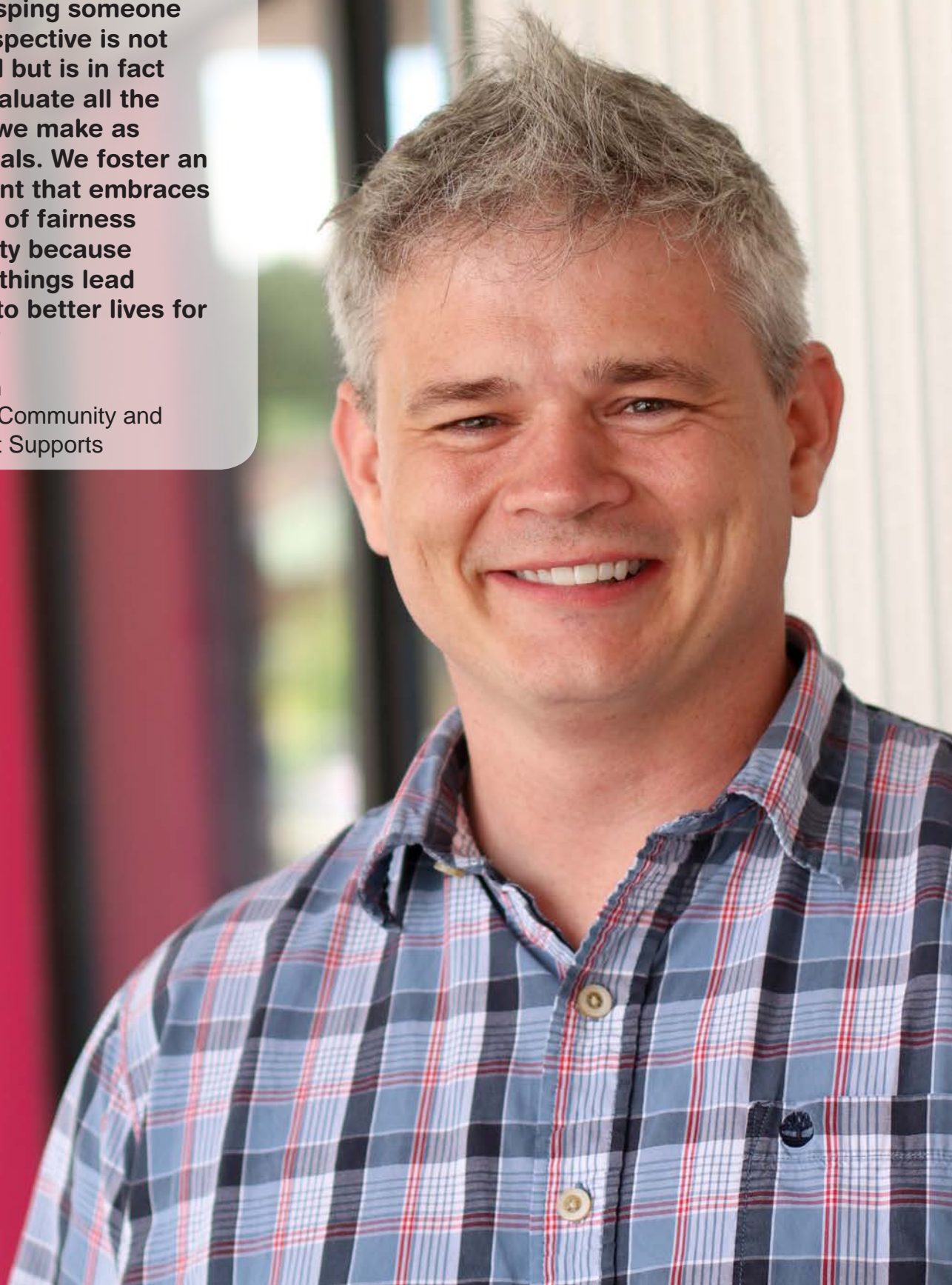
When I joined the team at 99 Ottawa Street, one of the first things that stood out to me was the importance that our organization places on training and development. It's clear that KW Habilitation recognizes the value of leadership development and investing in staff education. This year we continued to provide training programs such as Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI), First Aid/CPR, and a multitude of Health & Safety courses. We also continued to develop our leaders during Five Oaks, Management Days, and the South Central HR Group. In addition, we offered a specialized leadership development program that focused on management level competencies. Twelve employees participated in this 12-week program which was developed and taught by Steven Plaum (Director of Human Resources) and Wil Candlish (Manager of Community Participation and Employment Supports) for the first time last spring. Those who participated in the program spoke very highly of their experience and have encouraged their peers to consider applying for future offerings of the course. As I reflect on the information above, I'm excited to continue developing our leaders, experience the return on our investment, and see the positive impact it has on the citizens we support.

Drew Peterson, Director of Human Resources



**“The root of all integrity and accountability arises from understanding and developing empathy with all who surround us. I feel lucky to work in a field where grasping someone else’s perspective is not just valued but is in fact used to evaluate all the decisions we make as professionals. We foster an environment that embraces the values of fairness and honesty because these two things lead inevitably to better lives for everyone.”**

Wil Candlish  
Manager of Community and  
Employment Supports



## **KW Habilitation**

99 Ottawa Street South  
Kitchener, Ontario, N2G 3S8

519-744-6307

FAX: 519-571-1629

e-mail: [info@kwhab.ca](mailto:info@kwhab.ca)

[www.kwhab.ca](http://www.kwhab.ca)

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**Inspiring Abilities. Enriching Lives.**