

Mural painted by Ability First Ottawa participants, with assistance by A.R.T. in Action, for Canada's 150th Birthday Celebration. This mural was on display in Toronto.

ABILITY FIRST OTTAWA

Abilities, families and communities are our passions.



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

ABILITY FIRST OTTAWA
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OTTAWA, ONTARIO
K2E 7Z9

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WEB: www.abilityfirstottawa.org

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND TWITTER

Ability First Ottawa (AFO) is a charity organization that provides comprehensive services and support to individuals with development and non-developmental disabilities (ages 10 to 70) and their families. AFO's mission is to assist persons with disabilities, and their families, reach their social, educational and employment goals, by offering resource infrastructure and skills development in coordination with our supporting community.

CHARITABLE #826197394RR0001

VISION STATEMENT

To encourage hope and inspire persons with disabilities, and their families, reach for their dreams and achieve their full potential.

MISSION STATEMENT

To assist persons with disabilities, and their families, reach their social, educational and employment goals, by offering resource infrastructure and skills development in coordination with our supporting community.

VALUE STATEMENT

AFO serves its clients' needs in a respectful and inclusive manner.

CORE VALUES

Ability First Ottawa will always consider these core values:

- Hopeful
- Safety First
- Well-Being
- Supportive Environment
- Respectful
- Optimistic
- Inclusivity
- Passionate
- Caring
- Individual Development

PRESIDENT'S & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Another year has flown by for Ability First Ottawa and a busy year it was, both for AFO and personally. Changes in programming were made to adapt to participants' needs and/or based on the financial environment. It was also Ability First Ottawa's 5 Year Anniversary. I am very proud to see that this charity has made it to the 5-year mark as it is a favourable hurdle to reach as statistics show that companies that make it this far usually stay in business long-term. Personally, I got married this year. Yes, planning a wedding and running a charity made things very hectic. I really could not have done it all without the assistance of a lot of people but especially Cathy Aldrich, who does most of the administrative work on a volunteer basis.

As we were adapting to changes, we had to let go of the clothing bin program, which had been so successful in the past. However, it became inundated with competition from other charities and also a lot of theft. Therefore, this money generating program was closed. AFO would like to thank Majlinda Rrahmani for all of her hard work over the course of this program.

The "Awesome Mondays" program really became the "what day is best for everyone" program. However, we did manage to get out into the community more when we weren't stuck to one specific day. I also started working one-on-one with some of our participants on a weekly basis. The goal is to move to more days per week but there are roadblocks that need to be overcome first. First and foremost is funding and second is finding a home for AFO and its programming on a regular basis. Of course, we are grateful and happy to have Collab Space as our home base.

The Parent Support Program is ongoing but in a non-structured fashion as I continue to help and counsel parents of participants in the program.

AFO held its 3rd Annual Summer Camp, which has been very well received. We hope to keep this camp running and possibly expand it in the future. As noted earlier, we celebrated our 5th Anniversary. That celebration was held as a BBQ and replaced our annual fundraising BBQ.

Ability First Ottawa extends our heartfelt thanks for another successful year to our donors, funders, Board of Directors and volunteers, for without them, the programs and fundraising would not get done. We are proud that together we are able to improve the lives of the disabled community. AFO will continue to work hard to help those in need and to get our name more recognizable in our community.

Sincerely,

Christina Ranieri

Christina Ranieri, BA. Soc., SSW, DSW
Executive Director

/ca

ABILITY FIRST OTTAWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Christina Ranieri,
B.A.Soc, SSW, DSW
President &
Executive Director



Tanys Coughlan
Vice President



Leonard Leeks,
FCPA, FCMA, CPA,
CMA, FICB, AMCT,
Treasurer



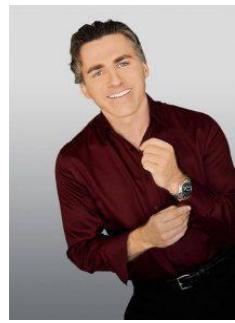
Cathy Aldrich
Secretary



Teresa Scrivens
Board Member



Emma Scotchmer
Board Member
(elected Nov. 2019)



Dylan Black
Honorary Board Member

*** put year elected with each person

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

“Awesome Mondays”

The “Awesome Mondays” program really became the “what day is best for everyone” program. However, we did manage to get out into the community more when we weren’t stuck to one specific day. This year we visited a lot of the summer festivals held in Ottawa as well as other events like Christmas Comicon, Pet Expo, Halloween at Cannamore Orchard. In addition, we also went bowling, trampolining and swimming.

AFO works with a small number of individuals (no more than 6 at any time), with the goal of changing their outlook and ability to contribute to the community. AFO participants gain a much-needed sense of community and friendship, which builds their confidence and capacity in their ability to make a life for themselves. As a result of AFO’s involvement, we typically see a dramatic increase in happiness, decrease in negative behaviours and a positive move away from homelessness.



L to R: Christina Ranieri with the AFO Mural in Toronto; Cathy Aldrich and Christina Ranieri with Bif Naked; Christina with Teresa Scrivens accepting the Finalist award for AFO from the West Ottawa Board of Trade; Participants at the Christmas Comicon and at Cannamore Orchard (Halloween).

Parent Support Program

AFO provides resources and information to parents that help them to create better lives for themselves and their loved one.

This includes a comprehensive intake session that will guide parents through the various funding and support systems available to them and their children. The goal is to one day have a structured Parent Support Program however, at this point in time, Christina continues to help and counsel parents of participants in the program.

In general, mid to high-functioning citizens with developmental disabilities face some of the highest risk of depression, disheartenment, homelessness and negative behaviours because few programs support their needs. They receive less funding than those who are more “obviously disabled”. Yet, due to the judgement and social stigma associated with people with disabilities, they find it equally difficult to secure any form of employment. As a result, participants are extremely susceptible to poverty, depression and homelessness. The weekly program helps participants learn social skills as well as entrepreneurial and employable skills for those that are high-functioning.

AFO Clothing Bins

As noted in the Executive Director's Message above, the clothing bin program was shut down. AFO had expanded from 63 bins to 100 bins located across the City of Ottawa. The bins were bringing in a monthly income and they also could employ up to 5 participants on a casual basis. However, the bins were being stolen or taken over by another “charity”. We tried working on resolving the issue however, it became necessary to shut the program down.

Housing Navigation Program

Ability First Ottawa, when it was first established, offered comprehensive housing navigation services to individuals with developmental disabilities, who were at risk of being homeless, or already were homeless. At the time, a donation had been received and was used to set up this program and now funds are no longer available so, the program has been suspended. There are currently over 60 people that were housed, and most still housed, under this program.



A.R.T. in Action

Ability First Ottawa has been extremely happy with its partnership with A.R.T. in Action that went into its third year. With many thanks to Mai and Claudine Santos for all of their help and support throughout the years. In 2018, this partnership helped produce the mural (seen on the front cover) that was displayed as part of Canada's 150th celebration. We have also gone to MadeMill, a start-up company that specializes in 3D printing. Our participants learned how objects can be printed on a 3D printer; how items can be filmed on a green screen and watched water cut through wood.

In addition, we have had art classes that teach the participants different ways to draw, paint, colour and so on. See some of the creations below:



2019 AFO Summer Camp

The Ability First Summer Camp was held at Domaines Martin et Fils in Bowman, Quebec, for the second year in a row. This facility works very well for our group, with two fully functioning cottages close together and enough room for everyone in attendance. Please see below for more:

ABILITY FIRST OTTAWA

Communities, families and abilities are our passions.

AFO SUMMER CAMP

WHEN: JULY 15-19, 2019

ABOUT THE LOCATION:

Whatever your age, if your dream of wide-open spaces, wilderness and in-tense moments in perfect harmony with nature, le Domaine Martin et Fils will fulfill your wildest dream.

The family owned business is located in the Outaouais region less than an hour drive from Ottawa/Gatineau. Whether you are interested in fishing, vacationing with the family or simply looking for a relaxing getaway, the environment and quietness of our area is sure to please you. Its location near major urban centers make it an ideal family vacation resort easily accessible by any type of vehicle. The Domaine is located on the outskirts of the Réservoir l'Escalier breeding grounds for bass. Adjoining Rivière Le Lièvre and Lac Rouge watersheds that are well known by anglers.

The territory has kept its natural charm inviting you to dream and live in harmony with nature. If you plan on having a relaxing experience book now. We promise your stay will be most enjoyable. We will do our best to accommodate you.

Excerpt from the website.



ABOUT THE CAMP

Ability First Ottawa has rented two cottages at the Domaine Martin et Fils. Activities and full menus have been planned for the entire week. Volunteer drivers will transport attendees from Ottawa to Bowman, Quebec and return (an hour drive each way).

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE • Swimming • Art Classes sponsored by A.R.T. in Action • Reiki • Nature Walks • Bocce Ball • Board & Card Games • Karaoke • Events in nearby Wakefield • Roasting Marshmallows and more!

LOCATION

Domaine Martin et Fils
39 Chemin de la rouge nord,
Bowman QC, J0X 3C0
Tel: (613) 794-2783
www.domainemartinsfils.ca

(make sure you put Bowman, Quebec in the GPS or the Postal Code or you may end up two hours in the other direction!)



2019 AFO Summer Camp Cont'd

During the camp, we kept the participants busy with games, swimming, nature walks and some special visitors. The participants were taught how to make buttons and were then able to make their own buttons with their own design. This was definitely a hit as everyone was excited to display their buttons. Ability First Ottawa would like to send a big thank you out to Dan from Bootleg Buttons for bringing his equipment and teaching the participants this new skill.

There was also a day dedicated to art when Anona Kosmack of A.R.T. in Action attended the camp and had the participants painting away with various themes. Thank you, once again, to A.R.T. in Action and, in particular for this activity, Anona, who works so well with our group. Thank you.

And, we also had Tany Coughlan of Twillow Lifestyles come and join us at the camp. Tany specializes in Reiki, among her other skills, and was able to have some of the group meditate.

It was another successful Summer Camp with some happy campers!



2019 BBQ – 5th Anniversary Celebration



Ability First Ottawa celebrated its 5th Anniversary on September 7, 2019 by holding a BBQ at Britannia Beach. It looked like the weather wasn't going to cooperate but someone put in a good word and it turned out to be a great day for a BBQ. We had lots of volunteers helping out during the day and lots of visitors enjoying all of the donated food, capped off with a large cake!

The day also featured a few speeches about the impact of Ability First Ottawa and the presentation of the 5 Year Certificate from the City of Ottawa's Counsellor, McCrimmon.

The entire event was well done. AFO would like to thank Emile Salem of Collab Space for mastering the BBQ all day – everything tasted fantastic; thanks to Shane Wicks and Emma Scotchmer of Hyperion Electrical for hauling the bbq and other heavy items over to Britannia Beach for us. And, of course, thanks to everyone who donated food and who made it such a memorable event.

Networking and Awards



Networking and Awards

WINNER IN 2016 & 2019
Nominated in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

FACES AWARDS -
FAVORITE SOCIAL SERVICES WORKER & BEST COMMUNITY
SUPPORT/NON-PROFIT

West Ottawa Board of Trade Business
Excellence Award Finalist (2016 & 2017)
Celebration of People Award for Advocacy
Finalist (2014)



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A group of AFO volunteers were always networking at various events. Four times a year, AFO attended eSAX, an event produced by Jarrod Goldsmith, held at Lansdowne Park. Jarrod also named AFO as one of the recipients of the 50/50 draw, along with the Max Keeping Fund, and CHEO. Some of the participants, particularly those interested in becoming entrepreneurs themselves, attended two of our regular networking events, eSAX and Entrepreneurs in Action at

Collab Space. Thank you so much to Jarrod Goldsmith, eSAX Founder and Emile Saleb, Co-Founder at Collab Space for your continued support. Here are a few pictures from programming and from eSAX.

AFO also attended the Entrepreneurs in Action event, as much as possible. This event was held once a month at Collab Space and hosted by Emile Salem and his staff at Collab. Then there were also GR Meetings and other networking events, which made for a busy networking calendar.

No matter how great your business idea may be, its success depends on one very important factor: other people. You can get all the other building blocks in place – a solid CRM, a brick-and-mortar storefront, inventory out the ears, and an advertising strategy. But devoid of a strong network of a strong network you'll reach the ceiling very quickly.

Awards:

Christina Ranieri has won

- AFO currently does not have paid employees. All administrative work is done on a volunteer basis by Board Members and the President/Executive Director, Christina Ranieri. The plans include having some paid employee positions in the future.
- Ability First Ottawa has quite a busy and effective social media presence. Our Executive Director handles the social media.

Twitter: AbilityFirstOtt

 Twitter Followers – 1,625

Facebook: Ability First Ottawa

 Facebook Followers – 1,103
 Facebook Likes – 1,129

ABILITY FIRST OTTAWA INC.
BALANCE SHEET AS AT NOVEMBER 30TH

	2019	2018
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$4,800	\$3,452
Accounts Receivable	\$1,394	\$1,290
Taxes Receivable	\$816	\$880
Total Current Assets	\$7,009	\$5,623
Fixed (Long-Term) Assets		
Long-term Investments	\$ -	\$ -
Property, plant and equipment	\$ -	\$ -
(Less accumulated depreciation)	\$ -	\$ -
Intangible assets	\$ -	\$ -
Total Fixed Assets	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL ASSETS	\$7,009	\$5,623
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$1,000	\$ -
Due to Founder/Employee	\$5,084	\$5,084
Credit Card Payable	\$669	\$467
Total Current Liabilities	\$6,752	\$5,551
Long-Term Liabilities		
Long-Term Debt	\$ -	\$ -
Deferred Income Tax	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ -	\$ -
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$ -	\$ -
Net Assets		
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$71	(\$1,466)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	\$185	\$1,537
Total Net Assets	\$257	\$71
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$7,009	5,623

ABILITY FIRST OTTAWA INC.

INCOME STATEMENT

	12 Months Ending 30-Nov 2019	12 Months Ending 30-Nov 2018
Revenue		
Donations		
Tax-Received Gifts	\$ -	\$ -
Donations received through Canada Helps ¹	\$1,180	\$3,039
Gifts received from other charities/foundations	\$90	\$ -
Other gifts – not receipted	\$461	\$ -
Gifts in Kind	\$ -	\$ -
Program Fees ²	\$8,995	\$11,054
Grants	\$ -	\$ -
Fundraising Events – Revenues	\$639	\$1,113
Other Revenues	\$782	\$274
Total Revenue	\$12,147	\$15,481
Expenses		
Program Outings & Meals	\$7,098	\$8,812
Professional Fees & Honorariums	\$908	\$660
Salaries & Benefits	\$ -	\$ -
Fundraising Events – Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
Rent	\$ -	\$ -
Insurance	\$1,116	\$1,846
Bank Fees & Interest	\$297	\$390
Advertising and Promotion	\$ -	\$ -
Gifts in Kind	\$ -	\$ -
Equipment & Leasehold Improvements	\$ -	\$ -
Travel	\$ -	\$ -
Other General and Administrative Expenses ³	\$2,544	\$2,236
Total Expenses	\$11,962	\$13,943
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$185	\$1,537

NOTES:

1. Donations through Canada Helps have dropped significantly, possibly due to their policy of wiping the slate clean at the beginning of each New Year. Therefore, anyone, who had a monthly donation, would need to re-subscribe.
2. Program Fees were also significantly less in 2019 vs. 2018. Some of this is due to lack of funding, some is due to the family wanting a full week program.
3. Administrative Costs: Economic Printers and other economic means of doing Administrative work have been undertaken.

Work done in planning two years ago?

SWOT Analysis?