

THE WAVE

SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER



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President's Musings

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Vice President Nora McKellin

Treasurer Dr. Eugene Lechelt

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Director Chris Tam

Director Dr. Dean C. Powers

Appointed Director Kim Wood

FEEDBACK

If you have any feedback, questions, or ideas, please contact Barbara M. Brown at:

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My year-end report last December summarized the many changes Wavefront Centre took on in 2019: our new name and logo, our new fully accessible head office and our revised vision, mission and values that championed our transformation.

Our mission is to serve Deaf and Hard of Hearing persons, their families and the community by delivering innovative programs, products and solutions to achieve full communication accessibility.

Throughout 2019 our Board of Directors continued working and planning to formalize the many changes that have occurred. We looked at ways to finance our new building's operations and to develop a financial system that would support and sustain our mortgage – a financial obligation that was last looked at by the board about thirty years ago.

In September 2019 the board began planning for our long-term needs. Grace Shyng has been our Interim Executive Director now for two years. During this time Grace has provided Wavefront Centre with tireless leadership and worked with many external and internal experts to put in place changes that will impact our future for decades. Thank you Grace, for your great contribution.

Just before this edition of The WAVE was to be published, Canada — indeed the whole world — was besieged by the COVID-19 pandemic. At Wavefront Centre, we have changed our procedures to protect the health and safety of our staff and our clients. We remain open with limited, but essential services and programs. Please visit our website or phone our head office for information about appointments.

Take care of one another. Thank you.

Barbara M. Brown, Wavefront Centre President

Meet Our New CEO: Christopher Sutton

On April 1, 2020, Wavefront Centre's Board of Directors announced the appointment of our new

Chief Executive Officer, Christopher T. Sutton. Read more about his appointment here:

<https://www.wavefrontcentre.ca/wavefront-centre-appoints-new-ceo/>

Christopher will be featured in the next edition of The WAVE. Stay tuned!

Interim Executive Director Message

Happy Spring Wavefront Community.

I hope our newsletter finds you all safe and healthy during these unprecedented times. It's been an unusual start to 2020.

Wavefront Centre is regularly monitoring how we can best serve our community during this pandemic. We are continuing to provide essential services to our clients, particularly to our vulnerable and isolated seniors. Our essential services have included urgent and emergency services in hearing health and hearing aid services, grocery shopping assistance and virtual visits, assistance with completion of EI applications and the provision of interpreting services. As a public service to our community, we have translated the Ministry of Health written media releases into ASL. We have worked hard to advocate that services for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities remain a priority during these challenging times. I wish to applaud our staff for their professionalism, positivity, and teamwork throughout this period. I also wish to thank our community for their support and encouragement.



Like many of you, we look forward to having this pandemic come to an end. In the meantime, there are a lot of behind-the-scenes projects that we are working to complete.

For the next several months we be finishing up our move-in process. We have a few outstanding building items to complete and install, including a specialized audio-visual system that will allow us to provide presentations that are seamlessly communication accessible. We look forward to further expansion of various programs once all of our systems and outstanding items are completed and in place.

We have been working with the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) throughout our building project to ensure our features meet accessibility standards for all types of disabilities. We will be having our accessibility rating assessed by RHF in a few months' time. We are aiming to achieve a very high rating of accessibility!

Later this year, we will be hosting a public open house. This was originally planned for May but given recent events, this has been postponed to later in the summer or fall. Our open house will feature self-guided tours, displays and demonstrations of our various services, as well as plenty of opportunity to explore, mingle and enjoy our new space.

We are also planning an AGM for our members later this year. If you are not a Wavefront Centre member already, we encourage you to join via the member application form in this newsletter and be better connected with Wavefront Centre. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support of Wavefront Centre. We look forward to the world returning to a healthier and safer place, and to what the rest of 2020 will bring!

Grace Shyng, Interim Executive Director

Watch this newsletter in ASL

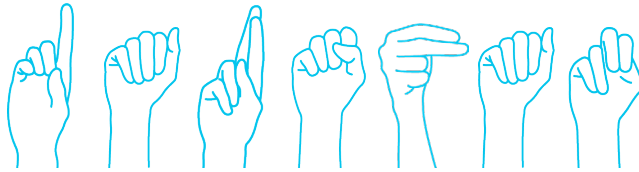
This Spring 2020 newsletter is available in ASL on our website:

www.wavefrontcentre.ca/newsletters



Staff Spotlight - Meet our Staff!

DARSHAN



If you've been into our Q-Street location recently you've probably seen a few new smiling faces, including Darshan, our newest Front Desk Receptionist.

Darshan was born and raised in Malaysia, and has travelled and lived around the globe, all whilst immersing herself in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities everywhere she went.

Many years ago, Darshan and her husband decided to make Vancouver their home. A decision which she prefers to express in a limerick. In her own words:

There was a lady who left the wetlands.
Who came to Canada with silver strands.
Fell in love with Vancouver.
Wants to live here forever,
So, she can explore the beaches 'n woodlands.

In addition to being a world traveller and having a splendid sense of humor,

Darshan speaks many languages including Malay, Indonesian, Punjabi, Hindi and of course, ASL.

Fun Facts about Darshan:

What is your favourite food? Nasi Lemak, a Malaysian dish - fragrant rice & sambal. (Sambal is ground chillies sautéed with onions).

What is your favourite movie? Dead Poets Society – don't you just love Robin Williams!

What is your dream job? To be a Sign Language Interpreter.

RYAN



Ryan is a recent addition to our Wavefront Centre team, joining the Counselling department as a DeafBlind Project Coordinator for the Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors (TAPS) in January 2020. Ryan is DeafBlind himself and has a guide dog named Norman. He brings a wealth of education and experience to Wavefront Centre and the TAPS program.

Ryan holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Deaf Studies from Gallaudet University, a barrier-free university for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. While at Gallaudet, Ryan's research focused on the DeafBlind community. Today, he remains passionate about working in advocacy and spreading awareness of the DeafBlind and Deaf communities. He particularly enjoys teaching others about his



community and about ProTactile, a new language for the DeafBlind.

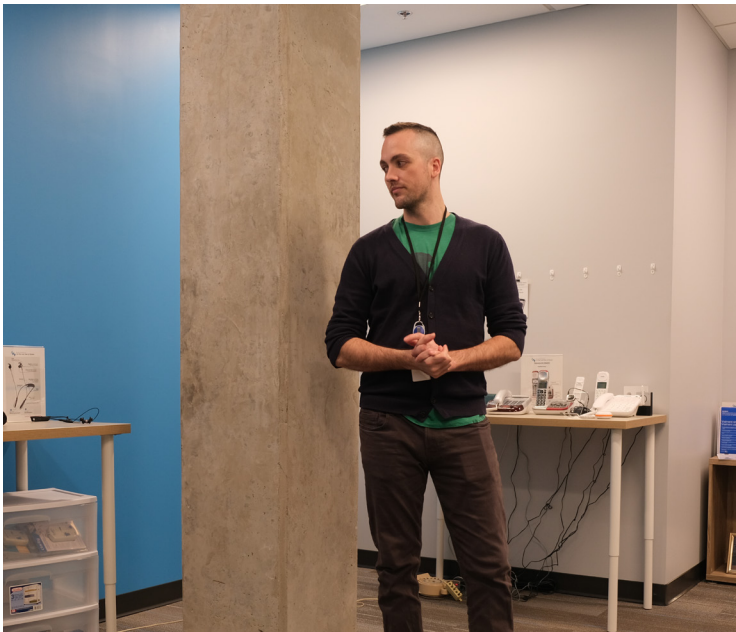
Outside of work, Ryan enjoys watching movies - Disney and Horror are among his favourite genres!

Fun facts about Ryan:

What is your most memorable experience? I came third in PanAmerican Games for the Blind in 1500m track and field in North Carolina as a representative for the Canada Blind team. I was also a representative of the Canadian Deaf team and visited Rome for track and field in Deaflympic in 2001.

Do you have a catchphrase? In the ProTactile community, we use the quote “tactile you later,” or “touch you later.” This quote is similar to “see you later,” but adapted since we use touch to communicate.

What does accessibility mean to you? To me, accessibility means that everyone has equal access to anything without experiencing barriers. Denny’s restaurants are an excellent example of providing accessible menus that help everyone. They offer menus in larger print and braille for anyone who is blind or low vision. They also provide menus with pictures so that those who have disabilities and are unable to read the menu can have access by using those pictures. Most restaurants don’t have this.



Cody is one of the newest additions to our diverse team. His wealth of experience working with vulnerable and marginalized populations around the world enhances cultural diversity at our Communication Devices Program. Cody also has experience in digital marketing roles! His strong background, which includes two Master’s Degrees, will elevate the Showroom and Communication Devices department to a whole new level. He’s already shown great ambition to increase communication device awareness at health fairs, corporations and local businesses. He works part-time, 3-days a week in our Showroom at 2005 Quebec Street. Come pay us a visit and get to know this fine gentleman!

Fun facts about Cody:

What is your favourite book? Bruce Chatwin’s The Songlines, or most anything that Friedrich Nietzsche wrote.

What is your dream job? I’d like to be like Carl Sagan. We have a wealth of information and research, but we could really use more people who know how to communicate it effectively.

What is your most memorable experience? This might not be my most memorable experience, but moving to London, England, to start my first Master’s Degree was certainly one of my most transformative. From organizing visas, finding a place to live, getting bank accounts, and transferring my money, I probably learned more outside of school than in it!

What do you enjoy most working at Wavefront Centre? I am thrilled with how open to new ideas Wavefront Centre is! It’s also great being a part of such a longstanding organization that is working hard to increase accessibility in the region.

Do you have a catchphrase? Tootles!

What does accessibility mean to you? It means not having to constantly advocate for yourself, because the supports and accommodations are just a normal part of life.

Student Projects



Wavefront Centre believes in connecting students and young professionals to work on real world projects that can be delivered and shared in a classroom setting. Since January, we have accepted three student courses, spanning 13 students. These projects have enabled business and interactive arts students to embed real-life situations into their curriculum, facilitated by an instructor.

Each group continues to work on different projects at length. Two of them are focused on the Communication Devices Showroom, improving accessibility through journey mapping, delivering ideas for filling in the gaps and also helping reach key business clients in other industries. Another group is working on solutions to improve the application process for the Lend an Ear program.

In an effort to encourage social distancing during this difficult time, we were also able to support one of the groups to facilitate a very successful virtual workshop!

We are very excited to lead all three groups to succeed. Based on some of the progress we've seen from these three groups, these talents and deliverables will turbo-charge Wavefront Centre, giving us unique opportunities to generate fresh insights!

A Trip Down Memory Lane

It's been a bittersweet season for the staff, board and community of Wavefront Centre.

This March, we officially said goodbye to our old building on West 7th Avenue that housed Wavefront Centre's head office for nearly 50 years! We reflect proudly on the ideas, projects and programs that were birthed there, as well as the many people whom we learned from and grew with: we will always treasure these fond memories.

Now we look forward with anticipation and excitement as we prepare to present our brand new accessible facility to the public at our upcoming open house later this year!

If you are interested in seeing a portion of the demolition of the West 7th building, watch it here:

https://youtu.be/m_go3fCzumg



COVID-19: Our Response

Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility remains committed to supporting our clients and community through this global pandemic. As such, all non-essential, in-person services and group activities have been suspended. However, communication accessibility remains vital to the ASL Community and those with hearing loss. It is essential that we are all able to access up to date information in order to stay informed as developments unfold.

For this reason, Wavefront Centre has provided ASL translations of daily media releases from our Provincial Health Officer and Minister of Health. These translations are available on our social media platforms, including our Youtube channel.

We also wish to acknowledge the excellent advocacy work by various Deaf and Hard of Hearing organizations who, like Wavefront Centre, have written to the provincial and federal governments requesting that press conferences be accessible via sign language and captioning. These organizations include the Greater Vancouver Association of the Deaf, Okanagan Valley Association of the Deaf, Silent Voice, Board Voice, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, Westcoast Association of Visual Language Interpreters, Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, as well as many other individuals from the ASL Community.

During this time, we have continued to provide essential services either through in-person appointments or, where possible, through virtual means. For the most up to date information, please visit our website: wavefrontcentre.ca



Become a Member Today!

Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility is committed to addressing concerns about accessibility and quality of life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in BC. Become a member and help us grow! Benefits of membership include discounts on workshops and classes, as well as voting privileges at our annual general meetings (AGM).

Membership fees:

Lifetime Membership - \$100

Annual Membership - \$15

To apply for membership fill out the enclosed form and return it to:

Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility

2005 Quebec Street

Vancouver, BC

V5T 2Z6

Applications for membership will not be accepted in the 30 day period immediately prior to the annual general meeting. Join today to ensure you are notified and registered to vote at the upcoming AGM!



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COMMUNICATION ACCESSIBILITY**

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SUPPORT GROUPS & SERVICES

CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION (CHHA) – VANCOUVER BRANCH

A consumer-based organization formed by and for hard of hearing Canadians. CHHA's goal is to increase public awareness of hearing loss and to help Canadians with hearing loss fully integrate into Canadian society.

chhavancouver@gmail.com www.chhavancouver.ca

GREATER VANCOUVER ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF (GVAD)

A consumer-advocate group on behalf of the Deaf Community.

gvadoffice@gmail.com www.deafbc.ca

CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION (CHHA) – BC CHAPTER

A consumers' organization for the hard of hearing, with national, regional and provincial structures dedicated to the assistance of hard of hearing Canadians.

info@chha-bc.org www.chha-bc.org

FAMILY NETWORK FOR DEAF CHILDREN (FNDC)

A parent run, non-profit, charitable organization supporting families with deaf and hard of hearing children & youth that use sign language or are interested in learning Sign Language.

fndc@fndc.ca www.fndc.ca

BC BALANCE AND DIZZINESS DISORDERS SOCIETY (BADD)

To support, inspire and educate those affected by balance and dizziness disorders.

info@balanceanddizziness.org www.balanceanddizziness.org

THE WAVE

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Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility is the operating name for Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, a registered charitable organization. Charitable Registration Number #108200098RR0001



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

Supported by the Province of British Columbia