

THE WAVE

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER



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President's Musings

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director Barbara M. Brown

Director Dr. Graham Bryce

Director Chris Tam

Director Dr. Dean C. Powers

Director Kim Wood

Appointed Director Art Reitmayer

Appointed Director Lance Williams

Appointed Director Rosalyn Chan

FEEDBACK

If you have any feedback, questions or ideas, please contact us at:

communications@wavefrontcentre.ca

CONTRIBUTORS

Editor

Vanessa Tobar

Contributors

Barbara M. Brown, Christopher Sutton, David Love, Jenn Wilson, Vanessa Tobar

This issue of The WAVE outlines innovations in services and programs at Wavefront Centre over the past few months. These developments came about through the hard work and care of our staff who strive to improve the quality of life for our clients.

The Board of Directors has also begun a transformation. At our September board meeting we introduced three newly appointed directors, chosen for their expertise in law, business and finance, as well as elect our new executive. We continue to focus on the development of a governance-focused board.

After 8 years on the board — 5 of those years in the role of President — I have decided to assume a less demanding role for my final year. I have been honoured to work with some amazing board members over my many years on the team, and I have had the privilege of working with three senior leaders— Susan Masters, Grace Shyng and Christopher Sutton. As a team, the board and our senior managers have worked diligently to bring client-focused services to our Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities.

During my time on the board I have been involved in the negotiations for, and the construction of, our new fully accessible head office, the expansion of many services and a sizable increase in staff to deliver new and innovative programs.

I would like to thank past and present board members, our senior managers and staff, and our Wavefront Centre members for their commitment. Thank you for the support I have received from so many of you.

Wishing much success to you all in your future endeavours.

Barbara M. Brown, Wavefront Centre President

A Message From Our CEO



There has been much change in the world around us. Change is a theme that we are familiar with at Wavefront Centre and one that we have managed well. This past year we have made tremendous changes: we introduced our new name, moved into our new home, and now continue to deliver award-winning programs and services.

This past May, we expected to have our open house to welcome you into our new home. Due to the circumstances, we moved our opening online in the form of a virtual celebration which was held on September 23rd. That same week we also celebrated International Week of the Deaf, where leaders in the Deaf community came together virtually to showcase talents and discuss issues important to the Deaf community.

In the next few months, we are looking to develop our reintegration strategy, a guide on how we should continue to deliver our programs and services over the next 12-16 months, as we face the realities and adjust to the new normal. We plan to focus our priorities on strengthening our services and developing innovative ways to stay connected, all while continuing to deliver the same high-quality support that you expect from Wavefront Centre. I understand that navigating through this new normal is very difficult. That's why we are developing this strategy with your input, to ensure that your priorities are top of mind. As always, Wavefront Centre is committed to reducing communication barriers.

I want to take the opportunity to thank our Board of Directors for their continued leadership. To the staff at Wavefront Centre, thank you for your continued commitment and dedication. And to you, our readers, thank you for your unwavering support. As the world adapts to the new change, our commitment to you remains the same.

I wish you and your family well. Please take care of one another.

Christopher T. Sutton

Watch in ASL

This Fall 2020 newsletter and past editions of The WAVE are available in ASL on our website:

wavefrontcentre.ca/newsletters



Making Waves - Breaking Barriers

We have officially opened the doors to our permanent home at 2005 Quebec Street, and in doing so have unveiled one of the most accessible buildings in the country.



“We have been servicing the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities in Vancouver for more than 64 years,” explains Christopher Sutton, Chief Executive Officer, Wavefront Centre. “We had simply outgrown our space in Kitsilano and were not able to provide the high level – and volume – of service required. Thanks to our partnership with real estate developer, Conwest, support from the BC Ministry of Health, individuals, foundations and corporate donors, we are able to continue providing unparalleled care, support and sector leadership for many years to come”.

We launched our Breaking Waves Capital Campaign several years ago and connected with friends, both new and those that have known us over the decades, and are filled with gratitude for their outpouring of support. We can never say thank you enough because, without the generosity of so many, the move to our new home after more than 60 years on West 7th would not have been possible.

We invite you to visit the 3rd floor audiology clinic at our Quebec St. location to view our donor wall which proudly lists project partners, pacesetter and leadership donors. And in our kitchen there is a long list of staff and board members who, over several years, committed to join our campaign to break communication barriers. Each and every one helped us make the leap to our new purpose-built home.

In future issues of The WAVE we will do more in-depth profiles of donors whose support benefits our neighbours who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. There are currently opportunities to contribute to research, seniors outreach, our hearing aid lending program and our new DeafBlind services. Contact David Love for more information. Today, we celebrate our Campaign donors.

David Love, CFRE, Campaign Manager
david.love@wavefrontcentre.ca | 604-736-7391 ext. 414

Thank You Campaign Donors!

Project Partners:

CONWEST
Cushman & Wakefield
Field & Marten Associates
Fusion Projects
MGBA Architecture + Interior Design
Norton Rose Fulbright
Rick Hansen Foundation
Vancity Savings Credit Union

Pacesetter Donors \$100,000+

BC Ministry of Health
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Leadership Donors \$10,000 - \$99,999

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Wawanesa Insurance
Drs. Jane Lea & Brian Westerberg
Malcolm White
Paul & Karen Wu
Mr. & Mrs. P.A. Woodward Foundation
Suzan & Pauline Zagar
Garry Zlotnik & Family

Seniors Outreach - Better at Home

The current pandemic has created barriers for many Deaf and hard of hearing individuals, and even more so for seniors who are disproportionately affected by a technological divide. Since March, many people and businesses have moved nearly all of their interactions online. For seniors who are already at risk of social isolation, this change has posed additional challenges. Our Better at Home staff and volunteers have been dedicated to making sure that seniors continue to stay connected to their communities.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Seniors Outreach - Better at Home program has provided:

240	Virtual Visits
48	Phone Check-Ins
18	Grocery Shopping & Delivery Trips



“Recently, one of our Deaf senior clients came into the office asking for assistance to contact her internet and phone provider. I helped her set up a VRS account and empowered her to make the call herself, while sitting nearby and supporting her. She was able to settle her bill, but still needed to reconnect her services. Unfortunately, the company reported that they were not able to do any house calls to fix the issue. Understandably, this client was very upset. Following this, I visited the client’s home three times to assist in fixing the problem. It took a total of about 12 hours, but we were able to get her internet, phone and tv working! She was so happy she wanted to pay me and feed me dinner! It feels great to be able to support seniors in our community to lead independent and fulfilling lives.”

– Wavefront Centre, Better at Home Staff Member

Accessible Communication Services

During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic our Interpreting Department faced many unexpected changes and we had to adapt quickly to the world around us. Knowing how critical communication is, we quickly sent updates and important messages about health and safety to our community of interpreters and the clients we serve - communication accessibility is our priority. Over the past few months, our team has reflected on our response during the initial onset of the pandemic to assess our department structure and to make



improvements to ensure greater access to communication as we move forward. We will continue to lead, to seek new opportunities, and to continuously improve our services.

We are excited to announce our department has been renamed to Accessible Communication Services! This new name recognizes the variety of services that we offer to meet the diverse needs of the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and hearing communities. This name change allows us to offer more accessible communication services to the community, such as: ASL translation, Captioning and Plain Language services.

We are also excited that we have invested in our infrastructure and people and will soon be launching a number of tools that will enable you to interact with us more easily. Along with this, we have hired new talent which you will see on our various communications. Soon, you will see an increase in content available in sign language so that you and your family can stay up-to-date with the latest news. As many other businesses are shifting their services to remote and online, we too, are doing the same. Furthermore, our interpreters will receive increased mentorship and training opportunities. This means you will continue to receive the top-notch service you expect and receive from Wavefront Centre!

We are excited to further our vision of communication accessibility for all and strive to ensure that no one is left out of any conversation. Thank you for your ongoing support and we hope you are as excited as we are for the opportunities to come. Also, a HUGE thank you to the Accessible Communication Services team (Jacky Buss, Cindy Haner, Jodi Birley, and Samara Ferguson), and all of our interpreters, for your hard work. It is apparent how much you care about Wavefront Centre and the communities that we work for by your dedication and commitment

Jenn Wilson, Interim Director of Accessible Communication Services

Learn more about Accessible Communication Services

To learn more, visit our new page:

acs.wavefrontcentre.ca

Virtual Celebration of Accessibility & International Week of the Deaf

Communication builds pathways between people, nurtures relationships and strengthens communities, which is why the team at Wavefront Centre continues to bring virtual celebrations to your fingertips. While we cannot gather in-person, many of you joined us online for our Virtual Celebration of Accessibility during International Week of the Deaf (September 21 - 25).

Throughout International Week of the Deaf, Wavefront Centre's ASL team brought us presentations from Deaf leaders and sign language advocates from across Canada. Presentations included a message from World Federation of the Deaf President, Dr. Joseph J. Murray, and inspirational conversations about sign language conservation and exposure. The staff at Wavefront Centre also participated in the #whyisign campaign, sharing why ASL is important to them.

On September 23rd, International Day of Sign Languages, Wavefront Centre also hosted a live webinar series to celebrate accessibility and our fully accessible facility at 2005 Quebec Street. The series included presentations from our CEO, Wavefront Centre's ASL team, audiology department and devices showroom.

If you missed it, you can catch up any time on our YouTube channel:
youtube.com/WavefrontCentre

Tour Wavefront Centre

You can now visit our Quebec Street location from the comfort of your own living room. Take a virtual tour of our head office building and explore all of its accessible features.



Take the 3D Tour of 2005 Quebec Street:
bit.ly/WavefrontCentre-3D



**WAVEFRONT CENTRE FOR
COMMUNICATION ACCESSIBILITY**

HEAD OFFICE

2005 Quebec Street
Vancouver, BC V5T 2Z6

Phone 604-736-7391
TTY 604-736-2527
Fax 604-736-4381
info@wavefrontcentre.ca

WILLOW OFFICE

#514 – 2525 Willow Street
Vancouver, BC V5Z 3N8

Phone 778-329-0870
TTY 778-329-0874
Fax 778-329-0875
willowinfo@wavefrontcentre.ca

TRI-CITIES OFFICE

#210 – 2755 Lougheed Hwy
Port Coquitlam, BC V3B 5Y9

Phone 604-942-7397
TTY 604-942-7380
Fax 604-942-7395
tricitieinfo@wavefrontcentre.ca

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 group which advocates on behalf of the Deaf Community.

gvadoffice@gmail.com www.deafbc.ca

CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION (CHHA) – BC CHAPTER

A consumer-based 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 who use sign language or are interested in learning sign language.

fndc@fndc.ca www.fndc.ca

BC BALANCE AND DIZZINESS DISORDERS SOCIETY (BADD)

A not-for-profit society dedicated to support, inspire and educate those affected by balance and dizziness disorders.

info@balanceanddizziness.org www.balanceanddizziness.org

THE WAVE

The WAVE is published quarterly; to submit an article please contact the editor, Vanessa Tobar, at **vanessa.tobar@wavefrontcentre.ca**

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