

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

DURHAM

Deaf Services



Message from the President

Welcome to the 2021/2022 AGM for Durham Deaf Services. What an interesting past 12 months we have had! I hope that everyone is happy, safe, and healthy! The last 12 months have been an interesting experience for all of us. Hopefully, COVID has not been too impactful for you and your family.

I want to thank Maggie and her staff for all their efforts during this time in keeping DDS moving forward and for offering as much as we can during this pandemic. Financially, DDS is struggling a little but is no different from every other non-profit or for-profit business. We need to stay the course, and we will eventually come out the other side in a better position to service the Deaf community at large.

I want to acknowledge the passing of Randy Vodden. He will be missed by his family and friends. His passing was felt by all who knew him.

I want to thank Joan Fillmore, Gail Brunsdon, and Alison Honsberger for their time on the board and wish them all the best!

I also want to mention that DDS has undertaken the development of a strategic plan. This plan will help to guide DDS through the coming years. This roadmap will set out a clear path to advance DDS in supporting the Deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing community. There have been a lot of people involved in the development of this plan, and the plan will be rolled out over time. As part of the strategic plan, we now have committees – Executive committee, Governance committee, Finance committee, Marketing committee, Fundraising committee, and Planning committee. I would like to thank everyone who has been involved so far.

Staff 2021-2022

Maggie Doherty-Gilbert
(Executive Director)

Stefanie Gibbons
(Literacy Coordinator)

Behishta Mushtaq
(Literacy Practitioner)

Rebecca Salisbury
(Admin Assistant)

Sonja Johnson
(Outreach Facilitator)

Stephan Rohatyn
(ASL Instructor)

Jessica Cano-Jauregui
(ASL Instructor)

Kim Reid
(ASL Instructor)

Kathy Da Silva Gendron
(ASL Instructor)

Alex McLean
(Summer Student)

Greta Davey
(Summer Student)

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Message from the President - Continued

I would like to acknowledge some of the generous donations that we have received this past year. Duca Impact Lab - \$5,000, Vince Della Pia from Elan Wealth Management - \$8,600, Giving Tuesday - \$825, and LiNDR honorarium - \$1,000. Also, the Rotary Club of Whitby Sunrise donated \$4,500 to upgrade the computers in our computer classroom.

This year also brings a big milestone as it is DDS' 40th anniversary. Durham Deaf Services was incorporated on May 31, 1982. We should all look forward to another 40 years! Watch for upcoming news on DDS's 40th anniversary!

The ongoing success of DDS rests with the Board, Staff, Volunteers, and Members, and each has a defined and unique role to play. The coming year/years will need to see increased participation of all groups to ensure the continued success of DDS.

Stay Safe!

Have a happy, safe, and healthy summer!

Rob Lalonde
Board President

Board of Directors

Rob Lalonde
(President)

Ken Jackson
(Vice President)

David Poirier
(Treasurer)

Josephine Geraghty
(Secretary)

Aly Beach
Ed Hughes
Tristan Kong
Stephanie Ozorio
Kathryn Ranger

THANK YOU!

Message from the Executive Director

Durham Deaf Services is proud that DDS has been serving our community for 40 years! Today we acknowledge all the Founding Members as well as all the Board of Directors, Members, Staff, and Volunteers that have supported DDS these past 40 years. We are grateful to the Durham Deaf Club and the Oshawa Deaf Seniors Citizens for their ongoing support. It is a momentous occasion, and we know DDS has touched the lives of many in our community. We are proud of the many programs and services that DDS provides to our community.

With the impact of COVID and the lockdown of the Canadian Hearing Services (CHS) offices, DDS was successful in obtaining two grants to support the older adults in our community. DDS provided much-needed education and navigation on the new technology and ways to access many services in the Durham Region. DDS hosted numerous workshops online and set up a lending library for individuals to borrow the technology, e.g., tablets. Since March 2022, DDS has worked with CHS to ensure those needing support from CHS were connected.

Our children's events were also put on hold, but we are happy to report that we held a Family Christmas party in December and an Easter event this year. Many children and their families attended both events. DDS will be hosting a Halloween event in the fall.

Due to the impact of COVID, it was difficult to deliver in-person programs and services, however, we found ways to support many individuals online. With in-person no longer an option, staff supported many in navigating the new online world. Staff worked 1:1 and ensured each person was given the tools they needed to access programs and services.

This year, we saw a decrease in our ability to fundraise, donations, and DDS membership. We are optimistic that the community will come together to support our fundraising efforts. Our volunteer numbers also declined, however, we are delighted that many of our previous volunteers have returned to support DDS. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our office by phone/text at 905-579-3328 or by emailing info@durhamdeaf.org.

As you know, DDS had to sell the building at 750 King St. and due to many issues, the building had to be demolished. We are pleased to report that DDS will be embarking on a 40th-anniversary fundraiser, and anyone donating can receive a piece of our history. Some bricks from 750 King St. have been saved and will be given out to those who donate to our 40th-anniversary campaign.

Message from the Executive Director

DDS will have an open house in the fall (September/October), inviting community members to come and see the new location. We hope to see some new and familiar faces.

We look forward to opening our doors and welcoming all of you to join us in the various events at DDS.

Sincerely,

Maggie Doherty-Gilbert

Executive Director
Durham Deaf Services

Thank You's and Acknowledgements

This year we were blessed with the support and generosity of many in our community. Thank you to the many dedicated volunteers, donors, community members and agencies who go above and beyond to help and support Durham Deaf Services.



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Thank You's and Acknowledgements - Continued

To our Funders:

Canada Summer Jobs 2021
Home and Community Care Support Services (formally LHINs)
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development
Ontario Trillium Foundation

To our Donors:

Courtney MacLean
Diane Douglas
DUCA Impact Lab
Durham Community Foundation
Fidelity Investments Canada
Gail Brunsdon
Hans Wilimek - Fidelity Investments Canada
Keller Williams Care Committee
Literacy Network of Durham Region (LiNDR)
Martin Franssen
Rob Hutton - Hutton Insurance and Financial Services Ltd.
Rob Lalonde - Paramount Pallet LP
Rotary Club of Whitby Sunrise
Samantha Read - Read Real Estate
Tristan Kong - Read Real Estate
Vince Della Pia - Elan Planning & Wealth Management

To our Community Networks:

Canadian Hearing Services
Community Care Durham
Deaf Literacy Initiative
Durham College
Durham Deaf Club
Durham Elder Abuse Network
Durham Regional Police Services
Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario
Literacy Network of Durham Region
Ontario Tech University
Oshawa Deaf Senior Citizens
Sign Language Interpreting Associates Ottawa
Trinity Church

Deaf Adult Upgrading Program (DAUP)

Our 2021-2022 year for literacy was a successful year in returning to a “new normal”. We have reopened programming to in-person. We followed recommendations and now have a mask-free environment allowing for full communication exposing facial grammar. We continue to offer virtual classes once a week to maintain the digital technology skills needed for our new way of life. Many appointments are still conducted virtually in our day-to-day lives and the learners continue to build skills to function in either a virtual or in-person environment.

We know multiple companies are hiring in the Oshawa area. Amazon has been very positive about hiring Deaf individuals. We have had multiple virtual presentations this year with employers (Amazon), Deaf professionals and made connections with Deaf talent across the GTA and other provinces. Learners have a newfound confidence and are quite motivated in their own personal endeavours. We had three learners this year book their G2 driving exams. One has successfully passed and we are waiting to find out how the others fared out. Congrats to all for independently attempting this milestone. One learner, through 1-1 training, found the courage to independently apply for apprenticeship training while employed with GM. We have many very talented Deaf artists cultivating their artistic skills and creating beautiful art that they, in turn, have generously donated to DDS for fundraising.

The health and safety of learners was our first priority this past year. We focused on referrals to those needing mental health supports and suffering from social isolation. We continue to reach out to community partners to provide wrap-around services needed as we come out of the pandemic.

Also, this past year, we had great success with our literacy practitioners becoming certified with the Deaf Literacy Initiative through the Practitioners Certification Course. A great deal of professional development is now available more than before and fully accessible in ASL. This has been fantastic as well as eye-opening to changes that were needed for the literacy program.

We are currently developing a new roster of courses and taking the summer months off to revamp programming for the fall. The literacy program will focus on more Deaf culture exposure, employment soft skills, self-advocacy skills, and community projects, as well as reading/writing strategies to continue to align with the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF) curriculum and the community we serve.

Deaf Adult Upgrading Program (DAUP) - Continued

We have a mix of employment, independence, and post-secondary goal paths for learners ranging from emergent to level 2 skill sets. Our new development will reflect our diverse group and match new ministry websites such as "Skills for Success".

The literacy program has had many placement students, summer students and volunteers help make the literacy program a success this past year and we are truly thankful for the assistance/support. We hope to have another successful year for 2022-2023.

Stefanie Gibbons
Literacy Coordinator

Behishta Mushtaq
Literacy Instructor

