

PERSONAL IMPACT STORIES

Peter's Story

Arts and crafts are a much appreciated and hugely beneficial activity for clients of Community Living Hamilton's Community Participation day programs. Peter, a long-time participant is a very gifted artist and has even had his work displayed at the Royal Ontario Museum. Years ago, staff members at our former Hester program location (Mountain Arena) were looking for opportunities to support David's interests and offer him a more enriching experience while at program. Along with David, and a few other interested clients, staff developed a small business making custom painted wooden signs that they sold to staff and to local community residents, including visiting families from nearby Ridgemount Elementary School.



When the program was suspended because of the pandemic, this side-project stopped operating. Thankfully, David was recently welcomed back to the agency's Community Participation program at Parkdale Arena and has been reunited with one of his former program staff from Hester. Together they have restarted the sign making business, to the delight of not just David, but to numerous other clients who have gotten involved.

The space and community location at Hester and now at Parkdale have been instrumental to making this endeavour possible. The business is highly successful and is a fantastic opportunity both for deeper inclusion in the community and to showcase the amazing abilities of the individuals with developmental disabilities.

Lucas' Story

Lucas, one of the clients at the Huntington program location, is an avid swimmer and has participated in swimming lessons for most of his life. He began attending the Huntington day program in 2017, largely because he would get ample opportunity to swim in the location's large pool.



Each day at 12:30, Lucas and 4-7 other participants go swimming during the adult swim. When the day program reopened after Covid, program staff supported the group to integrate back into the pool. Gradually staff removed themselves, until the group was doing this activity independently. That independence has grown into friendships with the lifeguards and community swimmers who attend each day.

These moments of independence are made possible by the support of the City of Hamilton Huntington recreation staff and the individuals from the community, who have embraced the group as one of their own.

Being included gives Lucas and his fellow program participants the chance to learn, to create lasting friendships and to engage in meaningful activities.