



# The Independent

Winter Edition | December 2015

## *Holiday Message*

During the past number of years Traverse Independence has experienced and successfully navigated through many challenging times. While the change we have experienced has been significant our brand has never been stronger. Traverse Independence is known for excellent services to our clients and for making a difference. Clients come to us from all over the province out of hospitals, long term care facilities, corrections, mental health and addictions beds, the shelter system, regional partners and much, much more. We are making a profound difference in the lives of those clients and I continue to have unwavering confidence in you and your ability to maximize our clients' ability to live independently.

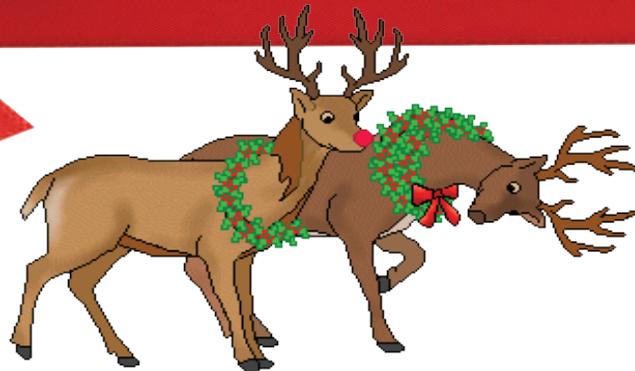
In all that we do, we work to ensure that it is the best possible service for our clients. In the future we will be working to provide faster access to our services, delivering better coordinated and integrated care in our community and work to be transparent so that our clients and their families can make the right decisions about their service.

I would like to wish all of you a safe and happy holiday season. As we hear about tragedy and conflict all around us, I urge you to take a minute to slow down and reflect... Enjoy time with your loved ones, pay it forward, put a smile on someone's face. I continue to be proud to be the CEO of Traverse Independence as we travel together on this journey.

With warmest regards,

Toby Harris  
CEO

MAY YOUR DAYS BE  
*Merry & Bright*



## *Spring Gala*

Congratulations to Jason Bailey, Attendant at Fergusson Place, who has successfully completed his DSW Apprenticeship Certificate program at Conestoga College with the support of Traverse Independence.

Two more employees reached 25 years of service this year: Tracey Brown and Brenda Schultz, Attendant Care Workers. Congratulations to Tracey and Brenda for joining Cheri McKinley and Jacquie Hadath in the “25th Anniversary Hall of Fame”.

The Traverse year started off in April with a grand spring gala, courtesy of the Board. It was a yummy food fest with speeches, employee recognition, dancing, door prizes and lots of photos taken, evidence of the comradery and the fun we all shared.



## *Spring Gala and Fun Fest*



## *Transitional Living*

### *Sidi's Breezy Move*

Moving is tough! You have to become accustomed to a new environment, you have to change your place of residence on all important documentation, and you risk further tweaking your already sore back by lifting a countless number of boxes. How-



ever, for Sidi Sbai-Tarqi, moving was a breeze! Yes, there was some heavy lifting, and Sidi did have to adjust to his new home, but generally, his transition from LTC to Traverse Transitional Living to Andes Sustained Independent Living site was very smooth.

“I sleep well, I take good medicine, [staff] are good to me; I like it here”, Sidi says of his new home. A direct and emphatic individual, able to articulate his thoughts and opinions in few words, Sidi quite clearly has appreciated this most recent change in his life. More specifically, Sidi has enjoyed the increased independence that has come with living at the Andes site.

He is a frequent traveler on just about every GRT

bus in the region thanks to the Forest Glen Satellite Terminal directly across the street. As a result, Sidi is able to visit treasured friends and family more regularly – something that is very important to him – in Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo, and sometimes even Mississauga! Moreover, the many stores and shops located within the Forest Glen Plaza have allowed Sidi to independently purchase any needed and necessary items such as clothes, groceries, and the odd Harvey's hamburger.

When asked if there is anything else he appreciates Sidi, of course, says that everything is “good”. For Sidi, moving hasn't always been easy; however, he has evidently enjoyed his most recent move to the Andes Sustained Independent Living Program.

### *Jay's Place*

“My name is Jay Hindley. Over the last eight years, I have made a number of transitions on my journey to independence. In 2008 I was admitted to St. Joseph's Health Centre in Guelph. I moved to Transitional Living in Fergus in June 2011, then to Transitional Living Stanley Avenue in Kitchener in December 2013. In June 2014, I made my final move to Strasburg Road Supportive Housing in Kitchener where I enjoy living independently in my own apartment with supports from Strasburg Road Attendant Care Workers and a Community Facilitator.”

Through his transitions, Jay has shown gains in communication (he utilizes his iPad regularly) and initiation (he makes requests for things he would like to do or achieve). He has achieved increased independence in shopping with Community Facilitator support and requires less staff supervision (elopement checks have decreased and time alone has increased with the introduction of a GPS watch). Jay continues to work on appropriate interactions

with others and motivation to complete activities of daily living. We offer him medication and finance support.

“On weekdays, I attend The Opportunity Centre ABI Day Program to participate in activities such as: Chit and Chat (discussing newspaper ads, wellness topics and trivia), Zumba, a wellness program, exercises, massage, games and cards. I enjoy interacting and joking with other clients and staff.

I also regularly converse with staff and other tenants at home about sports and entertainment. I visit other tenants in the building and like playing games, in particular card games. When needed I type statements in my iPad in order to communicate.

Recently, I was able to save enough money to purchase myself a new electric recliner with all the



bells and whistles. When I am not on the move, I enjoy sitting in my recliner to watch television and read magazines. The transition to Supportive Housing has been awesome for me!”

## *Jordan's Journey*

Jordan Thorne was 9 years old when he underwent surgery to have a brain tumour removed. At 12, Jordan had surgery again for a second brain tumour and at this time he was diagnosed with brain cancer. Due to illness, surgery and recovery, Jordan missed most of his grade seven year at school, spending the majority of his time with adults. He began to feel that his friends “grew up and went on without him”.

Jordan is now 19, and has been cancer free for 6 years. Since his recovery he has completed multiple public speaking engagements, participates in Relay for Life as well as other fundraising events and he donates the proceeds to Childhood Cancer and Cancer Research charities. Jordan's dream job is to be a motivational speaker. To aid him in this goal he has participated in multiple Toastmasters group meetings to learn tips and gain experience.

When Jordan began services with Traverse Independence, in 2014, his main goals were travel training and participation in activities outside of the home. He is currently attending Conestoga College in the Community Integration through Continuing Education program, which is helping him to enhance life and social skills. He competed in and won 2 scholarships to aid with school costs, he travels to and from school independently on Mobility Plus, volunteers at The Zone beside the YMCA of Cambridge, continues to give back to cancer research and childhood cancer charities through fundraising, public speaking and volunteer events.

Jordan is on the list for Transitional Housing through Traverse Independence as he would like to eventually move into his own apartment. Through all of the ups and downs in the last 10 years, Jordan has maintained an amazing sense of humour and a positive outlook and a joy of life that is contagious to all those around him.

## Accreditation Primer Award

Congratulations to all Traverse employees and management for achieving the Accreditation Primer Award: this first step on our accreditation journey was completed in September after a four day survey at Head Office, Tagge Street, Stanley Ave., Strasburg Rd. and The Opportunity Centre. All employees were presented with a Traverse Independence windbreaker, which carries the slogan "Commitment to Quality". Each site has since received a framed copy of the award with the Accreditation Canada seal for display in their offices, a testimony to our commitment to quality.



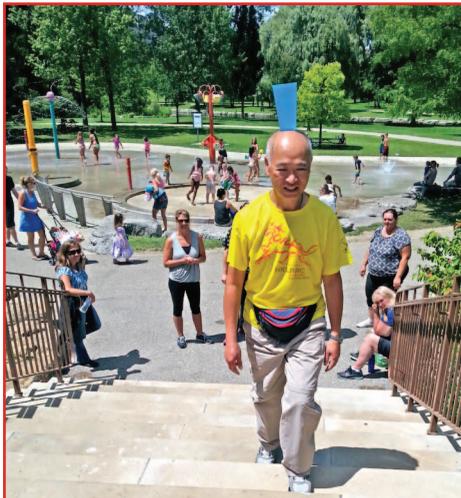
## The Amazing Race

One of the highlights on route to accreditation was The Amazing Race, organized this summer at Victoria Park in Kitchener and attended by all employees. It was a tremendous success and so much fun, which is quite evident in these photos. Major components of our accreditation requirements were incorporated in the games we played!

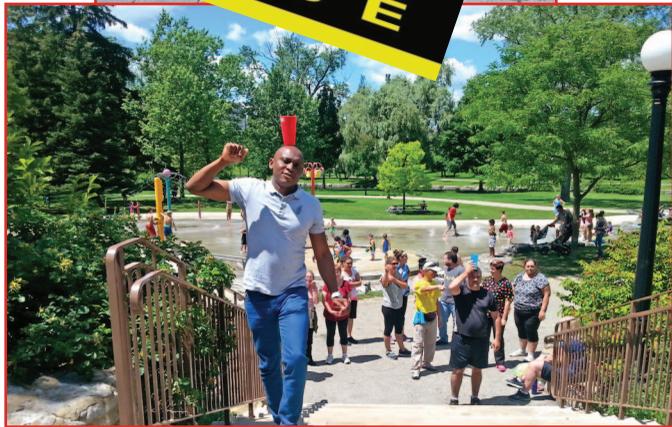


*We are the Happy Helpers. We will*





THE AMAZING RACE



help you with your Goals, We are here for your Independence, Our Service is Silver and Gold !



# The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

*With the kids jingle belling  
And everyone telling you be of good cheer  
It's the most wonderful time of the year*

*It's the hap-happiest season of all  
With those holiday greetings  
And gay happy meetings  
When friends come to call  
It's the hap-happiest season of all*



Outreach employees and clients at the Coffee House Social



All Client Christmas Party with Turkey and all the trimmings, courtesy of Santa and his helpers



## Dee Jay Danny



He goes by many names: Danny Firn Gervais, DJ Danny, DJ Brilliant; he's even been called The Newest DJ of 2015! Yet, despite any alias, Danny has one goal when performing: to provide joy to others through music.

For the past 6 years at the annual Traverse Independence Client Christmas Party, Danny has used his DJ skills to accomplish this very goal. He's become somewhat of a main attraction at this event, with many clients expressing just how much they love and appreciate his music. Such kind sentiments mean even more when you learn just how much Danny loves to DJ.

"I really enjoy it, it's what I like to do. It's a hobby, my passion, and I'm hoping to expand to play at other places", Danny says. Excitingly, expansion has already occurred, because in addition to DJing at the Christmas party for Traverse, Danny also "spins the tracks" at the Kitchener-Waterloo Accessibility (KWA) annual Christmas party.



It is clear that Danny has come a long way. From his humble beginnings as a young 13-year-old music fanatic, merely introduced to the art of DJing at the Valpine Country Trailer Park in St. Agatha, to a now household name within Traverse Independence and KWA circles. Evidently, Danny is providing joy to others through music, and that is music to his ears!



# *Breakfast with Santa Claus*





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