

## CEO Message

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the dedicated staff, supportive families, and vibrant community that have contributed to our agency's successes. 2024 was a transformative year for our organization, marked by innovative programs and a steadfast commitment to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities. We are excited to share our accomplishments and look forward to further enriching the lives of our clients in the coming years.

### 1. Specialized Programs: Celebrating Growth and Success

In its second year, our specialized programs, Music Therapy and Arts and Crafts, have emerged as pillars of our agency, gaining immense popularity within the community. To enhance community recall and reference, we have decided to give our specialized programs with new unique names, namely “Music and Me” and “Brushes and Beyond,” respectively.

Music and Me is tailored to harness the power of music as a therapeutic tool. While Brushes and Beyond, being an art-focused initiative, encourages creativity through various mediums. Participants have reported increased self-esteem and enjoyment as they explore their artistic talents.

Both programs have become synonymous with creative expression and therapeutic engagement for our participants.

### 2. New Community Inclusion Programs

In 2024, we launched two exciting new Community Inclusion Programs aimed at fostering social integration and enhancing community participation for our clients.

The Aero Museum, this program provides our clients with an opportunity to explore and enjoy aviation history while promoting social interaction in an engaging environment.

Second, the South Centre Leisure Centre. The centre is designed to encourage physical activity and social engagement; this program offers our clients access to various recreational facilities.

Both programs reflect our ongoing commitment to community inclusion, ensuring our clients have the opportunity to participate fully in society.

### 3. New Client Trainings with the Supported Lifestyles Agency

The agency believes that training is equally important for both our staff and our clients as well. We introduced two new programs designed to empower our clients namely the Nutrition Program and the Speak Up Course.

The Nutrition Program educates clients on healthy eating habits, empowering them to make informed food choices. Participants learn to prepare simple, nutritious meals while developing essential life skills.

The Speak Up Course teaches clients how to communicate their needs effectively and assertively. By enhancing their self-advocacy skills, we equip our clients to engage more meaningfully with the world around them.

Both training initiatives have been positively received, fostering personal growth and increased confidence among our participants.

#### 4. Successful Casino Event and Volunteer Appreciation

On January 15 and 16, our agency held a successful Casino Event, a cornerstone of our fundraising initiatives. Thanks to the enthusiastic participation of our community, we are thrilled to announce the acquisition of a new agency vehicle. This vehicle will play a crucial role in expanding the frequency and diversity of our community inclusion opportunities, allowing us to transport our clients safely and efficiently to various activities and events.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our Casino Volunteers. Your hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm made this event a resounding success. In recognition of your invaluable contributions, we proudly initiated a Volunteer Appreciation Day. This event aims to celebrate and acknowledge the efforts of all volunteers who continue to drive our mission forward.

#### 5. Monthly Newsletter Initiative

In our ongoing effort to enhance communication and keep our families, clients, and community informed, we are excited to announce the transition from quarterly to monthly newsletters. This change comes from our commitment to provide timely updates on agency activities, community events, program highlights, and essential information to those we serve.

#### 6. Increase in Hourly Wages for Frontline Workers

In our ongoing commitment to recognize the invaluable contributions of our frontline workers, we were able to implement an increase in hourly wages for these resolute team members. This decision reflects our profound appreciation for the noble services provided by our frontline staff, who are often the first point of contact for our clients and play a pivotal role in delivering the quality care and support that defines our agency.

Beyond mere recognition, this increase is a strategic move to ensure that we remain competitive within the sector. By offering enhanced compensation, we aim to attract and retain top talent, fostering a stable and motivated workforce that can continue to meet the needs of our clients effectively.

As we move forward, we remain committed to evaluating and adjusting our compensation structures to ensure we continually honor the dedication and hard work of our frontline staff, who are the backbone of our organization.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of this year, it is important to also acknowledge the challenges that have tested our resilience and commitment to our mission. While we have

achieved significant milestones, we encountered a couple of hurdles that require our attention and focus as we move forward.

One of our key objectives identified in our 5-year Strategic Plan was to expand our reach to 75 clients. Despite our best efforts, this goal has proven to be somewhat elusive. Various factors have impacted our ability to achieve this target. We recognize the importance of this objective in fulfilling our mission, and we are committed to reassessing our strategies to reach the desired number of individuals who can benefit from our support.

Another significant challenge faced this year was the passing of our immediate Past Board Chairperson, George Roberts. George had been a steadfast member of our Board since June 2001 and served as Chairperson twice. His leadership and vision were instrumental in shaping the agency into what it is today. George's contributions were critical, important, and deeply appreciated by all of us. His absence leaves a void that will be felt throughout the organization, as his guidance and commitment to our mission were unparalleled. We honor George's legacy and will strive to continue the important work he championed during his tenure.

As we look ahead, the agency is currently preparing for our accreditation visit scheduled for August this year. Drawing on our experiences from previous accreditations over the past decade, we are confident in our ability to achieve a full 100% accreditation rating once again. This accomplishment will not only validate our commitment to excellence but will also reinforce that Springboard Centre is indeed the "Place to be."

In conclusion, on behalf the Leadership and Management Teams, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders, our supportive families, our funders and partners, and resolute members of the Board who have made this year possible. But most specially, to our incredible frontline staff -- your dedication is the heart of our mission, and you remain our greatest asset. Thank you for being the unwavering strength behind everything we do.