



REBUILDING COMMUNICATION

BUILDING Bridges



Building Bridges – Newsletter of the Aphasia Institute – The Aphasia Institute is a Canadian community-based centre of excellence, pioneering programs and practices that help people with aphasia learn how to communicate in new ways and begin to navigate their own lives again. Through direct service, research, education and training, the Aphasia Institute has built an international reputation as a world leader and educator in aphasia.

Our Annual Appeal Made History... Because of You!

Every day we see the real-life benefits that our research, education, professional training, and direct client services have for people living with aphasia and their families. This impact has spread across the country and around the world.

Because of your generous support and your belief in what we do, we continue our pioneering work to dismantle the communication barriers that threaten to overwhelm the lives of our clients and their families.

Our 2016 Annual Appeal raised more money than any other year. Thank you!

We surpassed our goal by almost \$9,000, which is very good news indeed. It means we can continue to work in the areas for which we receive no funding: our research and education. **You've made a difference!**



Save the Date!

On Sunday, June 11th, our community of clients, staff, volunteers and family will join together for the 20th anniversary of the **Walk, Talk 'n Roll**, our annual signature fundraiser. In the coming weeks, we will share with you the story of our client, Kumar, whose enthusiasm for giving back to our community is truly inspiring. Look for an information package coming to you soon, and **please mark your calendars for Sunday, June 11th!**



Chris & Marita's Cupcake Sale

I CARE

I Care is the Aphasia Institute's grassroots fundraising campaign, led by our committed clients, volunteers, staff, and family members. Through dinners and bake sales, pizza parties, raffles, and more, we have already raised over **\$6,500** for **I Care 2017**.

It was decided that the proceeds from **I Care 2017** should exclusively support direct service to our clients. The money raised will subsidize clients who cannot afford to attend outings, help support our holiday party costs, and assist in purchasing supplies or equipment for which there are no funds (e.g. new iPads for conversation support).



The Aphasia Institute relies on the generosity of individual donors and volunteers to deliver life-changing programs.

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Music and Art as Therapy



Music and art are powerful therapies for both body and mind. For a person with aphasia, these forms of artistic expression also provide an antidote to the social isolation this debilitating communication disorder so often imposes.

Karaoke and Creative Expressions

With the assistance of our volunteers, our Karaoke and Creative Expressions programs combine music and movement to help our clients explore their unique

personalities and reveal their inner feelings, while at the same time engage in non-strenuous physical exercise. To watch some of the videos created in this program, please visit our Supplemental Materials page at www.aphasia.ca/2016/10/bb_links.

Painting

The Expressive Arts Painting Program has been a vital and popular part of our



Our gallery wall of recent client paintings. Curated by our art instructor, Carah Mitchell.

direct service for more than 30 years. Under the guidance of Carah Mitchell, our art therapist, clients are encouraged to express themselves through painting and drawing. Many of these clients had never picked up a paintbrush before joining this program. Some of them, particularly stroke survivors with mobility issues, now create using only their non-dominant hand. The program, which utilizes acrylic, watercolour, pencil, pastels, and charcoal, would not be possible without the dedicated support of our art volunteers. Visitors to the Aphasia Institute are often drawn to our gallery wall (pictured left), which showcases some truly beautiful and unique works of art.

In both the Art and Music programs, clients create a community of support and encouragement for one another. The camaraderie fostered here helps transform our clients from living a life of isolation after aphasia to re-engaging in all aspects of their lives.

Honouring Long-time Donor George Shields



When Pat Arato established the Aphasia Institute nearly 40 years ago, funding for this nascent aphasia centre was non-existent. Until Pat

was introduced to a man named George Shields. This introduction would form a life-long friendship and provide the Aphasia Institute with a long-standing supporter and one of its first donors.

When George met Pat Arato, he was a member of a Toronto-based charity called the Harmonize for Speech Fund, whose mission was to raise money for children with speech problems. This talented and energetic group of male singers saw in Pat a kindred spirit. They were inspired by her energy and

disheartened by the serious lack of funding for adults with speech issues. George convinced the other members that their fundraising efforts aligned perfectly with the work of the Aphasia Institute.

Harmonize4Speech became a funder and have helped support the Aphasia Institute's music fund every year since 1982. At a recent Harmonize4Speech board meeting, the group watched some of our Creative Expressions music videos (find links for them at www.aphasia.ca/2016/10/bb_links). They were inspired by how much our music program has grown and how relevant and powerful it still is after all these years.

We are grateful to George Shields and his colleagues, and we are grateful to you for continuing to believe in the work we do for people with aphasia and their families.

BUSTING APHASIA MYTHS

the myth

Aphasia affects intelligence

Aphasia is a language disorder. It affects the language centres of the brain, but **not** the areas that support intelligence. While many people with aphasia are suddenly unable to find the words to express their thoughts, they are as intelligent and as competent as they were prior to their aphasia. Their intelligence can often be masked, but the myth that they are less intelligent because of their aphasia is simply not true.

For supplemental materials to this newsletter, please visit: www.aphasia.ca/2016/10/bb_links/

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