Happy 5 Year Anniversary Beyond 21!

10 years ago, when our daughter, Emma, was 18, I began to search for opportunities for her post high school at the age of 21. Our daughter has special needs and was attending a local high school in the “school to community class.” I was shocked and horrified that there would be nothing available for her upon graduation. Where did that leave us as a family? I would have to quit a job that I loved to care for her. She would have no friends, no reason to get up every day, and essentially, no future. Emma had spent countless hours in 21 years with therapists, resource teachers, classroom teachers, educational assistants, and now all of that hard work helping her be the best she could be would all be for nothing!

My husband and I put an ad in the paper asking other parents if there was a need for a community-based support program. The responses were heartbreaking! I began knocking on doors, making phone calls, and requesting meetings with politicians, colleges and the Ministry, only to be told: “You are right there is a need,” followed by, “sorry we can’t help you, good luck.”

We formed a grassroots group and held monthly meetings – inviting families of special needs young adults, professionals involved in special education, anyone who had an interest in our goal. Right from the start it has been our sincere hope that in creating this unique learning center, our participants would wake up every day and have something meaningful to look forward to.

Then a wonderful thing happened. We received funding to start our program, with the understanding that we become financially self-sufficient in two years. We started with five participants, three staff and an interim director. Today, we boast seven full-time and one part-time staff, and have over 40 participants in our program. In 2016, we ran our first summer program, which was a huge success.

We have a talented and passionate team at Beyond 21. Together, Jane McLaren, our Executive Director, along with Debra, Sara, Alex, Dan, Dana, Sandy and Sydney, make Beyond 21 the success it is. I can honestly say that whoever visits the Hub for Beyond 21 is guaranteed to leave with a smile on their face.

The happiness and pride in the faces of our participants make all of the hard work that it took to get to this point so worthwhile. As a charitable organization that receives no government funding, we must fundraise from January through August to meet all our financial obligations. We are proud to be a United Way agency and support their fundraising efforts from September through December. We have been truly blessed to have had so much support and encouragement from the city of Cornwall and the outlying areas.

Now I need to address what really keeps Beyond 21 growing so successfully! We are blessed with a small, yet strong and so dynamic Board of Directors of six! Their work ethic and dedication to the families and participants of Beyond 21 goes far beyond what some organizations experience! I am privileged and proud to be part of such an incredible team. Together we have proven that dreams do come true. We sincerely hope that we support each and every person that comes to the Hub for Beyond 21 to realize and chase their personal dreams!

Happy Anniversary Beyond 21! Here’s to many more successful years ahead!

Tish Humphries
Board President

Our Vision
To enable adults with developmental disabilities to live connected, respected, and contributing to our community.

Our Mission
- To create and offer a unique structured program that is meaningful, inclusive, and community-based.
- To offer programming for adults with developmental disabilities that highlights and maximizes each individual’s potential.
- To create a safe environment where adults with developmental disabilities can thrive and grow socially, physically, emotionally, and intellectually.
- To connect adults with developmental disabilities with the skills and community knowledge they need to succeed in their futures.
- To build and foster local partnerships that help support adults with developmental disabilities in the community.
- To promote and encourage lifelong learning for adults with developmental disabilities.

Our Programs
We offer two different programs to meet the needs of our participants:

The Life Connections Program encompasses three main areas: home skills, community skills, and recreation and leisure skills. The program also includes one-to-one time with our Community Connector who supports participants to learn employment skills and engage with our community via volunteerism.

The Social Network Program is for those with complex developmental needs. The goal is to provide opportunities for socialization by building peer and community connections.

At Beyond 21, we are dream chasers. We partner with our program participants to identify their dreams and help them learn the skills and build the connections they need to achieve them!
Following two and a half years of meetings and thoughtful planning, the passionate efforts of concerned parents and associated educators transformed a grassroots movement into an incorporated non-profit organization. We were provided space in T.R. Leger School and officially opened in association with the Upper Canada Leger Centre. After launching our program in January with three staff and five participants, we received charitable status in the fall of 2012.

In 2013, Beyond 21 achieved independence as a charitable organization and proudly became a United Way Agency. A van was generously donated, allowing us to transport a growing number of program participants to and from community-based activities. Thanks to a grant awarded by The Ontario Trillium Foundation, we were able to hire a Program Manager whose role has evolved to Executive Director.

Our services expanded to include a new program area - Community Connections - which focuses on volunteerism and employability skills. Since 2014, our Community Connector has been working one-on-one with participants to connect them with volunteer opportunities that align with their individual skills and interests.

We planned our first major fundraising events: the Spring Market & House Tour and the Moon River Run.

We introduced the Social Network Program in response to requests from families looking for a program that supports the social involvement of individuals with complex developmental needs.

Our rapid growth called for a shift in our fundraising plan! We introduced and organized two new events: the Chili Cook-off and our largest fundraising event, the Cornwall Food Fest.

In 2016, we operated our first Summer Program. We opened the Summer Program to individuals 19+ in order to build connections with transition age youth who are preparing for life after high school.

We trained our staff in person-centred thinking and developed a volunteer-based befriending program thanks to the funding that we received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in December 2015.

As of January 2017 our team will consist of eight passionate staff members serving over 40 families!

John is a participant at Beyond 21, where he enjoys spending time with his friends and taking part in different activities, like martial arts, tai chi and cooking. John also likes to volunteer. As a car guy, he particularly enjoyed volunteering at a local dealership! The Greers have been with Beyond 21 since we opened our doors in 2012 and have witnessed our evolution as an organization. “It has been wonderful, Beyond 21 is very well organized,” said John’s mother, Elspeth. It is clear that community is very important to the Greers as they extend their humble gratitude to the family, friends, neighbours and services who continue to encourage John to achieve his full potential. At Beyond 21, we too are grateful. It is the families that use our services who remind us that we can accomplish anything when we come together as a community.

“Since its beginning 5 years ago, Beyond 21 has had a profound effect upon our family. Our son has become more verbal, more social and more helpful at home. He often shows initiative, by thinking ahead and by helping out without being asked. The scope of things which interest him has increased and he has some new skills, especially in the kitchen! Thank you to the dedicated staff and volunteers. We appreciate all that you do!”

- Elspeth

“Beyond 21 has set an amazing standard of excellence: programming, professionalism, empathy, creativity, and determination. Bravo! To have had the privilege of observing Beyond 21 grow from a grassroots idea into a dynamic respected HUB has been an inspiration to us all. Dare to Dream.”

- Kevin Cooper (Interim E.D. 2012-2013)
3rd Annual Dion Ignite the Night Snowshoe Race
Saturday, January 21st, 2017 | Registration begins @ 4:30 PM | Race starts @ 6:00 PM
Upper Canada Village (13740 County Rd 2, Morrisburg, ON K0C 1X0)
The 3rd annual DION Ignite the Night Snowshoe Race is the only night time race in the DION Ontario Snowshoe Running Series. The race features a 5km loop touring Upper Canada Village, which will be adorned with close to one million magical lights for their Annual Alight at Night Festival. All monies raised will be donated to Beyond 21! For more information please contact Gilles at snowshoer118@gmail.com.

Volunteer your time
Volunteers are a vital part of our team! We engage volunteers at special events, on our board of directors & our befriending program.

Make a donation
Every dollar makes a difference! Visit our website at www.beyond21.org to learn how you can make a donation.

Attending our fundraising events
In addition to donations, we also rely on fundraisers to sustain & expand our services. Support Beyond 21 by attending one of our upcoming events (see listing below).

Get involved & make a difference

2017 Fundraising events

3rd Annual Dion Ignite the Night Snowshoe Race
Saturday, January 21st, 2017 | Registration begins @ 4:30 PM | Race starts @ 6:00 PM
Upper Canada Village (13740 County Rd 2, Morrisburg, ON K0C 1X0)

3rd Annual Chili Cook Off
Saturday, February 11th, 2017 | 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Lola’s Pub & Grub (616 Pitt St, Cornwall, ON K6J 3R8)
Join us in February for a chance to sample a dozen delicious recipes & judge who has the best chili in town while supporting a great cause! Is your chili THE BOMB? Contact Shannon at shannonsavard@hotmail.com to enter your chili in the cook-off!

4th Annual Spring Market & House Tour
Sunday, June 25th, 2017 | 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Vendors Market @ Williamstown Fairgrounds (19629 John St, Williamstown, ON K0C 2J0)
Spring House Tour ticket holders will have the opportunity to get a rare glimpse inside some of South Glengarry’s most beautiful homes. The Spring Market will feature antique appraisals & over 40 unique vendors.

3rd Annual Cornwall Food Fest
Saturday, August 19th, 2017 | 10:00 AM – 8:00PM
Downtown Cornwall on Pitt Street (between First & Third Streets)
This summer, support a great cause while you enjoy delicious food, live music, family friendly activities and much more! There will be something for everyone - tasty eats prepared by local restaurants and gourmet food trucks, sidewalk sales set up by participating merchants and an outdoor vendors market. We are pleased to partner with the Kinsmen in Motion Show & Shine which will feature some seriously cool vehicles and motorcycles!

For more information about our upcoming events visit www.beyond21.org
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Proud to be a United Way Agency