



County of
Essex

OCTOBER 19, 2023

INVISIBLE NO MORE

An Accessibility Forum

**Heritage Park Alliance Church
2501 Concession Road 6, LaSalle, Ontario**

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

Notice Of Photography

Portions of the day's sessions may be recorded or photographed. Images and audio may be used promotionally, by the County of Essex, in print publications or online. By registering and attending this event, you are consenting to the use of your appearance and image in still and video photography.

Scent-Free Event

Please refrain from wearing scented products such as perfume, cologne, and fragrant personal care products while participating in today's event.

Connect With Us

Visit the County website, and consider signing up to Accessibility News from the County of Essex and the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee.

PROGRAM

9:00 AM - Welcome Remarks and Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

Greetings from the County of Essex

9:15 AM - 'Working Together - Supportive Employment'

Shelbey Pillon, Community Living Supports Career Compass Program

Lori Atkinson, Regional Manager Windsor-Essex, Libro Credit Union

James Beattie, Libro Credit Union

Tammy Dalglish, Support Worker, Community Living Essex County

Break

10:30 AM - 'Overcoming Trauma - Lived Experience with Accessibility Barriers'

Judy Robinet, Executive Director, A Life Worth Living

11:00 AM - 'Accessible Customer Service - an introduction to AODA Training for volunteer organizations and community groups'

Julie Miles, Member of ECAAC

Lunch

1:15 PM - 'Mental Wellness: Awareness and Strategies, Invisible Disabilities - Mental Health and Overcoming Barriers'

Sonia McMahon-Comartin, Mental Health Educator, Canadian Mental Health Association of Windsor and Essex County

2:15 PM - Keynote: 'Strategies for Breaking Down Barriers to Accessibility'

Julie Sawchuk, Accessibility Strategist, Storyteller and Educator

3:15 PM - Conclusion and Public Wrap-up

Note: Program Continues until 4:00PM for those registered for the Julie Sawchuk AAC Walk-Through Mock-Inspection Session

ESSEX COUNTY ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHAT WE DO

The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee is actively working year-round to promote inclusiveness and awareness and to share information about accessibility concerns.

The committee, among other tasks, also:

- Reviews policies and procedures for accessibility;
- Reviews blueprints and designs;
- Tours existing facilities and suggest improvements;
- Organizes and promotes accessibility awareness events;
- Initiates discussions on social media and elsewhere and attends public events.

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), a majority of the members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be persons with disabilities. The committee also includes one member of County Council and stakeholders from the disability community.

Committee members in 2023 (left to right): Julie Miles, Rachel Jewell, Debbie Alexander (vice-chair), Dennis Sanson (chair), Diana Kirkbride, Sherri Currie and Kingsville Deputy Mayor Kimberly DeYong.



ON BEHALF OF ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

HILDA MACDONALD

WARDEN

While wheelchairs and walking canes have come to symbolize disabilities, they do not adequately paint an accurate picture of the number and nature of disabilities, especially invisible disabilities, that millions of Canadians live with on a daily basis.

From chronic pain to mental illness to hearing loss, diabetes and sleep disorders, the range of invisible disabilities is vast and their effects significant and far reaching. The fact these disabilities can be overlooked or misunderstood by others only exacerbates the impact they can have on the quality of a person's life.



The hidden nature of these invisible disabilities means there is a greater need to talk about them; to create awareness and work toward changing attitudes and removing the stigma.

Today's symposium is an excellent opportunity to advance these important conversations, to educate and empower us to continue working to create an inclusive, barrier-free community

Thank you to our guest speakers for sharing their knowledge, thank you to the Accessibility Advisor Committee and thank you to our guests for embracing this learning opportunity.

HON. RAYMOND SUNG JOON CHO

ONTARIO MINISTER FOR SENIORS AND ACCESSIBILITY

Helping seniors and people with disabilities stay independent, active, and socially connected.

We are also helping seniors stay safe and making Ontario more accessible for everyone and promoting the benefits of age-diverse, accessible workplaces and communities where everyone is able to participate.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is intended to reduce and remove barriers for people with disabilities so that Ontario can become more accessible and inclusive for everyone. Collaboration among businesses, organizations, communities and all levels of government is key to reaching this goal.



Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario

Ontario



SHELBEY PILLON

MANAGER COMMUNITY LIVING SUPPORTS CAREER COMPASS PROGRAM

Shelbey Pillon has 17 years experience in the Developmental Services sector.

She has held many positions with Community Living Essex County and her current role is overseeing Career Compass, Community Living Essex County's modernized employment services. She also has experience with project management and planning with people receiving supports and their families. She loves to collaborate and is always looking at innovative ways to support people in reaching their goals.

Accessibility is a huge part of not only advocating for inclusive employment but is an important piece of supporting people with disabilities to advocate for themselves when it comes to building a more accessible inclusive community.



LORI ATKINSON

REGIONAL MANAGER, LIBRO CREDIT UNION WINDSOR-ESSEX

Lori Atkinson, Regional Manager Windsor-Essex for Libro Credit Union, engages her team to actively build prosperity throughout the region. With over 25 years of senior management experience within the customer service industry and significant strength as a strategic and collaborative leader in southwestern Ontario, Lori's passion is coaching, mentoring and community building. Lori's mandate includes building partnerships throughout Windsor-Essex with like-minded organizations, businesses and Libro's member-Owners to positively impact the entire region. Lori is also Chair of the United Way/Centraide Windsor-Essex County Board of Directors and is an active community contributor and volunteer.



Libro Credit Union is a full-service financial institution providing services to more than 116,000 Owners, including accounts, loans, financial advice, investments, credit cards, business cash management and employer services. The largest credit union in southwestern Ontario and with 80 years of history, Libro offers services digitally and at more than 30 physical locations. Locally owned and operated, the credit union's passionate staff of more than 800 people is committed to making a difference for communities, individuals and businesses. To learn more about what it means to bank with purpose and share in the profit as a Libro Owner, visit libro.ca.

JAMES BEATTIE

James Beattie, 26 years old, nerdy individual that is actively working with the assistance of Tammy and Career Compass on finding a job. He Graduated high school in 2017 with honors and has found both success and learning experiences, facing a lot of challenges and barriers with invisible disabilities, that is what he is here to speak today on.



TAMMY DAGLEISH



Tammy Dagleish has dedicated more than two decades of her career to Community Living Essex County, contributing to various support capacities. She has been an integral part of Career Compass; the organization's employment services. Tammy's unwavering commitment lies in fostering inclusive employment opportunities and assisting individuals in achieving their employment goals. Through her adept networking skills, she establishes and nurtures relationships with employers, businesses, and job seekers, ensuring optimal job matches. Additionally, Tammy conducts pre-employment workshops for youth in high schools across the Essex County area, as well as within the broader community.

JUDY ROBINET

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - A LIFE WORTH LIVING

Judy M. Robinet, MSpEd, O&M, ECE, an Early Childhood Educator, Parent Effectiveness Instructor, Child and Family Counselor, and Orientation and Mobility Specialist, is the Executive Director of a grassroots charity, A Life Worth Living. Judy also worked as a Child and Family Counsellor for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind from 1989-1994, Board Member for a provincial parent organization, VIEWS – For the Visually Impaired (served the maximum term of seven years) and a member of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation. Her achievements include authorship of the book, A Life Worth Living, contributor to the Parent Information Kit, guest lecturer at post-secondary institutions, and presenter at national and international conferences.

Along with Jeff Beach, an Honours Psychology graduate, and Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson, Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Windsor, Judy co-authored research on self-esteem and independent living which was published in the Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, Nov-Dec. 1995.

Recognized for her contributions, Judy has received the Lions International President's Certificate (1998), Ontario Community Action Award (2000), Helen Keller Award (2001), St. Clair College Alumni of Distinction Award (2017) and a Melvin Jones Fellowship (2019).



A Life Worth Living



SONIA MCMAHON-COMARTIN

MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATOR

Sonia has worked in mental health and wellness roles within the public sector for over 20 years, assisting a multitude of people across the lifespan. Her educational background includes Psychology, specialized grief and loss certification, and Professional Life Coaching.

She has been with Canadian Mental Health Association Windsor-Essex County Branch since 2016, initially providing Bereavement Support and Education and currently in the role of Mental Health Educator. Sonia is a Certified Trainer and Facilitator in safeTALK and ASIST through Living Works Education, as well as a “Living Life to the Full” and “Y Mind Teen and Youth” Facilitator.

Sonia has diverse experience offering both wellness and bereavement seminars, in addition to coordinating and facilitating a multitude of loss-specific grief support groups.

She feels privileged to support individuals on their life’s journey, often meeting in times of struggle, to provide hope and enhanced perspective as well as acknowledge and celebrate positive steps forward. Sonia believes it is vital for everyone to be offered opportunity, be treated with dignity and respect, so feels honoured to connect and make a positive difference in others’ lives.



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Windsor-Essex County
Mental health for all



JULIE SAWCHUK

AUTHOR, ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGIST AND EDUCATOR

After sustaining a spinal cord injury in 2015, Julie turned from teaching high school science to educating everyone that accessibility matters. Julie was a key team member for the development of the National Building Code for accessible residential homes and is currently the Chair of the Standards Development Committee Review of the Design of Public Spaces in the AODA. Julie is also on the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the County of Huron and a Member of the Board for Spinal Cord Injury Ontario.

Julie has completed accessibility ratings for commercial and institutional buildings all across Ontario, but more importantly, she has helped people see that achieving a meaningful level of accessibility benefits everyone. She applies all facets of disability to help building owners, managers, designers and contractors find ways to improve access. She has worked on projects including libraries, recreation centres to apartments and restaurants. Julie also teaches accessible design, construction and awareness to firms and students online.

As an author, Julie has written three books including Roadmap to Recovery: Finding the way forward after spinal cord injury and the two Amazon best-sellers Build YOUR Space: How to create an accessible home for you, your family and your future and Building Better Bathrooms — connecting real stories with the details you need for truly accessible results. At heart, Julie is a storyteller who helps people understand that true accessibility allows people to participate without having to dismantle barriers or change attitudes first.



juliesawchuk.ca

Sawchuk Accessible Solutions

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING



CONTACT US:

THE ESSEX COUNTY ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

360 Fairview Ave W, Essex ON N8M 1Y6

Telephone: 519-776-6441

TTY: 1-877-624-4832

Fax: 519-776-4455

Email: accessibility@countyofessex.ca

www.countyofessex.ca

Facebook - EssexCountyAccessibility

Twitter - @EssexCountyAAC
