

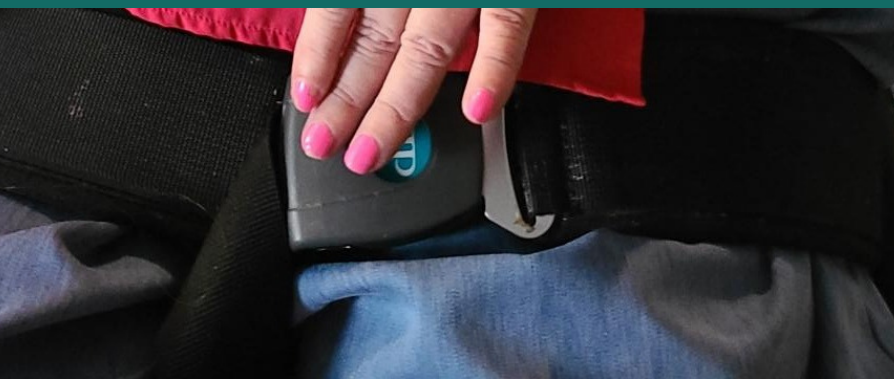


Being

Belonging

Becoming

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2022/2023





# **ABOUT US**

Dartmouth Adult Services Centre (DASC) has been serving the Dartmouth community for 57 years. DASC is a non-profit vocational day program and business centre supporting adults with an intellectual disability, dual diagnosis, and/or fragile health and complex needs. We provide a variety of programs to suit each individual, including Vocational, Prevocational, Active Lifestyles, Recreation and Leisure Clubs, Community Employment, Youth, and Individual Support programs. We support the social, community, and economic inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities. Find out more at [dasc-ns.ca](http://dasc-ns.ca)!

## **MISSION**

DASC's mission is to support the being, belonging, and becoming of adults with intellectual disabilities.

## **VISION**

We envision a future in which all people with intellectual disabilities, and their families, are empowered, self-determined, and fully engaged in their communities.

## **OUR STRATEGIC GOALS**

- Create more paid employment opportunities for people in our vocational programs
- Grow our Day Programs to align with the Province's recent Human Rights and Review Remedy
- Reduce our program waitlist
- Return to pre-pandemic revenue levels for our boardroom rentals
- Empowering participants with program choice and skills in advocacy
- Return and growth of our LaughAbility! fundraising event
- Seek short-and-long term solutions to grow space for our offsite clubs

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Last year marked a year of significant change, celebration, community engagement, program re-emergence and growth for DASC. In 2022-23, we served 195 people with intellectual disabilities. While COVID-19 continued to impact our services and our team, we note that with each successive year, the effects of the pandemic on our programs are diminishing. While COVID forced us to close or postpone in-person programs for long periods of time in the first two years of the pandemic, last year we experienced only 10 days of full or partial program closures, a sharp decline from previous years.

The evolution of our COVID-related policies is also a good measure of progress: mandatory employee COVID testing has been dropped, and we have also just eliminated mandatory mask-wearing for staff, participants, and visitors. We thank all of the DASC team, as well as our customers, supporters, and volunteers, for their understanding and patience as we navigated this exceptional time.

Raising the awareness of DASC within the greater Halifax area and increasing our fundraising efforts were areas of renewed focus this past year. In March, we hosted a major fundraising event in support of our programs. LaughAbility! was a terrific night of comedy and improv, featuring performances by persons with disabilities. We thank all of those who attended, volunteered for, or supported us on this special night! In another important fundraising development, with the support of numerous foundations, donors, and municipal politicians, we raised \$70,000 to purchase a new accessible van for our Active Lifestyles Club.

DASC enjoyed tremendous visibility on the Dartmouth waterfront last summer, as we were the Rotary Club of Halifax Harbour's charity partner during Ribfest weekend at Alderney Landing.

In 2022 we celebrated 50 years of making buttons! CTV Morning Live and the Halifax Chamber of Commerce visited us to mark the occasion. To tell the story of DASC, and to remind the public about our button production and boardroom rentals, we also produced a commercial with CTV. This broadcast led to a surprise donation of \$10,000 from a generous local business.

Our boardroom rentals are beginning to rebound from the drop of in-person meetings during the pandemic. We're gradually getting closer to pre-pandemic rental revenue.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT, CONT'D

We experienced considerable change in our organization's leadership. Last year we welcomed five people to the senior team: Sam Briere became our new Facility Manager, Ashley Butt our new Manager of Business and Fund Development, Wendy Knowlton joined us as new Life Enhancement Program Supervisor, Jake Rekunyk is our new Offsite Programs Supervisor, and Paul Whyte our new Production Supervisor. They've made an immediate and positive impact on our operation, and we are grateful for their contributions.

The addition of a new accessible gardening program at our Dorey Avenue base proved to be extremely popular with our participants, and we look forward to another vegetable harvest this year!

Last fall we celebrated our community's inclusive employers in a social media campaign, thanking them for their leadership as they hired more than 30 of our Community Employment program participants. And we also hired from within our program! Patrick Berrigan is now our part-time Administrative Assistant.

Reducing our program waitlist remains a top priority for DASC. Last year, we welcomed 12 new participants to our programs. The coming year will be an important one for our organization as we strive to move more participants in our vocational program to paid employment, and work with the Province of Nova Scotia to create more choice and program opportunities for persons with disabilities in our community.

Thank you all for your support and commitment to DASC.

Henk van Leeuwen  
Executive Director, DASC

Faith Scattolon  
Board Chair, DASC

**PATRICK BERRIGAN**

Patrick has been a long-time participant in our Community Employment program, and now he's employed with us! Patrick is an administrative assistant at DASC. "I feel like it's a beginning of a new chapter. It feels good. I have a disability, so this is important. DASC has given me a chance to prove myself. I know that I can do it. It's important to show achievement. If given the chance, I can do it."



**QUE LEBLANC**

Que is in our Youth Program and enjoys developing new skills at DASC. "It makes me feel good." Que has begun pre-employment training with us, and recently worked as part of a Home Services Nova Scotia initiative supporting seniors in acquiring tech skills. Que's mother Lisa says DASC's Youth Program "has really brought him into who he is today."



**CATHERINE DENSMORE**

Catherine is on the move at our Recreation and Leisure Club! Catherine enjoys working out at Cole Harbour Place, and different activities like "picnics in the summer. It makes me happy. I love my friends and staff and having a community at DASC."



## DASC AND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### The year by numbers

Last year we served 195 persons with intellectual disabilities. Our team supported participants in our Social Enterprise, Community Employment, Life Enhancement, Actives Lifestyles, Recreation and Leisure, Individual Support, and Youth programs.

### New participants, transitions, and the community waitlist

DASC is pleased to report that we were able to welcome new participants to our programs last year. We realize how challenging it must be for people to wait long periods of time – in some cases several years – to access one of our programs. Shortening the program waitlist for persons with intellectual disabilities is a perennial priority of ours.

In 2022-23, **12 people joined our programs**. Four people joined our Onsite Social Enterprise program, and four others became members of our Life Enhancement program. Three people began participating in our Community Employment program, and one started in our Active Lifestyles Club.

However, demand for our services has not stopped. As of March 31, 2023, there are still **40** people waiting to access a DASC program.



### COVID-19: Impact on programs

Compared to the previous year, last year featured a decline in the number of days programs were fully or partially suspended due to the pandemic. In 2022-23, COVID-19 caused the full or partial closure of DASC programs 10 times. This is down from the 50 lost days of programs in 2021-22. We are hopeful this downward trend continues.

Our COVID-19 protocols continue to evolve: we've ended our mandatory testing program for employees, and mask-wearing is now optional for participants and staff.

## NEW GARDENING PROGRAM



Last spring we seeded a new accessible gardening program! Participants in our Life Enhancement program grew cucumbers, squash, peas, radishes and other vegetables! Along with our raised garden planters, we also installed a paved path on the perimeter of our building and accessible picnic tables. We are grateful for the help of the many community funding partners who supported this project including the City of Halifax, the Windsor Foundation, the Canadian Progress Club, the Dartmouth Community Health Board, the East Coast Credit Union, and the Stevens Family Foundation.





## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### LIFE ENHANCEMENT

23 people were in this program which focuses on social interactions and life skills. Highlights included art classes, music therapy, trips to several hockey games, and of course, the new gardening program!



### ONSITE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Last year, 72 participants were involved in our Onsite Social Enterprise and Small Production programs. By working on packaging, assembly, labelling, button-production and other contracts, they acquired important vocational training and job skills.

In 2022, we celebrated 50 years of making buttons!



### COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT

Our team supported 54 people! Our job coaches were busy, helping more than 30 people working with local businesses, and helping others with job searches, interviews, or job application preparation. We thank all local businesses who practice inclusive hiring!

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## OFFSITE PROGRAMS:

### RECREATION AND LEISURE CLUB, ACTIVE LIFESTYLES CLUB, INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT, COMPLEX NEEDS AND FRAGILE HEALTH

Our Offsite and Individualized Support programs supported 28 people. Our teams are always on the move! Community outings included trips to water parks, Peggy's Cove, Lunenburg, local trails, farms, museums, and even a sunflower maze!



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

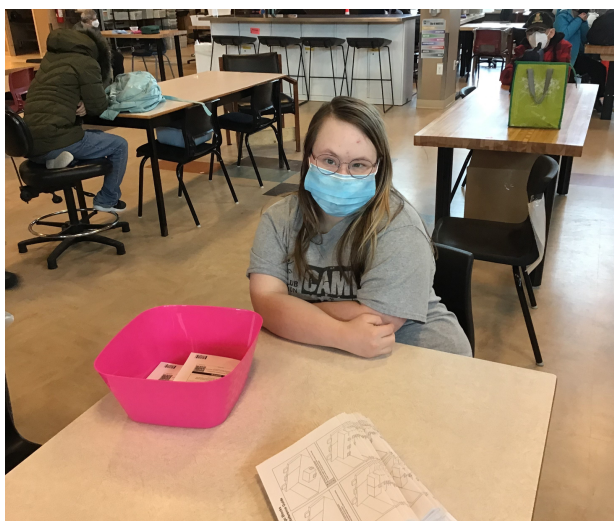
### HOME SERVICES NOVA SCOTIA

Dartmouth resident Jennifer (above right, with DASC participant Chris) uses our Home Services Nova Scotia service to care for her lawn. It provides paid employment for participants like Chris, and helps older Nova Scotians maintain their homes. “After the death of my spouse, I had difficulty getting my lawn mowed and whipper snipped. I had heard of DASC’s services and decided to give them a call. Best. Call. Ever. They are always punctual, and I can count on them to do a great job. The crew is gracious, friendly, and courteous with great communication. This is a lovely service.”



### YOUTH PROGRAM

We supported 18 people between the ages of 16-and-24. What was once a pilot program is a pilot program no more, as we thank the NS Department of Community Services for committing to a multi-year funding extension of this vital service. Youth participated in Art and Education days, tried their hand at production contracts and pre-employment training, volunteered, and attended workshops such as self-esteem, communication and social skills, and life skills.



## RIBFEST

We're grateful that the Rotary Club of Halifax Harbour invited us to join them as charity partner at their Ribfest event on the Dartmouth waterfront last summer! Thank you volunteers for helping us raise nearly \$4,500 for DASC programs!



## NEW VAN FUND



Thank you to our friends at Halifax City Council! Several Halifax City councillors collectively provided us with \$29,000 in district capital funds so we could purchase a new accessible van for our Active Lifestyles Club!

## LAUGHABILITY

In March, we hosted our first ever LaughAbility! fundraiser in support of our programs! It was an evening of comedy and improv featuring performers with disabilities! Thank you to all of our sponsors and attendees who helped us raise \$53,000!



## FINANCE REPORT 2022/2023

- Fiscal year 2023 featured a sharp decline in COVID-related program closure or interruption, which was something to celebrate as our team and clients returned to a more predictable and consistent environment.
- Government revenue increased this year with continued funding support from the Province for the front line staff wage increases and retention bonuses announced by the Province of Nova Scotia in late March.
- Earned revenue increased this year by over \$206,000, due in large part to:
  - Broadening Day Options grants increased significantly this year by \$231,000, primarily as a result of increased funding for wage increases.
  - Boardroom rentals increased by \$9,000, reflecting a bit of recovery post pandemic but still lower than pre-pandemic results due to the change in how and where people work. As we look forward into the upcoming year, we are continuing to consider how best to use our space.
  - Contract work in our production centre decreased by approximately \$15,000 this year due to changes in the volume and type of contracts in place this year, while buttons stayed steady at \$28,000.
- Fundraising was an area of significant focus this year, with an increase of \$224,000 over last year, including the recognition of the funds received in the prior year for the gardening project which was completed early in the fiscal year. It also includes \$53,000 raised from our inaugural LaughAbility! fundraiser, which I think is safe to say was a great time for all who attended – I know I really enjoyed it! A big thank you to everyone who helped organize it and supported it.
- Expenses increased this year, with our programs running at full capacity and increases to payroll for raises, some new team members as well as including the retention bonus costs that was paid out to our team in June, 2023. Our facility costs have increased as the costs to maintain our building have been growing due to the age of the building and equipment – we expect this to continue as time passes.
- The year ended with a surplus of \$89,000.
- Overall, cash flows returned to a more typical pattern and balance this year and we ended the year with a balance of just over \$240,000 and an additional \$211,000 in an interest-bearing term deposit account.
- We had some significant capital expenditures this year, primarily related to the vans that we use for our offsite program participants, as well as bringing in movable walls to help with the production centre configuration.

As we look forward, some more capital spending will be needed – we have committed to the replacement of one of our vans immediately and know that we need to replace the other soon. Our centre on Dorey Avenue is starting to show its age and we need to continue to invest in maintenance to keep it safe for our participants and staff.

DASC is also continuing to focus on building a program of fund development and community engagement so that more people know about our mission, and so we can find dollars to invest in inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities in the months and years to come.

## FINANCE REPORT 2022/2023

<i>(operations / unrestricted fund)</i>	Years ended March 31st (\$ Thousands)				
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Revenue					
Operating Grants	2,707	2,412	2,501	2,307	2,282
Earned Revenue	965	759	563	846	911
Fundraising	236	8	5	13	28
	<b>3,908</b>	<b>3,179</b>	3,069	3,166	3,221
Expenses					
Human Resources	2,937	2,412	2,239	2,432	2,436
Program	353	298	292	308	264
Facility	403	352	332	330	323
Administration (excl. Amort.)	126	172	134	77	114
	<b>3,819</b>	<b>3,234</b>	2,997	3,147	3,137
Surplus (Deficit)	89	(55)	72	19	84
Margin	2.3%	-1.7%	2.3%	0.6%	2.6%
Revenue Growth					
Operating Grants	12.2%	-3.6%	8.4%	1.1%	1.2%
Earned Revenue	27.1%	34.8%	-33.5%	-7.1%	27.1%
Expense Growth	18.1%	7.9%	-4.8%	0.3%	5.6%

	Years ended March 31st (\$ Thousands)				
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Operating Cash Flow	184	142	(23)	25	167
Less: Fundraising & Donations	236	8	5	13	28
Net Operating Cash Flow	(52)	134	(28)	12	139
Capital Expenditures	95	49	18	55	26
Net increase (decrease) in unrestricted cash flow	(22)	(3)	(41)	(31)	88
Cash and Term Deposits					
Unrestricted	243	265	268	309	312
Restricted	27	27	27	27	55

I would like to thank the entire management team at DASC, staff, and all of our program participants for their effort this year and I look forward to our continued success in the future.

On behalf of the Finance committee,  
Veronica Hunt, CPA, CA  
Treasurer

## CELEBRATING THE TEAM!

Luke Elwood (right) and his volunteer friends in the Better Together Nova Scotia team were recognized for their community work with a Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal! Luke, Brent Kerr, and Mark Deckert were honoured with other Dartmouth volunteers at a ceremony at Province House. Well done, Luke! Thank you for your service, and congratulations! Luke is a participant in our Recreation and Leisure Club, and was joined by his mother Maureen at the ceremony.



The Active Lifestyles Club received an Invisible Champion Award from the United Way of Halifax and the Bhayana Family Foundation. This award recognizes people who go above and beyond in service of their community, and the Club team received theirs for everything they did to ensure DASC participants remained connected and included during the difficult early months of COVID-19. Club staff visited participants at home, dropped off food and care packages, and kept morale and programs going through online platforms like Zoom.



## BUSINESS AND PRODUCTION

Our Social Enterprise provides our program participants with the opportunity to work on a variety of business contracts and develop employment skills. Revenue we earn from these contracts, along with revenue from renting out our boardrooms, enables us to host our programs for adults with intellectual disabilities.

We sincerely thank all our customers who continued to do business with us, and we also thank all our new customers who joined us and used our services!

Thank you to our New Customers:



GeoSpectrum.ca



Thank you to our Existing/Returning Customers:



# DASC'S 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## PARTICIPANT MILESTONES

### 5 Years of Service

Ivan Chiu  
Lindsay Crandall  
Nicole Doucette  
Bryan Giles  
Amy Holman  
Devin Morrison  
Jacob Power  
Damon Toews

### 10 Years of Service

Delicia Beals  
Mary Beth Crawley  
Catherine Densmore  
Meaghan Maxwell  
Tracy McDonald  
Julie Thompson

### 15 Years of Service

Sam Starr

### 20 Years of Service

Craig Eaton  
Noelle Howell  
Tara Kane  
Karl Waugh

### 25 Years of Service

Rachel Banks  
Matthew Murray

### 30 Years of Service

Barb Corbin  
Craig George  
Juanita Gillam  
Eddy Myra  
Angela Plummer  
Karen Snow

### 35 Years of Service

Jim Eustace

### 40 Years of Service

Velvet McPhee  
Allan Pearce

### 50 Years of Service

Len Feehan

## STAFF MILESTONES

### 5 Years of Service

Michelle Poirier  
Erin Moses

### 10 Years of Service

Gina Cochrane



WE REMEMBER  
THREE MEMBERS OF  
THE DASC FAMILY  
WHO PASSED AWAY  
LAST YEAR...



**WILLIAM STEPHEN**  
1950-2022



**KYLE WARD**  
1996-2022



**CHRIS CASEY**  
1967-2022



**We acknowledge and thank the Nova Scotia  
Department of Community Services for its  
continued support and partnership.**

