



connected

FALL/WINTER 2021



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WELCOME

We are looking forward in so many ways: to a new year, to expanded opportunities to be together, and to new endeavours and opportunities. We are mindful too of all of the ways you have made so many things possible for the individuals supported by CLH throughout these times of profound change. Thank you for your generosity and your steadfast support.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since the last time we spoke, small changes have begun to come about in our day-to-day lives. Yes, the pandemic is still here, but light is starting to peek through the clouds – light we have all desperately been searching for.

CLH Foundation has continued the work of stepping up whenever and wherever CLH Developmental Support Services have needed us. Even when so many of our usual activities were put on hold, we found new and innovative ways to continue our partnership: connecting generous donors offering PPE and supplies to CLH in the very early days of the pandemic, helping to launch the virtual program with supplies and activities, grant writing for project-driven initiatives, and supporting special online events.

In recent times, we have begun to shift our focus away from fundraising and programming supports related to the pandemic, and onto fundraising programs that will have

significant effects for the people supported by CLH long after these difficult times are well in our rearview mirror. *Commitment to Care, Bridging the Gap, and Foundation for Success* are three of the CLH Foundation fundraising initiatives that will have real, lasting, positive impact by improving the quality of life for many people – over a range of ages and types of programming.

One thing is certain: your generous support will allow us to continue to keep the people supported by CLH at the forefront of all that we do. With your help, CLH Foundation can provide meaningful opportunities to support, include and empower; and enhance the day-to-day experiences of those served by CLH. Knowing that your generosity will make a real difference to people in this community is truly something to look forward to.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Kitchen'.

Sarah Kitchen
President
CLH Foundation Board of Directors



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I might still be a relative newcomer to North Simcoe, but the past two years (most of them in pandemic times) have taught me so much about the generous and resilient spirit of the members of this community. Where there is a need, there is help; where there is a challenge, the community swiftly moves into action with a plan.

Whenever we have identified a new opportunity or CLH Foundation initiative that will improve the lives and experiences of the individuals supported by CLH Developmental Support Services, you have stepped forward and offered your enthusiastic support and generously asked, **“how can we help?”**

This is true for two CLH Foundation fundraising projects underway right now. **Commitment to Care** will enable CLH to continue its longtime (and unique to CLH) practice of underwriting unfunded medical expenses for adults who live in our Supported Living Homes. The other, **The Great SIL Pantry Re-Stock** will help bridge the gap for members of our SIL program. And not to forget all of the other wonderful ways you have found to sustain and engage those we serve, including pumpkin contests, pizzas parties and **Chipping-In FORE CLH**. Through financial support, donations of goods, and many, many pairs of brand new socks, you have shown your generosity and your commitment to include and empower. Thank you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue-Ellen Boyes".

Sue-Ellen Boyes
Director, Revenue Development
CLH Foundation



The Great Pantry Re-Stock

Our North Simcoe community responds with generosity and practical support for their fellow community members.

As the cost of living continues to rise, living independently on a fixed income has become ever more challenging for the 34 individuals in our Supported Independent Living (SIL) program. This fall, as a *Bridging the Gap* project, we undertook a SIL Pantry Re-Stock of basic staples and higher-priced household goods, including personal care items. The initiative received a terrific boost with a \$2500 grant to CLH Foundation from the Township of Tiny's Mayor's 2021 Golf Tournament.

Sarah Kitchen led the Re-Stock, and we quickly learned that this is a town that 'gets' what it means to give a hand up to neighbours in need. Our wish list included shampoo, soap, toothpaste, deodorant, cleaning supplies, laundry soap, dish soap and toilet paper. In batches of 34, one donor after another dropped off their whole-hearted and practical contributions to the Re-Stock. Georgian Shores Dental donated toothbrushes, the staff of James Keating Elementary School made sure we had toothpaste and soap, Fer-Mar Farms donated 340 pounds of potatoes and

Maurice's - Your Independent Grocer assisted with paper products. Silver Bridge Labs and St. Paul's Presbyterian Church stepped in with financial support. A further initiative dubbed "Socktober" and headquartered at One Stop Beauty Shop resulted in dozens of donations of new socks to help SIL members keep warm this winter from the toes up! The Re-Stock baskets were filled and delivered early in November, and were received with amazement and delight.



"Like many people on a fixed income, it is well documented that people with disabilities who rely on government pensions struggle to make ends meet. Bridging the Gap is an important initiative, and while it is not a long term solution to this problem, it is a critical measure to make sure that our SIL members have what they need while we work toward that goal."

- SARAH KITCHEN,
CLH FOUNDATION PRESIDENT



St Paul's
Presbyterian Church



Chipping In FOR CLH Foundation



For the second year in a row, we did not hold our annual golf tournament; while it is one of our favourite events, we're waiting until all of the individuals supported by CLH are able to attend and fully participate with us, just as they always did before COVID-19.

And also for the second year in a row, generous individuals and members of the North Simcoe business community stepped forward to support CLH Foundation. Their donations will be directed to our annual *Commitment to Care* campaign.

Arcade and Jory Guardian Pharmacy

Audi Barrie

CompuSolve Technologies

Fred Hook Limited

Georgian Electric

LeClair Cremation Services

Y's Men Club of Midland

Todd LaLonde | Desjardins Insurance

Brian McGonegal | RBC Group Advantage

Sarah Kitchen

Wayne and Donna Job

Cherifa Heintz

Barb Maguire

Vicki Robertson

Mary and Scott Warnock

Colleen Kelly-Berichi

Wendy McKinnon

Rosemary Marchand

Janice Smitka



JOSEF & CLAIRE + FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS



When other funds or options aren't available, the Foundation for Success program can provide CLH-supported children, youth and adults with financial assistance to enhance their quality of life in these areas:

- Community and Social Inclusion
- Self-Development and Personal Development
- Health and Assistive Devices
- Essential Needs

There is a formal application process, with requests received and adjudicated by the Foundation For Success Committee of the CLHF Board.

Terri and Mark Gortnar's children, Claire and Josef, have a rare neurological disease known as Batten disease. Through their efforts to find the best treatments and medical care for their children, the Gortnars have also positively impacted other children and families dealing with the same diagnosis.

Batten disease is a fatal, inherited disorder of the nervous system that typically begins in childhood. Early symptoms usually appear between the ages of 5 and 10 years, when a healthy child begins to develop vision problems or seizures. Over time, affected children suffer cognitive impairment, worsening seizures, and progressive loss of sight and motor skills. Claire is experiencing some of the physical impacts and uses a wheelchair for mobility. Josef is so far asymptomatic, but has also been diagnosed with Batten's. The Gortnars hope that early diagnosis and treatment will slow down the pace of the disease for both children.

Initially the Gortnars created the website CureforClaire.com to create awareness of Batten disease and raise funds for research. More recently, they formed the registered charitable *Canadian CLN2 Foundation*, to be able to accept larger donations and advocate more directly with pharmaceutical companies and researchers. Their goal? To fund vital research to treat symptoms and one day find a cure: "Never take no for an answer", says Terri, "I didn't have a choice: my children's lives and well-being depend on it."

This approach has served other Canadian children with Batten disease as well: through research and advocacy, the Gortnars were able bring a very expensive but effective treatment for Batten to Canada, one that had not been available here before.

Jillian Ferney, a Resource Consultant with CLH's Simcoe County Resource Consultation Services, provides developmental support to Joseph. "Jillian", says Terri, "has an amazing ability to think outside the box, to find ways to support Joseph in spite of his not meeting the 'tick-boxes' that are usually in place for funding or assistance in education, health and medical care."

It was Jillian who made the connection that the *Foundation for Success* might be able to provide assistance with an expense that the family had to undertake: converting their vehicle to be able to accommodate two wheelchairs.

Terri and Mark have raised more than \$250,000 for medical research projects, acting as 'angel investors' to keep it going forward. They've also been able to help other families by sending them equipment or help them create memories through special experiences. Terry explains, "We understand how hard it is to navigate the rare disease world in Canada and are here to support other families dealing with Batten disease."

The Gortnars cannot access funds through the *CNL2 Foundation* for the care and expenses of their own children's needs, and while there are many foundations related to health causes, they often have a very specific focus, "we aren't eligible – Batten disease is too rare."

"We are fortunate to have tremendous family support which makes it possible for us to do the advocacy and research," says Terri, "To re-fit our vehicle to accommodate wheelchairs, beyond the purchase price there was an additional \$17,000 expense for the conversion. So every bit of help that we receive makes a big difference: the support of the CLH Foundation's *Foundation for Success* program with a \$1000 contribution to the expense meant a great deal to us."

Foundation for Success is generously supported by TD Bank, TD Wealth, and the Ontario Realtors Care Foundation.



Dignity Matters

Make A Commitment to Care

*It's as essential to human life as water, food, and oxygen.
It's like pond ice in early winter—thin, brittle and easily shattered.
It's human dignity.*

Sixty years ago, CLH Developmental Support Services was born because a group of caring community members recognized that people living with developmental disabilities deserved to live each day in comfort and dignity.

The generosity of our community has always helped CLH to provide high quality, responsive, continuous care. This requires innovation and creativity at the best of times, but the need has never been greater than it is today.

You may know that we've always provided safe, compassionate care and exceptional quality of life experiences for adults with complex medical needs in CLH Supported Living Homes: nutritious and delicious meals, inclusive, interactive, fun ways to connect and engage, and important learning and employment opportunities.

But did you know that CLH also provides critically needed – yet unfunded – life essentials?

Essentials like medical treatments or specialized feeding tube food: without CLH paying for these medications and treatments, individuals would be expected to pay for them themselves – and most could not.

You may not know that in many other settings, personal hygiene/incontinence products are limited to a certain number per person, per day. **Not at CLH.** These essential needs are always met – regardless of funding constraints.



We spend \$120,00 annually to ensure every one of our supported individuals can count on us to ensure their basic needs are covered, whatever and whenever – no matter what.

A common thread in all we do is woven throughout our mission to **support, include and empower.**

This truly informs the work of CLH Foundation. Together, we are driven by our commitment to providing the care, comfort, and dignity that everyone deserves.

We do this by sharing our stories to inspire and identifying where our support is most needed and can achieve the greatest impact.

But we can't do it without you!

Last year, when many charities were fearful of closing their doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the support of our community made all the difference. The pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges, but it has also provided unexpected opportunities to reimagine new ways to deliver engagement, interaction, a sense of belonging. Your support will help propel us forward.

As we continue navigating this "new normal", we hope you will seriously consider a generous gift to CLH Foundation. Your gift will be used wisely to deliver safe, effective programs, services and life essentials to some of Simcoe County's most vulnerable individuals and families – and ensure that all members of our CLH community continue to thrive in comfort and dignity.

**To support A Commitment To Care,
visit CLHMidland.on.ca/donate
or call Sue-Ellen Boyes at 705.528.2825**



Pillars of Justice

BRINGING INNOVATION AND SPECIALIZED SUPPORT TO THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

When CLH Developmental Support Services (CLH DSS) took its new name, it reflected the wide breadth of services CLH DSS provides, and their geographic reach across the province.

The Community Networks of Specialized Care - Central East (CNSC-CE) may not be as well known to our North Simcoe community as other CLH adult services, but its impact is significant. The CNSC-CE provides support to adults who have developmental disabilities with high support and complex care needs. One focus is Dual Diagnosis Justice Coordination, which supports individuals who have come in contact with the justice system to ensure they receive the supports they require.

The Clinical Justice Program was established in 2018 as a collaboration between the Community Networks of Specialized Care-Central East (CLH Developmental Support Services) and Centre for Behaviour Health Sciences (Mackenzie Health) beginning with a dual role between the Dual Diagnosis Justice Coordinator and a Board Certificated Behaviour Analyst (BCBA). It has transformed into a larger clinical model of justice support for persons with developmental disabilities who need comprehensive support to access the justice system.

The CNSC-CE Program Manager Marnie McDermott refers to the three parts of the Clinical Justice Program as the three pillars: The Justice Clinic, Adapted-Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (A-DBT) Justice Group and a CNSC-CE Justice App. This synergistic model of support provides new pathways for individuals to develop skills that lead them to successful participation and equitable experiences in the courtroom.

Wanting to learn more, we met with Dual Diagnosis Justice Coordinators (DDJCs) Vicky Simos and Courtney Hutson to get an even bigger picture. In their roles, they assist individuals to prepare for all aspects of their court matters using a variety of approaches, including Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA).

Vicky and Courtney bring complementary skillsets and experience to their working partnership. They share a commitment to finding ways of supporting individuals who

would otherwise find themselves alone in the court system. Says Vicky, "We work really well together – I bring ABA and developmental sector knowledge where Courtney is experienced and knowledgeable in justice and the court."

Vicky is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA) with extensive experience working with individuals with Developmental Disabilities and Dual Diagnosis, including 14 years' experience working at both the Centre for Behaviour Health Sciences (Mackenzie Health) and Surrey Place. ABA is a scientific problem-solving approach that aims to produce socially significant behavior changes –in this case, to help individuals participate in court, whether they're there as witnesses, victims of a crime or the accused. Vicky is also the Coordinator of the Justice Clinic in partnership with Centre for Behaviour Health Sciences (Mackenzie Health)

Courtney is the DDJC for Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge and Durham. In addition to her BA in Forensic Psychology and Masters in Criminology, she worked at Central East Correctional Centre in the Psychology Dept., and the Canadian Mental Health Association in Justice Services before joining the CNSC-CE in 2018, a few months before Vicky.

The Justice Clinic (the first pillar) uses Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) as a tool to construct and implement individualized Justice Plans and Court Support Plans. The goal of a Justice Plan is to build skills and behavior for the individual to participate successfully. Court Support Plans involve every person who has a court role during a trial with recommendations and accommodations to ensure the individuals can provide their evidence. Courtney and Vicky have hosted workshops, seminars, and "lunch & learns" to reach local agencies, community health practitioners and courthouse professionals. Courtney says, "The real light bulb moments come when you have an agency that has exhausted every option for support, and then they see the positive benefit/change, and they come back with more and more referrals".

The second pillar, Adapted-Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (A-DBT) is a form of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, which is proven to work really well for adults with a developmental



Left: Courtney Hutson
Right: Vicky Simos

disability. Since 2008, the CNSC-CE in partnership with a variety of community agencies has been providing weekly A-DBT group sessions across Central East region. In 2020, funding from the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) gave lift-off to a pilot project to bring A-DBT and its focus on core mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotion regulation and distress tolerance to support individuals in the justice system. These have run (virtually) on a weekly basis with trained A-DBT therapists, with very promising outcomes.

The newest CNSC-CE initiative (and third pillar) is The Justice App. A “what if” conversation in September 2020 about using technology to serve their high needs clients during the pandemic led Vicky, Courtney and Marnie to go to work on a solution. By spring 2021, with help from colleague Justin Neilon, a newly developed app was tested, and then refined.

The final version was publicly launched in November 2021.

The Justice App contains

helpful information about navigating the court system when it is most needed. With step-by-step photos and examples, supported individuals, their families, and their direct support professionals can walk through the processes and definitions, and better understand the terminology, stages and expectations of the court systems. As Vicky and Courtney make their way through wait lists and the increasing demand for service, the app can provide individuals and family members access to information they need all in one place – in the palm of their hand.

Funding for these initiatives is not permanent; provincial support is currently in place until March 2022. Recognizing the tremendous outcomes for individuals who have successfully participated in these programs, CLH Developmental Support Services and CLH Foundation are committed to finding long-term funding solutions.



About the Community Networks of Specialized Care (CNSC) – Ontario

The Community Networks of Specialized Care (CNSC) links specialized services and professionals to collaborate and develop complex support plans for adults who have developmental disabilities with high support and complex care needs. The CNSCs bring together people from many sectors including developmental services, health, research, education and justice in a common goal of improving navigation, access and quality of services. The CNSC works in four focus areas: Complex Support Coordination, Health Care Facilitation, Service System Resources and Dual Diagnosis Justice Case Management.

CLH Developmental Support Services serves as the accountable agency for the CNSC in Central East, which includes Simcoe, York, Durham, Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge. The mandate focuses on providing complex support and support coordination for individuals, and acting as a resource for other service agencies, Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) and local planning tables. Additionally, CNSC-CE builds sector capacity through education and mentorship to other case managers and service agencies and provides provincial coordination of videoconferencing and French language resources.

STRAWBERRIES
 AWESOME
 PERFECT MAZES
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 TRACTOR CAMP
 ZOOM
 MARSHMALLOW
 CHOCOLATE
 APPLES
 BAKING
 BOATS
 PASTA
 FRIENDS
 TEEN
 YOUTH
 TACOS
 ZOO



The Word(s) on TAY and Teen Camp

We asked them what they thought, and members of our TAY Youth (Transitional Aged Youth) and Summer Teen Camp participants shared plenty of reasons why they enjoy their programs. They are a flexible and resilient group, having experienced many changes at school through the pandemic, and also different phases of their TAY and Teen Camp programs, transitioning from fully virtual (Fall-Winter-Spring 2020-2021) to virtual + one-to-one support (Summer 2021) and small group cohorts (Fall 2021).

With the leadership and creativity of TAY staff Jennifer Simms and Cody Simpson, and Teen Camp staff Taylor EMBERLEY and Dave Coutts, these programs have remained vibrant and well-attended, providing support and social connection for CLH-supported Youth during challenging times.

Thank you to our loyal annual Teen Camp and Youth program supporters for contributing to these vital programs!

A Red Carpet Evening

#LookingForward

Saturday, February 19, 2022

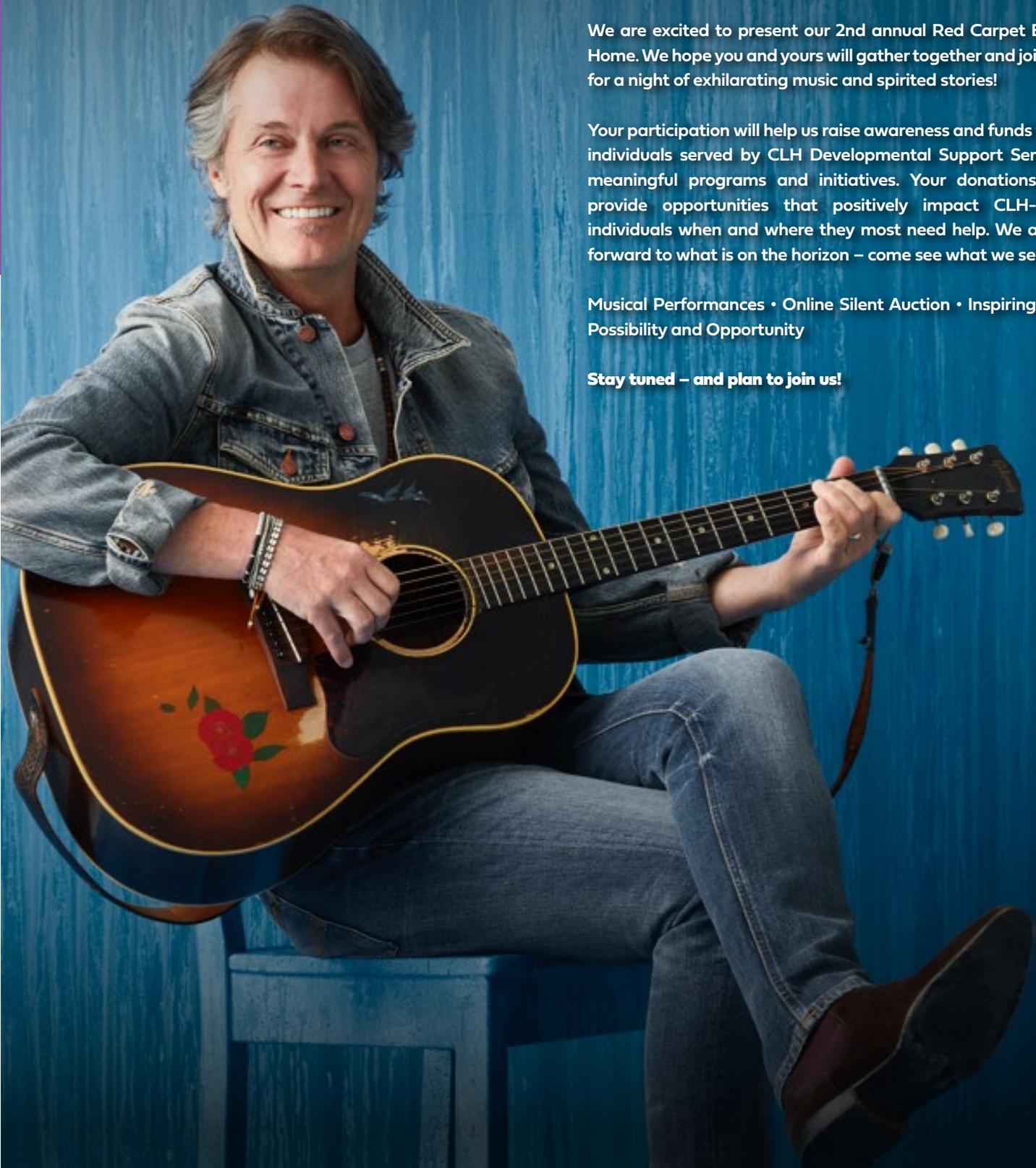
A Night of Story and Song | Featuring Jim Cuddy

We are excited to present our 2nd annual Red Carpet Evening at Home. We hope you and yours will gather together and join us online for a night of exhilarating music and spirited stories!

Your participation will help us raise awareness and funds to support individuals served by CLH Developmental Support Services with meaningful programs and initiatives. Your donations will help provide opportunities that positively impact CLH-supported individuals when and where they most need help. We are looking forward to what is on the horizon – come see what we see!

Musical Performances • Online Silent Auction • Inspiring Stories of Possibility and Opportunity

Stay tuned – and plan to join us!





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