



## 2016 TASC Annual Report

With our first full calendar year as an incorporated not-for-profit under our belt, and as 2016 comes to a close, I thought I would take a moment to reflect on the past years' challenges and successes as well as take a brief look at what's on deck for the coming year.

I have spent the majority of this year focusing on 3 areas that were identified in 2015 as critical to moving the needle forward on tackling awareness as a barrier to participation in sports and recreation for people with disabilities (PWD) in the GTA.

**AWARENESS** — The first (and still on-going) task is identifying the 'players' are and what type of programming they are delivering. Those who attended our roundtable discussions in 2014 and 2015 recall that the focus of TASC would not be to deliver programming but rather to identify and promote existing programming. In that vein, we have compiled a growing directory of over 60 organizations delivering over 100 integrated and adapted programs in over 20 disciplines and for all ages. Importantly we identify both recreational *and* sport opportunities equally and we do not have any bias on a particular discipline or disability. We feel that establishing strong ties in all active pursuits and across all disabilities will further enable and empower those living with disabilities to get active through their chosen recreational or sports pursuit. We continue to regularly identify new opportunities and add them to our directory.

**FUNDING** — As a NFP we are not eligible for many streams of funding from the charitable sector other than private donors, sponsors and the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). We identified a granting opportunity within OTF and applied for a SEED Grant this past Fall. Unfortunately, we were denied the grant despite a solid application, partnership agreement with Variety Village and dozens of letters of recommendation from many of you. We felt that we 'ticked all the boxes' and were confident in our application. As a result of our unsuccessful grant application during this latest round of funding from OTF, we have decided to pursue Charitable status in hopes of attracting additional sources of funding, as we have been approached on numerous occasions by individual donors, foundations and other funding agencies looking to invest. We will keep you all apprised on the status of our charitable application in the New Year.

**ADVOCACY** — TASC is increasingly becoming known as a champion and the voice for greater equity and inclusivity in the sports and recreation sector in the GTA. We have attended numerous consultations, conferences and forums either to learn from others or to pass along our ideas and suggestions to those looking to expand their offerings beyond their current



membership. With a seat on the City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division’s Community Disability Steering Committee we have a unique opportunity to ensure that accessible sports and recreation is on the radar for all future programming delivered by the City. We also continue to address the imbalance of permits (both cost and quantity) being issued to organizations running accessible sports and recreation programs on/in city facilities.

**2017** — The New Year will be full of activities, opportunities and, of course, challenges. We are strongly promoting many events taking place in 2017 that involve parasports including the ParaSport Winter Games, U23 Wheelchair Basketball Championship and Invictus Games. Many of these events will provide an opportunity for the general public to either get involved (as volunteers) or just to attend a unique and high-level sports event in the surrounding area. Any opportunity to promote Toronto as a hub and host of adapted/para/accessible sports and recreation should be embraced and encouraged at all levels and not just by those organizations offering similar sports in their programs. Our on-going fundraising efforts should be greatly improved by a successful charitable status application as well as development of our online portal. We will continue to identify programming opportunities as well as look for strategic partnerships within the sector to help increase awareness and participation in sports and recreation for PWD in the GTA.

We’d like to see Canada celebrate its 150 years by making our country more inclusive and accessible, and we believe Toronto is in a unique position to help lead the way.

Many thanks for all your encouraging words over the year and look forward to connecting with many of you in 2017.

Have a safe and active holiday season!

Jonathan Wood, *Chair*  
Toronto Accessible Sports Council (TASC)