

Ontario Brain Institute Gives Boost to Community-Led Programs

The OBI-GEEK program is allocating \$1 million in funding over the next five years to support community-led programs for people living with brain disorders

TORONTO, May 8, 2019 - The Ontario Brain Institute (OBI) has announced the first recipients of funding under the newly launched Growing Expertise in Evaluation and Knowledge Translation (GEEK) program. OBI-GEEK supports programs run by community organizations which aim to improve the lives of people living with brain disorders.

OBI has committed \$300,000 in funding over the next two years to support three programs across Ontario, each providing a unique service to people living with brain disorders in their community. The programs include: supporting people living with disabilities through community inclusion, connecting individuals with acquired brain injuries to care services, and providing career specific post-secondary education programs for people with developmental disabilities.

The 2019 “GEEKS” are [Active Lives Active Living \(Active Lives After School Dufferin – Orangeville\)](#), [Educational Pathway to Employment \(Christian Horizons - Toronto\)](#), [Brief Intensive Case Management – Acquired Brain Injury \(Ontario Brain Injury Association - Nipissing District\)](#).

“We know the important role community organizations play in providing support and care for people living with brain disorders outside of the clinical setting,” said Dr. Tom Mikkelsen, President and Scientific Director, Ontario Brain Institute. “By funding these community-led programs, OBI is helping more people access the services and supports that play a critical role across their life.”

The OBI-GEEK program will allocate up to \$1 million over the next five years, funding a cohort of community-led programs. The funded programs will help address the needs of the brain health community and represent a range of brain disorders.

“We are so grateful to the Ontario Brain Institute for supporting our program. Brain injury happens in an instant, and the lives of those who sustain a brain injury, as well as their families, are changed forever - often leaving no time to prepare for the unique and extraordinary challenges that are immediate and last a lifetime.”, said Ruth Wilcock, Executive Director, Ontario Brain Injury Association. “With the support of OBI, we will be able to directly help individuals and families during some of the most difficult periods of their life.”

Please click [here](#) to learn more about the OBI-GEEK program.



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Additional Quotes:

Kimberly Van Ryn, Program Manager, Active Lives After School:

“Active Lives After School Dufferin is pleased to be a part of this amazing funding initiative with the Ontario Brain Institute. This funding for the Active Lives Active Giving volunteer program will impact the lives of those living with developmental disabilities to become involved participants in their home community and support their ongoing development in an inclusive and holistic way. OBI funding will support our mission to make our community inclusive, safe and enriching for all members and sets an example for all Ontarians to be their best selves.”

Irene Moore, Executive Director, Christian Horizons:

“The fabric of any community is stronger when everyone belongs and contributes in meaningful ways where their gifts shine. Christian Horizons is thrilled to have the OBI-GEEK grant join our partnership with Humber College in providing people experiencing disabilities or mental illness the market edge in gaining career skills. This grant provides the opportunity to continue to build modified learning experiences for people where the traditional approach does not support their learning needs.”

2019 Program Details

Active Lives After School - Active Lives Active Giving, Orangeville, ON: Active Lives Active Giving connects individuals with developmental disabilities living in Orangeville to supported volunteering opportunities. Active Lives Active Giving’s goal is to engage individuals with neurological differences through volunteer opportunities to support ongoing positive mental health through authentic community inclusion.

Ontario Brain Injury Association - Brief Intensive Case Management – Acquired Brain Injury, Nipissing District, ON: The Brief Intensive Case Management – Acquired Brain Injury program connects individuals living with acquired brain injury and co-occurring diagnoses of addictions and/or mental health to primary care and other services. The program is developing an integrated model of care to support these individuals with complex cases.

Christian Horizons - Educational Pathway to Employment, Toronto, ON: The Educational Pathway to Employment program develops career specific post-secondary education programs for people with developmental disabilities as well as mental health challenges, giving them the opportunity to gain the education and skills needed to access employment.

All recipients are available for interviews



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About the Ontario Brain Institute:

The Ontario Brain Institute is a provincially funded, not-for-profit organization that accelerates discovery and innovation, benefiting both patients and the economy. Our collaborative 'team science' approach promotes brain research, commercialization and care by connecting researchers, clinicians, industry, patients, and their advocates to improve the lives of those living with brain disorders. Welcome to Brain Central. Visit www.braininstitute.ca for more information. Follow us on Twitter (@OntarioBrain)

The Growing Expertise in Evaluation and Knowledge Translation ([GEEK](#)) program provides funding, evaluation expertise, and support to community-led programs and services for people living with brain disorders. GEEK supports the sustainability, scale or spread of these programs, to improve the quality and quantity of evidence-based care in the community.

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