

Silent  Voice

2022-23 Annual Report



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A society grows great when people plant trees under whose shade they know they'll never sit.

This sentiment is found in Indian, Greek, and other proverbs.

Shout out to Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth, for whom we plant trees!



Silent Voice Canada Inc. is a Catholic Charities member agency supported by ShareLife



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We live, work, play, raise children, and bury loved ones on the territories of many nations including the Mississaugas, Anishnawbe, Wendat, Huron, and Haudenosaunee Indigenous Peoples, where Silent Voice Canada head office is located. We acknowledge and thank the first stewards of this land and commit to doing our best to be a good steward as well and follow their teaching.

We are here for a brief time; it is important to be aware of our opportunity to live where we live by acknowledging and honouring both the peoples that came before us, and the diverse and vibrant Indigenous communities that make their home here today.

To acknowledge the land upon which we live is to commit to protect and honour its original peoples, their history through to today.

We say these words of recognition as an important step, yet only one of many steps, in creating collaborative, accountable, continuous, and respectful relationships with Indigenous nations and communities.

Reflection

Belonging

It is interesting to note that the opposite of “belonging” is “fitting in”.

“Fitting in” is becoming who you think you need to be in order to be accepted.

Belonging is being your authentic self and knowing that no matter what happens, you belong as you.

True belonging doesn’t require you to change who are you; it requires you to be who are you.

Brene Brown

Silent Voice strives to be a place of belonging.



Mission & Values

Silent Voice Canada Inc.

Silent Voice serves Deaf adults, youth, children, infants, and their families in an American Sign Language environment. We are dedicated to improving communication and relationships between Deaf and hearing family members and Deaf and hearing members of the community. Silent Voice is an agency grounded in Catholic values offering services to the whole community. We value and respect the dignity and worth of all people.

Silent Voice Values:

- American Sign Language as the primary language of communication in providing services to the Deaf community
- The right of individuals within the Deaf community to choose the communication method of their choice
- Service to all people in need regardless of race, creed, disability, sexual orientation, family status, receipt of public assistance, level of literacy or any other personal characteristics
- Those most in need given preference
- The sanctity and dignity of human life
- The role of family as central to the individual and to society
- The role of community as central to the individual and to society

Silent Voice Governance

Board of Directors at March 31, 2023

Chair: Robert Wilson

Treasurer: Ian Edmonds

Members-at-Large:

Rose Auciello

Ross Dickson

Shelagh Durno

Jingchan (Jin) Hu

Vice Chair: Giulio Schincariol

Secretary: Brandon Goure

Susie Lee-Fernandes

Nicolle Lehn

Donna Lin

Jenelle Rouse

Message from Robert Wilson, Board Chair

ASL video not available in downloaded PDF

Please view online to see ASL videos.

Board Chair's message in ASL, by ASL host Theodore Wolff

It is my pleasure to report on behalf of the Board of Directors of Silent Voice Canada on the year ending March 31, 2023.

On September 21, 2023, Silent Voice is pleased to be hosting its third AGM held virtually and I believe that it has been a successful learning, from our COVID-induced separation, that we have not only been able to stay connected but that we have also been able to include many people who might not have been able to participate in a traditional "in person" meeting.

I would first like to thank the Board members for their efforts and support of Silent Voice Canada over the past year. It is an honour

to work alongside such dedicated fellow Board members. Thank you for your valuable contribution to the governance of Silent Voice. As a group, we hope to continue to raise the bar of the agency's governance and support of the people on the ground providing the best services they can to the community, and be accountable to stakeholders and funders.

We welcome Donna Lin, a new Board member, who was appointed in February of this year to be elected by the members at this year's AGM.

Sadly, we must say goodbye, and we extend our heartfelt thanks, to Shelagh Durno, our past Board chair, and Rose Auciello who some of you



Silent Voice was honoured to receive a prestigious City of Toronto Community Champion Award

may know from the Catholic District School Board Deaf and Hard of Hearing program. Both Shelagh and Rose have contributed tremendously to the Board and agency, for three, three-year terms – a total of nine years each.

We thank them for their enormous contributions, for effecting change, and for leaving such positive legacies! We know that both will continue to be strong advocates for and supporters of Silent Voice.

It is no surprise to anyone that COVID continues to influence the operation and direction of all organizations and Silent Voice is no exception. You will recall from the 2022 AGM; that we reported achieving the objectives, and exceeding expectations, of our previous strategic plan. Next is to engage our stakeholders in planning for the coming years. The focus of the new strategic plan will include:



Strategic Plan Objectives

1

COVID-19 recovery – Over and above financial and personnel recovery, is operating under a new hybrid model of staffing and service delivery. Here we will explore the post-COVID landscape and its impact on Silent Voice and the not-for-profit service sector.



2

Programming – Programs continue to be enhanced, further developed, and adapted to meet emerging needs: from our children and youth programs to community and family support services; from the Infant Hearing Program ASL Services to our robust volunteer program.



3

Funding & Ability to Grow –

The impact of the pandemic and current events on global economies is something to be navigated. Here we look at sustaining and growing our valued partners in government, corporations, foundations, and individual donors, as well as community agencies, and through events. Silent Voice Resource Development Services continues to work with partners across the country to build accessible content, resources, and e-education. And at the core is our valued membership with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto.

4

Public Profile – This is taking a close look at the agency's identity and brand, and being intentional about enhancing its public profile.

5

Sustainability – Beyond diversifying revenue streams, we will focus on those elements that make Silent Voice Canada viable, relevant, and responsive, and build the capacity to thrive.





Silent Voice is thrilled to host CDG 2024!

As stakeholders, you can expect to be invited to contribute your thoughts to the next Silent Voice strategic plan.

Let's take a moment to become excited about Silent Voice hosting Canada Deaf Games '24! Supported by the Ontario Deaf Sports Association and sanctioned by the Canadian Deaf Sports Association, the Games, hosted in Toronto for the first time, promise to bring together hundreds of athletes, coaches, and fans from across the country in May 2024, at the same time as Mayfest. As you know Mayfest is the largest celebration of Deaf people in Canada, hosted by the Ontario Association of the Deaf. Come one, come all!

On the financial front, we have changed the fiscal year end from December 31st to March 31st. This first full new fiscal year ending March 31, 2023, saw an overall revenue increase of 35% from \$1.8M in 2021 to \$2.4M. Outstanding work by Executive Director Kelly MacKenzie and the entire Silent Voice team to whom we extend profound thanks for the dedication and passion you bring to your jobs.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend our sincere thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) for its support of our agency through its Resilient Communities Fund. OTF's generosity has gone a long way in helping Silent Voice manage organizational needs as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. We're thrilled to partner with OTF to continue to provide crucial programs and services that meet the needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members. Thank you, Ontario Trillium Foundation!

Robert Wilson, Board Chair

On the subject of thanks, a big thank you to all those who participated and supported Silent Voice in the 2022 Waterfront Marathon. It was our best year ever and a great vote of support for the fundraising team. We are looking forward to another successful showing this year. If you want to join the team or support a Silent Voice runner, please visit our website at www.silentvoice.ca!

The impact of COVID, and the rising costs of goods, have called for supporting families beyond our services and programs. From the Holiday Hamper initiative, which continues to grow every year, to establishing food, diaper, clothing, and supplies banks, Silent Voice and its generous partners have responded. Many thanks to our corporate supporters and to the many hands that make these happen.

On behalf of myself and the Board of Directors, I would also like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation – OTF – for their support of our agency through the OTF Resilient Communities Fund. Their generosity has gone a long way in helping Silent Voice manage organizational needs as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. We're thrilled to partner with OTF and continue to provide crucial programs and services that meet the needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Thank you Ontario Trillium Foundation!

I have one last item to share that many of you may not be aware of. Silent Voice was one of 25 agency recipients, from a staggering 650+ nominations, to receive a City of Toronto Community Champion Award, celebrated at an event in March 2023, attended by board members, staff, clients, and volunteers. What a tremendous way to end a great year!

To our funders and donors, THANK YOU. We cannot do what we do without you. You are responsible for Silent Voice being able to respond, to be innovative, to be transformative.



Message from Ian Edmonds, Treasurer

For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023, a copy of the Audited Financial Statements is available upon request and posted on the Silent Voice website. A summary of the financial results from the Audited Financial Statements can also be found in the following pages of this Annual Report, which will also be available on the Silent Voice Canada website.

Fiscal year 2022-23, was once again an extraordinary year, with COVID still on the scene, with services being provided predominantly remotely until January 2023, and the pandemic continuing to have an impact on economies and employment globally. Silent Voice, however, continued to grow: revenues were \$2.4 million for the year, up 35% over the previous year. I want to thank Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto for not only their continued funding and support, but also their shared services for health benefits and pension to our staff, shared HR, IT, and Financial Management services, evaluations consultation, and professional development, its network of agencies and more. A profound THANK YOU!

I'm pleased to report that we ended the year with a surplus of just over \$100,000 which will be allocated to our reserve fund to keep in line with the agency's growth. All government and specially ear-marked funding was spent as directed - on the programs and services we offer. We were



able to achieve this result through discretionary funding from our generous donors and decreased discretionary spending, and fee for service generation from Resource Development Services, shared services and consultation services that we offer. Silent Voice has a fiscally responsible team led by Executive Director Kelly MacKenzie.

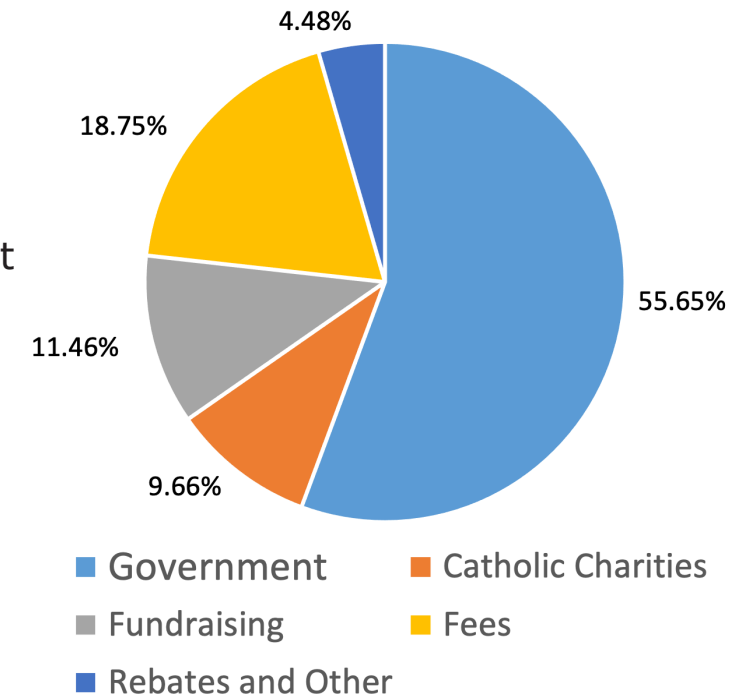
The key financial resource for Silent Voice continues to be funding from our generous supporters – including government agencies, at all three levels. We would like to thank the City of Toronto as well as Provincial and Federal governments, for their partnership in enabling us to provide services to members of the Deaf community.

Our auditor has performed an independent review of the financial results for fiscal year 2022-23. Consistent with prior years, we have been provided a positive opinion on the financial results which is normal and expected for a charitable organization such as Silent Voice.

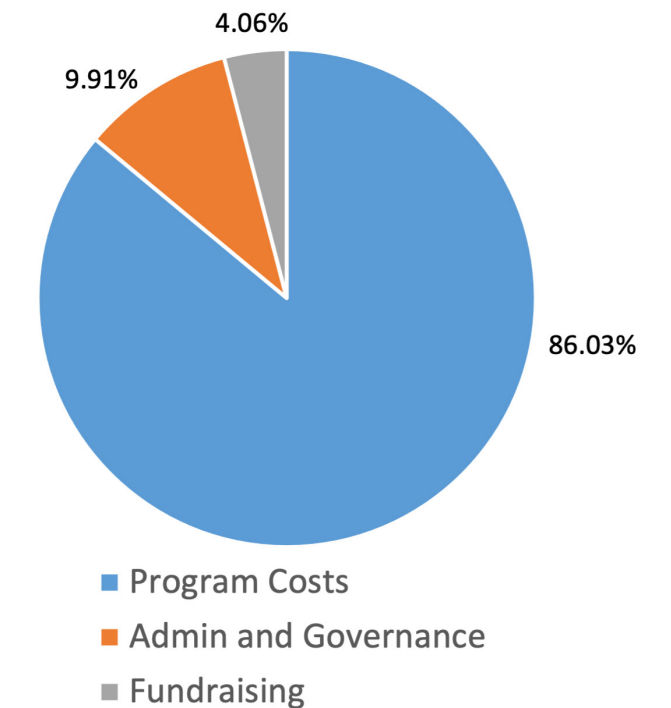
As members of the agency, funders, and stakeholders, you should feel confident that the agency is being properly managed as it delivers programs and services to the community.

Ian Edmonds
Treasurer, Silent Voice Canada
Board of Directors

Silent Voice Revenue 2022-23



Silent Voice Expenditures 2022-23



Sources of Revenue and Areas of Expenses

Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets For the year ended March 31,

	2023	2022
Revenue		
Grants		
Catholic Charities - Archdiocese of Toronto	\$ 234,729	\$ 58,680
City of Toronto	77,379	5,469
Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada	255,257	85,049
Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills		
Development Citizenship and Immigration Division	70,000	8,125
Ministry of Children, Community and Social		
Services Early Child Development Branch	648,933	154,297
Ontario Ministry of Education	200,000	-
Service Canada	100,437	2,948
Fundraising events (Note 9)	83,764	6,369
Donations (Note 9)	194,592	4,574
Rebates and other	108,905	44
Service fees	455,404	42,668
	<u>2,429,400</u>	<u>368,223</u>
Expenses		
Communications	58,356	10,943
Employee benefits	222,200	34,499
Fundraising expenses (Note 9)	19,255	80
Occupancy costs	9,727	1,990
Office	28,822	6,949
Professional fees	48,222	18,397
Program fees and supplies	426,647	73,437
Rent	118,041	28,659
Salaries	1,378,953	197,592
Amortization	11,886	1,031
	<u>2,322,109</u>	<u>373,577</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	107,291	(5,354)
Net assets, beginning of year	351,528	356,882
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 458,819</u>	<u>\$ 351,528</u>

Message from Kelly MacKenzie, Executive Director

ASL video not available in downloaded PDF
Please view online to see ASL videos.

Note: The video is a recording from our online AGM; the clip may be choppy due to internet speeds.

It is so easy to be excited about Silent Voice Canada, its staff and volunteers, its programs and services, its partners and funders, its members and stakeholders, and the clients and families we serve!

I love that we are a go-to place:

- for members of the Deaf community
- for our partners
- for members of the public looking for information and partnering with us to become more accessible.



Silent Voice Canada Staff at March 31, 2023

Kelly MacKenzie, Executive Director

Rose Etheridge, Director, Resource Development Services

Ken Koffman, Director of Development

Gayathri Samaroo, Office Manager & Community Liaison

Sanja Wirch, Director, Children and Youth Programs

Megan Youngs, Director of Programs

Melissa Baker, Community Support Worker

Ley Bergeron, RDS, Research and Development Specialist

Mana Bijandoodarz, Volunteer Coordinator (contract)

Wanda Blackett, RDS, eLearning Tech Specialist

Dallas Boyd-Zagozdzon, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

Rylyn Delaney, Communications Specialist

Kateryna Gorodetska, Settlement Worker

Elisabet Goure, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

Lehesha Hall, Operations Specialist

Rachel Kelly, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

Amanda Klages, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

Mathew Kuntz, Employment Counsellor

Kayleigh Marshall, Volunteer Coordinator

Anuja Nadarajah, Children and Youth Programs Coordinator

Jen Reda-Lagrandeur, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

Mihret Tekle, Systems Navigator

Theodor Wolff, Digital Media Specialist

Anna Wren, Research and Development Specialist

Programs and Services conducted in ASL that open the world to Deaf adults, youth, children, infants, and their families

Children and Youth Programs

Saturday Program

Sports Program

Sign Language Summer Program (SLSP)

Spring Break Camp

Community Outreach

Deaf Youth Hub

Community Support Services

General Support

Settlement Services

Parent Education Program

Tax Clinic

Education programming

Employment Services

Infant Hearing Program ASL Services

Family Communication Program

Resource Development Services (Includes Deaf Youth Hub and 258HUB)

We strive to be a place of belonging.

Our guiding principles are simple:

- No one is turned away – our doors are open to everyone. We provide services to all people regardless of any belief or characteristic.
If we do not provide the services needed, then we make a meaningful referral - that is, to services that are accessible. We ensure the client or family is received.
- We are not ever in a position to judge others; we do not pass judgement; we do not dismiss or undervalue others.
- The most vulnerable and marginalized are a priority in being served. Those who face barriers – barriers to acquiring language, to accessing information and communication, goods and services, sports and recreation, education, employment, housing, government systems, and to peers and mentors; those who experience isolation – at an all-time high during the pandemic.
- Where there is an identified gap in services, we are innovative.

During the pandemic, Silent Voice never closed for business; like others we moved online. However, we fully opened our doors again in January 2023 adopting a hybrid service model of both in-person and online services.

Earlier in this report, Ian and Robert mentioned our continued growth. Check out the list of staff on the previous page - the many new hires who came on board this year. And that list doesn't include our seasonal and contract staff: camp counsellors and coordinators, Family Communication Program ASL teachers, ASL copywriters and on-camera Hosts, administrative support, and other valued contributors to the success of Silent Voice in meeting the needs of Deaf adults, youth, children, infants, and their families, and the public at large. And then there are the greater than 100 volunteers who give of their time, talents, and support!



Let's take a look at 2022-23.



1,365 individuals served

That doesn't include the online traffic:



- 637 unique visitors to Deaf Youth Hub www.deafyouthhub.ca
- 1840 unique visitors and learners to 258HUB, our eLearning platform www.258HUB.ca
- 968 visitors to the many provincial and federal forms translated into ASL found on our website www.silentvoice.ca/forms-in-asl
- 344 unique visitors to ASL Resources developed and compiled by Silent Voice for ASL education www.asleducationresources.com
- 50,000+ visitors to the our website www.silentvoice.ca

More than the Summer Camp

Do you know that we still have folks come up to us and say, "Oh, I know Silent Voice. You run a summer camp." Well, yes we do! In fact, the Sign Language Summer Program (SLSP) day camp first started in 1974, one year before Silent Voice Canada became federally incorporated. But wait there's so much more!

The Children and Youth Programs also include March break camp, the Saturday Program, family-friendly ASL events, workshops, outreach, and the Deaf Youth Hub!

Community Support Services include one-to-one general support, settlement services to Deaf newcomers, parent education programming, housing support, free tax clinic, food bank, peer connections, program navigation, workshops, and classes. Employment Services launched at the end of March 2023.

Our settlement program expanded to manage the large influx of Deaf refugees from Ukraine. Silent Voice



Staff engaged in Indigenous signed languages education

conducted extensive outreach, provided support at the airport and general support, as well as forged new partnerships with Canadian Ukrainian Immigrant Services to welcome greater than 100 Deaf refugees arriving in Toronto (some on route to other provinces).

Silent Voice brings ASL home – through ASL education and resources to Deaf infants, children & youth, and their Families.

We provide Infant Hearing Program (IHP) ASL Services, which is the ASL language development services to families with Deaf or Hard of Hearing children between the ages of 0 to school entry in the Ontario IHP.

We serve families in our Family Communication Program. That's ASL instruction to families of a Deaf family member.

Resource Development Services serves you, the Deaf community, our stakeholders, and the general public with:

- ASL-English Translation Services for websites, social media, information, courses, and more.
- The 258HUB Professional training and community-based eCourses accessible in ASL and English.
- Research on Deaf and Hard of Hearing-related topics for the purpose of identifying barriers and gaps, course development, strategic planning, etc.
- Forms in ASL: provincial and federal government forms made accessible.
- Deaf Youth Hub: a central information and resource hub for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth 15-30 and their families, teachers, and other stakeholders in their lives.
- Development of accessible tools and resources for teachers, service providers, government, and community.

We work with the University of Toronto Medical School to offer medical students with experiential education placement. And also with the U of T law school whose students get placed with our Board of Directors. We provide shared services and consultation services, or guide you to the right sources if it is not our expertise. And that still just touches the surface.

You can see how easy it is to be excited about what we do. On that note, I extend my sincere and profound thanks to you our stakeholders, to the clients and families we serve, to our partners and funders, to our members, to our volunteers including an incredible Board of Directors, and to the Silent Voice staff whose passion and dedication is CHAMP!

Thank you!

Kelly MacKenzie
Executive Director, Silent Voice Canada

Thank you to our Corporate, Foundation, Service Club and Government Donors

Benevity Community Fund

Black Bear Healing Home

CARFLEO

Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto, supported by ShareLife

Charities Aid Foundation Canada

Charles Norcliffe Baker and Thelma Scott Baker Foundation

City of Toronto

Community Foundation of Mississauga

CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish

Fournier Ethier Charitable Foundation

Government of Canada

Government of Ontario

Harry A. Newman Memorial Foundation

Ingredion Canada

KBSH Spirit Foundation

Kids Up Front Toronto

Kiwanis Club Riverdale

Meridian Credit Union

Ontario Trillium Foundation

Patricia Jensen Foundation at Toronto Foundation

Paypal Giving Fund Canada

Polar Foundation

Rhema Canada

Robert Campeau Family Foundation

S. Firoz Ahmed Professional Corporation

TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon

Toronto Foundation Vital Signs Grant

Toronto Star Fresh Air Childrens Fund

Tristan Kong Group

United Way

United Way Lanark and Renfrew Counties

Vaughan Food Bank

Xin Family Foundation

Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada

Thank you to all our incredible individual donors and to everyone who supports Silent Voice through monetary and in-kind donations. Your contributions truly change lives!



Our Holiday Hamper initiative has grown again this year.

113 Hampers in total. More than 102 adults, and 134 children and youth received gifts, food and supplies to help them celebrate the holidays!

Thank you to the 34 wonderful volunteers who helped build, wrap and deliver these much needed hampers.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of our very generous donors.

Thank you for helping us bring joy to so many families.

Happy Holidays to you and wishing you the very best of health in 2023.





Keep up with all the latest at Silent Voice Canada!
Follow us on Social Media:



Want to stay connected with us?
Sign up for our emails!
<https://silentvoice.ca/subscribe/>

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