



# 2023-24 Impact Report

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**“The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

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



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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.



## 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, 2024

**Chair:** Robert Wilson  
**Treasurer:** Ian Edmonds

**Vice Chair:** Giulio Schincariol  
**Secretary:** Brandon Goure

### Members-at-Large:

Rose Auciello  
Ross Dickson  
Shelagh Durno  
Jingchan (Jin) Hu

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 provide this report on behalf of the Silent Voice Board of Directors. I would first like to thank all the Board members for their efforts and support of Silent Voice Canada over the past year. It is a pleasure to serve alongside such expertise and active engagement.

return when your lives allow and, of course, to seeing your faces at future Silent Voice events. A token of our appreciation has been sent to each of you in gratitude for your commitment, contribution, and continued support of Silent Voice Canada.

At the 2024 Annual General Meeting, we must say goodbye to three Board members who are stepping back from the Board to focus on their respective work and family commitments. We give heartfelt thanks to Brandon Goure, Board Secretary, as well as Dr. Jenelle Rouse and Nicolle Lehn. We are sorry to lose you, but it is great to know that this is not a permanent goodbye; we look forward to your



You may have seen reports in the news that COVID has not gone away, and there are still ongoing surges of the infection as it has become a fixture in our public health environment. So, it should be no surprise that COVID continues to influence the operation and direction of all organizations, with Silent Voice Canada included. You will recall from the 2022 and 2023 AGM reports that the strategic plan continues to be focused on five key points.

The key focuses continue to be:

1. **COVID-19 recovery** – navigating the new normal.
2. **Programming** – continuing to meet the needs of clients and families under new financial pressures.
3. **Funding & Ability to Grow** – seeking opportunities to support and grow Silent Voice Canada infrastructure, and its programs, services, and resources to the community.
4. **Public Profile** – growing the reputation as the go-to agency for services, expertise, and resources in the Canadian Deaf community.
5. **Sustainability** – ensuring Silent Voice Canada is positioned to continue to thrive.



Silent Voice Canada continues to fine-tune the virtual aspects of our services in a continuing evolution of the agency. Programming continues to be a fluid area and changes in the funding environment put a sharper focus on the programs that we continue to provide and refine. Reductions in spending are a theme that impacts our fee-for-service and fundraising efforts, as there is caution everywhere about spending in these uncertain times.

Therefore, on the financial front, the fiscal year 2023-24 was challenging, and we did not hit the forecast revenue for the agency. Funding has been reduced, and donations were down across the entire not-for-profit charitable environment and reflected in a deficit for the year. This deficit was both anticipated and approved. Working closely with Silent Voice Canada Executive Director Kelly MacKenzie, we have dipped into the reserve funds that have been

“ My son is now capable of communicating through the use of sign language and speech. Our IHP ASL Consultant is so accommodating with her teaching style and connected with him. We are beyond grateful to have this opportunity to learn with her and have expanded our communication with our son. ”

IHP ASL Services Family



strengthened in the past several years rather than lose valuable and qualified staff during what may be temporary precarious times. Along with Kelly, we continue to monitor our financial stability as you will see from Board Treasurer Ian Edmonds in this report. Though there have been challenges this year, the team has continued to deliver the services that the community needs and appreciates.

I also want to acknowledge that aside from delivering the daily programs, Silent Voice continues to be a presence in so many other ways, Catholic Agencies Committee meetings, community events like Mayfest, London Deaf Expo, and many more, as well as running a Food Bank that includes diapers, clothing, toys, and more, and

delivering local school presentations. A sixth strategic objective for fiscal year 2023-24 has also been preparing to host the Canada Deaf Games in May 2024. A huge thanks to the organizing committee and volunteers, and to George Postlethwaite, who led the sponsorship efforts for the Games. It is hard not to report on the Games now, but they did not take place until fiscal year 2024-25 and we are reporting on 2023-24. More to come in next year's impact report.

On the subject of activities and events, a big thank-you to all those who continue to participate and support Silent Voice in the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon. In 2023 we participated for the 13th year and raised more than \$25,000. We are looking forward to another successful showing in October 2024!

Our other hugely successful annual program at Silent Voice is the Holiday Hamper initiative. Last year was a great success, and it continues to grow every year. Again, many thanks to our corporate and individual supporters and to the many hands that made it happen.

“Everyone at Silent Voice was so inviting when I started volunteering. Working together on the Holiday Hamper program gave me a sense of community and belonging.”

Silent Voice Volunteer

The next exciting event we look forward to is the Silent Voice 50th Anniversary next year. Planning is already in progress. Stay tuned for the details; we look forward to seeing you there.

Many thanks to the Silent Voice Canada members, volunteers, donors, stakeholders, and staff led by Executive Director Kelly MacKenzie for another outstanding year delivering impact to Deaf adults, youth, children, infants, and their families!

**Robert Wilson**  
Chair, Silent Voice Canada  
Board of Directors



## Message from Ian Edmonds, Treasurer

As the Treasurer on the Board of Directors, it is my responsibility to report as summary of the fiscal year for Silent Voice Canada ending March 31, 2024. A copy of the Audited Financial Statements is available upon request and is posted on the Silent Voice website at [www.silentvoice.ca](http://www.silentvoice.ca). A summary of the financial results from the Audited Financial Statements can also be found in this Annual Impact Report on page 11.

Fiscal year 2023-24 was a challenging year, due primarily for three reasons:

- The new post-COVID economic environment locally and globally,
- government and corporations cautiously spending and in fact pulling back, and,
- the dramatic increase in the cost of goods and services – the cost of living that we all have experienced.

I am happy to report that Silent Voice maintained its programs, services, and resources to the community. Its revenues were \$2.5 million for the year, up 3% over the previous year.

However, its expenses, as with everyone else's, grew more rapidly, ending the year with a deficit of \$130,000. This was both anticipated and forecasted by the Board, working closely with the Executive Director Kelly MacKenzie, in unprecedented post-COVID times.

I'm pleased to report that in previous years Silent Voice was able to add to its reserve fund for just this kind of circumstance.

I want to thank Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto for not only their continued core and essential 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!

“Thank you to Silent Voice for helping me with my resume and interview skills. Their guidance was invaluable, and I'm proud to say that I was able to get a job at Amazon! Silent Voice's employment services played a crucial role in my success.”

Employment Services Client



All government and specially earmarked funding was spent as directed - on the programs and services we offer. Silent Voice has a fiscally responsible team led by Kelly. 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 and the community at large.

Our auditor has performed an independent review of the financial results for fiscal year 2023-24. 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, services, and resources to the community, and that the finance committee of the Board is working closely with Kelly to ensure agency sustainability.

Thank you. I wish you all the best.

**Ian Edmonds**  
Treasurer, Silent Voice Canada  
Board of Directors



## Sources of Revenue and Areas of Expenses

### Silent Voice Canada Inc.

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

	2024	2023
<b>Revenue</b>		
Grants		
Catholic Charities - Archdiocese of Toronto	\$ 258,002	\$ 234,729
City of Toronto	65,281	77,379
Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada	351,742	255,257
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services   Citizenship and Immigration Division	70,000	70,000
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services Early Child Development Branch	642,917	648,933
Ontario Ministry of Education	210,000	200,000
Service Canada	144,457	100,437
Fundraising events (Note 8)	108,171	83,764
Donations (Note 8)	156,614	194,592
Rebates and other	29,825	108,905
Service fees	462,331	455,404
	<b>2,499,340</b>	<b>2,429,400</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Communications	81,864	58,356
Employee benefits	302,058	222,200
Fundraising expenses (Note 8)	12,335	18,224
Occupancy costs	10,214	9,727
Office	34,814	28,822
Professional fees	58,124	48,222
Program fees and supplies	378,899	427,678
Rent	116,221	118,041
Salaries	1,627,168	1,378,953
Amortization	9,335	11,886
	<b>2,631,032</b>	<b>2,322,109</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year</b>	<b>(131,692)</b>	<b>107,291</b>
Net assets, beginning of year	458,819	351,528
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 327,127</b>	<b>\$ 458,819</b>

## Message from Kelly MacKenzie, Executive Director

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

Silent Voice Canada strives to make accessible and meaningful connections:

- To programs and services
- To resources
- To peers
- To mentors
- To community

In 2023-24, we resumed all in-person services, provided a hybrid service delivery model of both in-person and remote services, and continued to meet the needs of the community we serve.

Silent Voice is made of a team of staff – permanent, part-time, and contractors – and volunteers that are committed to serving and being:

- Resourceful
- Accessible
- Responsive
- Respectful
- Restorative
- Real (authentic)
- And Transformative

What makes Silent Voice so great is its people and the community we serve letting us know what their needs are and how they want to be served.

## Let's take a look at 2023-24.



**1,644 individuals served**

- That doesn't count the thousands of times they connect with us to get services or the many programs they access.
- That doesn't include attendance at events and online traffic.
- That doesn't include social media views, visits to the Deaf Youth Hub, learners in the 258 Hub, or the 50,000 users of our website.
- That doesn't include our many valued partners and our outreach and community education.
- That doesn't include the 4,960 hours Silent Voice volunteers generously give.



What those 1,644 people do include are:

- Families in the Ontario Government Infant Hearing Program ASL services across the province receiving early intervention language development services.
- Families learning ASL in the Family Communication Program because their child is Deaf and uses ASL.
- Children and youth who come to our camps, our Saturday program, our family events, and the students we meet in their schools, and the mentors and role models they meet to develop skills.
- Individuals who receive community support services, employment services, and settlement services.
- Individuals and families who access the tax clinic, the diaper bank, clothing bank, and food bank.
- Seniors who come to hang out with us and with peers to combat isolation.
- Parents who get connected to fellow parents and parenting education.

**No one is turned away.**

In fiscal year 2023-24, we prepared to host the Canada Deaf Games in May 2024, and hundreds of athletes, fans, families, and visitors came to Toronto to enjoy the Games along with Mayfest and Deaffest. More on that amazing event next year! Also, next year, we are turning 50! I hope you come to celebrate with us in May 2025.

This year, we are participating again in the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, so please consider sponsoring me or the team! Every bit makes a huge difference. In fact, in these uncertain times, we need all your support.

Please enjoy the comments you read in this report from the clients and families we serve, the volunteers and students we work with, and the community at large. These

comments let us know we are on the right track, that there is always room for improvement, and that the need is larger than the human and financial resources; however, we try to catch those who would otherwise fall through the cracks.

I will end with my sincere and profound thanks to you, our stakeholders, the clients and families we serve, our partners and funders, our members, our volunteers, including an incredible Board of Directors, and the Silent Voice staff whose passion and dedication are CHAMP!

Thank you for yet another year of letting us serve with passion!

**Kelly MacKenzie**  
Executive Director  
Silent Voice Canada

“When I flew to Toronto from Ukraine, I felt worried and lost. But I was so grateful to Silent Voice for sending someone to the airport who could sign and help me and my family navigate Canada. They supported us from the moment we arrived, helping us find housing and get assistance with our immigration papers. Without Silent Voice, my family and I wouldn't be where we are today. We are part of an amazing community. I feel so blessed and grateful for their support.”

Settlement Services

“I am incredibly grateful to Silent Voice for helping me and my child. They provided us with a much-needed stroller, as well as extra diapers and food. You have no idea how much that assistance meant to us during a challenging time. Silent Voice's support made a real difference in our lives.”

General Support Services



“My son was born profoundly deaf. We have had such fun learning a new language together with the IHP ASL program. It has strengthened our bond as he is just the smartest boy since he has been immersed in the Deaf community. He even loves to teach us new signs every day. It has been an amazing experience, and a blessing getting to raise him as a deaf child.”

IHP ASL Services Family

## Programs and Services

### Children and Youth Programs

- Saturday Program
- Sports Program
- Sign Language Summer Program (SLSP)
- Spring Break Camp
- Community Outreach
- Deaf Youth Hub

### Bring ASL Home

- Infant Hearing Program ASL Services
- Family Communication Program

### Community Support Services

- General Support
- Settlement Services
- Parent Education Program
- Tax Clinic
- Education Programming
- Employment Services

### Bring Accessibility to the Community

- Resource Development Services (Including the 258HUB learning management system)



# Impact Statements from our Community

The IHP ASL services were such a blessing after our daughter was diagnosed with progressive hearing loss. We no longer have to worry about her not being able to communicate when she isn't wearing her devices. We are looking forward to continuing to learn ASL through this service!

IHP ASL Services Family

As a dad with two deaf sons, your camp normalized how they saw themselves. Your camp staff were role models and helped to instill in them self confidence, a positive identity and fostered a underlining sense of self worth. I thank you for all the great times and for helping all my boys to grow and learn.

SLSP Parent

Everyone was so nice to me when I started volunteering. It didn't matter how much or little sign language I knew. We worked together to make amazing things happen for Deaf and Hard of Hearing families. Thank you Silent Voice!

Silent Voice Volunteer



We recognize the importance of ensuring our messaging is accessible to everyone. We have relied on Silent Voice to translate text to American Sign Language videos with captioning and we are always pleased with the end product. We value our relationship with Silent Voice and their dedication to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Partner of Silent Voice  
Resource Development Services

My son has friends that he's comfortable playing with and he practices American Sign Language, which is really awesome! The Silent Voice programs are really helping a lot of kids. Not just the kids, but the parents too. Silent Voice is like his second home, his second family.

Children and Youth Program Family

I don't want Deaf and hard of hearing kids to be isolated. They need to feel connected to other Deaf and hard of hearing kids their age. I use ASL and if I'm able to communicate with other kids who use ASL, communication is a lot easier. Thank you for supporting our Deaf community.

Saturday Program Family

Silent Voice demonstrated professionalism, expertise, and a genuine commitment to our project. The entire process was smooth and hassle-free, making it evident that they understand the importance of effective communication. We look forward to working with them on future projects and are grateful for the invaluable contribution they've made to our content.

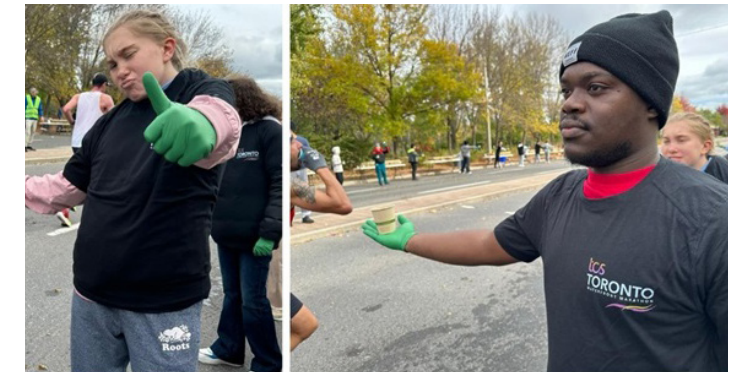
Partner of Silent Voice  
Resource Development Services

My family and I are very grateful to Silent Voice for helping us with food costs. Food is so expensive and we don't know how we could manage without Silent Voice help. A Silent Voice volunteer even delivered the food packages to our door after my surgery because I could not walk properly. A million thank yous Silent Voice.

Food Bank Client

I am so grateful to volunteer at Silent Voice. Everyone is so kind, thoughtful and generous and it is an honour to help in any way I can.

Silent Voice Volunteer



## Silent Voice Canada Staff at March 31, 2024

**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**, Research and Development Specialist, RDS

**Mana Bijandgoodarz**, Volunteer Coordinator (contract)

**Wanda Blackett**, eLearning Tech Specialist, RDS

**Dallas Boyd-Zagozdzon**, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

**Vanita Dama**, Program Assistant

**Rylyn Delaney**, Communications Specialist, RDS

**Kateryna Gorodetska**, Settlement Worker

**Elisabet Goure**, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

**Lenesha Hall**, Operations Specialist, RDS

**Rachel Kelly**, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

**Amanda Klages**, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

**Mathew Kuntz**, Employment Counsellor

**Trista Langford**, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

**Kayleigh Marshall**, Volunteer Coordinator

**Anuja Nadarajah**, Children and Youth Programs Coordinator

**Jen Reda-Lagrandeur**, ASL Consultant, IHP ASL Services

**Shannon Rusnak**, Digital Media Specialist, RDS

**Mihret Tekle**, Systems Navigator

**Theodor Wolff**, Digital Media Specialist, RDS

**Anna Wren**, Research and Development Specialist, RDS

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

Asign

Baker Heavy Industries

Benevity Community Fund

Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Supported by ShareLife

Central York Professional Firefighters Association

Charities Aid Foundation Canada

Charles Norcliffe Baker and Thelma Scott Baker Foundation

City of Toronto

Community Foundation of Mississauga

CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish

Crescent School

Government of Canada

Government of Ontario

Grackle Coffee Shop

Harry A. Newman Memorial

Foundation

KBSH Spirit Foundation

Kids Up Front Toronto

Kiwanis Club of Riverdale

Knights of Columbus

Meridian Credit Union

Paypal Giving Fund Canada

Polar Foundation

Robert Campeau Family Foundation

Scoler Lee Borenstein and Associates Architects Inc

Scotiabank

TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon

Tristan Kong Group

Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund

United Way

Vaughan Food bank

Xin Family Foundation

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!



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Follow us on Social Media:



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

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