

## INDEPENDENCE, FREEDOM & ACCESS

Tetra is a registered charity that enables people with disabilities to overcome barriers in the physical landscape. We recruit technically skilled and compassionate volunteers who work one-on-one with individuals requiring custom engineering solutions. The completed gizmos empower people with disabilities to live independent and active lives.

## TETRA Thanks!

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- SX Family Fund
- The Blennerhassett Family Foundation
- The Community Foundation of Mississauga
- The Georgina Foundation
- The Guelph Community Foundation
- The Marion Ethel Kamm and Frederick John Kamm Foundation
- Winnipeg Foundation

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### TETRA SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

Dedicated to assisting people with disabilities to achieve an independent and fulfilling life, one assistive device at a time

**Have an idea for a project? Want to know what's possible? Want to overcome a barrier?**

**Here's how to reach us...**

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Charity #14043 5108 RR0001



THE TETRA SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA: CUSTOM ASSISTIVE DEVICES



Tetra clients get out on the slopes in the Okanagan using a customized sit-ski.

## TETRA SUPPORTS STAYING ACTIVE IN WINTER

As fall turns to winter, Canadians from Tofino, British Columbia to Cape Spear, Newfoundland, seek out activities suited to the changing of the seasons. For over 30 years, the Tetra Society of North America has been supporting people with disabilities looking to participate in skiing, curling, sledge hockey, and other winter recreation activities.

In our 34-year history, the modifications made to sit-skis are numerous. From adapting handlebars to altering seats and changing the way that skis connect to the bucket seats, volunteers across the country have seen it all. Tetra works both with individuals and sporting organizations. In Vernon, BC, for example, volunteers have worked with Community Recreational Initiatives Society (CRIS) to adapt sit-skis that can be used by people with a range of disabilities. These kinds of projects are being completed by tireless volunteers across the county.

Hockey is, perhaps, the quintessential Canadian winter pastime. Tetra volunteers design devices that support individuals with disabilities as they get out on the ice. Earlier this year, Tetra was contacted by a client in Newfoundland, Carter, who wanted to figure out how to get his hand into a hockey glove in a way that accommodated his disability. Long-time Tetra volunteer Dr. Leonard Lye took on the case, converting a

traditional hockey glove into a "hockey mitten". Now, Carter is often found "doing crossovers and learning to skate backwards", as part of his local team.

"Tetra has been a tremendous partner with SportAbility over the years". Jade Werger, Sport Development Coordinator with SportAbility, says: "With the help of Tetra volunteers, we have overcome equipment barriers to sport participation as well as providing upgraded equipment to athletes, enhancing their sport experience. Thank you, Tetra, for all of your work!"

**Check out the Tetra website for many more examples of winter recreation projects being built across the country.**

Tetra client Carter wears his new custom gloves during a hockey game in Newfoundland.





Retired Tetra Volunteer Sam Barnes.

## RETIRED VOLUNTEER - PEEL REGION SAM BARNES

For over 20 years, Sam Barnes was always there to lend a hand or come up with a solution. Sam has completed over 80 projects for people with disabilities in the Peel region, removing barriers and enabling people with disabilities to live their lives to the fullest. Sam was awarded Tetra's lifetime achievement award, honouring all his efforts on behalf of people with disabilities, in 2014.

He is stepping aside from volunteering but his contributions to Tetra and people with disabilities will never be forgotten. Peel Chapter Coordinator Scott Capper recognizes Sam's contributions to Tetra, saying, "a long-time Volunteer, Sam could always be counted on to help others achieve better quality of life, through his project contributions."

## VOLUNTEER - PEEL REGION ALI TAHA

For over 20 years, Ali Taha has volunteered with the Peel Region chapter of Tetra Society of North America. As a professional engineer with a Master of Science and Master of Engineering degree, Ali started his own machine building company upon arriving in Canada from Iraq in 1997 and connected with Tetra's Toronto

chapter, volunteering there before moving to the Peel Region three years later. Often working on two projects at the same time, Ali is passionate about the Tetra Society and helping others. Whether it's a mechanical or an electronic build, he tackles any project and is always quick to assist the other volunteers with any

problems or snags they might run into. Ali is also a member of the Shriners since 2009 and was able to secure a grant from them so we could purchase an electric car for a project for a child with a spinal defect that he is currently modifying with a joystick to replace the steering wheel and accelerator pedal.

## OTTAWA PROJECT Ramping it Up

Although there is a great push to make all venues accessible to people with disabilities, many locations are still not well equipped, keeping people who use mobility devices such as walkers and wheelchairs from accessing them.

Jerry Fiori, Chair of the Ottawa Disability Coalition, approached Paul Marriage, Project Coordinator of the Ottawa Chapter, with a request to design and develop a portable, lightweight ramp that could provide access to buildings with three or four stairs. Ramps needed to be small yet durable enough to use, store, move, and maintain in all environments and

weather conditions in accordance with engineering requirements, all while being affordable to produce.

Through an ongoing cooperative arrangements with Algonquin College in Ottawa, this project was assigned to a team of student volunteers (Brandon Guillemette, Fredrick Anyike, Erik Jolliffe, Tiancheng Hu, Ryan Gilpin) under professor Mike Makhoul Rabie, as part of their course requirements. Costing just \$800, these ramps have the potential to greatly enhance the quality of life for a great many people, ensuring they have access to previously inaccessible venues.



The ramp is tested at a building in Ottawa.

# SPOTLIGHTS

## NEW CHAPTER COORDINATOR HEATHER IBBETSON

Fredericton, New Brunswick

Heather is excited to join the Tetra team. With a background in both healthcare and political science, she is eager to put her skills to work for her community. She strives to incorporate a person-centred approach in all her interactions and is always available for a chat. Heather enjoys downtime with family, friends, and her numerous pets.



## VOLUNTEER MICAH HELLAND

Kelowna, British Columbia

Micah first heard of the Tetra Society when he was a Mechanical Engineering student at UBC back in 2018. In this program, students are required to do a year-long project called a CapStone. Micah's group would take on the project presented by Tetra Program Manager Eric Molendyk, creating an automated backpack retrieval system that allowed Eric to independently access his backpack.

After graduating, Micah went on to develop his skills and never lost his passion to help others. In 2020 he joined Tetra's Kelowna chapter, and not even COVID-19 could stop him from working on projects. Since then, he has worked on a solution to a barrier encountered by many a traveler with a disability: transferring onto hotel beds. Micah made a portable platform that someone in a wheelchair can wheel on to make transfers onto hotel beds, many of which are too tall for a transfer, easier.

"I've always had a heart to help people," said Micah, "the experiences you get from volunteering and helping others is great for your own experience, but also helps someone else, so it's a win-win."



## CHAPTER COORDINATOR SARAH SAE YANAGI

Winnipeg, Manitoba

"It was my pleasure to join the Tetra family in March 2020 as an outreach volunteer. After a few months, I worked as a Project Coordinator with the Tetra Winnipeg Chapter and started the Chapter Coordinator role in October 2021. My background is Project Management and Consulting in the IT industry. Tetra gives me lots of opportunities to communicate with different organizations and clients and I really enjoy helping people. There are excellent volunteers in the Winnipeg Chapter and I am glad to continue working with the team. I am very excited to coordinate Winnipeg Chapter and introduce Tetra to more organizations. Looking forward to providing more help to the people who need it."

