



Press Release from Board of Directors & Executive Director, Cardiac Health Foundation of Canada Announcement: Executive Director Retirement – Barbara Kennedy (2008-2018)

Barbara Kennedy has had the honour of serving as the Executive Director of The Cardiac Health Foundation of Canada for the past 10 years. She launched a successful re-branding of the Foundation with its new name, website and tagline – ‘Prevention, Education & Cardiovascular Rehabilitation’. She worked with the Board of Directors to revise the mission to include cardiovascular disease prevention (adding primary to the secondary prevention focus) and also to add public education with respect to cardiovascular issues and related chronic conditions. And more recently cardiac health advocacy has been championed with the Foundation’s involvement in Patient Advocacy Groups, White Papers, Charity Coalitions and partnerships and fundraising collaborations with several related organizations including:- the Mikey Network; SickKids Hospital and Cardiac Kids; University of Toronto’s Dept. of Kinesiology & Physical Education; the Canadian Congenital Heart Alliance; University of Guelph-Humber; University of Ottawa Heart Institute /Heartwise; the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario /CHEO; and Brock University.

She greatly expanded the National WALK OF LIFE Campaign to involve 7,000 participants across Canada, supporting and giving grants to over 30 centres collectively raising \$ 1 Million annually for cardiac rehab, education and prevention of cardiovascular disease. Funds generated were used across the country for public forums, professional lectures, patient education and resources, facilities and medical equipment. She successfully grew and diversified the GTA WALK OF LIFE to include people from all ages participating not only in various WALKS, but also adding competitive runs, chair exercises, urban poling, kids-dance-a thons; bouncy castles ; healthy food fests and a much anticipated KIDS-FUN- RUN.

She has spearheaded several fundraising campaigns and new initiatives over the years including:

1. Beginning a student intern program at the Foundation’s office and involving and mentoring over 50 University Students and also greatly reducing administrative costs.
2. Setting up a liaison with Toronto Secondary Schools to involve students in volunteering and receiving volunteer hours with the GTA WALK OF LIFE with over 1000 students participating.

3. Co-ordinating the Canada-wide Ride for Rehab in 2012 – the 1st cycle across Canada for CR.
4. Participating in the 2015 virtual World Walking Tour with the Cardiac Health Foundation representing Canada adding ‘steps’ from the National WALK OF LIFE Campaign to the AROUND THE GLOBE WALK to share the message that - “remaining physically active after a cardiac event can make a world of difference”.
5. Setting up a \$50,000 endowment fund at the University of Guelph-Humber - the Cardiac Health Foundation of Canada Scholarships - awarding two scholarships annually to Exercise Science and Lifestyle Management and Fitness & Health Promotion / Kinesiology students.
6. Establishing the Dr. Terry Kavanagh Heart Health Lab at the University of Toronto in the new Goldring Centre - a commitment of \$325,000 from 2015-2025.
7. Raising the profile of the Foundation by acting as its spokesperson - serving as a moderator of several panels of cardiologists at medical conferences; appearing on TV for publicity; giving quotes for National Post and other media articles and website blogs regarding cardiac health; and collaborating and co-authoring position papers with various university and hospital institutions.
8. Inaugurating the “Healthy Hearts CHEF Challenge” in 2016 –an educational seminar and culinary gala to promote proper nutrition for cardiac health.
9. Working with the SickKids Hospital Foundation and partnering with Cardiac Kids and Bike2Play to establish the first Pediatric Exercise Medicine Room & Cardiac Rehab Program for kids and adolescents in Canada at the Hospital for Sick Children in 2018.
10. Applying for and receiving THREE grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTC) totalling \$275,900 from 2011-2018.
11. Connecting with various Pharma companies as educational sponsors to produce and disseminate educational materials such as a flyer entitled “Are you concerned about your heart? Cardiac Rehab can help” – Distribution to over 70,000 medical offices in the GTA, public libraries, and pharmacies and also online. Donations garnered from Pharma – totalling over \$455,639. Have also aided in public education; patient advocacy; newsletter productions; webinars and continual updating of the listing of Cardiac Rehab Programs and services across Canada (a critical resource for physicians and patients).
12. Greatly expanding the “Sponsorship – In- Kind” donations to the foundation to over \$245,000 annually (total: \$1.8 Million).
13. Raising over \$5 Million for the GTA WALK OF LIFE and instrumental in raising over \$12 Million for Cardiac Rehab across the country through the National WALK OF LIFE Campaign.



Introducing: New Executive Director – Sarah Smith, Nov 2018

Sarah Smith has dedicated her career to the non-profit sector for over two decades, working with underserved populations of children, youth, adults, and seniors to improve their health and social well-being in order to live their best lives. She brings a wealth of leadership experience collaborating with executives and volunteer advisory committees to diversify their fundraising portfolios and increase profitability in support of much needed programs and services. She has held progressively senior positions with organizations such as Hadassah International in New York, the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation in Toronto, the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation Canada, and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). In her most recent role at the Daily Bread Food Bank, she spearheaded food and fundraising initiatives that supported the creation of the Farm to Food Bank program and the distribution of more than ten million pounds of healthy, nutritious food across the Greater Toronto Area to those in-need.

Some major successes over Sarah's career include the management of the Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations at Hadassah, generating over \$10 million annually for the organization in support of their Emergency Medicine and Neonatal Intensive Care programs. She led the Leadership Giving portfolio (\$250,000+) and coordinated the Proposal Development department at Mount Sinai Hospital, assisting the fundraising team to reach their \$25 million dollar goal during their Best Medicine Campaign to purchase life-saving medical equipment and patient and family support programs. As the National Director for start-up charities such as the Dystonia Foundation, she worked diligently with the Canadian Institute of Health Research to secure the first-ever dedicated dystonia research funding in Canada from government. At CMHA, she more than doubled the revenue as she developed corporate campaigns that garnered increased visibility of mental health issues in the community to help reduce the stigma associated with these conditions.

Sarah has a proven track record in managing people, programs and special events, crafting innovative proposals, developing major gifts, stewarding donors, and cultivating strategic partnerships with external agencies. Her passion for healthy living, volunteer-driven initiatives, and the creation of sustainable programs makes her the ideal candidate to lead the Cardiac Health Foundation of Canada to a new chapter in its long and successful history and to another level.

In Sarah's leisure time she enjoys outdoor activities and yoga, volunteering in her community, and spending time with her family.