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CLOC Begins A New Chapter with the Clarington Public Library

Bowmanville, ON – Since 2006, Community Living Oshawa/Clarington (CLOC) has partnered with the Bowmanville branch of the Clarington Public Library, in order to provide light meals and beverages via Dewey’s Café. The Café was established as an employment skills launch pad for people with developmental disabilities, to overcome barriers to employment. At the Café, trainees learn transferable skills in the food industry, including food preparation, customer service, and have the opportunity to build new relationships, generate their own income and contribute to the community in which they live.

Though Dewey’s Café has been an integral part of the library and is exemplary of the strong and ongoing partnership that CLOC has with the Library, Municipality, and the community, it has faced a number of challenges over the past few years, in particular closures during the COVID-19 Pandemic, as well as rising food and supply costs, and minimal customer growth. Unfortunately, Community Living Oshawa/Clarington has made the difficult decision to close Dewey’s Café. “CLOC’s mission has always been to see people with developmental disabilities valued for their contribution to the communities in which they live. The evolution of the employment market has meant that employers now, more than ever, see value in hiring people with developmental disabilities, and it is no longer necessary for an organization, such as CLOC, to provide these opportunities internally,” says Executive Director, Terri Gray. Employees receiving training at Dewey’s Cafe continue to receive support through CLOC’s Employment Services program. “The Café will be missed by library members and staff alike,” says Linda Kent, Library Director & CEO. “Despite the closure of the Cafe, the Clarington Public Library intends to continue its relationship with Community Living Oshawa/Clarington and their clients by exploring new partnership opportunities”.

For more information about Community Living Oshawa/Clarington and its employment initiatives, please contact Erin Perry at 905-576-3011 or eperry@communitylivingoc.ca.

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