

# Volunteer Toronto serves it up fresh for SPECTRUM clients

CAMH' SPECTRUM Client Holiday Party got a helping hand on December 10 when 20 staff and board members from [Volunteer Toronto](#) helped serve lunch.

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The Spectrum program provides a coordinated and comprehensive treatment program for people who have chronic schizophrenia or related disorders and are living in the community.



*Volunteer Toronto participants talking shop and serving dinner to SPECTRUM clients and staff.*

Prior to the to the lunch service registered nurse and care worker Donna Manning, and SPECTRUM program psychiatrist Dr. Roy McCurley shared why the lunch is an important piece of the holiday party tradition. Created more than 20 years ago through the generosity of a wife whose husband suffered from schizophrenia, the Spectrum Annual Holiday Party is sustained by her donations. The vision was to offer a dignified and celebratory event to individuals not accustomed to such treatment and as a way to acknowledge the tremendous contributions made by their CAMH caregivers. Now the event is attended by close to 100

clients, friends and family each year.



*The Coyotes (l-r): Eric Mattila, Mark Lavigne, Burke Cullen and Peter Paolucci*

“This holiday party has always been served by the staff members to the clients. As a group they stepped back and allowed the volunteers an opportunity to participate in every facet of the service. The SPECTRUM staff were extremely flexible and understood the importance of having the volunteers meet our clients in a meaningful and genuine way,” **Jim Davey**, Coordinator Corporate Volunteer Program.

Volunteer Toronto served up delicious meals of roast beef, turkey and with all the fixings. At the end of the meal, Santa swept through with presents for the clients. Throughout the lunch [The Coyotes](#) played several sets of holiday music. The enthusiastic four-member band lead by Eric Mattila, support various non-profit and charitable causes by appearing at fundraisers and by performing at hospitals, senior's homes, long-term care and convalescent homes and many other facilities.



*Donna Manning (far left) and Dr. Roy McCurley (second from left) talk about the history of the SPECTRUM holiday party while Social Worker Brian Mayo and Bronwen Sims of SPECTRUM listen in.*

"We thoroughly enjoyed it. It was great to see people enjoying themselves during our performance, some even participating. So many of your clients wrestle daily with such profound challenges; it is very moving for us to know we might have been able to help brighten part of their day," said Eric.

Volunteer Toronto participants had similar things to say:

"The whole experience was excellent. Having some of the clients tell me their names and thank me for serving them was special. I also enjoyed hearing more about the clients with the doctor."

"A young man introduced me to his mother/grandmother. The pride he had in his eyes from, "taking them out to lunch," was great to see."

Mieko Ise, Coordinator for the Employee Volunteer program at Volunteer Toronto has facilitated many partnerships for CAMH's Corporate Volunteer program, including Scotiabank, St. Joseph's Communication and Aurigen Reinsurance.

A special note of thanks goes to the SPECTRUM staff and volunteers, Donna Manning, Barbara Trudell, Brian Mayo, Bronwen Sims, Darrin Elliott, Judy Gardner, Margaret McLellan, Robert McCurley, Tara Pearcey, Annick Aubert and Gordon Singer.

If you would like more info please contact [Jim\\_Davey@camh.net](mailto:Jim_Davey@camh.net) at ext. 6238.

*The CAMH Corporate Volunteer program is about "creating partnerships to build healthy communities"*