

# 2025 Accessibility Awareness Recognition Awards

June 3, 2025



# Welcome to the Accessibility Awards

- Seventeenth Annual Accessibility Awareness Recognition Awards.
- Canada's National AccessAbility Week: May 25 – 31. A time when communities across the country come together to recognize the efforts being made to create a more accessible and inclusive society.
- Theme of National AccessAbility Week 2025: **"Breaking Barriers Together: Paving the Way for an Inclusive Future."**

# The Youth Accessibility Award

- Young people across Kawartha Lakes are already taking action—whether in schools, online spaces, community groups, or personal projects. They’re showing initiative, empathy, and leadership in creating more inclusive environments.
- While we've proudly recognized many incredible champions over the years, we realized there was one important voice missing from our celebration—**the voice of our youth.**
- The Youth Accessibility Award that was approved by Council on May 20.

# Goals of the Youth Accessibility Award

- **Foster early engagement**—building lifelong awareness and commitment,
- **Amplify youth leadership**—recognizing the next generation of accessibility advocates,
- And **build a culture of inclusion** that will shape Kawartha Lakes for decades to come.

# Honouring a Legacy

- In keeping with the tradition of the **Barbara McArthur Award of Distinction**—named in honour of our committee’s founder and first Chair—we proposed that this new award also carry a meaningful name.
- We can think of no one more fitting than **Kathryn Peeters**.
- Kathryn was a former recipient of the Barbara McArthur Award and a shining example of what this new youth award represents.

# Kathryn Peeters

- Diagnosed with a brain tumour as a child, Kathryn faced life with legal blindness, a seizure disorder, and cognitive impairment. But none of that stopped her. At just six years old, she began fundraising for paediatric brain tumour research and went on to speak at conferences and community events for 25 years.
- Later in life, Kathryn sustained a spinal cord injury that resulted in paraplegia. Rather than slow down, she became even more determined to raise awareness and advocate for change.
- We believe that naming this award in her honour will ensure her impact continues to inspire future generations.

# Kathryn Peeters Youth Accessibility Award 2026

We will be adding the new award category to our nomination form, the inaugural Kathryn Peeters Youth Accessibility Award will be granted in 2026.

Reminder: Nominations open year round.





# Accessibility Awareness

As part of its ongoing commitment to promoting public awareness of accessibility, the Kawartha Lakes Accessibility Advisory Committee recognizes individuals, businesses, and organizations through the Annual Accessibility Awards.

While the ceremony is a meaningful way to celebrate these contributions, the Committee also wanted to provide a lasting and visible symbol of recognition.



## Decals and digital badges

Moving forward recipients will be provided with a window decal and a digital badge for use in email communications and on websites.

Help to foster awareness and highlight the importance of supporting and accommodating people of all abilities in everyday spaces.



# 2025 Award Winners

# Outstanding Contribution- Business: The Wheat Sheaf

The Wheat Sheaf restaurant is located in downtown Bobcaygeon and offers a great accessible location.

The restaurant, and it's staff, are accommodating for those with an array of visible and invisible disabilities.



# Outstanding Contribution- Business: Symposium Cafe

The Symposium Cafe offers an accessible dining option in Lindsay.

The restaurant boasts accommodating seating areas and accessible washroom facilities that are open and easily accessed by mobility device users.





# Outstanding Contribution- Business: Ken Reid Conservation Area

In order to make the trails and facilities open to move residents, an accessible washroom facility has been installed at Ken Reid Conservation.

This upgrade allows residents of varying abilities to hike the trails and have access to an accessible washroom.



# Outstanding Contribution- Business: Trinity United Church Bobcaygeon

Trinity United Church is doing its best to make their facilities accessible to all.

From automatic door openers, well-maintained sidewalks, linking the parking lot to the sound system, and providing large print bulletins, the church is trying to break down barriers to their facility.





# Outstanding Contribution- Business: Celebrations

Celebrations offers a lift to the main floor allowing patrons of all abilities to obtain access.

The primary gathering room is well lit, has a great audio system, and is barrier free.

The washroom facilities are some of the best accessible facilities in the City.





# Outstanding Contribution- Business: CMS Web Solutions

Lindsay based CMS Web Solutions, has been developing accessible websites and providing digital accessibility education for over fifteen (15) years.



# Outstanding Contribution- New Build or Modification: Fieldside Yoga

Fieldside Yoga boasts a barrier free washroom, designated accessible parking, automated doors, and an easily traversable open concept design. Locally, they are the only privately owned yoga studio in the City of Kawartha Lakes that is accessible.



# Outstanding Contribution- City Employee or Team: Lindsey Schoenmakers

Lindsey played a critical role in the creation of the Economic Development Strategy.

The document was made accessible by an external consultant but when changes were made to the draft, all accessibility formatting was lost. Lindsey made it accessible once again.





# Barbara McArthur Memorial Award of Distinction: John and Cheryl Hassan

John and Cheryl are both advocates for accessibility.

Through their work with the Alzheimer's Association, Brain Injury Association, Community Care, and Ross Memorial Hospital, they have worked diligently to make our community a better place for people with disabilities.



# Congratulations!

Congratulations to the 2025 Accessibility Award winners.