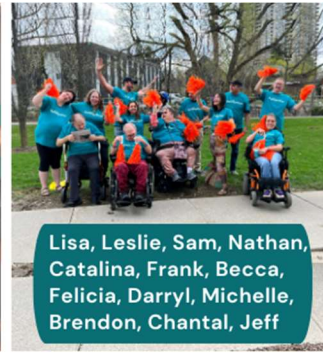




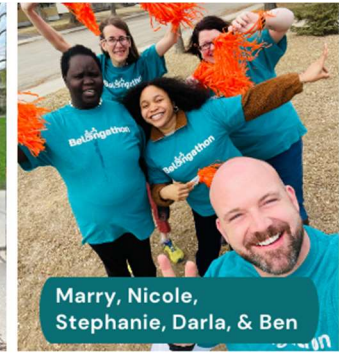
Heather, Scott, Amanda,  
Michelle, Allan, & Isaac



Esther, Theresa, Clifton,  
Sheila, Koko, Edward,  
Rebecca, & Winnie



Lisa, Leslie, Sam, Nathan,  
Catalina, Frank, Becca,  
Felicia, Darryl, Michelle,  
Brendon, Chantal, Jeff



Marry, Nicole,  
Stephanie, Darla, & Ben

**Scott Austin**, Person Using Services (Niagara O3)

**Isaac Flagg**, Direct Support Professional (Niagara O3)

**Michelle Sin**, Development Strategies Manager (Waterloo)

Christian Horizons is no stranger to accessible walk, roll, run, or bike events, but we wanted an opportunity to focus on disability inclusion, advocacy, and community. That's why we're launching the [Belongathon](#) as a community outreach fundraiser. Everyone can participate to raise awareness regardless of fundraising goals. Just by joining an event or by sharing it, you're helping your community create inclusive, accessible spaces of belonging.

If you've met Scott Austin, chances are he's either wearing his Montréal Canadiens or Ride for Refuge t-shirts – clothing that showcases “his” teams. Now he's wearing his new Belongathon shirt. It has been over three years since our last in-person event, and Scott can't wait to reconnect with his community in this way. “He just likes talking to people,” Direct Support Professional Isaac Flagg says about Scott. “He'd get people involved. He talked to his family, he talked to people he lives with, and he talked to his church. And Scott just started telling everyone about this wonderful event.”

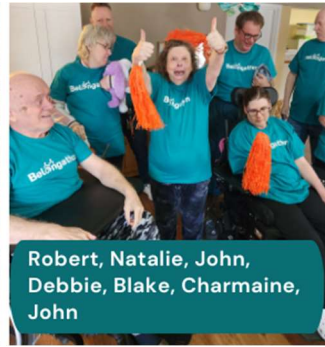
During past fundraisers, Scott was a team captain and even invited his doctors and dentist to support and join his team! Year after year, Scott and Isaac's team are top fundraisers in part due to Scott's natural ability to engage everybody around him. Taking a page from Scott and Isaac's book, the Belongathon is a new opportunity for all of us to reconnect with our communities.

Scott's goal this year is to get his entire house to join his team – people who use our services and every employee! Scott is excited to walk with his team to support other people with disabilities in Canada and beyond. “I want to help a lot of people,” Scott says.

On Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup> 2023, hundreds of neighbours, friends, people who use services, and employees will walk and roll together at **sixteen** Belongathon event locations across Ontario and Saskatchewan! We'll enjoy snacks and fun activities together. The Belongathon t-shirts are free, since this is a team that anyone can be a part of.



Lamont, David, Wendy,  
Erin, & Tiffany



Robert, Natalie, John,  
Debbie, Blake, Charmaine,  
John



Trevor



Hilary, Paul, Darah, Ashley,  
Jennifer, Jennifer, & Jodi

I (Michelle) spoke with Jasmine Duckworth, Community Development Manager in Ottawa, about belonging. We hear about belonging a lot, but what does it actually look like? “Just by showing up and being present in a space and being uniquely yourself, you’re offering a meaningful connection,” Jasmine said. “No one else can be *you* in this space, and your presence is a unique gift that you bring.” As our vision statement expresses, being present in communities where *everybody* is welcome, and their God-given gifts are valued and respected, is the true experience of belonging.

Are you like Scott, a “natural” at inviting people to join your team? Are you like Isaac, passionate about improving peoples’ lives? Or maybe you’re like Jasmine, a community connector? Whoever you are and whatever gifts you bring, you are invited to join us at the Belongathon. Everybody has gifts to contribute, and everybody belongs.

Right now, I’m wearing my teal Belongathon t-shirt. On June 10, I will be one of *hundreds* of people wearing a Belongathon t-shirt! As Isaac said, “We are all one team.” ***I’m a Belongathoner*** and this is a team I’m proud to be a part of.

### Making the Connection

- Share about a time when you were a part of something bigger than yourself. When was it and how did it feel?
- What are some ways the Belongathon might benefit people who use our services and their communities?
- What might you do to help raise awareness – not only about the Belongathon but about disability inclusion and accessibility in your community, which is at the heart of the Belongathon?

***We hope you’ll sign up for your local Belongathon event. The free t-shirts are first come, first served after April 30, so register as soon as possible! [belongathon.ca](http://belongathon.ca)***