

Cultivating Potential

Volunteer turned supply teacher, turned teacher, turned principal: this was Carol Shantz's life at the Rotary Centre. She started in the 1970's volunteering in Grace Skanes' classroom. Grace became Carol's mentor and was the first principal of the School. With her mentor Grace at the helm, Carol taught for 18 years. It was upon Grace's retirement in 1995 that Carol made her final career move, taking over the reins and becoming KidsAbility School's principal for six years until her own retirement in 2001.

"Cultivating potential" is what Carol thinks of when she thinks of KidsAbility. These words are very poignant when she recalls her favourite memory of helping to move the original Rotary Centre on King Street in Kitchener to the new facility on Hallmark Drive in Waterloo in 1995. "The education staff worked on the planning of the new facility with architect Roger Farwell, designing accessible, functional classrooms," she says.

Carol witnessed many changes in her 24 years with KidsAbility School. As KidsAbility changed to meet the needs of the children, so too did the school that at one time had offered classes from Grades 1 to 8. Over the years, the focus of the school program shifted to the primary grades and in 1984, Carol, along with a speech pathologist and another teaching colleague, implemented a junior kindergarten language class that focuses to this day on providing half-day special education programs.

Carol is proud to have been a part of initiating and planning for the first Cambridge classroom when KidsAbility expanded its site at the Chaplin Family Y. This was important to Carol so that students in Cambridge didn't have to travel long on a bus to go to school.

Wanting to leave a legacy at KidsAbility when she retired, Carol says: "My husband, Leroy, and I decided to start a bursary fund that supports recipients in achieving their potential in post-secondary education." To date, more than \$23,000 has been awarded to 17 KidsAbility alumni who have benefited from The Carol Shantz Bursary Award presented by Carol at a celebration event held at KidsAbility each year.



Carol Shantz

Teacher and Principal - KidsAbility School Authority
1973–2001 and Donor