



BEYOND SILENCE: A DIALOGUE ON HARD OF HEARING EXPERIENCES

The panel discussion titled, “Beyond Silence: A Dialogue on Hard of Hearing Experience”, occurred on February 24 at 12:00 pm at the Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility in Vancouver. The event was open to anyone interested in learning about hard of hearing experiences. The discussion featured four hard of hearing panellists sharing their journey as individuals with hearing loss followed by a Q and A session. What made the event even more special was that the moderator and the three other volunteers also were hard of hearing, providing an inclusive platform. The event was designed to be an exploration of various experiences and achievements of professionals with hearing loss. Participants engaged in a meaningful dialogue with the panellists who emerged as stronger advocates for accessibility and inclusion.

Here are the details of the four distinguished panellists, moderator, and volunteers.



Naghmeh Samenirad



Tasha Cox



Negar Iravani



Nicole Leung



Hart Plommer



Andrew Mulligan



Hok Lun (Tom) Lee

Panelists:

Naghmeh Samenirad: A Passionate Advocate for Educational Accessibility

Naghmeh, teacher with sensorineural hearing loss, brought a wealth of experience to the panel. With nine years of teaching in a Vancouver primary school under her belt, she holds a Master of Education with a focus on early childhood education. Her commitment extends to her role as a volunteer at the CHHA Vancouver branch, where she actively works to advocate for improved accessibility and services for the hard-of-hearing community.

Tasha Cox: A Dedicated Professional in Therapeutic Recreation

Tasha, born with bilateral conductive hearing loss, has been wearing hearing aids since the age of three. With a diploma in therapeutic recreation, she has dedicated a decade of her career to working with seniors with dementia in a nursing home. Active within CHHA since childhood, she has served on the boards of CHHA Vancouver and CHHA Young Adults Network. Her extensive involvement includes attendance at national conferences and international summer camps, emphasizing the importance of support, advocacy, and camaraderie for young people with hearing loss.

Negar Iravani: A Journey from Engineering to Entrepreneurship

Negar, an immigrant from Iran with a background in electrical engineering, shared her inspiring journey of self-discovery. After moving to Canada, she pursued her passion for beauty and skin, becoming a certified medical aesthetician. Now a successful business owner, her story encompasses resilience, adaptability, and the pursuit of personal fulfilment.

Nicole Leung: Registered Nurse

Nicole, a registered nurse in the Lower Mainland, offered a powerful narrative of overcoming discrimination and adversity. Facing institutional barriers, she has emerged as a dedicated advocate for accessibility. Her journey includes speaking engagements at the University of British Columbia, leadership workshops in Europe, and an ongoing commitment to fostering in-depth conversations within the hard of hearing community.

Hart Plommer: Moderator

Hart resides in Delta, BC. He has a PhD in chemistry, but this winter, he works at Canada Post and maintains the Nordic area at Cypress Mountain. He has bilateral sensorineural (progressive) hearing loss. For the bulk of his school years, his education and communication were supported by a sign language interpreter. Following his undergraduate studies, he received a life-changing cochlear implant. He has been active in CHHA since the age of seven. Most recently, he has enjoyed being a positive mentor and role model for children and teenagers in BC and NL. From 2019-2022, he also served as the President of the CHHA Young Adults Network, a nationwide support and advocacy network for young adults with hearing loss.

Committee of Volunteers:

Andrew Mulligan: Photography

Andrew is a dedicated individual with a longstanding connection to CHHA, having first become a member in the early 2000s as a toddler and later rejoining at the age of 19. Currently employed as a teacher specializing in deaf and hard of hearing, as well as special needs children aged 3-5, he has a profound passion for supporting and working with individuals facing challenges such as deafness, hearing impairments, special needs, and speech delays.

Hok Lun (Tom) Lee: Technical Support, Ushering

Tom, a former engineer originally from Hong Kong, is currently studying in international business management at Douglas College. Born with profound hearing loss and having undergone cochlear implant surgery in the 10th grade, his journey has ignited a passion for advocating and empowering individuals within the hearing-impaired community. Actively engaged in volunteer work with CHHA-BC, he is driven by a commitment to break down societal stigma and provide unwavering support. His previous experience in Hong Kong involved promoting accessible technologies among peers, and he is eager to leverage those skills to contribute locally to the CHHA-BC community.

