



## thumbs up! thumbs down!



A big thumbs up to **Ali Sigal!** The first-year dental student started a program called Oral health, Total health. Affiliated with Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, its mission is to advocate, educate and improve oral health care for persons with disabilities. "Dental care is one of the top un-met health needs facing this group of vulnerable individuals," explains Ali.

To break down attitudinal barriers, she recently hosted "Sharing Smiles," an activity day between dental students, dentists and individuals with disabilities, which she hopes will become an annual event. She plans to lecture at community care facilities about oral health and implement oral-hygiene care training for Ontario's Community Living facilities. As if that weren't enough, Ali wants to raise \$2 million to help Mount Sinai's overburdened dental clinic provide treatment while educating dental students, residents and community access workers about providing oral care for persons with disabilities. For more information, please email [alison.sigal@utoronto.ca](mailto:alison.sigal@utoronto.ca).

Thumbs up to **Mary Louise Dickson**, who was named to the Order Of Ontario in January. She was recognized for her work as a mentor and an educator within the legal profession, and an advocate for people with disabilities. Appointed Queen's Counsel in 1983, Mary Louise is a partner with Toronto law firm Dickson MacGregor Appell and an expert in trusts and estate planning. Her community work dates back to 1977. She has been a director at Lyndhurst Hospital, the Ontario March of Dimes, Canadian Abilities Foundation, Canadian Paraplegic Association and the Centre for Independent Living, among others. Congratulations, Mary Louise!

Thumbs down to **President Barack Obama**. On March 19, as a guest on *The Tonight Show*, he joked about his poor bowling scores by saying, "It was like the Special Olympics or something." The White House quickly recognized the mistake, and Obama later telephoned Special Olympics chairman Timothy Shriver to apologize for what he said. Shriver called the error "a learning moment" and told the press, "I think it's important to see that words hurt and words do matter. And these words that in some respect can be seem as humiliating or a put down to people with special needs do cause pain and they do result in stereotypes."

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