



It is certainly not me and it is certainly not most of us. However, when I think of it, the answer is just so close at hand. I can practically reach out and grab it! I can touch it and I can feel it! So who is it? Or should I say who is he?

His name is Chris Stark and I do not think that anyone could even think of debating my choice here! For if we take the time to think about it; a true advocate is one who not only walks the walk! He fights the good fight! He gives and sacrifices all that he has in his arsenal! He is selfless, he is never self centered, and his hand is always out there readily waiting to help! Most of all, he is humble and never seeks to grab the limelight. Instead, he is always willing to give others the opportunity to stand up, speak up, and speak out!

He is generous with his time! He is kind, patient, and always willing to share his knowledge, advice, and experiences! He is not afraid and most of all; he is a humanitarian and a teacher!

These are the thoughts that I express as I sit here mourning the sudden passing of my mentor, friend, and sounding board! Chris Stark was all of these things to me and so much more! Chris Stark was much more than this to Blind, deaf/blind, and vision impaired Canadians! We have lost probably the best advocate that Blind, deaf/blind, and vision impaired Canadians has ever had!

Chris Stark was my inspiration, my role model, and my reason to keep on fighting! He never complained and he always found a way to come up with a solution! He was always professional in his approaches to problems and he

always preached to me that I should take the high road!

I will miss you Chris! I will miss your advice, friendship, wonderful sense of humor, and mentoring. You were probably one of the finest chess players when it came to strategies of life! I can only promise to help carry on your legacy and to do my best to live up to your standard when it comes to true advocacy!

I promise to keep on fighting the good fight! To fight for a better future for our kids and to pass on and share my knowledge with those around me. I promise to be strong, patient, and to do my best to protect our rights as blind, def/blind, and vision impaired Canadians.

You are in a better place now! No more pain, no more suffering, and now it is our turn to continue what you worked so hard to accomplish! Each time we approach a banking machine we will remember that it was through your efforts that we can now benefit from talking banking machines.

Each time we are faced with tough and unyielding respondents whose main objective is to use their deep pockets to thwart our efforts we will remember that you did not falter in front of those who failed to understand the entire picture. And each time we are faced with situations that test our courage, passion, commitment, dedication, and determination and sacrifice; we must and will remember what you did for us and now we must do it for others.

You walked with me on the journey to a successful charter challenge against the Canadian Government over

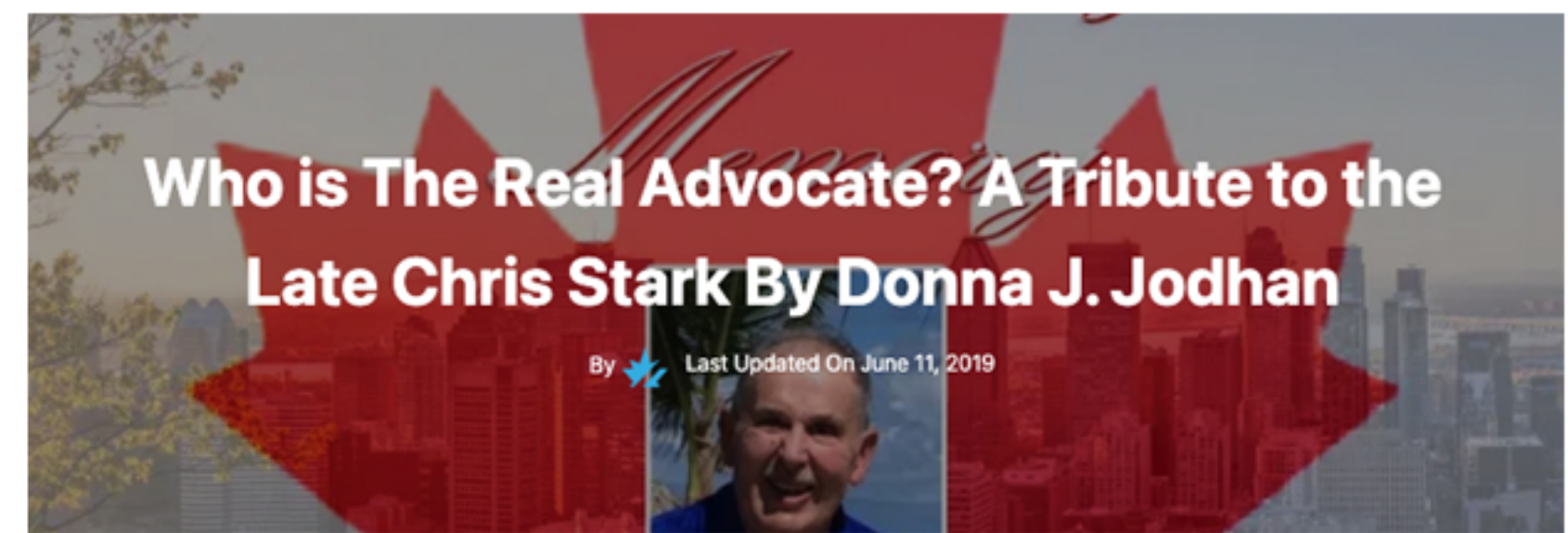


Photo Alt: Red maple leaf on transparent background of Montreal city. In the center of the maple leaf is a photo of a smiling Chris Stark. Above the photo are the words 'In Loving Memory'. Below the photo are the words 'Chris Stark (1947-2019)'. Image.

their inaccessible websites and you were there for me during our campaign for the passage of an accessible Canada Act! But now you are gone and you won't be coming back! I only hope that I'll have the strength, courage, and determination to follow in your footsteps!

Safe travels to you good friend and it will be a sunny day when we meet again! Please save a seat at your table for me! You came into my life when I needed help and my only regret is you did not come sooner!

From Albert Ruel:

Canada and the community of citizens who are blind, deaf-blind and partially sighted recently lost a visionary, an advocate and an activist who made a profound and lasting difference throughout his short 72 years of life. Through his family, I want to thank Chris Stark for those things I didn't take the time to thank him for during his life, to thank the Canadian Human Rights Commission for their below recognition of those accomplishments, and to thank Beth Robertson and her Envisioning Technologies.

From Richard Marion:

Chris stark was personally committed to a number of issues. He had a very clear idea on how people who are blind should participate in society and worked tirelessly to do his part to ensure his view was implemented and supported by decision makers and others in Canada and around the world. Here are some of Chris's victories that we now benefit from in so many ways. The first Accessible ATM

was a result of his work filing a human rights complaint against RBC. As a result, today accessible bank machines are usually available at all branches of all the major chartered banks and some credit unions across the country. Accessible utility bills and banking statements was another area that we now benefit from as a result of his work. After filing actions against Bell and other, all the telecommunications companies were mandated by the CRTC to produce accessible billing statements. This work went on to include other utility companies like the cable companies and I believe Ontario Hydro. His work was not just limited to filing actions against companies for not providing accessible services. He was committed to accessible travel and transportation and guide dog access as well. As a result, he went to a number of places around the word including the far North beyond the artic circle but also visited Israel and Jordan as well. With all of this, he worked to be part of the work that still goes on to ensure better access and service from airlines, inter provincial bus services and via rail. With all of this, he wanted to share his story with anyone who was willing to listen and learn. His belief was that only through teaching and guiding people would ensure we continue the work of achieving equality and that people were completely aware of their rights and responsibilities in our daily lives and that we were best equipped to fully participate in all activities no matter the challenge for gaining access to places and services.