

*This edition's theme:*

## Celebrating Self-Employment

CLBC Magazine

Winter 2017-18

Celebrate

# Diverse ABILITIES

*Stories from around British Columbia*



COMMUNITY LIVING  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

### Clowning around!

Craig Muirhead is turning his passion for entertaining others into a budding business.

*page 8*



## MESSAGE FROM CEO SEONAG MACRAE



# Celebrating the entrepreneurial spirit

Welcome to the winter edition of Celebrate Diverse Abilities, a publication developed by the CLBC Editorial Board and written by self advocates in British Columbia.

For this edition, our theme is “Celebrating Self-Employment.” For many people CLBC supports, finding a job is important to them. Helping people find meaningful employment opportunities is a priority for CLBC. It’s also important to recognize and celebrate the different creative ways people are exploring self-employment and starting their own ventures. In this magazine you’ll read stories of people who are running small businesses, some through following a personal passion, and others by identifying a need in the market.

From a photographer, to a personal shopper, and even a clown, each shares a unique story and offers their own insight and advice on the challenges and excitement of self-employment. “Don’t be afraid to venture into a new subject and learn on your own,” says Haig Dickson of Nanaimo (read his story on page 14).

I encourage you to read these stories, and learn ways you can support small businesses in your own local community.

I also want to also make note of the recent Community Living Month in October, which saw another great round of events and celebrations across B.C. During the month, CLBC Board members visited three communities to listen and learn from people CLBC serves and our partners in community. You can read more about these visits in the **News** section on pages 5 and 6, along with updates on the Planning and Advancing New Support Options projects, which are both important parts of CLBC’s Strategic Plan.

Thank you as always for reading. I hope your 2018 is off to a positive start so far and we look forward to sharing many great success stories and news updates in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

**Seonag Macrae**  
CEO, Community Living BC

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*A special thanks to Editorial Board members and CLBC staff who provided writing and technical support to the authors of our the stories and articles in this edition.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

# Promoting our ABILITIES through self-employment!

Hello! We are the CLBC Editorial Board made up of Self Advocates and Community Living leaders from across the province. Our role is to work with CLBC to improve communication with the people they serve. Working together on this magazine has been one opportunity to share with CLBC about what we think is important. The Editorial Board also provides feedback and suggestions on projects and new initiatives that CLBC is working on.

In this edition, we are proud to recognize and promote self-employment and the businesses of people with diverse abilities in B.C. We believe that having a job is one way to gain confidence and independence, and also contribute to your community. This edition focuses on the creative ways that people with diverse abilities have chosen to pursue their interests and careers through self-employment.



### CLBC Editorial Board Members are:

*front row, left to right:* Tamara Russell (Parksville), Jennifer Dosanj (Surrey).

*back row, left to right:* Nathan Bodie (Victoria), Bryce Schaufelberger (Mission), Ryan Kenny (Williams Lake), Gerald Oesch (Chilliwack).

*not pictured:* Rob Tippe (Revelstoke), John O'Neill (Nelson), Aine Rathwell (Vancouver), Jhenna Owen (Kamloops).

Editorial Board member Rob Tippe, from Revelstoke, started his own business five years ago. Rob's Handy Service includes jobs like landscaping and snow removal. Rob shares his advice about self-employment by saying, "As long as you keep at it and keep knocking on doors, you will become a success." He also encourages people to look closely at their community to see what resources are available to help start their business. For Rob, Community Futures ([www.communityfuturesrevelstoke.com](http://www.communityfuturesrevelstoke.com)) was a key partner in his success.

We hope you enjoy these stories and are inspired to think outside the box when it comes to self-employment. Please help us to promote the businesses of people with diverse abilities in our communities around B.C. Also, if you or someone you know is self employed and would like to promote a business on [SelfAdvocateNet.com](http://SelfAdvocateNet.com), please contact CLBC's Self Advocate Advisor at [Jessica.Humphrey@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jessica.Humphrey@gov.bc.ca).

We'd like to thank all the members of the self advocacy community and others with diverse abilities who contributed their stories to this magazine. We look forward to your feedback and suggestions for the next edition of Celebrate Diverse Abilities.

Sincerely,

**The CLBC Editorial Board**

## CLBC Board members visit Kelowna, Victoria and Richmond

Each year, small groups of CLBC's board members visit local communities to connect directly with individuals, families, Community Council members and CLBC staff. The visits are part of the board's commitment to listen and learn which assists them in guiding CLBC's work. To mark Community Living Month in October, Board members visited Victoria, Kelowna and Richmond.

These visits help board members learn more about CLBC's service delivery and the people CLBC supports in diverse regions across the province. You can read more about the board members' visits at [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca) under **News**.



**Above:** Dale Froese showed CLBC Board members around the Starbucks in Kelowna where he has worked for almost 10 years, and hosted a coffee tasting for the guests.



**Left:** Members of the CLBC Board of Directors met with the South Island Community Council in Victoria to hear about their work and priorities.

**Right:** CLBC Board members visited Camsell House in Richmond, a staffed residence run by the Developmental Disability Association that supports seniors with developmental disabilities. They also had a chance to see Aether, a robot designed to help people with simple tasks.







To read CLBC news updates, visit:  
[www.CommunityLivingBC.ca/News](http://www.CommunityLivingBC.ca/News)

To read Self Advocacy stories  
from across B.C., visit:  
[www.SelfAdvocateNet.com](http://www.SelfAdvocateNet.com)

## Families test new CLBC service option

Over the last two years, CLBC has been developing a new service option through the Advancing New Support Options (ANSO) project.

The new service responds to what many individuals and families have asked for: support to help people find a job, to make friends, learn new skills, and get better connected in their communities.

The new service will not replace current employment or day programs but will be a new option for people to consider.

Individuals, families, service providers and CLBC staff have been testing the service. This includes testing how CLBC will support the service, find the right service providers and measure its success. This work was completed at the end of November 2017.

CLBC is now planning how the new service will be introduced across the province with work starting on this in 2018 and the service being launched in Spring 2019.



*To learn how Chris Dodds and her daughter Darci are helping to test and design this new service, read the latest **CLBC Connect** at [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca) under **News > CLBC Connect digital newsletter**.*

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## Revamp of CLBC's welcome process for new families on track

CLBC has been redesigning our planning process for new families by involving the people who will use it.

In the last eight months, CLBC has met with over 300 individuals, families, CLBC staff, CLBC-funded service providers, the Family Support Institute and other groups to design and test a new welcome and planning process.

Based on what families have said they find most helpful, the new process will provide better information to individuals and families before the age of 19, new welcome workshops to learn about the transition to adulthood, community and CLBC supports, and a broader range of ways people can plan with CLBC facilitators and partners. CLBC will launch the new planning process starting in Spring 2018.



# Finding the pattern for success

*by Eliza Lee*

I am a local girl in Ladner. I took up knitting hats with matching booties for new born babies when I was 18. I am now 21 and I love to learn new knitting patterns. I have recently started making mittens to keep myself interested in my knitting hobby.

I started my self-employment journey by knitting for family and close friends that were expecting babies. In exchange they would let me hold their baby.

In 2015, I decided to donate my knitting to the Richmond General Hospital. I would drop off my hats and bootie sets to give to the babies that are born there. One day, I came in to drop off some of my knitting and the obstetrician asked if I would be interested in knitting a bunch of hats and booties and donating them to help raise money for new machines for a maternity ward in Malawi. I was very touched to see all the pictures they took and sent to me with their babies wearing my knitted hats.

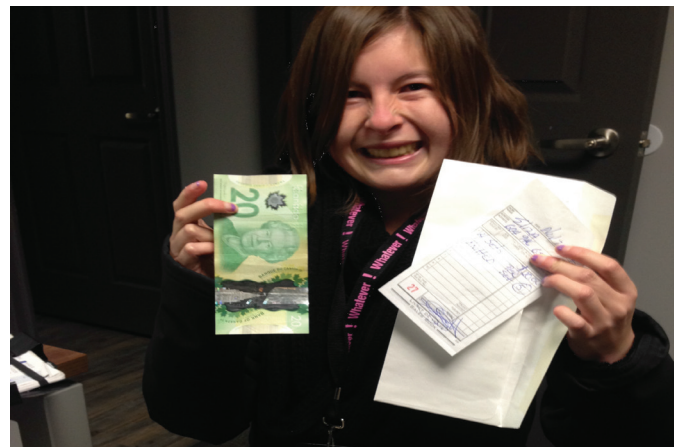
In 2016, I signed up for a local summer market to sell my hats and mittens. I had a great experience selling my items at the market and I hope to be a part of more markets in the future.

Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to sell my hats, booties and mittens in different size sets within a local business in Ladner.

I hope to continue knitting for friends and family and I hope to keep these opportunities open to sell my products to the community and donate when I can.

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*Orders for Eliza's knitting can be placed by contacting [Eliza@dcls.ca](mailto:Eliza@dcls.ca).*



**Above:** Eliza proudly fills another order for her knitted products.

**Right:** A matching hat and pair of booties knitted by Eliza.



***"I had a great experience selling my items at the market and I hope to be a part of more markets in the future."***

**Eliza Lee**





# Building a portfolio from my passion

*by Emily Kattleson*

I was born and raised in Ladner and now live in Tsawwassen. At age 12, I enjoyed still life painting and creative art projects during school time and I continued to create art at home as well.

When I was 15 years old, my parents added an art studio in our home to give me a space to be creative and helped me find my passion for many different types and styles of art.

I started my self-employment journey in 2012, at age 17. I found a love for creating celebration cards for every celebration during the year, especially Valentine's Day and Christmas. I also had people contact me to create invitations for them and thank you cards for their personal celebrations.

I have been selling cards to friends and family throughout the years as well.

In 2015, I was given the opportunity to create multiple types of Christmas cards for a bank to give to clients and employees. I have a portfolio book that is at the bank with all my paintings in it that are for sale.

**Right: Emily is recognized for her work by Delta Mayor Lois E. Jackson.**

I created a banner for a contest in the summer of 2015. I named it "take a bite of summer" and my banner was picked as a winner. I received an award from Mayor Lois E. Jackson. I am very proud of it.

In 2016, I had the opportunity to sell my celebration cards and art at the Victoria CASE Conference, which was very profitable and I had a great experience.

This past year, I have been selling my cards at a local Ladner store, and so far it's been a positive experience.

I am 22 years old now, and I feel my love of art is being able to create these cards for the customers I have. I hope to find many other ways to keep offering my art to people to enjoy.

***Keep an eye open for Emily's cards in local gift shops in Tsawwassen and Ladner.***



***"I hope to find many other ways to keep offering my art to people to enjoy."***

**Emily Kattleson**

# Clowning around! Dreams can come true

*by Craig Muirhead (also known as Hey!-MiSH! The Safety Sergeant)*

For as long as I can remember, I have been drawn to mascots, clowns and entertainers. I enjoyed watching the way they interact with people, being silly and making them laugh and smile. I always thought it would be a really cool job to have but I never thought it was a possible opportunity for me. For the most part, I kept my fascination for the entertainment industry to myself, but I always carried it in my heart.

I often dreamed of one day being Fin, the mascot for the Vancouver Canucks. One day I thought this dream might be a reality as I was hired to be Aqua Boy for a water company. I thought, “Wow! Maybe this could be a job for me.” After a short while, the company that hired me had to close and I thought my dream was over.

I moved on to traditional jobs that never seemed to be the right fit for one reason or another; they didn’t quite fit my natural skills and abilities or they offered such little variety that I had no interest in them and would soon want to quit.

Then, after many years of working various jobs, I was hired by Simon Fraser University to be an ambassador for the “C2U Expo: For The Common Good” and it was there that I started to find my fit. I discovered my natural ability as a people person and public speaker. From there, I was hired by Stenberg College as a Marketing Assistant working as a greeter at information sessions. One day, I mentioned to my supervisor my dream of being a mascot and she offered me the chance to be Stenberg College’s mascot Stenny the Penguin. I was so excited and after my first job as Stenny, I knew this was the job for me!

I met with my employment specialist and told her I want to be a professional mascot. After lots of brain storming and many conversations, we realized that I was friends with a professional clown. Together we set up a meeting with my friend Korki the Clown (of Clowning Around with Korki) for career advice.



**With the help of his mentor Korki the Clown, Craig developed his own clown persona: Hey!-MiSh! the Safety Sergeant.**





The meeting went really well as I had known Korki for years, volunteering as her assistant at the local Sea Festival. Korki was excited to learn that I was interested in becoming a professional entertainer.

Korki agreed to teach me about the profession through the MentorAbility program. She taught me the basics of being a clown and mascot, and also helped me develop my clown persona, Hey!-MiSH! the Safety Sergeant. She also introduced me to balloon twisting and discussed some of the basics of being self-employed.

My MentorAbility was a success. I had finally found not only a job, but a career that fit my natural abilities and talents. Most important, I had found my passion!

Korki was impressed with my natural clown and entertainer abilities and with the progress of my skills in such a short time. She offered to continue to be my mentor as I complete an internship with her to learn the business of being a clown and a self-employed entertainer.

As well, I am an official member of the Rain Coast Clown Troupe. I plan to join the National and World Association of Clowns and I have completed my first paid professional clown job.



I'm continuing my work as a mascot. After all, the difference between a clown and a mascot is the uniform. I have learned there is much more to the business of clowning than putting on a suit and make up. It's all the work behind the scenes that makes the performance look easy. My dream career is coming true one step at a time. It's going to be a lot of work but I'm ready for it. Sometimes the answer is right under your clown nose!

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*If you're interested in booking Craig to entertain at an event or gathering, send an email to: [kclown@telus.net](mailto:kclown@telus.net) (and mention "Craig" in the subject line of the email).*

***"I have learned there is much more to the business of clowning than putting on a suit and make up. It's all the work behind the scenes that makes the performance look easy."***

**Craig Muirhead**



# Getting creative about self-employment

by Julian McKay

My business is doing First Nations art. I paint, bead and in the near future plan on starting to carve.

I started with no real plan as it started out as just a hobby that picked up a little extra income.

Once in a while I had support through a few of my daily support workers, but mainly I took the initiative all on my own.

I like having my own business because I can do work whenever I want and have the opportunity to make money when I need it.

A challenge I have running my own business is that I have not yet secured a steady source of income. However, my artwork isn't just a business; it is a passion and a hobby so I don't financially depend on it.

My only advice for others would be to make sure there is a goal and plan in place before choosing to start your own business.

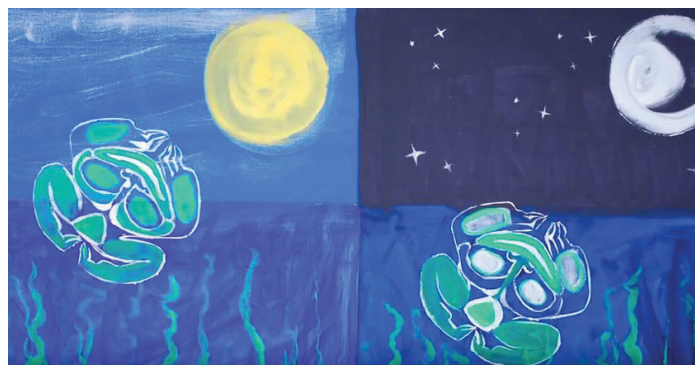
The best part of having a business for me is that I get to interact with all sorts of people. I can work when I want. I don't have to be on a work schedule when I'm having fun doing what I love.



Julian McKay grew up in Prince Rupert in Northwest B.C. and currently resides in Surrey.

He comes from the We'suwet'en and Tsimshian Nations. Each of his art works is handmade and inspired by his Aboriginal Heritage.

To view and order Julian's art, including greeting cards featuring his work, you can visit:  
[julianmckay.wixsite.com/creationsofatsayu](http://julianmckay.wixsite.com/creationsofatsayu)



***“Make sure there is a goal and plan in place before choosing to start your own business.”***

**Julian McKay**





## Speaking my mind

*by Alexander Magnussen*

At the age of 25 I started my employment journey. I had never had a “real” job before and I knew it was my time to start looking into a career.

In 2013, I was given the opportunity to speak at a conference in front of fifty people. This was my first time speaking in front of a group of people, and expressing my opinion on living with Autism. I loved the feeling of voicing my opinion in front of people and speaking to them about my life, but at that time I didn’t realize that this could be a career.

Through my support at Semiahmoo House Society, the customized employment program landed me a job at a vineyard in Langley. I enjoyed it but I knew it wasn’t my niche in the world because it was mostly an outside job, and I don’t like the rain.



After working an outside job, I decided to try a different job working at a bottle depot. I was counting and sorting bottles, but dealing with the smell and stickiness was hard, because my senses are already heightened. This job lasted two days because I knew the general environment wasn’t for me.

After doing some exploration on finding the perfect job for me, I realized that I already had my perfect job right there. I knew public speaking was my niche in the world once I saw that people were booking me. One speech led to another, and as time passed I had no time to look for the “perfect job.” Then it clicked that public speaking is the “perfect job!” When I’m on stage, I get this feeling of purpose and pride that sharing my knowledge is helpful for people. The classification of my career is public speaking but I also consider it helping people.

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To watch a recent TEDx talk that Alexander gave, go to [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search for **“Bridging the Gap - Alexander Magnussen”**

To contact Alexander about his public speaking services, you can email: [teamalexm@outlook.com](mailto:teamalexm@outlook.com).

*“When I’m on stage, I get this feeling of purpose and pride that sharing my knowledge is helpful for people.”*

**Alexander Magnussen**



# Capturing beauty through my lens

*by Adrian Collins*

I'm a professional live music and nightlife photographer. My business, Adrian Collins Photography®, started off as a casual hobby and quickly transformed into a business.

Many people were involved in teaching me how to start a business and the skills needed to be a professional photographer. I'd say the biggest asset was the Centre for Arts and Technology, which is a private fine arts school taught by leading professionals in the art industry.

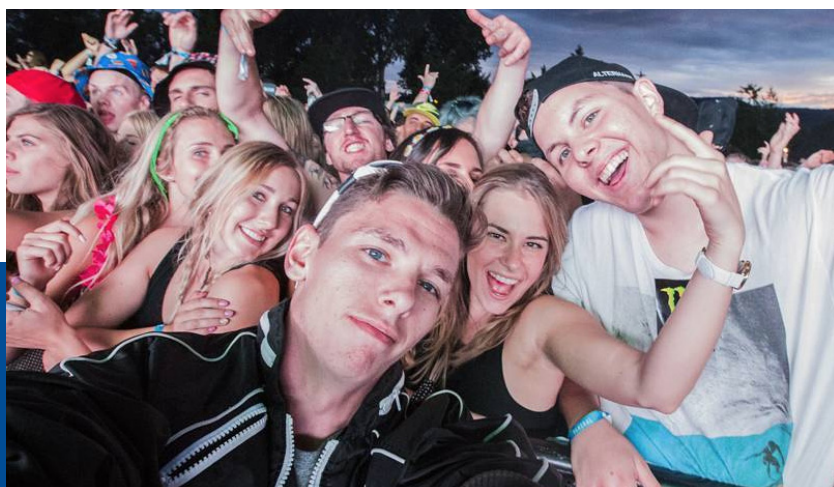
We were taught everything from basic settings to creating a business plan. As a professional photographer starting out, I couldn't afford to hire mules (people who carry your equipment), an assistant or a marketing team. Most self-employed professional photographers who freelance are responsible for every aspect of their business.

The biggest challenge of being a freelance artist is the fact that so many people expect you to work for free. People don't understand the amount of work that goes into taking and editing a photograph.

The upside of having your own business though is that you can decide how you want things to run; You can decide your hours and payment. Almost everything is in your control.

One thing I get told by the people I photograph is that I really get in there with my photographs. My goal when I take a photograph is to give the viewer the experience of being there.

My overall goals are to be photographing mainstream artists, Vancouver (or Vegas) night clubs, and to make a comfortable living based mainly off my photography. I've photographed some big names over the years including Ice Cube, Skrillex, Kid Ink, Machine Gun Kelly, and Nightmre.




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To see photos from Adrian's portfolio and contact him, you can visit:  
[www.AdrianCollinsPhotography.com](http://www.AdrianCollinsPhotography.com)

*"My goal when I take a photograph is to give the viewer the experience of being there."*

**Adrian Collins**





## Alex's excellent candy adventure

For Alex Summers, the self-employment adventure started over two years ago when a Prince George service provider, AiMHi, helped Alex and his family to brainstorm a job that would fit both his personality and interests.

Alex is now the owner of Candy Adventures Ltd. His company provides candy dispensers at six locations across Prince George, with a variety of candy like M&Ms and jelly bellies, for people to buy for a quarter.

Two to three times a month, Alex, with his support worker, visits these locations, and refills the dispensers and collects the money. His mother, Beth, rolls the coins and records the amounts; His father, Rory, makes the deposits and he and Beth purchase the stock for refilling the dispensers. Alex needs to make at least \$100 per month to meet financial commitments for insurance, permits, stock and incorporation fees.

Alex had a lot of support from his family to find ways to make his business work for Alex's unique needs. He also had help from the Ready, Willing & Able national employment initiative which helped Alex and his family do things like incorporate the business before it got underway.

"It takes a network of people to support Alex's business but the benefits for him are numerous," says Rory.

For Alex, the best part about having his own business is getting to talk with lots of different people. He says he also really likes "opening the machines with the key and putting quarters in the bags."

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*Look for Alex's candy machines all around the community of Prince George.*



***"It takes a network of people to support Alex's business but the benefits for him are numerous."***

**Rory, Alex's father**



Nanaimo

# Curiosity opens opportunities

*by Haig Dickson*

I make instructional tutorial videos to help people resolve common computer issues such as: “How to remove Malware and Adware”; “How to make Windows 10 run blazingly fast”; and “How to avoid getting infected by Malware and Spyware.”

I learned how to do this by watching other people on YouTube. From there, I experimented by infecting my own computer with different types of Malware, Adware and Spyware. I then used different anti-Malware programs and software to determine which ones were most effective.

I decided to make my own instructional videos in order to help people who were in my position. I really like the fact that I’m helping people resolve issues on their own. I feel proud of what I’ve learned and the response I’ve received in numbers of views and positive comments.

I now have over 2 million views, over 12,000 subscribers and have monetized my videos by allowing YouTube to put advertising in them. By doing this I have already earned over \$200 and rising.

I have recently started uploading my weather videos with hopes of incorporating my love and passion for weather and storm chasing.

If I could give any advice to others about self-employment, it would be to look on the internet for guidance and don’t be afraid to venture into a new subject and learn on your own.

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*Find Haig’s YouTube channel by visiting [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and searching for “Haig Dickson”*

*Find recent weather updates and videos on Haig’s [Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) page by searching for “Haig Dickson (Weather Specialist)”*



***“Don’t be afraid to venture into a new subject and learn on your own.”***  
**Haig Dickson**





# Creating a business, one customer at a time

*by Alison Shubrook*

The name of my business is Alison Shops For You. I have a personal shopping business that shops at Costco. My responsibilities include sending out weekly order forms to my customers, shopping for their orders, delivering orders, tracking money payments and sending out receipts after each shopping trip.

I started my business by first working alongside an employment facilitator who helped to brainstorm ideas. Once we came up with the idea to shop for people at Costco, I had help to make a business plan.

The things I like about my business are pushing the shopping cart, seeing my favorite cashiers and customers, driving to the different drop off locations, making money and hanging out with my job coach.

One of the challenges of my business is finding new customers. The other challenge is that I don't drive and so have to organize my business around the support of someone who has a car.

If you are thinking about starting a business, my advice is to be patient. It takes time to earn money. Marketing materials are also important, like having business cards and a website. It's really important to stay on top of finances.

The best part about having my own business is that I get to spend time where I love to shop. It gives me independence and I'm my own boss.

*If you are interested in Alison's personal shopping services, you can email her at:*  
**[AlisonShopsForYou@gmail.com](mailto:AlisonShopsForYou@gmail.com)**



Alison uses a business card (left) and a brochure to promote her business and connect with potential customers.



***“If you are thinking about starting a business, my advice is to be patient. Marketing materials are also important, like having business cards and a website.”***

**Alison Shubrook**

## IN THE COMMUNITY

# Kamloops Self Advocate publisher recognized

Krystian Shaw, founder of the Kamloops Self Advocate newsletter and past member of the CLBC Editorial Board, is one of 116 Canadians recently profiled in “What’s Your Story?” a publication by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation marking Canada’s 150th birthday.

“I own a successful newsletter that is free to the public that focuses on reducing discrimination around all disabilities by reporting on positive success stories,” says Krystian.

In December, the Kamloops CLBC office held a celebration to recognize Krystian, and his story was also featured in the local Kamloops This Week newspaper. Congratulations Krystian!

Read the latest Kamloops Self Advocate newsletter at: [www.SelfAdvocateNet.com](http://www.SelfAdvocateNet.com).



Above: Krystian, with his mother Linda, celebrates at a recent event in Kamloops.



Left: “What’s Your Story?” can be purchased at Chapters book stores.

## South Fraser Region Self Advocate Conference

BC People First and CLBC are proud to partner in presenting the 2018 South Fraser Region Self Advocate Conference “I Be Proud, You Be Proud.”

Self Advocates from across the South Fraser Region (Surrey/Delta, Langley, Abbotsford, Hope, Mission and Chilliwack) as well as BC People First members from across the province will gather together to celebrate what makes them proud.

**Where:** Abbotsford Quality Hotel and Conference Centre, 36035 North Parallel Road, Abbotsford

**When:** March 15, 2018, 9:00am - 4:30pm

**For Questions and Registration:**  
Visit [www.BCPeopleFirst.com](http://www.BCPeopleFirst.com) or e-mail [bcpfcoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:bcpfcoordinator@gmail.com).

## CLBC Contact Information

**Website:** [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca)

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