

# THE CITIZEN

Connecting People with Their Community



COMMUNITY LIVING  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

CLBC Newsletter - March 2007

Volume 3 Issue 2

## Camp Confidence



The Zajac Ranch for Children offers more than just the usual camp activities. Here, camper Elliott climbs out of the pool after his morning swim. See page four for full story.

### What's Inside

Local Hero



A Winter Surprise



A 28-Year Journey



Order of Canada



Families Helping Families



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Lois Hollstedt



**T**he end of March 2007 marks the first complete financial year CLBC has had full management of its budget. This is significant for a number of reasons.

We can ask if we have met our obligation to deliver a balanced budget within the resources available, did we find ways to provide more services without reducing quality, did we direct resources to new approaches to services, have we moved forward on new funding methods, do we better understand the cost of our waitlist? The answer to all of these questions is "yes."

Because we must not run deficits in either the adult or children's budget areas, managers have learned to project future spending based on the new services being provided. 2006-07 was the first year this was done and staff are able to more accurately determine the future effect of today's spending based on today's decisions. This skill will increase and enable CLBC to provide certainty towards making financial commitments.

An additional \$7 million was directed to new services from existing resources without changing the quality of what was provided.

In the adult program the government provided funding that allowed for the commitment of \$20 million in new services this past year. However, an additional \$7 million was directed to new services from existing resources without changing the quality of what was provided. In addition, \$300,000 in funds was earmarked to provide innovative new approaches. Four projects, which will provide others with new ideas, are currently in development as a result of this fund.

The first individualized funding contracts have been signed. The creation of our first waitlist has been a challenging, but important tool to measure the scope of the issues facing individuals and families. With the full implementation of our new computer system this year, the numbers will become more useful in measuring our progress and telling our story. And the Family Independence Fund is making an impact in improving the lives of families with a child who has a developmental disability.

The progress has been excellent and there is still much to do. But good financial planning, execution and clarity will help us improve our performance and the lives of individuals and families. ✨

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# INSIDE VOICE

*The self-advocate's perspective.*

## LIVING LIFE TO THEIR FULLEST

By Donna Wheatly

**M**y name is Donna Wheatly. I am a self-advocate from Surrey. I have a boyfriend named Cliff Stacey and we have been together for three years. I met Cliff at a conference and we fell in love. He is good-looking, funny and really good to me. We started going on dates and he took me to a movie on my birthday. He loves to give me gifts and this makes me feel special. We always love doing things together, like helping each other. My goal was to move in with Cliff so we could always be together. We moved in together this summer. We live in a basement suite. He has been teaching me how to cook and do laundry, because I never learned how. He always helps me. Cliff cooks dinner for us every night, we walk everyday and we go to self-advocacy meetings together. We also like to grocery shop together and make our home look nice.

We are very busy in our community. We volunteer together every Friday on Vancouver Co-op Radio. We are the DJs on the Community Living Show on Friday afternoons at 2 p.m. We talk about important things for self-advocates, and we bring speakers to talk about lots of different topics. Cliff has been volunteering on the radio station for five years and I have been involved for two years. We love our job at the radio station because it is fun and we get to meet lots of really nice people.

We both want to find jobs; we are looking really hard to find something that we will enjoy. We have been looking for work in our community, but it is hard to find a job. We both have a dream to help people with disabilities and make their dreams come true. It is hard for self-advocates to find a job, because it seems people

don't want to hire us because we have a disability. I think that they don't know how hard we will work if they give us a job. We are hard workers and like to work. We just want to do something that interests both of us and make enough money to live a good life.

I love living with Cliff. We have a happy life together. We really want to get married one day. We want to buy our own house, so instead of paying rent we can have a mortgage, so that one day we will have something that belongs to us. ✖

*Inside Voice is published in each issue of The Citizen. If you are interested in writing for this column, please call Karin Basaraba at 1-877-660-2522 or e-mail [editor@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:editor@communitylivingbc.ca) to discuss.*



Donna Wheatly and Cliff Stacey at Community Living BC headquarters.

## CAMP FOCUSES ON THE POSITIVE

COVER STORY

The only time 12-year-old Grayson Wood had ever been away from home was with his relatives. But that all changed last summer when Grayson attended the Zajac Ranch for Children, a summer camp that serves children with serious and chronic illnesses and disabilities.

"I was nervous at first, but once I got there I was quite excited," says Grayson, who has autism. "The best part about camp was meeting new people, helping me to socialize and learn about being away from my parents."

Since 1968, Mel Zajac has been raising funds for children with special needs and seniors in British Columbia. In 1987, The Zajac Foundation was formed as a non-profit organization in honour of his sons, Mel Jr. and Marty Zajac, who lost their lives in separate sporting accidents.

According to Mel's daughter and



Camper Kynan tries out Zajac Ranch's high ropes course.

president of Zajac Ranch, Carmen Zajac, the camp is truly her father's vision. Mel met with actor Paul Newman, who runs similar camps around the world, and then adopted a similar model for Zajac Ranch.

They purchased the property in 2003, which is set on the shores of Stave Lake in Mission, British Columbia. They renovated the existing buildings and opened in June 2004.

"The main objective is to reach as many children and families that have medical conditions that would keep them from going to camp," says Carmen. "We've really gone and reached out to these families who've said, 'My kids deserve a camp, too.'"

Each week during the summer, the ranch holds camps for different medical conditions, including Turner's syndrome, Down syndrome, muscular dystrophy, Tourette's syndrome, craniofacial differences, autism spectrum disorders, and kidney disease.

"We don't want to turn any child away," says Carmen, who encourages parents to call the camp to discuss registering their child in one of the confirmed camps if they do not see a camp that fits their child's needs.

Children are eligible to attend camp if they are between the ages of seven and 17 and as long as their condition is stable. However, some campers do come with a caregiver to help out if their needs are more complex.



(left to right) Zajac Ranch staff member Kayla goofs around with two campers, Mertis and Wade.

The kids begin each day with a morning swim and then choose from several activities, including horseback riding, wall climbing, canoeing, archery, and arts and crafts. There is a campfire every night where they perform karaoke and skits.

The medical centre is open 24 hours a day and can handle any medical need. Children who have kidney disease can even have dialysis there. "There's nothing that we can't do at camp," says Carmen. "We have all the equipment necessary to deal with the medical issues until they

can get them to a hospital.”

But the ranch often provides more to the children than just the usual camp activities. It offers a safe and protective environment for kids to be themselves and not worry about what others think. “The kids come away from camp with greater confidence, self-esteem and a ‘can do’ attitude,” says Carmen.

Grayson’s mom, Joan Wood, would agree. She has noticed a positive change in Grayson’s personality and says the camp has given him the self-confidence he was lacking. “For the week that he’s at camp he can just let his hair down,” says Joan.

She read about the camp in the Vancouver Sun and was interested as she had never seen a camp that was specifically for children with special needs. The autism camp was full, so Grayson was able to attend a camp for mixed abilities.

“We wanted him to learn to go with the flow and that things aren’t always ‘just so’ and to learn to step outside of his box,” Joan says. “He was so excited; he didn’t want to come home!”

Part of the reason the camp is so successful is because of the councillors. Carmen says they try to attract councillors who study medicine, special education and special needs.

They then go through a very intense two-week training course.

Zajac also has a nursing director who is familiar with all of the medical conditions. The medical team are all volunteers and includes

both doctors and nurses.

The typical ratio is three children for every one councillor. Each child is also assigned a “special friend” to help them with any of their needs.

However, the camp is able to balance the children’s medical and recreational needs because of donations

from individuals and businesses.

The cost to send a child to camp for the week is up to \$2,500, says Carmen.

In order to sponsor a child, Zajac requires a minimum donation of \$1,000. Each donor is assigned a specific child, while businesses can sponsor a whole week for \$50,000.

There are also opportunities for in-kind donations, such as art supplies, medical equipment, and lumber to support their renovations.

Zajac Ranch is always looking for volunteers, Carmen adds, whether it’s for maintenance, working with the kids or in the kitchen. In addition, they have a leader-in-training program for youth who want to participate in camp activities, but also learn leadership skills.

The camp is available to rent year-round, except for the summer.

By renting the facilities in the off season, people are helping to support the camp. Carmen says it’s an excellent venue for businesses to do team building.

As for Grayson, he’s looking forward to attending the spring break camp in March and the autism camp in August. He

encourages other children who might be a bit scared to give camp a try.

“It’s a great place to meet new people and

hang out together,” says Grayson. “You get nervous at first, but then you get to meet new friends and have so much fun.”

Meanwhile, Joan feels parents may notice unexpected, positive changes from sending their child to Zajac. “It’s the best experience a parent could give their child to garner their independence,” she says.

For more information about the Zajac Ranch for Children, please visit their website at

[www.zajacranch.com](http://www.zajacranch.com). 

*“The kids come away from camp with greater confidence, self-esteem and a ‘can do’ attitude.”*



*Zajac Ranch staff member Colin Brouwer helps out camper Alexander with his archery skills.*



# A WINTER SURPRISE

By Gloria Brown, Lakes District Counselling & Support Services Association

In October of this year, CLBC in Smithers planned a visit to our community to give us a small gift to celebrate Community Living Week. Mother Nature had other plans and gave Burns Lake and the Lakes District a really big gift – over three feet of snow in a 24-hour period! Needless to say, the weather postponed several of our planned activities.

Given the bounty of snow, our special services team arranged a special day for our CLBC folks – a private sleigh ride pulled by a team of majestic Clydesdale horses on a beautiful farm overlooking the Lakes District.

In addition to clients from Lakes District Counselling and Support Services Association, the team also invited people from the Burns Lake Christian Supportive Group Home, other individuals who CLBC supports who live independently and in proprietary care. ❄️



Allan Molloy and Danny Tress get ready for the ride.



The group takes advantage of the fresh supply of snow in the Burns Lake area.

## OUR SLEIGH RIDE

By Barb Martens

On December 30, 2006 our group went for a sleigh ride. We all had a ride and drove out to the farm. We arrived and waited for our other friends to arrive. We saw the horses waiting and we said hello to them. They had jingle bells on them. The horses were having lots of fun pulling the people and snorted around. It was

nice to have all our good friends around. We roasted wieners on an open fire and drank hot cocoa. We sang to the dancing horses and made them go faster. They tossed their heads around and pulled at the bit. On the ride home we went really fast. It was beautiful day the sun was shining and everyone had a great time. ❄️



Barb Martens enjoys her day at Alfred Horning's farm.

# RESIDENTIAL SUCCESS STORIES

By Andrea Baker, Manager, Residential Options Project

January and February were busy months for the Residential Options Project team. By February 15, we had completed our review with 1,999 of the 2,462 individuals who are participating in this process. Of those, 84 per cent indicated that they wish to remain in their current home. Another 16 per cent have expressed an interest in exploring residential options. Below are two stories of women who have chosen a new home.

Sarah is a young woman who lives on Vancouver Island. Since turning 18, she has lived in many places, including her own trailer on her parents' property, two family care homes, and a group home.



*Sarah in her new home.*

Sarah felt the group home was too restrictive for her needs. Due to licensing requirements and the

needs of others in the home, her choices were limited. She was not allowed to get the mail and did not have access to the kitchen area. The washrooms had to be locked at all times so Sarah had to ask staff when she wanted to use the washroom.

In October 2006, we met with Sarah and her family. They were excited about developing a plan that would give Sarah the independence she desired. Her parents set up a registered society, developed a proposal for funding, and began

remodelling a duplex to create an apartment for Sarah.

She moved into her apartment in December 2006. It is in a nice community, is on a bus route and stores and a bank are within walking distance. She still attends a day program and receives support at home from staff who help her gain the skills and confidence she needs to live independently. Sarah hopes to get a paid job and dreams of working with animals. She is thriving in her new home and recently spent her first evening without overnight staff.

Sarah and her circle of support are dedicated to making this work. Sarah is on the way to making all of her dreams come true. When you ask her family how they feel about this transition, they will tell you that "this is more than we had ever hoped!"

Penny grew up just north of Kelowna. When her mother moved into a care home, Penny tried a few different arrangements. She lived on her own and with a family friend, but eventually moved into a group home in Kelowna. She moved from the group home into a duplex that was set up to teach Penny the skills she needed to live independently. Penny was successful and moved to a subsidized apartment on her own.

She lived on her own with community support for several years, but felt somewhat unsafe and wanted to try something new. She

moved into the roommate companion program until her health needs increased, then moved into a family home. She didn't enjoy this and told her social worker she wanted to move into a group home. This was arranged and she stayed there for three years.

When her service provider asked if she would like to move in with her best friend Susan, Penny immediately



*Penny (left) and her friend Susan.*

agreed. Susan lives with a family that Penny knows well. The pair now live happily together. She and Susan eat supper with the family, but have their own space.

Thanks to a trust set up by Penny's mom, she has been able to go on a cruise and has joined the local travel club on trips to Hawaii, Disneyland, and Mexico. She enjoys going to the library, painting classes and is a member of an advocacy group. She travels independently using public transportation. When she needs support, Penny relies on her cousin and her caregivers.

At the age of 54, Penny says she wouldn't have it any other way. 🦋

Residential  
Options  
Project



## TRANSITION FAIR HELPED PEOPLE SHAPE THEIR FUTURE

By Sam Haffey, *Facilitator, CLBC*

**D**ozens of individuals and family members gathered at Burnaby South Secondary School on February 20 for the Transitions Planning Fair to share information and to learn about the possibilities available to them after high school.

Making the transition from school is an exciting and challenging time for many individuals with developmental disabilities. There are a wide range of choices to make when leaving the familiar school environment. Most are concerned with finding a worthwhile vocational path, which may include college, volunteer work, paid employment or community activities.

Families were very thankful that the transitions fair presented an opportunity to meet face-to-face with representatives from agencies, colleges and groups that can assist them in their future planning. People

attended not only from Burnaby, but across the Lower Mainland. The evening had a great sense of community as 19 agencies, including CLBC, lent their support, developed their own networks, and learned about other local agencies that share common goals. ✖



CLBC facilitators Sam Haffey and Shannon Gillin give advice to a family member at the Burnaby transitions planning fair on Feb. 20.

## PERSON-CENTRED CARNIVAL MAKES PLANNING FUN

By Melinda Heidsma, *Executive Director, AiMHi & Carol Dennison, Program Director, AiMHi*

**T** rue person-centred planning (PCP) requires person-centred thinking and at AiMHi (Prince George Association for Community

Living), we are always ready to find innovative and fun ways to accomplish important tasks. Teaching people to think in person-centred ways

– to ensure people have their wants, needs, and dreams met – is easier than you may think.

A real carnival always has music, games, hamburgers, popcorn, cotton candy, special time with your friends, and

of course, a lot of fun! So, with the help of many people, including our Prince George Self-Advocates Caucus, we enjoyed it all! Each PCP booth was interactive and designed around a PCP theme. We wanted people to share in the excitement of PCP thinking and remember that great plans are all about the uniqueness of each person – not, their support needs.

We had 140 people attend our PCP carnival, with almost everyone working on their own person-centred plans. It was a great opportunity to build enthusiasm, learn new skills, and gain momentum on this really critical topic. It was also a great excuse to get together and celebrate the great things that make each of us unique. ✖



Ashley Funk (front) presents the Donuts R Us booth at the Person-Centred Planning Carnival. Ashley helped prepare the booth with Gudrun Schmidt (back), an AiMHi employee. Participants used play-dough to show others what a support persons' role is in their life.



# WOMAN MOVES HOME AFTER 28 YEARS

By John Morran, *Communications Officer, Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Central Alberta*

**A**fter 34 years of separation and a 28-year struggle to bring their daughter Holly to BC, Freda and Morris Zemliak are reveling in their family's reunion. "It's so nice just to be able to pop in and visit now. We go to see her every day," Freda says.

Thirty-four years ago, when Holly was five, Morris and Freda admitted her to Michener Centre in Red Deer, Alberta, because there was no place in their hometown of Fort Simpson, NWT, to help look after the girl.

*"We never expected it would take this long."*

Despite the geographical distance separating Holly from her parents and her two siblings, the Zemliaks remained a close family. The family arranged for Holly to fly to the Northwest Territories for visits three times a year.

In 1978, Morris took a new job in Prince George and the Zemliaks began a 28-year journey to bring Holly to BC. "We never expected it would take this long. BC always said there's a big waiting list and Holly always seemed to be at the bottom of it," Morris says.

The Zemliaks continued to bring Holly home three times a year, but as they grew older it became more and more difficult to look after her. Morris says the drive to and from Red Deer became an ordeal.

"Sometimes it took 13 hours to go from Red Deer to Prince George. I remember how hard it was on

Holly. She became really restless and would cry every time we put her in the car to go home."

The number of annual visits dwindled until finally Morris and Freda were driving to Red Deer once a year to visit Holly. By this time, they had given up hope of getting their daughter to BC.

Morris and Freda credit Bernadette Irwin at Michener Services, a facility that supports adults with developmental disabilities, and their daughter, Muriel, for breaking the logjams that prevented Holly from reaching Victoria.

Muriel encountered many obstacles during the next five years. Holly's guardians, who all supported her wish to move, wanted her home to have 24-hour nursing care which wasn't easy to find. She also needed a home that could accommodate her extra-large wheelchair. Holly is occasionally loud and this worked against finding a home. The greatest obstacle, however, was Holly's Alberta citizenship. BC residents received priority whenever a vacancy became available.

When Bernadette heard about Holly's wish to live in BC, she looked to CLBC for assistance. Although nothing was available for Holly at the time, Bernadette stayed in contact with CLBC.

The turning point came when spots opened up in Twin Oaks, which is operated by the Victoria Community Resources Society (VCRS). Muriel visited the facility and liked it. Two officials with VCRS came to Red Deer in October to meet Holly and they decided it would be a fit.

CLBC, which funds Twin Oaks, also deemed it a good match and by November a deal was struck to move Holly to Victoria. On December 19 Holly flew to Victoria with Bernadette and two Michener employees.

The Zemliaks, although thankful for the care Holly received at Michener, are delighted that she's in BC and they say Holly has adjusted exceptionally well to her new home.

"I think what I admire the most about Holly is that she makes the most of what she has," says Muriel. "Life isn't drudgery for her. She has something like 250 words in her vocabulary, but she uses them to great effect. They give her such a connection to people even though they are so small in number." 🦋



*Freda and Morris Zemliak with their daughter Holly at her new home.*

*Get to Know*

## CLBC New Staff Members



Tamara Kulusic joins Community Living BC as the new Manager of Child and Family Supports. Tamara's role at CLBC will be to implement the Shared Care model and guide best practice in child and family supports. She was most recently at the BC Association for Community Living (BCACL), where she was the Co-ordinator of Inclusive Education and Family Support. While at BCACL, Tamara was responsible for identifying families' needs and accessing appropriate resources. Prior to BCACL, Tamara was a teaching assistant at Simon Fraser University and was involved with First Nations mentoring programs and research in Aboriginal mental health. In addition, she has published a parent's handbook on inclusive education. She has a BA and Associate of Arts Degree in Psychology and is completing her MA in Cultural Anthropology at SFU. Tamara lives in Richmond with her husband and three children. Her eldest son, Christian, has a developmental disability and autism.



Maureen McKay joins Community Living BC as the new Policy and Practice Analyst. Maureen began her career in MCFD in 1987, doing a generalized child protection caseload. In 1989 she moved to SPMH (now CLBC). Since then she has been working with families who have children with disabilities and guardianship. She has done frequent stints as acting team leader and as CLBC moved into the new model, took on the role of transformation project manager. She has since been an analyst, specializing in children's work. Maureen received her Bachelor of Social Work through the University of Calgary and has worked at the Child Development Centre and the Calgary Association for Developmental Disabilities. Maureen lives in Kelowna with her husband, teenage son, dog and two cats. When not at work, you will find her connecting with family, friends, doing some form of fitness or advocating for animal welfare. ✂

### FOR THE RECORD

The article "Residential Success Stories," in January's edition, incorrectly stated that Mel (more commonly known as Melissa) and Aaron have lived in the apartment together from the beginning. In fact, Melissa and her friend, Josh, had lived in the apartment since 1997. Josh and Melissa's families were instrumental in making the move happen. When Josh passed away in 2004, Aaron moved in shortly after. *The Citizen* regrets any misunderstanding.



# HOUSING CO-OP SUPPORTS PERSONALIZED LIFESTYLE

By **Brian Salisbury**, *Director of Strategic Planning, CLBC*

On February 9, as part of its Explorations in Innovation series, CLBC held a workshop with the Deohaeko Support Network – a small family-governed group in Pickering, Ontario. Deohaeko is an Iroquois name given to the Spirit Supporters of Life and honours aboriginal people who have occupied the Pickering area before the coming of the Europeans.

Friends of Deohaeko support personalized lifestyle and support arrangements that are built one person at a time. Their journey to intentionally plan for good lives for their adult sons and daughters with an intellectual disability began 17 years ago. Families designed and built a 105 unit housing co-operative, now home to six of their sons and daughters and over 250 typical community members.

Assisted by a part-time family co-ordinator, Deohaeko sustains a vibrant community spirit in the co-operative. Each person is supported in natural ways and with paid staff to hold a variety of work, leisure and civic roles, and relationships with a wide circle of family, friends, and neighbours.

The co-ordinator works for the group, as well as for each individual and their family. Her roles include establishing the vision, writing the support plan, building circles of support, encouraging relationships and planning for the future.

*A key to Deohaeko's success is a commitment to reach decisions as a group.*

Deohaeko believes each person has unique gifts to be offered and that creating a support network makes possible the welcoming, initial relationship building, discovery of gifts and the nurturing of community. A key to Deohaeko's success is a commitment to reach decisions as a group.

Deohaeko members have learned many important things in their journey. First, small is beautiful. Second, everything must be rooted in relationships. Third, people first must hear what people with disabilities have to offer, rather than their support requirements or limitations. Fourth, it is better to join with others who share similar values. Finally, people must be present in their community and hold valued social roles.

Funding flows through a transfer payment agency that puts no restrictions on Deohaeko's work. Families individualize and disburse funding to individuals and families based on their support plan. They also share funding when they can. Families hire staff directly, however, funding takes a back seat to helping people use their gifts in community with the support of friends and fellow citizens.

Ensuring quality support is a daily challenge as is recognizing and seizing opportunities for new relationships and nurturing and sustaining support circles. Starting again with each new paid supporter also takes time and energy. Board members continue to be uncertain about future funding and who will replace them when they aren't there in the future. There is also the challenge of juggling other family priorities.

Deohaeko Support Network is an example of how people with disabilities can take their rightful place in community alongside other citizens. The work of this family group is a testament to the power of shared, clear vision and steadfastly holding to core values and principles. 🦋



*Deohaeko Support Network Family coordinator Janet Klees and board member Janice Salisbury.*

## HELPING OTHERS TOWARDS GOALS

By Erin Hitchcock, Staff Reporter, Burnaby Now

**G**erry Juzenas has overcome personal obstacles and helped others reach their goals, earning him a Burnaby Local Hero Award for 2006.

Juzenas, who is the vice-president of the board of directors for the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, received the award at a Burnaby city council meeting in November along with 18 other citizens deemed local heroes.

Juzenas, who was born with a brain injury, helps others by sharing his own experiences, working with seniors and youth and public speaking.

"I just love it because we're working as a team," he said.

Juzenas said he once had a drinking problem. The association helped him through it, and he is now sober.

"I became a better person after BACI," he said. "I'm sober now. This is my 19th year. I'm really proud of myself."

Through training workshops, he teaches BACI staff and others about the rights of people with developmental disabilities.

He said he helps others understand

their rights and dreams through role playing, which in turn benefits Juzenas.

"That helped me a lot with my life as well," he said.

He also helped found The Voice, a newsletter written by him and other self-advocates.

Juzenas also went to Melbourne, Australia in 2001, where he spoke at the 13th World Conference of Inclusion, sharing his experiences and advocacy work.

"I was very happy to go. I shared my story and my beliefs."

While in Australia he got a chance to meet his aunt, whom he hadn't seen in 47 years, as well as cousins he had never met.

"It was just beautiful how that reunion was," he said.

Juzenas has also helped create a digital media project called This Ability, with the partnership of BACI, the National Film Board

of Canada and the United Way of the Lower Mainland.

In This Ability, Juzenas interviewed a friend who lived in an institution.

He hopes the project will continue to grow, but it currently lacks further funding.

Juzenas was happy to find out he was nominated as a local hero and when he received the phone call that informed him he had won, he was thrilled.

"My reaction was so very excited, so overwhelmed. I said it was the nicest thing that's ever happened to me in Burnaby." ✖



(Photo: Larry Wright, Burnaby Now) Gerry Juzenas says his work helping people with developmental disabilities has been a boon to his own life and experiences.

## CLBC BOARD CHAIR RECEIVES CANADA'S HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOUR

**L**ois Hollstedt, Community Living BC's Board of Directors Chair, has been named to the Order of Canada. The award is the centrepiece of Canada's Honours System and recognizes a lifetime

of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation.

Hollstedt was nominated by her former colleagues at the YWCA of Vancouver. She will attend a formal

ceremony in Ottawa within the next six months to receive her award.

"The Order of Canada is Canada's highest civilian honour and it's pretty exciting to think that you're deserving of it," said Hollstedt. ✖



## PROJECT ALLOWS FAMILIES TO HELP EACH OTHER

By Brian Salisbury, *Director of Strategic Planning, CLBC*

A new project involving families with a microboard, the Vela Microboard Association and CLBC will assist families in CLBC's Surrey/Delta/Richmond quality service area who have small one-time only funding needs. Families Helping Families is a family-governed project that will review one-time only funding requests from families living in these three communities, decide if they meet the committee's criteria, and allocate funds accordingly.

Along with CLBC base funding, microboards that hold an unexpected surplus can voluntarily give these funds to the project for use by other families requiring support. This is not an expectation of microboards; other processes exist to account for allocated funds. However, all microboards will be made aware of this opportunity to assist others. It is anticipated that the funding pool will fluctuate each year.

The governance committee currently has three family members from the project area. Families Helping Families' vision is that there will be one family each from Richmond, Delta and Surrey. This will include one person from a microboard, and at least one parent with a child. The goal is to ensure that members have a range of experiences and understand community living supports and services. Members must be people whose funding and support needs are currently being met and able to demonstrate respect for others' differences and unique circumstances.

Vela provides administrative assistance and will ensure applicants include all relevant information. Only complete applications will be forwarded to the committee and all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Once committee decisions are made, Vela will send a letter to the family outlining the response and provide the requested funding, where approved. All committee decisions are final.

Once the committee is up and running, and the process becomes more familiar, meetings will likely occur every two to three months, although the frequency may be adjusted depending upon the number of applications. Readers can learn more about family governance by visiting the CLBC website.

For more information on this project, or to apply, please contact Linda Perry at Vela Microboard Association, at

[lindaperry@microboard.org](mailto:lindaperry@microboard.org) or 604-575-2588. 

### WHAT IS A FAMILY-GOVERNED PROJECT?

Family-governed projects are developed by small family groups to arrange and oversee their supports as a group. They are an important element of CLBC's commitment to community governance because they support family-level decision-making. Families can take on as much, or little, responsibility as they want to create and oversee unique support arrangements tailored to their needs. A host agency often provides administrative support. This option offers many advantages of incorporation without the many responsibilities involved. Families Helping Families is an example of this approach.

## CONFERENCE WILL PROMOTE FRIENDSHIP, BELONGING


Discovering the Power of Friendship and Belonging, which will be held from May 3 to 4, is the first conference of its kind. Participants will learn how to build relationships and promote inclusive communities.

The event will be held at the

Coast Hotel, located at 20392 Fraser Highway in Langley. The full conference fee is \$199.00 and includes the Friday evening lecture and lunch on Thursday and Friday.

The two keynote speakers for the conference are Azim Jamal, a leading inspirational speaker and

an international best-selling author, and Meg Wheatley, co-founder and President Emerita of The Berkana Institute, a charitable foundation serving life-affirming leaders.

For more information and to register for the event, please visit [www.youvegottahavefriends.ca](http://www.youvegottahavefriends.ca). 


## CLBC SPONSORS SCREENING OF ACCLAIMED FILMS



CLBC is co-sponsoring a screening of the celebrated film, "The Boy Inside," as part of the Vancouver Jewish Film Festival. The movie takes an intimate look at documentarian Marianne Kaplan's family as her 12-year-old son Adam, who has Asperger's syndrome, struggles to survive the schoolyard's social climate.

The screening will also feature the film, "Shameless: The Art of Disability," in which art, activism and disability are the starting point for a funny and intimate portrait of five surprising individuals.

"The Boy Inside" was featured at the Vancouver International Film Festival this September and also on CBC Newsworld. The directors of the films, as well as Marianne's son, Adam, will take part in a 20-minute discussion period after the screenings.

The event will take place on Thursday, March 29 at the VanCity Theatre in Vancouver. The screening will begin at 7 p.m. and finish by 9 p.m. Tickets are \$15.00 for adults and \$11.00 for students or seniors. They are available by calling 604-488-4300, at the venue on the day of the screening, or by visiting [www.vijff.com](http://www.vijff.com). 

## FAIR WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION TO CHINESE COMMUNITY

An information fair, which will be held on Saturday, March 24, will provide the Lower Mainland's Chinese population with information for people with developmental disabilities and their families.


The event will be held at the office of the Chinese Christian Mission in the Crystal Mall in Burnaby. It will begin at 10:00 a.m. and finish by 5:00 p.m.

The key-note speaker is Dr. Helena Ho – a developmental pediatrician and a Professor Emeritus of UBC. She headed the Sunny Hill Child Development Program and Autism Team for a number of years.

Panels made up of family members, service providers,

professionals, CLBC staff and self-advocates, will speak throughout the day about their experiences and answer questions.

Speeches will be conducted in either English, Mandarin or Cantonese. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided. Please bring a portable FM radio if interpretation is required.

For more information, including the event schedule, please visit the Events section of our website. 





## NEW BOOK FOCUSES ON PEOPLE WITH DUAL DIAGNOSIS

**F**or families with a child who has a developmental disability, it can take a lot of time to understand how to best support them. But what if they learned, just as their child is reaching adolescence, that some of their child's behavioural issues stemmed from an undiagnosed mental illness?

Success Stories from the Front Line, a new book compiled by the Fraser Valley and West Coast Mental Health Support Team, hopes to inspire, educate and assist those families with a child who is dually diagnosed with a developmental disability and a mental illness.

"We have some families who have some really great stories and could be a help to others," says Tina Donnelly, manager for developmental disabilities and mental health services with the Fraser Valley and West Coast Mental Health Support Team.

The book, which was released in December, features stories from family members and individuals who are dually diagnosed with a developmental disability and a mental illness.

It also includes illustrations by Delta artist Riiva Talve, depicting her struggle with obsessive compulsive disorder, and a poem by Mission resident, Tracy Martin, called A Little About Me.

"This book is important," says Tracy, "because all too often people with a developmental disability who experience mental health concerns are not treated properly."

Individuals with a developmental disability are two to three times more likely to have a mental illness than the general public, says Dr. Robin Friedlander, clinical director of the Fraser Valley and West Coast Mental Health Support Team.

A mental illness is harder to diagnose in people with developmental disabilities because some can't speak well or communicate how they are feeling, says Dr. Friedlander. And many times, when individuals end up in the hospital, the behaviour issue is often seen as a symptom of their developmental disability.

The book is the first to tell the stories of families who are dually

diagnosed, says Tina. Families would often say that when their child develops the mental illness, there are no resources for them to understand how a mental illness works with a developmental disability. Dr. Friedlander and Tina hope this book will address that need.

The book is available at any Fraser Valley or West Coast Mental Health Support Team office, or at Black Bond Books. Their locations can be found by visiting [www.blackbondbooks.com](http://www.blackbondbooks.com). The cost of the book is \$15.00. ✎



*Maple Ridge-Mission MLA Randy Hawes congratulates Tracy Martin on the publication of her poem in Success Stories from the Front Line.*

## STAY CONNECTED WITH CLBC

It is a major priority of Community Living BC to communicate with the people they serve, their families, service providers and stakeholders. We promise to provide the most up-to-date information in a timely and consistent manner.

But we need your help. In order for us to provide better communication, we need to collect your contact information. If you are interested in receiving the latest news from CLBC, please visit our website at

[www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca), fill out the contact form from the Contact Us section and provide us with all of your contact details. If you do not have access to the Internet, please call 604-664-0101, to provide our receptionist with your name, address, phone numbers, affiliation, and e-mail address.

Free access to the Internet is available at all public libraries across BC. You can also sign up for a free e-mail address at [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com) or [www.yahoo.ca](http://www.yahoo.ca). ✎

## GRANTS ALLOW CHILDREN TO REMAIN AT HOME WITH THEIR FAMILIES

**S**even BC families, who have children with developmental disabilities, have been awarded grants totalling more than \$230,000.


The \$30-million Family Independence Fund, provided by Community Living BC to Vancouver Foundation, provides grants through the Giving In Action Society to help families who have an adult or child with a developmental disability buy equipment, convert vehicles and renovate homes so loved ones may remain at home and gain greater access to their communities.

Approved by the volunteer committee overseeing the grants at their first grant review meeting, these families will now be able to make vehicle and home adaptations to improve access, mobility and quality of life for their children or family member.

"This grant has made our life simpler in caring for our

son," says Susan Gardner. "Andrew has an improved quality of life – he can enjoy a bath, he has more privacy and independence and as a family we have greater accessibility within our home. It is so nice to have!"

The first grant recipients have received anywhere from \$7,000 to \$50,000 to help cover the costs of keeping their child at home. The money will be used to purchase wheelchair accessible vans, tracking systems and make home renovations. They live in several different areas of the province: Abbotsford, Delta, Kimberley, Langley, North Vancouver, Port Coquitlam and Prince George.

"The Family Independence Fund will help families stay together," said Lois Hollstedt, chair, CLBC Board of Directors. "It will assist individuals to have rich relationships with family and friends and realize full participation in community life." 

## CONTACT US



*The Citizen* is published every two months by CLBC's Communications Department. It is your information source for news that's relevant to the individuals and families CLBC supports. The views and opinions expressed in *The Citizen* are not necessarily those held by CLBC. We are always on the lookout for inspirational stories about people in the community. If you know of an event that others might like to know about, an issue that invites debate, or news worth reporting, let us know. While we appreciate story ideas and submissions, *The Citizen* reserves the right to edit content for accuracy, grammar and space, but strives to maintain the integrity and voice of the author.

If you have a story suggestion, feedback on the newsletter, or would like to subscribe to a paper version of *The Citizen*, please e-mail: [editor@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:editor@communitylivingbc.ca)

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If you have a general question about CLBC, please e-mail: [info@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:info@communitylivingbc.ca)

For the most up-to-date information on CLBC, please visit our website at: [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca)



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