

WINTER
2015

THE STAR



Developmental
Disabilities Association

IN THIS ISSUE

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	2
Employment for People with Disabilities	
A NEW PLAYGROUND	4
A Berwick & UBC Partnership	
JUICING AT SHERBROOKE	5
The Tradition Continues!	
ARTIST PROFILE	6
A Closer Look at David Purkis	
HOLIDAY OPTIONS	6
A Look Back at this Summer 2015	

INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT	10
Celebrating Inclusion in the Work Force	
EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR	11
Buy Low Foods Employer of the Year	
WALKATHON	12
Third Annual Walk & Roll-a-Thon	
TAX ASSISTANCE & INFORMATION	15
Assistance & Info for Income Tax Filing	
'TIS THE SEASON TO GIVE BACK	15
Ways to Lend a Helping Hand	

EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES – AN EVOLUTION

PAGE 2





“
... employment
for people with
developmental disabilities
requires good social policy
and a plan with specified
outcomes and measures
”

EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES – AN EVOLUTION

BY ALANNA HENDREN

Employment for people with developmental disabilities is a trend that is taking over the developed world, but at DDA in Vancouver we have been getting jobs for people in the community for over 30 years. In Canada in the mid-1980's, the federal government launched a program for the 'Severely Employment Disadvantaged' in an attempt to get jobs for people facing the biggest barriers to life in the workforce. Many B.C. community living agencies developed these programs that were supported by one BCACL (Inclusion BC) staff, provincial vocational rehabilitation staff and federal employment benefits administrators.

During this 'first wave' we managed to get jobs for most of the 'higher functioning' clients who had been languishing in sheltered workshops. DDA made employer contacts quickly, developing a relationship with McDonald's restaurants, helping them employ folks with disabilities throughout the lower mainland and we created Jobs West, an employment agency that continues to specialize in employment for people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities. Some of the people who got jobs during these earlier times continue to be employed – some with the same employer over 30 years – but the cost of providing the supports necessary for those with greater barriers exceeded the wages paid to the individual and in some cases, agency staff literally worked hand-over-hand in order for the person to be able to do the job. This was also a great time of experimentation – work crews, enclaves, self-employment and other options were created within this partnership between community agencies, employers, the Ministry of Social Services and Housing (back in the day) and the federal government.

Once these programs were launched, many did not survive the withdrawal of federal funds and reverted back to a sheltered workshop style of day programming, but DDA closed our sheltered workshops in 1998 and 1999. We

developed Starworks so that those who could not gain community employment could work for their own "company" within DDA, making minimum wage or more within a supportive work environment with the flexibility to meet their unique individual needs.

We were somewhat surprised when CLBC launched their own employment initiative only a few years ago in spite of the success of employment programs (generic and specialized) that were already getting people jobs in the community. This current initiative seeks to involve all care providers, families and others in helping people with developmental disabilities get jobs.

A few families are having success with this, as are some service providers, but employment specialists are people who are trained to: nurture relationships with a bank of employer contacts, match the right job to the right person, support the individual through on-the-job training (and making social connections at the work site), and follow up with the employer and employee at least annually thereafter to make sure both parties are having their needs met. Most families do not have the time, ability or resources to act as an employment specialist (even if their adult child has no disabilities). Most employers also object to in dealing with Mom when they hire a new employee.

There are also individual considerations that many families are not aware of once people with a developmental disability get a job. Some people require flexible work schedules. Others do not want to work so many hours that they may lose their government benefits. Some may be able to do the job but have behaviors or social skills that are not conducive to employment. Others have 'jobs' that pay far less than minimum wage and although these jobs may offer socialization and inclusion opportunities, they are not self-supporting. Some families want their adult son or daughter to gain competitive employment in an inclusive setting, but with a one-to-one staff because they fear for the individual's safety.

There have also been untrained agency staff who have helped people with a developmental disability apply for a job with the best of intentions, but they have no idea about considerations such as job matching, job training, meeting employer expectations and on-the-job support. Often these situations end up with the failure of the individual who was employed without support and an



employer who has no interest in ever hiring someone with a disability again. The average cost of gaining employment for our Jobs West clients is less than \$5,000 each, so having untrained support staff or families substitute for employment specialists doesn't make much practical or economic sense.

Governments today – in the US, Norway, Poland, Japan, South Korea and many others – have recently launched initiatives to gain employment for people with developmental disabilities and all these jurisdictions have faced the challenges of overcoming barriers to success in the work world. In an attempt to get disabled adults off public assistance and into the workforce, each of these countries also enacted employment quotas to promote hiring people with any form of disability, who otherwise face an unemployment rate of about 44%, depending on jurisdiction.

employers to provide work experiences (that usually end in job offers) but after the legislation, employers come to them.

There are solutions to the employment challenges for people with disabilities that have observable, measurable rates of success, but having families become responsible for getting a job for their own child is not one of them. First we must have consensus on what a 'job' is. Does it mean employment as defined by the Employment Standards Act, for example? Or is it something else? Does it mean the ability to support oneself? Or is it the maximum we can contribute to the workforce? Should all people work, even those with severe disabilities? Are there Worker's Compensation considerations? These are questions that today are somewhat murky and lead to confusion when employment is discussed.



We developed Starworks so that those who could not gain community employment could work for their own "company" within DDA.



A recent study in the US of employers recruiting for positions indicated that people who disclosed a disability in a covering letter were almost 50% less likely to receive an interview than those with the same or poorer qualifications with no disabilities. To overcome this kind of cultural bias, the federal government in the US has imposed a quota whereby 7% of their employees and those of their contractors must have a disability. Poland fines employers who do not meet their quotas and these funds are re-invested in vocational training for people with disabilities. Japan fines employers who do not meet their quota (2% of all employees in companies with 15 or more staff) \$30,000US per disabled employee they are under quota. Prior to this legislation, Japanese schools and community agencies had to entice

CLBC wants to change the world so it is a better place for people with developmental disabilities and this is a noble pursuit. In order to see real cultural change, however, the culture must be nudged into changing and we must accept the reality of life as it is today. At DDA we are blessed with connections to all sorts of fantastic employers who hire the folks we support because they understand the value proposition and want to do the right thing, but as other countries have realized, employment for people with disabilities requires good social policy and a plan with specified targets, outcomes and measures. This is exactly what we need in British Columbia today.



BERWICK & UBC PARTNERED PLAYGROUND

BY K. ROBINSON

Over the past 40 years, Berwick Child Development Centre and UBC have had a strong partnership. We are thrilled as we continue to benefit from this collaboration with new improvements to our playgrounds! We would like to say a big THANK YOU to UBC Hard landscaping, carpenters and metal workers for their great work and dedication. These UBC teams have been great at checking in and making sure the plans are clear and that the work does not endanger our children. This year a brand new, eco-friendly pathway has been created, making our perimeter yard even more accessible for children of all abilities. By replacing the rotting wood around the sandbox, it will be more aesthetically pleasing and safer for the children to dig, make castles and have tea parties. The kids have loved watching the workers in action, especially the big “digger!” We appreciate the friendly waves and smiles from them that provide excitement and joy! The recently installed balance beam helps children have fun while working on their motor skills and coordination. On top of all that, in the main yard, the restored boat at our “creek” has provided many fun adventures for the children at Berwick. We look forward to our continued partnership with UBC.



JUICING AT SHERBROOKE CONTINUES

BY: ANGELA HAMMOND

At Sherbrooke, we're all about juicing! Doug and Tom first learned how to juice years ago from a previous staff member, but now Robert and Trevor juice as well. The juicing program is very healthy, packed full of vitamins and minerals, and helps keep your body strong.

Each batch of juice can be different. On a typical day, our juice includes 2 apples, 3 stalks of celery, 2 carrots, 2 kiwis, 1 cucumber, lettuce, and beets. Depending on the season, we may also add watermelon, cantaloupe, pineapple, bok choy – you name it, we've probably juiced it! A tip from Doug – lemons and onions do not work! We even juice kale, but Doug must first put it through the extruder, an attachment which grinds the kale very fine. You can even juice the peels and rind of certain items, which leads to less waste!

Juicing is a great option for people who do not like to eat a lot of vegetables. In fact, this is how juicing came to be at Sherbrooke. Juicing often produces a sweet flavor, making a more desirable serving of vegetables. You can accommodate individual tastes and preferences in a single batch. As Robert does not like beets, we pour Robert's glass before the beets are added at the end.

We go to different markets around Vancouver once a week, to buy the juicing produce for the week. This is a great way to support our local economy and get to know the community we live in. We have even tried growing our own ingredients. The alfalfa sprouts were very successful; sadly, our broccoli was not. Next on our list is to grow wheatgrass. We were all ready to plant it, when we realized we bought wheat instead of wheatgrass! Needless to say, it is NOT the same thing. If anyone out there has the space and motivation to grow some wheat, we've got you covered!

Our iPads are an integral part of our juicing program. We use the iPad to research new juicing recipes, which produce items that can and cannot be juiced, and which markets are in our community. We also use the iPad to take photos of the finished product! Furthermore, we plan to use our iPad to make a "How To Juice" video, as a way to share our knowledge and teach others.

We juice 5 days/week, and are always trying new recipes. If you are interested in learning how to juice, please contact us at New Sherbrooke. Doug is an experienced juicer, and has offered to share his knowledge and teach others how to juice. We hope to hear from you!

Cheers!



HOLIDAY OPTIONS 2015

BY JACKIE LANZ

The summer has come and gone and it was one of visiting with old friends, making new friends and experiences.

For what appeared to be a quiet summer of travel to our preferred places, there were a few pleasant surprises along the way. This taught me as the planner of adventure, and to the travelers, that we don't always need to think big adventure in order to get the most enjoyment from our experiences.

We knew early into the planning stages that it was very likely that due to the strength of the US dollar in comparison to our Canadian dollar, it was going to make "the big trips" involving flights or cruise ships, out of reach for most of our traveler's budgets. I reassured myself that this was going to be alright and that we would make the most out of our local trips. That is exactly what we did and as a result I wanted to share this one memory with you;

In previous years we had always provided the Buntzen Lake canoe & picnic as a day trip. Slowly, all on its own it had turned into what I was referring to as the "man trip". Certainly we did not limit this trip just to the men, but registration names began to depict it as a trip for men. Around the same time I also had requests from some of the female travelers about how they desired a "ladies day". Well of course they did! Why had I not thought of this previously? When reflecting on my own memorable and relaxing experiences, they were usually shared with others with the same interests that I enjoyed most.



ARTIST PROFILE: DAVID PURKIS

BY: KIM ALMOND

David Purkis is a talented artist and communicator. He signs and understands spoken words, but he is often interacting with people who don't understand sign language. This can be frustrating, requiring great patience and strength of character. David is an amazing person who enjoys life, builds and maintains new friendships and has many interests and connections within the community. Many of his paintings include text but they are most often expressed using a decorative pattern. Some of David's paintings do include actual words; these paintings with words are often about music and horses. All of his paintings are about some kind of communication and or love of colour. He has worked in both acrylic, clay and water colour, including whimsical portraits of Elvis.

David as a person and as an artist embraces accidental mishaps and always finds the humour in life. David has to express and communicate his enjoyment and or happiness very clearly to the world otherwise he may miss out on an opportunity!

One day I spilled very blue paint brush water on his painting; David just laughed and laughed and signed stop. He loved the colour splash and it actually became a part of the composition. David has the delightful ability to be supportive and thrilled for his friends and the artistic sensibility to appreciate when a friends painting is working. His work is both joyful and expressive.

David's artwork was recently chosen for a juried competition.



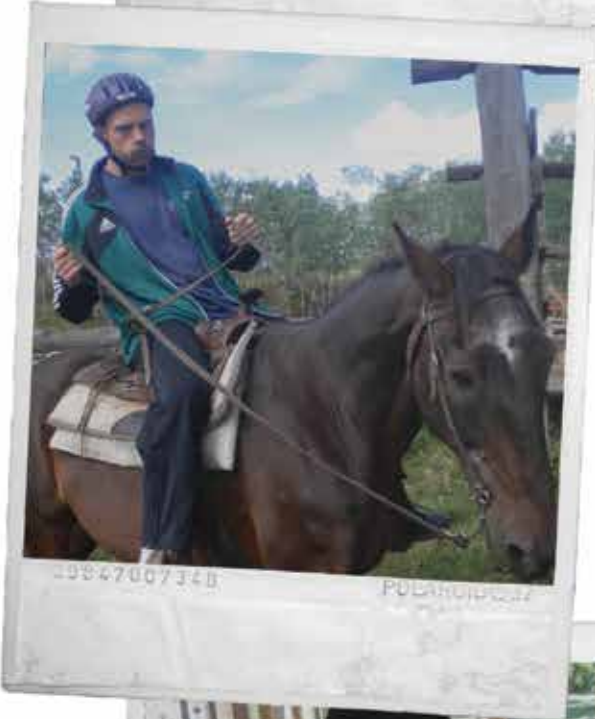
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As a result, Holiday Options travelers, first official “Day for the Ladies” was born. an excursion shared by twelve lovely women. Individuals from different areas of the city, some of which had never spent any time together before, thoroughly enjoyed themselves as if they had known each other for years. Of course I can’t share all the details of the day, but it did start out with a drive to Langley BC for high tea lunch, conversation and laughs. From there the group proceeded on to a spa where nails and toes reflected every color in the rainbow and of course the conversation continued!

I participated in the event as an observer, and for some of the ladies it was the first time they had experienced a day to pamper themselves. I heard several positive comments and saw many, many, smiles throughout the day, but the most memorable comments I heard were, “I feel like I’ve died and gone to heaven” and “this is the best day ever”.

It wasn’t what you might consider a big trip but what I felt and heard from everyone that shared in the day, that it was pure enjoyment! It reaffirmed to me that regardless of what each of our lives bring to us; we all need to have experiences that bring us joy.





RESIDENTIAL SUMMER BBQ

BY TASIA ALEXIS

We had a wonderful party at Trout Lake on July 2, attended by over 30 people from numerous homes. A great time was had by all!

The party was an excellent time to wish Mahvash, the former manager of East 47th and Commercial House, a fond farewell. Good luck with your future endeavors.

We can't wait for next year's BBQ!



TOM KELLY DECEMBER 1956 – JULY 2015

BY ANDREA STUMPF

Tom enjoyed life. He made everyone around him, residents, staff, friends and family feel very special. We were often greeted with, "you're a gorgeous doll".

As soon as the weather started to warm, Tom would sit on the garden swing in his backyard, talking loudly to himself and greeting everyone as they passed by. At Arlington Day Program he preferred a rocking chair where he would look at a Sears catalogue and listen to the radio, keeping us all updated on the weather and breaking news.

Tom was a big Vancouver Canucks, Canadians Baseball, and Lions Football fan. Tom would support his home teams with inventive, boisterous verbal encouragement aimed at the TV, making it easier for everyone in the house to follow the progress of the game.

Tom loved going on dinner cruises and had participated for several years with the Holiday Options summer program through DDA. He was able to attend several Carol Cruises at Christmas time as well. These were often popular trips for our staff. Attending these events with Tom always proved to be a memorable affair!

Tom supported the Vancouver Canadians Team, a passion that he shared with his family. Last summer he was able to be on the field with the Canadian players as a guest of the Challengers Baseball Program, which supports young people with disabilities to be able to play baseball.

Tom had a sentimental fondness for the Legendary Burger at White Spot and a coffee at Tim Hortons. He often asked new staff if they would like to go for a walk to Tim Hortons to grab a coffee as a way to get to know them better.

It was comforting to know that Tom did many of his favourite things the day before he passed away. He saw a movie, went to White Spot and followed that up with a coffee at Tim Hortons. He, as usual, remarked how beautiful the staff who served him were. Tom picked up a new Sears catalogue at the mall and read it on his swing before going to bed.

He lived for more than 20 years with the Arlington Community and will be greatly missed.



NEW CLOTHING DONATION BINS IN THE LOWER MAINLAND

THANK YOU to our new bin hosts for supporting DDA

Be sure to drop off your donations at any of our white DDA donation bins!



Shoppers Drug Mart
3215 St John St. Port Moody



Bosley's by PetValu
1905 Lonsdale Ave, North Vancouver



Garden Grove Nursery
1654 264th St., Aldergrove



Glacier Bay & Wine Makers
5101 Ladner Trunk Rd., Ladner



Rollins Machinery Ltd.
21869 56th Ave., Langley



Rose Pharmacy
1483 Marine Drive, West Vancouver



Church's Chicken
2504 Kingsway St., Vancouver



Chartwell Retirement
Residences
12275 224th St., Maple Ridge



GardenWorks
705 3rd St West, North Vancouver



Heshun Rosewood Senior
Centre
11742 225th St, Maple Ridge



General Paint
1882 Marine Drive, North Vancouver



Cloverdale Paint
1624 Pemberton Ave, North Vancouver



St. Stephen's Church
885 22nd St., West Vancouver



SunnySide Self Storage
15553 24th Ave., Surrey



Royal LePage Realty
1333-56th St., Tsawwassen



KalTire
1851 Lougheed Hwy, Coquitlam



Brentwood Presbyterian
1600 Delta Ave, Burnaby



Millenium Ink Custom Tattoos
1814 Lonsdale Ave, North Vancouver



Me-N-Ed's
2010 Sumas Way, Abbotsford



Richmond Pentecostal Church
9300 Westminster Hwy, Richmond



Inno Bakery
2332 Marpole Ave, Coquitlam



Queen Anne Apartments
106 - 12186 224 St., Maple Ridge

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CELEBRATING INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT IN BC

September was British Columbia's Disability Employment Month and in celebration Avia Employment Services held a recognition event highlighting the success stories of job seekers and employees living with disabilities. Jobs West staff and WorkBC candidates working with Jobs West were invited to share their experiences and success stories. One such candidate, Monica gave an eloquent speech sharing her success story.

BY MONICA

Hi, I'm Monica and I have struggled with challenges throughout my life. Since I was a very young child, I have struggled to reach the milestones that the general population take for granted. Everyone has dreams and expectations. Growing up developmentally I was behind in many areas, including in emotional/psychological maturation and physical coordination.

One major milestone that just about everyone takes for granted in adulthood is in the area of securing employment and supporting oneself. Someone with disabilities is no different. But I struggled immensely. From cashier to receptionist to postal clerk at Canada Post, I always tried my best, but had trouble keeping up with all the demands of the work environment. I could not multitask. It was incredibly difficult for me to focus at times as I became overwhelmed. Other times I was too hyper focussed – focussing on something too much and not being able to move on to the next task. Job after job I failed. None of the various employment programs I sought could help me. They let me know about available employment opportunities, but nobody could provide me with the help I needed for maintaining successful employment and being fired at various jobs made me feel like a complete failure as a person in adulthood.

I had given everything I had, but that still wasn't good enough. No employment program knew how to help me and could not find an employer who was patient and understanding enough to accommodate my needs and challenges, yet focus on my strengths. I was going to give up on ever securing employment when I decided to give it one last try. I found out about Avia and attended their orientation. There I was set up with my case manager, Lani. I didn't expect much from Avia as I already had a very long history of employment programs. But Lani was very insightful and had much wisdom when I described to her the challenges I have struggled with since I was very young. After reading the medical report from my family doctor and the results of my psychological/vocational testing, she advised me to seek the services of DDA – Developmental Disabilities Association.

Of all the employment programs I have sought, Jobs West from DDA has provided me with the most comprehensive services. Like Lani from Avia, they have invaluable wisdom and insightfulness. The employment specialists are instinctively aware of the unique challenges of persons with various developmental disabilities and assess the needs of the whole person – not just concentrate on work skills like previous employment programs. My employment specialist has visited me at my home, had coffee with me at the mall, and volunteered with me in order to accurately evaluate my challenges and strengths to find the best fit for successful employment. Jobs West

“
Of all the employment programs I have sought, Jobs West from DDA has provided me with the most comprehensive services.
”



▲ ABOVE: Monica (right) with Jobs West Manager, Delia Meinhardt at the British Columbia Disability Employment celebration in September

understands that someone with developmental challenges needs support/ advice in all areas of life in order to be successful at employment, such as housing, meal preparation, and handling one's emotions in the midst of difficult situations.

In April, a manufacturing company, called Dpoint approached Jobs West about their interest in hiring a client from DDA. The CEO of Dpoint had some connections with DDA and really wanted to provide someone with disabilities a chance to work. During my first week of work, my employment specialist stayed with me for the full 8 hour shift and provided support for me as needed. Since then, my current employment counsellor, Ashley, still visits me on the work site periodically and provides support, advice, and encouragement when I am particularly overwhelmed and challenged. Finally, after so many years of failure, Jobs West has been the only employment program that has been able to help me secure work for an employer who is patient, understanding, and accommodating.

It's been nearly 5 months since I started working at Dpoint and there are times when I feel like I no longer can do this and want to give up and quit. An example is when just the other day I had a meltdown because in an instant my hard work sunk like quicksand and was destroyed. And then I cried because I was absolutely exhausted but I needed coffee but there wasn't any! A young, nice-looking engineer told me not to cry over spilled milk! The next morning with ongoing issues at work, but still no coffee, overcome with emotion, I phoned my job coach and within a short time, she arrived to the rescue with a cup of coffee and calm, comforting, reassuring words. My supervisors at work have always kept encouraging me to keep striving forward and they regularly acknowledge how I always try my best – as does my employment counsellor Ashley. And I am so very, very glad that I pushed myself to walk into the doors of Avia where I met Lani who was so insightful to know what kind of support I needed. My heart is full of overflowing gratitude to Avia and DDA and to the CEO, manager, and supervisors at Dpoint thank you all!



BUY LOW FOODS AWARDED JOBS WEST EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR 2015

BY KIRSTI INGLIS

At Jobs West, we are privileged to work with many fantastic employers and each year face the difficult task of selecting just one to be our employer of the year. However this year, selecting an outstanding employer in recognition of their commitment to creating an inclusive workforce was a clear choice, Buy Low Foods.

Over the last 10 years Jobs West has built a relationship with Buy Low Foods that has grown to include several Buy Low brands and stores, including Nesters Market, Meinhardt Fine Foods, Van-Whole Produce and Buy Low Foods locations. Today, Buy Low Foods locations employ 4 Jobs West candidates in a variety of roles, from traditional positions to customized roles that best utilize the skills and abilities of the employee and create added benefit for the store. In addition to hiring staff, Buy Low Foods has also assisted numerous job seekers by providing training opportunities and informational interviews.

From the beginning, Buy-Low Foods has recognized the abilities and important contributions that persons with developmental disabilities could bring to the workplace. Buy-Low Foods has demonstrated a corporate culture that is welcoming of diversity and in which the skills and abilities of all employees are recognized and celebrated. From the individual partners, to the store managers and supervisors we have experienced nothing but eagerness to work with Jobs West.

From all of us at Jobs West and the DDA we would like to congratulate Buy Low Foods on being Jobs West Employer of the Year!

THANK YOU

On behalf of



Developmental
Disabilities Association



United Way
Lower Mainland

We would like to thank the following businesses for their generous contributions to our United Way fundraiser:

***Meinhardt Fine Foods** for a luxurious gift basket and **Brodie Bikes** for the Brodie Bikes gear and wine.*



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We match our candidates with your available positions. Onsite support is provided for the employer and the candidate until all job requirements are met. We maintain contact with the employee on a regular basis for any re-training or change in job requirements.

www.jobswestdda.ca



WALK ROLL-A-THON

BY CATHERINE, JANICE AND JEFF

Since the introduction of the Summer Fitness Project three years ago, the Developmental Disabilities Association has hired three Kinesiology students each summer. This year's Summer Fitness Students - Catherine, Janice and Jeff - spent two weeks at each of the four DDA Adult Day Programs and two weeks at the Drop-In Centre. We were hired to assess the fitness level and needs of the clients and the fitness programming at each Day Program. Our job was to then develop or improve resources that can be implemented by the staff throughout the year to improve the clients' fitness.

To understand what each Day Program needed in terms of specific fitness concerns and goals, the first few days were spent shadowing the clients and staff with their regular schedules. Through this time we were able to get to know the clients and staff better so that the developed resources would be more personalized and useful. The rest of the two weeks were spent creating and implementing these resources. The staff reported that the videos made by last year's Fitness Students were highly effective; therefore, we created more videos that were slower, longer and easier to follow. We also put all the videos on one disc for the staff's convenience. At a few sites, we created exercise posters that were easily used by staff to lead clients in different exercises either for morning exercise or scheduled fitness activities.

Our final project was to organize and coordinate the 3rd Annual Walk & Roll-a-thon for all of DDA's Adult Day Programs, including the home-based Programs and Drop-In Centre. This event was intended to encourage all DDA clients to participate in a walk together. We had a large turnout with approxi-

mately 150 clients and 50 staff. The day started off with a warm up before the walk, and then clients and staff proceeded to walk around Trout Lake for an hour, getting in some cardio. This was followed by a BBQ lunch that was cooked by volunteers and served by DDA Day Program Managers. Judy finished off the day by leading the whole group in a fun-filled music session.

Thanks for a great summer everybody!

Catherine, Janice and Jeff are three Kinesiology students from UBC who were hired to be part of DDA as Summer Fitness Students from May-August 2015.





BOLLYWOOD DANCING

BY WILSON LAW

DDA's Bollywood Dance team had a very successful and entertaining performance at the Bell Performing Arts Centre.

The event was attended by over 1,000 people!



BY DOUG LANG

This is a painting of Joy Elluk's latest work of art, completed in Kim's class. This is a phenomenal piece.

I showed it to Richard Tetrault, one of Vancouver's leading artists and muralists, and his response was, "This person needs to paint."

CONTRIBUTE TO THE STAR!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have comments, thoughts, or your own stories about DDA or people with developmental disabilities?

Here's your chance to become a **STAR CONTRIBUTOR!**



JULIE'S ANNIVERSARY SPEECH

BY JULIE HUBER

On October the 8th, I had 19 people come to my 10 year anniversary party at Worthington. We had pizza, chicken salad and chocolate cake. It was great to see all our friends again. I got some amazing gifts. The brita filter was a great gift. I also got a necklace and a smoothie's cookbook. I love to make smoothies. My mom and I have a favourite smoothie called Strawberry Banana. It's been a great 10 years. Looking forward to the upcoming years!

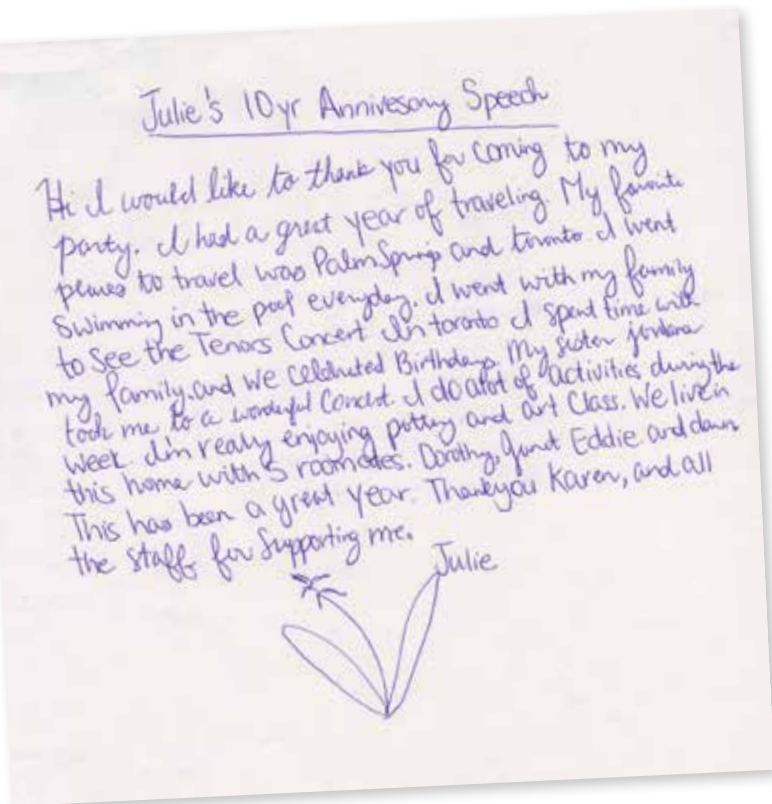


FAREWELL, NOORIE!

BY WILSON LAW

We had a wonderful farewell party for Noorie the former manager of Sherbrooke House.

A lot of clients, staff and friends came over to celebrate her retirement and birthday. Best of luck Noorie!



TAX ASSISTANCE & INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



DABC: Who We Are

For over 35 years, DABC (formerly BC Coalition of People with Disabilities) has been a provincial, cross-disability voice in British Columbia. DABC's mission is to support people, with all disabilities, to live with dignity, independence and as equal and full participants in the community. We champion issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities through our direct services, community partnerships, advocacy, research and publications. You can learn more about DABC's work at www.disabilityalliancebc.org.

What is Tax AID?

Tax Assistance & Information for People with Disabilities (Tax AID DABC) is a Disability Alliance BC (DABC) program that provides free and confidential assistance and information with income tax filing.

Who is Eligible?

People who receive:

- Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits, or
- Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) benefits.

What We Do

We can help prepare simple income tax returns for the most recent tax year, as well as for prior years. We are very happy to help people who have multiple years of taxes to file. If we cannot prepare your income tax return for you, we will do our best to help you find resources in your community that can.

Need Help with Disability Benefits and Programs?

For over 25 years, DABC's Advocacy Access program has been a place of support, information and advocacy for people with disabilities. Our mission is to help our clients receive the government benefits and services to which they are entitled. The heart of our program is free one-to-one assistance with provincial benefits and Canada Pensions.

Disability benefits (CPP-D). Call 604-872-1278 or Toll-Free 1-800-663-1278 for details, or visit www.disabilityalliancebc.org/programs/advocacy.htm

Taxes don't need to be taxing! Contact us today. **Tax AID DABC**
taxaid@disabilityalliancebc.org 604-872-1278 | Toll-Free 1-800-663-1278 |
TTY 604-875-8835



GIVE BACK THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Look around. Everywhere you go, you will probably see something reminding you of the holiday season, whether they are wreaths on doors, flyers with trees and ornaments on sale, or even red festive coffee cups. As joyous as this season can be for some, it can be a dreadful reminder for others. This year, take the opportunity to share our blessings with the less fortunate. Here are some ways to give back:

1. Donate Clothing

Donate clothing to your local charity. All proceeds collected fund programs and services for that specific charity. Remember that there are plenty of for-profit bins that may look like charity bins, so do your research before donating. 100% of the donations from DDA white bins go back to our clients. Find your closest DDA bin here: www.develop.bc.ca

2. Donate Food

No luck in your closet, then search your pantry! Your local foodbank is always looking for canned goods, especially canned meat (other than tuna) and canned low-sodium vegetables and juice. Baby items and hygiene products are also welcomed.

3. Donate Time

This is probably the one that we all struggle with, especially during the holiday season. Donating time can mean committing to donate time in the summer or in the new year. Make the commitment and plan for next year, donating any time of the year is just as great.

4. Donate Money

Life gets busy and sometimes we don't get to frequently donate as we would like to. This year, consider making small scheduled monthly payments to your favourite charity. It's a lot easier on the finances, and you would be surprised how small frequent donations can add up. If you don't have a charity you are attached to, United Way is a great place to start. United Way identifies itself with several registered charities (that cater to seniors, youth and children), and distributes donations according to the programs and services that are most in need. Read more here: <http://www.uwim.ca/>

There are plenty of other ways to donate, which includes Christmas hampers to your local community, or helping a homeless shelter. Whatever it is, large or small, know that your contribution will benefit someone in need.

On behalf of everyone at DDA, we wish you a fulfilling holiday season!

STARBURST SPRING 2016

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS SPONSORED BY THE
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION

VANCOUVER CHINESE SUPPORT GROUP

General support for children's and adult's issues
in Cantonese and Mandarin.

MEETING: 3rd Saturday of the month
from 6:30-8:30pm

PLACE: 4948 Fraser Street, Vancouver

CHILD MINDING: Available on site when
requested at least one week in
advance of meeting

CONTACT: John at 604-928-8289
john_tsang2000@yahoo.ca

DDA YOUTH IN TRANSITION

Support information for transition to adulthood.

**MAR, MAY MEET-
ING & PLACE:** March 2, 2016 and May 4, 2016
at 6:30pm at Developmental
Disabilities Association 3455
Kaslo Street Vancouver

**JAN, APR MEET-
ING & PLACE:** January 2, 2016 and April 2,
2016 at 10:30am Vancouver
Resource Society, 2006 West
10 Avenue Vancouver

CONTACT: Liz Cochrane at 604-733-6252
transitionparents@gmail.com

BOLLYWOOD MAZA

Support to families in Hindi and Punjabi

MEETING: Wednesdays 3:30 to 4:30pm

PLACE: 4948 Fraser Street, Vancouver

CONTACT: Michael Hajduk at 604-301-2831
mhajduk@develop.bc.ca

VIETNAMESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Support to Families in Vietnamese

MEETING: Second Thursday of the Month
6:30pm to 8pm

PLACE: 3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

CHILD MINDING: Available on site when
requested at least one week in
advance of meeting

CONTACT: Nikki Tran at 778-895-2535
from 6:00 to 9:00pm

JAPANESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Lower Mainland general support to parents of
children and adults with intellectual disabilities

MEETING: 3-4 Times Per Year

PLACE: 3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver

CONTACT: Chigusa Barnes at
chishebarnes@msn.com

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please contact 604 273 4DDA
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We welcome your comments and feedback. Kindly direct all comments and submissions to rsidhu@develop.bc.ca.