



British Columbia
Association for
Community Living

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inspiring a world where everyone belongs



Message from the president and executive director

Over the past year, we have been honoured by the opportunity to engage with individuals, businesses and communities to promote the inclusion, citizenship and participation of people with developmental disabilities and their families across BC. Our vision is a world where *everyone belongs* — a world where we invest in everyone's gifts and abilities and everyone is welcomed into diverse and inclusive communities. This year we have taken many steps, both large and small, towards this vision. We are proud of the work we are doing, and we hope you enjoy reading about it in this report.

Our triumphs and successes are only possible as a result of the extraordinary contributions of our Circle of Friends members, our donors, and our conference and lottery sponsors. Your gifts sustain the spirit of Community Living throughout the year, and your generosity inspires us to work ever more diligently on behalf of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the incredible volunteers who made up the 2007/08 BCACL Board of Directors: Al LeFebvre, Nancy Hoyano, Norma John, Jerry Laidlaw, Malerie Meeker, Michael Prince, Paul Pallan, Jo-Anne Gauthier, and Annette Delaplace. We would like to welcome the new board members, Kathleen O'Hanley and Leila Rahemtulla, and thank the retiring board members Tim Stainton and Jenny-Lynn McVicar, for their hard work.

It is our privilege to work with the leadership team at BCACL. We will continue to strive to live up to the trust that you have placed in us as stewards of the community living movement in BC, and as advocates for people who have a developmental disability and their families.

Rory Summers, President

Laney Bryenton, Executive Director



Laney Bryenton, Executive Director of BCACL, with friend, Maggie Litster.



Rory Summers, President of BCACL, with his family.

self advocacy

For individuals who have a developmental disability, life has often meant separation from family and friends, no job, and little access to education. It has often meant having a life where other people make decisions about what you do, where you live, and what activities you attend. That is changing. Self advocacy is a movement that helps people exercise their right to control their own lives and to make their own decisions.

BCACL is guided by the Self Advocacy Caucus, made up of adults who have a developmental disability who are elected from across the province. BCACL is looking forward to working with their newly-elected members for the 2008/09 year.



This year, the Caucus focused on the issues of poverty, housing, and supports for people who did not meet Community Living BC's eligibility requirements. The Caucus took this information back to their communities to raise awareness and provide leadership around these issues. BCACL would like to welcome all the new Caucus members for 2008/09 and thank the leaving Caucus members from the 2007/08 year.

There are over 65 active self advocacy groups and committees in BC today. Your donations allow us to work in partnership with local self advocacy groups to help keep the self advocacy movement strong.

supports to families

There is nothing more powerful in a family's journey than coming together with other families and sharing their dreams. Knowing what is possible encourages families to dream and inspires their determination for the best supports for their loved one.

This year, BCACL hosted two regional family retreats focused on building a stronger and more sustainable network of families who are dedicated to the advancement of inclusion. The weekend retreats brought families together who were relatively new to the idea of advocacy, as well as families who were ready to explore new ideas and opportunities for their own child's participation in community life.

In 2008/09, BCACL has committed to hosting two more family retreats. We know that strengthening families means better outcomes for their sons and daughters. Your donations enable us to continue to provide these opportunities for families to come together to network and share resources.

inclusive education

BCACL was founded over 50 years ago by parents who believed that their children, who had a developmental disability, had a right to be educated and included in the public school system. So when community living advocates heard that a School Board Trustee from District #82 (Terrace) suggested opening a fully-segregated school for children with special needs, they called BCACL.

"The helpful staff at BCACL . . . provided a great deal of support, and their expertise in advocacy and communications was a real help to us locally," says Chris Arnold, of the Provincial Networking Group Inc., a Terrace-based agency that provides community living services.

When the Board of Trustees met in Terrace, more than eighty people rallied and marched to protest the segregation of students with special needs. As a result, the proposal was stopped by a unanimous vote of the Trustees, including the person who had proposed it.

"We've come a long way from the discriminatory system that placed students into special places based on their disability. It is never a good time to turn back the clock on the progress that we've made over the last 50 years," says Rory Summers, BCACL President.

employment

This year, as part of BCACL's employment initiative, BCACL provided grants to self advocacy groups all over BC to advance employment for people with developmental disabilities.

The Kelowna self advocacy group held an employer's breakfast to talk to businesses about the importance of 'Real Work for Real Pay' for people with disabilities. It featured a speech from the Mayor of Kelowna and testimonials from employers.

The breakfast was a great way for self advocates to talk about inclusive workplaces and how valuable they are for the community. As a result, the Kelowna self advocacy group was invited to present at the Chamber of Commerce and were invited to do a radio interview — encouraging local employers to hire people who have a developmental disability.



photo courtesy of Ladysmith-Chemainus Chronicle

woodlands memorial

For many years, people with developmental disabilities lived in institutions in BC, one of which was Woodlands in New Westminster. On June 22, 2007, BCACL hosted an official opening ceremony for the Woodlands Memorial Garden. The ceremony recognized and honoured the people who had been buried and forgotten. Many gathered in solidarity for those who still live in institutions, and for those who continue to seek restitution for the harm they experienced within BC institutions.

Richard McDonald, who lived at Woodlands for over 10 years, sat on the planning committee for the Woodlands Memorial Garden and spoke at the ceremony. He is the president of the Self Advocacy Foundation, an avid volunteer with BCACL, and hosts a co-op radio show. The contributions that Richard makes to the lives of self advocates across BC are incredible — and he is now able to make those contributions because he is living in his community.

The Woodlands Memorial Garden stands as a tribute to the memory of the people who lived and died at Woodlands, and to celebrate the many people who once lived in institutions and are now living as active citizens in their community.



The BCACL Foundation

BCACL has been serving people with developmental disabilities and their families since 1955. To ensure that it can continue to advocate on behalf of children and youth with special needs, adults with developmental disabilities and their families, the BCACL Foundation was incorporated in 2006.

The BCACL Foundation builds partnerships with individuals, communities and organizations to realize our vision of welcoming inclusive communities where children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities and their families can live full and contributing lives. The BCACL Foundation aims to increase BCACL's long-term efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, and to build permanent capacity by making an annual contribution to BCACL to support core organizational functions and to sustain this vision.



In June 2007, the BCACL Foundation purchased and BCACL took residence its new home, and as a result, reduced BCACL's annual operating expenses. "These generous donors allowed BCACL to take a huge step towards increasing our permanent capacity to serve people with developmental disabilities and their families for years to come," says David Driscoll of the BCACL Foundation. BCACL would like to recognize and thank the Board of Directors and the working group committee members for all their great work and enthusiasm: John Kehler, Rory Summers, Alain LeFebvre, David Driscoll, Claudia Semaniuk, Chris Cumming, Howard Kettner, Tom Milner and Court Smith.

AGM and Conference 2008 – Surrey

Much of what we do here at BCACL is about providing leadership in the community living movement. The theme of our 2008 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and conference, *Tools for Change*, celebrated the strong and powerful initiative that the community living movement is taking, in creating change in the lives of people who have a developmental disability.

Our conference is more than professional development and learning – it is an opportunity for self advocates, families and service providers to gather and network, and connect with each other about the stories and issues that shape their lives. We had over 600 people register for workshops and sessions over the three-day conference, and we were excited to see that over a third of those registered were self advocates.

We are looking forward to next year, when we travel to Victoria for our 54th annual AGM and conference where we will have more inspiring and informative workshops and sessions.

33rd Annual Vipond Golf Classical Tournament

This year, the Vipond Tournament raised an incredible \$60,000! The tournament relies on the hard work of a volunteer committee to execute the event, and we are thankful for the leadership and support they provide. This year marks the 33rd year of our partnership with Shaughnessy Golf & Country Club for the Vipond Golf Classic Tournament. Over the last five years, the tournament has raised a quarter of a million dollars, bringing its 33-year total to more than \$1 million!



Right Stuff Lottery

We are inspired by the people we meet and speak with through the Right Stuff Lottery. Whether it's a long-time donor, lottery buyer, volunteer or a sponsor, many people come together to make the lottery successful and we are grateful for your support. Our thanks to all of you, and especially to our sponsors – Audi, False Creek Travel, Kingfisher Oceanside Resort and Spa, the Fairmont Chateau Whistler, Times Colonist and The Beat 94.5FM.

In our Fall Right Stuff Lottery, John Spooner was the lucky winner of our third prize – \$1,000 in cash! "I couldn't believe it when I got the phone call," says John. "I've never won anything substantial before." John made a generous donation back to BCACL, and used the rest of his prize to offset some of his medical expenses.

Throughout the Spring Right Stuff Lottery, BCACL staff and volunteers sold tickets at malls in the Lower Mainland. We also toured the Audi Q7 Quattro and Audi A4 Cabriolet to Metropolis at Metrotown, Pacific Centre, Semiahmoo Shopping Centre, Brentwood Town Centre, Oakridge Centre, and Lougheed Town Centre. We wish to extend our thanks to the volunteers for both campaigns who made the mall campaign so successful!

Meet the Resource Development Team

"Good afternoon. You've reached the Fundraising Department. How can I help you?"

Chances are, if you've ever called to update your address, make a donation, or purchase a lottery ticket, you've probably talked to one of the staff on the Resource Development team.

"We are continually inspired and humbled by the extraordinary generosity of our donors and sponsors," says Salima Mawji, Director of Resource Development. "It is our job to ensure that BCACL has the resources that it needs to serve individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and communities for another 50 years."

Your contributions amaze and energize us. "Without the support of thousands of generous donors and sponsors, our work could not continue," says Laney Bryenton, Executive Director of BCACL.



Meet a Donor

The belief that people who have a developmental disability should be living in the community has been a part of Inge Bailey's world view for most of her life – her younger brother has Down Syndrome. "It makes my heart glad," says Inge, "to see people of all abilities, backgrounds, appearances, are becoming more and more able to enjoy genuine participation and acceptance, not just tolerance, in the community." Inge has been donating to BCACL since 1987, and has been a member of our Circle of Friends monthly giving program for 10 years.

Inge is passionate about community living – she believes that a circle of support, as well as education and training to promote independence and self-worth, will allow for lifetime support that doesn't force parents to be the sole providers of support and worry for how their children will fare. "The BC Association for Community Living has come a phenomenally long way from its beginnings," says Inge, "Our society is the better for it."

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