

SPRING  
2015

# THE STAR



Developmental  
Disabilities Association

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## LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

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# WELCOME TO OUR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES EDITION OF THE STAR

BY ALANNA HENDREN

Welcome to our Employment Services edition of the STAR! DDA is a long-time leader in community employment – remember Hero's, our food service training program and restaurant? The Vancouver/Richmond partnership with Lower Mainland McDonald's that started in the mid-1970's? And Jobs West that started to get jobs for folks with developmental disabilities way back in the 80's and continues to do so today?

About 16 years ago, DDA closed our sheltered workshops because they were paying for "work" at a rate under minimum wage, in contravention of B.C.'s Employment Standards Act. In just over one year, we gave up old leases and acquired new sites to accommodate the new constellation of day services we were implementing.

We designed these new services based on interviews with 250 people who had participated in our sheltered workshops. We asked the people we had been supporting for decades in some cases what they wanted to do and became familiar with what each person could do. We met with families continuously through the process, even though many were not supportive, and re-oriented our services to focus on maximizing each individual's potential rather than everyone working on contracts that were unsustainable. Our staff were no longer "client supervisors", so we trained them to be support workers who help people achieve their goals. We created several new day programs to support a diversity of needs, a Drop-In where people could take a variety of courses and engage in social experiences, and developed Starworks, our social enterprise that employs folks who used to be "clients" who are now giving back to the community rather than being dependent on government. Many clients moved onto Jobs West, which continues to provide employment services to a growing number of people with special needs who want to work in a paid job.

Employment Services are evolving in British Columbia to the point that people with developmental disabilities can now use the same generic WorkBC programs as do all people in pursuit of a job. With the federal and provincial governments promoting and funding employment services, there have also been a multitude of other employment services launched directly by CLBC, Inclusion BC and other agencies. There are also several college programs that stress work readiness. All these offerings can confuse families or the self-advocates they are designed to serve, so planning, particularly for teens in high school, is becoming a key to future employment in a job that is a good match.

We have also created our own Youth Transitions program, helping teens with preparations for adulthood, including getting summer jobs and work experiences while completing school. This has been very successful, so we will be working with our community partners to expand this service in the future. We are now realizing that many of our Jobs West clients were once with DDA in the Infant Development Program!

Our employment, vocational and community programs are constantly evolving

as we are challenged to find employment for everyone with a developmental disability who wants to work. We are also now helping our clients use generic technology to gain greater independence, challenging our staff to keep up with everything digital that is available these days. Young adults with special needs today have ambitions far beyond those of their Baby Boomer predecessors. They are attending college, working in the community, volunteering, spending, saving and otherwise pursuing their dreams. Those

of us who support them need to ensure families and self-advocates understand how to get the help they need (without confusion). We also need to ensure that the business community has a cohesive understanding of what to expect if they hire someone with a developmental disability in terms of training, on-site support, trouble-shooting and long-term relationships. The stronger our reputation for excellent support is, the more confidence we will build with the business community and the more jobs we will be able to develop.

Most governments in the developed world these days are promoting employment for people with disabilities due to their disproportionately high unemployment rates and the desire of governments to reduce their reliance on social assistance. Most of these employment initiatives rely on business

cases and the good intentions of companies but in a few European countries there is a tax placed on those companies with more than 25 employees that have not also hired an individual with a disability. These taxes are then pooled to provide services to those people with disabilities who continue to be unemployed. Although this approach is unlikely to win approval in B.C. or Canada today, escalated incentives may be necessary in the future. Until then, we are enjoying fantastic relationships with the employers who currently hire folks from Jobs West and look forward to many more!

“  
Young adults with special needs today have ambitions far beyond those of their ... predecessors. They are attending college, working in the community, volunteering, spending, saving and ... pursuing their dreams.  
”





## Michelle at Tim Horton's

In 2010, Tim Horton's received an award for recruiting, retaining and promoting people with disabilities. Tim Horton's Integrated Accessibility Standard Policies and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan details how all locations must provide accessibility, accommodation and awareness for job seekers, employers, suppliers and customers. These policies are enthusiastically embraced by Greg Clough, the owner operator of the Tim Horton's in Metrotown Center-Metropolis below Silvercity.

After meeting Greg briefly in December he quickly agreed to meet again to discuss working with Jobs West. During the second meeting, Greg stated that he was an equal opportunity employer and agreed to host a short term work trial for Michelle Chu.

Michelle is looking forward to her experience at Tim Horton's where she will be learning many of the jobs at Tim Horton's and strengthening her team work, cash handling and customer service skills. Michelle will be gaining valuable experience and upon successful completion of the short work trial she will have a chance of gaining paid employment. Good luck Michelle!



**Looking for a reliable and eager employee for your business?**

**Let Jobs West Employment Services help.**

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](http://www.jobswestdda.ca)

“

“We know that when barriers are removed, and people with disabilities are able to participate fully in their communities and support their families, everyone benefits.”

”

— Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation Don McRae

## NEWS RELEASE: FLEXIBILITY HELPS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES EARN

### MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

The Province of BC is recognizing the unique circumstances of people with disabilities by making it easier for those receiving disability assistance to earn more money with annualized earnings exemptions.

Starting in January 2015, B.C. will become the first province in Canada to ensure people receiving disability assistance will be able to calculate their earnings on an annual basis instead of monthly, reducing barriers to employment.

Annualized earnings exemptions are particularly helpful for people with disabilities whose ability to earn fluctuates during the year. For example, if a person earns more than \$800 in a month, they can keep all of that money up to \$9,600 for the year. There is no monthly maximum.

Earnings exemptions are in addition to monthly disability assistance and other supports, such as: discounted bus passes, free MSP, medical supplies, dental and optical care and employment services through the Employment Program of BC.



For more information and to view the video news story, please go to <http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2014/12/flexibility-helps-people-with-disabilities-earn.html>



# TRANSITIONS TESTIMONIALS

DDA started a pilot transitions project in 2010. As part of Respite Services, 17 and 18 year olds would receive assistance with the transition to adulthood instead of the traditional respite. The program is now 5 years old and has served 75 youth. Here are some testimonials from the parents and youth who have experienced this program:

We have received service from DDA['s] transitions program. Their work is essential in keeping a smooth transition for our child with special needs to a young adult. This process requires a lot of patience, kindness and hard work. We need their help and we appreciate their help. We hope whichever individuals or organizations ... give their contributions to keep the program running... Thanks in advanced for your kindness.

George (father of a girl with special needs)

My name is Aaron Wong. Shanti taught me many things. She taught me how to take bus, skytrains and seabus transportation. She also taught me how to go around Vancouver. I learned a lot. It was fun and helpful

Aaron Wong

Hi Shanti,

I would like to inform you that this program [that] Sean is involved in helped us a lot, especially Sean[, who looks] forward to it every week. He [has] progressed so much and become independent, specifically in taking public transportation and my favourite: communicating. He seemed comfortable enough that I have peace of mind to ... know that my son can handle commuting by himself. ... [I am] fully aware that you taught him so well, and I thank you so much for that. I truly appreciate it. Sooner or later, Sean will eventually realize that we're here to guide him with great pride in our hearts.

Thank you so much Shanti. May this program continue...on longer for youths like Sean, [because] it helps mould their future and be fully aware that someone out there cares other than their parents. Again, thank you very much for your patience with my son and best wishes.

I like spending time with my transition worker. We have lots of fun at the library counting money. I learned how to take the bus and skytrain to VCC by myself.

Rebecca

## 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?

SEND SUBMISSIONS TO  
[COMMUNICATIONS@DEVELOP.BC.CA](mailto:COMMUNICATIONS@DEVELOP.BC.CA)



## THE EVOLUTION OF PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS

BY LEANNE SCHWARTZ

The beginning of the Main St. Drop-In Photography Program started small: armed with a couple of shared digital cameras and a handful of people keen to explore, learn and take shots of their surroundings. With the kind collaboration of Kim Almond (who enthusiastically advised us to exhibit our prints along with the talented art program), it has grown into a fun, expansive and lucrative form of expression. Photography has become another means of income generation for our participants through gallery and craft show sales. Throughout the year, since 2009, our photographers have benefited from the consistent sales of their framed prints and photo cards.

Now we are transitioning forward using iPad technology. The broader screens help in capturing the initial photo. iPad touchscreens allow clients much easier access to pictures, requiring less dexterity than the “point and click” options offered by a computer mouse and laptop. Participants are also enthusiastic to learn more about photo editing apps - which can create exciting results with their images, adding another range of visual interest to the photographs. As the Photography Program evolves, we hope to uncover promising techniques ahead and hopefully provide a few more reasons to support upcoming DDA art shows!

**WANT TO BE THE FIRST TO KNOW ABOUT DDA AND COMMUNITY EVENTS?**

Subscribe to our newsletter by emailing  
[communications@develop.bc.ca](mailto:communications@develop.bc.ca)



## JOBS WEST SPOTLIGHT

### TU GROUP – EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

BY DELIA MEINHARDT

Jobs West is pleased to present Travel Underwriters Group as the Employer of the Year.

TU Group is one of Canada's top travel insurance providers. Over the past year and a half, TU Group has demonstrated excellence in their hiring and employment of people with a disability.

TU Group first approached Jobs West to gain support and guidance with recruiting an individual with a disability to perform customized cleaning and coffee bar replenishing duties. Shortly after hiring this individual, TU Group observed that with the right training and support, the new employee brought many skills which could be expanded on, to assist other internal departments at TU Group. The employee had a very strong ability to identify and correct information on travel documents and manifests. In addition, the employee began learning how to perform document verification, and is now requested monthly, to assist departments with accuracy and invoice creation. After this successful experience, TU group hired another Jobs West job seeker for another customized position.

TU Group has done a remarkable job in creating and demonstrating an inclusive and welcoming work environment for individuals with a disability, and have created a customized position where both the employer and the employee benefit.

Congratulations on being Employer of the Year!



# STARWORKS CELEBRATES 15 YEARS!

BY KIRSTI INGLIS

On January 15th, Starworks Packaging and Assembly celebrated its 15th anniversary. Founded by the DDA as a social enterprise to create competitive employment opportunities for individuals living with barriers to employment, Starworks has had quite the journey over the last 15 years. When we first opened our doors we had only 18 employees and a handful of customers. Fast forward to today and Starworks is a bustling business with 40 employees and over 120 customers.

Over the years, Starworks has employed more than 80 individuals and partnered with local colleges and employment agencies to help dozens more develop work skills and experience through practicums. We've paid out over 1.8 million dollars in wages, but more important is the impact Starworks has had on the community and the lives of the individuals we employ.



“

I was excited to receive an award from Kirsti Inglis for 15 years of service at Starworks. I enjoy working at Starworks twice a week and look forward to many more years of service.

”

— David Dayton,  
Production Worker



At a luncheon surrounded by coworkers, family, customers and social enterprise champions, Starworks and DDA thanked the production team, their customers and supporters for 15 years of success and recognized 7 employees for reaching 15 years of employment. Congratulations to Willie Amero, Ming Cho, Linda Chow, David Dayton, Nancy Koo, Kevin Pradela and Anne Radoslovich. We thank you for your hard work and dedication!





## HARRISON HOT SPRINGS

BY DAVID DAYTON, RESIDENT AT CHARLES STREET GROUP HOME

I went on a vacation to Harrison Hot Springs with my roommates and staff. We enjoyed walking along the beach, going for a dip in the hot springs and hiking. On the way home, we visited Fort Langley to learn about Canada's history. We all had a great time!



## LEISURE CHALLENGE SNOWSHOEING TRIP

BY JACKIE LANZ

The Leisure Challenge Youth Program started the New Year with a bang! On January 2nd we bundled up and took the gondola to Grouse Mountain to go snowshoeing. We were so excited to have some of our participants' family members join us for the day. Snow began falling on the mountain just as we met at the fire pit to begin our tour. Joined by a guide, we took an hour and a half loop around the lake, before crossing over a bridge back to the chalet. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful scenery, learning about the wildlife in the area and taking target practice with snowballs! It was such a great way to start off the 2015 for Leisure Challenge participants, staff, and family members!







## VALENTINE'S FOR VETS

BY JACKIE LANZ

Brock Junction is bringing some love to Canadian Veterans this Valentine's Day. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) invites school groups to make Valentine's Cards for Veterans in long-term care facilities in Canada. Each child from Brock Junction helped create a hand-made valentine. These special cards will be sent to Veterans Affairs Head Office where they will distribute them and hopefully bring joy to a Canadian Veteran on Valentine's Day.



## BROCK JUNCTION'S WINTER ACTIVITIES

BY JACKIE LANZ

On December 19, Santa experienced an affectionate welcome to our program and was enthusiastically greeted by Brock Junction children and their parents and guardians. Everyone enjoyed a delicious buffet of healthy snacks and treats as Santa passed out presents to the children. A wonderful time was had by all, and the Holiday Party set the December break off to a great start.

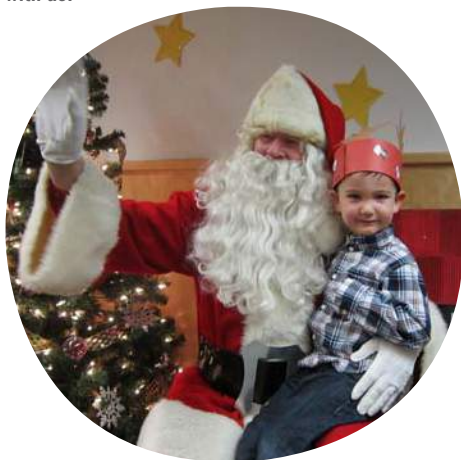
Snow at the top of Grouse Mountain greeted Brock Junction on one of the outings during Winter break. The group enjoyed lunch in the main cafeteria and watched "Frosty the Snowman" in the theatre. Other highlights of the day included the gondola ride, playing in the snow, and exploring the trails around the top of the mountain. Another excellent outing in our community!

## SPECIAL VISITOR AT CREEKSIDE

BY KATHARINE NAUGHTON

The excitement level was high as December rolled around. As soon as we had put up our trees and decorated the classrooms, the children knew Santa would be visiting soon. We did a count down daily until the special day — the day Santa arrived! Many of the children greeted Santa with big smiles and hugs. Others, especially our younger ones, greeted Santa with an unsure face and at times tears, as they weren't sure who this big guy in a red suit was.

This was a special night for the Creekside family as it started off our holiday season. Thank you Santa for taking the time out of your busy schedule to come visit with us!





# ANNUAL WINTER CELEBRATION AT VAN DUSEN

BY TANYA CHEUNG

The dreary wet weather didn't seem to dampen spirits at our annual Van Dusen event. Staff, families and members from several programs gathered together for hot chocolate, treats, and delicious cupcakes made by one of our staff Cherry Balderas, who generously donated them before braving the cold for the spectacular light show Van Dusen puts on every year. Thanks to our Board, staff, families and donors for another wonderful year. A special thank you to our volunteers who have made the event another success.



# LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

BY KIRSTI INGLIS

As a supported employment service provider we often get asked by parents how they can help prepare their transitioning child not only for adult life but for the world of work. Luckily for them, research shows that the fact that you are thinking about work and the next steps for your child has a significant positive effect on their employment outcome... so pat yourself on the back right now...

Supporting both the job seeker/employee and employers, we at Jobs West are often called upon to provide supports on the worksite. While technical skill and ability to complete the job tasks are vital, we often find that employers are most concerned with soft skills or “good citizen” skills such as adaptability, work ethic, social skills and motivation. In fact, many people may be surprised to find out that we get phone calls more often about someone’s lunchroom etiquette or an interpersonal conflict, rather than to assist the employee in developing technical job related skills.

## So how can parents or caregivers help foster these skills?

As busy parents we are often guilty of “taking over” and getting things done by removing the opportunity for children to get involved and learn valuable skills. Encouraging independence in both domestic and community activities, and finding opportunities for your child to develop independent adult living skills is key. Keep in mind that you may need to get creative with accommodations or tools to assist with independence.

### Time Management

Maintain a daily routine and have expectations around waking up and getting ready each day. Even during the summer holidays or after graduation, keep the routine going. With your child, develop a calendar and include all of your activities and appointments. Discuss where there is room to add activities and talk about allowing for transit time.

### Chores

Give your child responsibilities around the house. A study published in the *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Journal* found that family expectations of household chores doubled the odds of youth obtaining paid employment. Give your child chores that truly contribute to the household (not just cleaning up after themselves) and set expectations around quality and timeliness; folding laundry, cleaning the bathroom, making a meal, or cutting the grass etc.

### Teach Value of Money

Giving an allowance for chores teaches the concept of exchanging labor for money, but remember to only pay up if the chores are completed. Set up a bank account with a goal.

### Teach problem solving skills

As hard as it might feel to make mistakes in front of your children, intentionally making mistakes in front of your child can be a great way to teach problem-solving skills. Add too much sugar to the cookie dough or get off the bus at the wrong stop, talk out loud to show them your “inside voice” as you find solutions.

Allow your child to make mistakes and find solutions. Hold back the urge to step in and help right away. “Safe or controlled mistakes” can teach problem solving and help build confidence and autonomy. For example, don’t prompt your child to get off at the correct bus stop, let them miss your bus stop on purpose and work with your child to find a solution.

### Bus Training

Even if you drive your child everywhere right now and haven’t personally stepped foot on public transit in years, challenge yourself to assist your young adult child in developing independent transportation skills (you’ll thank yourself later). For many parents, the thought of their child taking a bus or skytrain independently can be daunting and even a little scary. Utilizing tools and systems to help build confidence (break down and “chunk” the training, use apps to track cellphones, or develop a call in system, and establish boundaries). Remember to teach night time safety too. We often get asked for the mythical 10-2 job that requires no evening or early morning travel. The reality is that some jobs may require that your child take a bus early in the morning or evening.

### Community Awareness

Explore your neighbourhood with your child and learn about community resources, and safe places. Participate in community activities and develop connections.

### Social Groups

Hobbies and activities are a great way to make friends and develop new skills and interests that may be transferable to a work site. Having a healthy social life and friends outside of the family circle can encourage the development of individual interests, practicing social skills and managing interpersonal conflict. We are laying the foundation for healthy relationships and boundaries in adult life and the workplace. Also the more dynamic an individual’s life is, the easier it can be to identify skills and opportunities.

### Volunteer

Volunteerism is a great way to develop pre-employment skills, and an understanding of supervisor – employee relationships, communication skills, and develop connections with potential future employers. It’s the old adage, it’s not what you know but who you know that often leads to our first jobs.

### Encouraging positive attitudes towards work

Children are sponges and hear everything. Talk about your work and work experience. Demystify the world of work for your child by talking about workplace successes and challenges and show your child how you overcome adversity in the workplace. Demonstrate that you work through issues and what it means to have a good work ethic.

While helpful, mastery of all of these skills is certainly not a requirement for employment and may not be a realistic expectation for all children or transitioning youth. We often utilize workplace accommodations, negotiate conditions of employment or augment an opportunity to work for the individual. While work is a right, it also comes with responsibility and helping prepare young adults for the responsibility can go a long way to achieving employment success!

If you are a parent or caregiver of a transitioning youth and are interested in receiving more information or participating in a workshop please call Kirsti Inglis at [604-233-5741](tel:604-233-5741)

“  
...Employers are most  
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”





## JOBS WEST SPOTLIGHT

### RICHARD & JASON, 10 YEARS AT LESLEY STOWE FINE FOODS

In 2005, Richard and Jason started working for Lesley Stowe Fine Foods in their Kitsilano location; folding and assembling boxes of crackers as they came off the assembly line. In the beginning, Jobs West assisted with carving the positions to meet both the employer and employees needs and assisted with initial training, but it wasn't long before both gentlemen were off and running without support. So impressed with Jason and Richard's work ethic and dedication, Lesley Stowe contacted Jobs West in 2010 for assistance in negotiating new job tasks for both employees. Lesley was planning to relocate to Richmond, which meant an equipment change that would result in new roles for both employees and she couldn't imagine not including Richard and Jason in their new facility. Jobs West was able to step in briefly to assist with bus training and renegotiating the job duties to fit the new equipment and employer's needs. Jason and Richard are great team players and exceptional employees greatly appreciated by their supervisor, May Bo.

Congratulations Jason and Richard! We look forward to congratulating the both of you when you reach 15 years of employment!

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



**WE'RE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR  
EVENTS HAPPENING BETWEEN APRIL TO AUGUST 2015.**

**CONTACT US TODAY TO VOLUNTEER WITH THE DDA!**

We're looking for volunteers for the following 2015 events:

Canada Day Parade	Vancouver	Wed July 01
Vancouver Pride Parade	Vancouver	Sun August 02
St. Patrick's Day	Vancouver	Sun March 15
Steveston Salmon Festival Parade	Richmond	Wed July 01
Ladner May Days Fair	Ladner	Sun May 24
Spirit of the Sea Festival Parade	White Rock	Sun Aug 02
Hyack Parade	New West.	TBA
North Delta Family Day Parade	Delta	Sun Jun 28
Lynn Valley Days Parade	N. Vancouver	TBA
North Shore Canada Day Parade	N. Vancouver	Wed July 01
Teddy Bear Picnic Grande Parade	Coquitlam	Sun June 07
Port Coquitlam Rotary May Day Parade	P. Coquitlam	TBA
Pitt Meadows Day Parade	Pitt Meadows	TBA
Squamish Days Parade	Squamish	Sun Aug 02

**VISIT [www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca) OR CALL 604 273 4DDA**

# YOU'RE INVITED TO LEISURE FAIR 2015

Leisure Fair 2015 is an annual event co-sponsored by the Developmental Disabilities Association, Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children, and Vancouver Parks and Recreation.

**WHEN** Wednesday, April 1, 2015 from 6:00 to 8:00pm

**WHERE** Trout Lake Community Centre

**WHAT** This event is a great opportunity for you to explore displays and demonstrations of recreation resources available that welcome children and adults with disabilities. Over 30 recreation and leisure organizations participate.

**ADMISSION** NO COST/FREE!

## BLAINE'S DVD REVIEW

BY BLAINE MACDONALD

My DVD pick for review is *DIGIMON: THE OFFICIAL FIRST SEASON*.

Before there was *DIGIMON: TAMERS* and *DIGIMON: FUSION*, there was *DIGIMON: SEASON ONE*.

While at summer camp, seven kids--Tai, Matt, Sora, Izzy, Mimi, Joe and T.K--came across seven "digi-voices" and are transported to a strange digital world. In this new world they make friends with creatures that call themselves DIGIMON, which is short for "digital monsters". Digimon were born to defend themselves from various evil forces. The children learn that they have the ability to help their new friends "digevolve" into different digital monsters and fight as a team to defend against enemies and ultimately find their own way back home.

★★★★★/5



## DDA Annual General Meeting

Check out the next issue of the star & our website for information about our upcoming AGM.

[www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca)



## JOBS WEST SPOTLIGHT

### Jerome at Save on Meats

Jobs West would like to congratulate Jerome, who has reached his three work year anniversary as a dishwasher at Save on Meats Diner.

Three years ago, Jerome was supported by Jobs West, to participate in an interview at Save on Meats. Through this experience, Jerome was able to complete a short work trial to try the job, and see if it was a good fit, as well as the employer was able to see the skills and abilities that Jerome possessed. This resulted in Jerome being hired as a part time dishwasher in March 2012.

Jerome continues to work part time. He is a very positive minded individual, who is highly valued by his team.

Congratulations on 3 years!



# DDA IN-SERVICE CONFERENCE

BY TANYA CHEUNG

In November, DDA held a two day conference for our staff focused on health and wellness. The conference allowed staff to learn how to deal with stressful situations and conversations, learn relaxation techniques, and understand the power of wellness. We believe in order to provide quality service for our clients, we must start with our staff. A big thank you to the planning committee who worked tirelessly throughout the event.





# DDA ARTISTS FEATURED IN THE JOSEPH CHUNG GALLERY AT JOE'S TABLE CAFÉ

BY LEANNE SCHWARTZ

For the months of January and February, Joe's Table hosted an art exhibition featuring art and photography by some of DDA's talented artists. All of the artwork is for sale! If you are interested in pieces featured in this newsletter, please call Leanne Schwartz at 604-322-0052 to check for availability.

Joe's Table Café in Burnaby was founded by Peter and Stephanie Chung in memory of their son Joseph, who lived with autism. Joseph passed away in 2012.

The café's focus is on inclusion, business sustainability and community. The Café goes the extra distance to provide employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. At the back of the Café is the non-profit "Joseph Chung Gallery" which displays paintings, sculpture and other works by artists with developmental disabilities.

01. "Iris" by Lisa Poon
02. Frank Spatari
03. "City" by Emerson Canas
04. "Grasshopper with Wings" by Jessie Chan
05. "Abstract Pink" by David Purkis
06. Jerome Cousineau
07. Intra Aulak
08. "Poppy" by Joy Elluk



## IN MEMORY OF DOUGLAS GREEN

It is with sadness that we inform you of the passing of Douglas Green on December 19th, 2014. Doug leaves behind his wife of 34 years, Lois Green, a long-time Community Apartment Program member.

Doug was employed at several companies during his life, including Richport Ford, Nexus, Whitewater, Hero's Industries, and most recently before his retirement, Starworks Packaging and Assembly.

Doug and Lois were active members of their housing co-op in East Vancouver for several decades. Doug enjoyed going to movies, fishing and attending boat shows. He was able to come to his final DDA Open House this year and have lots of great conversations with all the people he knew from DDA. A service was held on January 7th with Doug's family and friends. We will miss his smile.



▲ Doug with his wife, Lois Green



# Meet Nick with the Vancouver Canucks

Interview with Nick, a 10 year veteran employee with Canucks Sports and Entertainment

As an accomplished Special Olympian, avid fan and season ticket holder for the Vancouver Canucks, Nick was the perfect candidate when the Canucks (then Orca Bay Sports and Entertainment) were in need of a fan mail assistant. Hired to assist with managing the huge volume of player fan mail that the Canucks receives, Nick has to be skilled at managing information, data entry and mail preparation, but more than that, his love of the game and knowledge of the players was paramount. Nick plays a very important role in the communications department. Nick's supervisor Tara couldn't manage without him:

*"I have been Nicolas' supervisor since day 1 ten years ago. Nicolas without fail always shows up for work; he is reliable and passionate. Nicolas knows more about hockey than some of the employees and everyday he talks about the latest news and statistics about the Canucks. Nicolas loves talking and joking with his coworkers and has developed friendships with people from all different departments. He is dedicated and contributes a lot. He does the fan mail, helps with charity events. It's a pleasure working with him"* —Tara Clarke

Congratulations Nicolas on reaching 10 years of employment. Keep up the fan-tastic work!

Interviewed by Delia Meinhardt of Jobs West on January 22, 2015 at Rogers Arena

## 1) Tell me about yourself?

*I am a Special Olympian. I work with the Canucks 1 day and go to Stage Door Studios 4 days.*

## 2) How did you get started working for the Canucks?

*Through Jobs West and Special Olympics. They called my mom and asked if I was interested in working with Canucks.*



## 3) How did Jobs West help you?

*They helped me on speed and learning the job. I can't remember it's been so long*

## 4) What are your duties?

*It's all about community, I stuff player cards into envelopes for fans. Sometimes the players autograph the cards. One time I went to the dressing room and helped with the laundry. It was a great experience! I also go to the press box with the Canucks Media team and put together media packages.*

## 5) You have a very important job. What is your favorite part about working for the Canucks?

*Meeting the Canucks and the coach. My favorite player is Trevor Linden and Henrik Sedin.*

## Have you met them before?

*Couple summers ago I met Henrik in the hallway. He was with his family. This past year I met Trevor Linden. Finally after 10 years! We talked and it was an honor to shake his hands. Trevor Linden is now the president.*

## 6) How do you feel about reaching 10 years of employment?

*It's a long time. It's good.*

Thank you Nicolas. See you in 10 years so we can celebrate your 20 years!

# IN MEMORY OF LINDA McMANUS

BY GLADYS McMANUS, IN MEMORY OF HER BELOVED DAUGHTER

Linda McManus was born on August 30th, 1952 in Winnipeg, Manitoba and moved to B.C. in June 1954. Linda attended the first schools DDA set up in Vancouver.

Linda left the school system at age 19, and then attended workshops by DDA. She went into Arlington group home in 1975 and lived in other DDA group homes. At this time Linda had been taught to use transit, and faithfully worked at "Hero's" a restaurant operated by DDA. Linda loved this work and worked there for years.

Linda passed away on January 21st, 2015. Linda was predeceased by her father, and is survived by her sister Joanne, her brother James, and her mother, Gladys.

▶ *Linda with her favourite dog, whom she proudly proclaimed that she had trained herself.*



# IT'S TAX SEASON

## MAKING TAX TIME ACCESSIBLE TO ALL CANADIANS!

BY CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Canadians with disabilities and those who live with them know that, over a lifetime, the costs of overcoming barriers can really add up. That's why the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) offers credits and benefits for Canadians with disabilities and their caregivers to help offset these costs—from childhood through the school years to the workforce to retirement.

If you have a severe and prolonged impairment in physical or mental functions and you are eligible for the disability tax credit (DTC), you may be able to reduce the amount of income tax you pay in a year. You can apply for the DTC by filling out the application, having your disability tax credit form certified by a qualified practitioner, and submitting it to the CRA for approval. You may also be able to transfer any unused parts of this disability amount to another supporting person to reduce his or her federal tax owing.

Making your home accessible is a very important part of living comfortably with a disability. Most individuals can claim the home buyers' amount for first-time owners, which allows them to claim an amount of \$5,000 for the purchase of a qualifying home. However, if you are eligible for the disability amount and you purchased a home to better meet your needs or those of a related eligible individual, you can claim the home buyers' amount without the home being your first-time at ownership. For more information, visit [www.cra.gc.ca/hbtc](http://www.cra.gc.ca/hbtc).

**Do you care for a child with a disability?** If your child is under 18 years old and eligible for the DTC, you may be able to reduce the amount of income tax you pay in a year by claiming the disability amount for a dependant. In addition, if you receive the Canada child tax benefit, you can also receive the child disability benefit, which is a tax-free, monthly benefit for families who care for children under 18 who are eligible for the DTC.

Applying for your Canada child and family benefits is easy using the Apply for child benefits online service through My Account. You may also be eligible for the family caregiver amount of up to \$2,058 in 2014, in calculating certain non-refundable tax credits. If your child is registered in a physical activity or artistic program, you may be able to claim an additional \$500 on top of the regular amount under the children's fitness tax credit and the children's arts tax credit. In addition, under proposed changes, the maximum amount of eligible expenses for the fitness tax credit has been increased to \$1,000 for each child.

For long-term financial planning, the registered disability savings plan (RDSP) helps reduce financial worries for those who are eligible for the DTC and their loved ones. In particular, the RDSP helps parents and others contribute up to \$200,000 for the long-term financial security of a person who is eligible for the DTC. To find out more, go to [www.cra.gc.ca/rdsp](http://www.cra.gc.ca/rdsp).

The purchase and use of supports and support services like talking textbooks, job coaching services, and braille note-taker devices are eligible expenses

that you may be able to claim as part of the disability supports deduction. These expenses must have been incurred as a result of your being employed or carrying on a business, conducting research based on a grant, or attending an educational institution.

New for 2014—if you are eligible for the DTC you may be able to claim the salary amount associated with the design of a personalized therapy plan, as a medical expense. Also new this year, you can claim the costs for service animals used to manage severe diabetes. To get more information, including a list of other medical expenses that are eligible, go to [www.cra.gc.ca/medical](http://www.cra.gc.ca/medical).

The CRA website has a dedicated section to persons with disabilities and the specific tax scenarios that may affect them. Go to [www.cra.gc.ca/disability](http://www.cra.gc.ca/disability), where you will find information on how to determine if you may be eligible for the DTC.

The CRA prides itself on making its services accessible to all Canadians. If you are blind or partially sighted, the CRA offers publications and forms in alternative formats—such as braille, large print, etext, and MP3 audio. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can use teletypewriter services by calling 1-800-665-0354. Or, with your written permission, the CRA will speak to an operator-assisted relay service for you or arrange to have a sign language interpreter available at a meeting. Call 1-800-959-8281 for more information.

If you need help filing your income tax and benefit return, have a modest income, and a simple tax situation, contact the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, which runs volunteer tax clinics across the country. To find a volunteer tax preparation clinic, go to [www.cra.gc.ca/volunteer](http://www.cra.gc.ca/volunteer).

Remember, the deadline to file your individual income tax and benefit return and pay any amount owing is April 30, 2015—don't wait!

## FREE INCOME TAX PREPARATION SERVICES

1. Community Volunteer Income Tax Program: Call 1-800-959-8281 to find the nearest Community Tax Volunteer Centre 1166 West Pender Street, Vancouver.
2. 411 Seniors Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver 604-684-8171
3. Gordon Neighbourhood House, 1019 Broughton Street, Vancouver 604-683-2554
4. BCPWA Support Services, 1107 Seymour Street, Vancouver 604-646-5323
5. Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC, 1133 Melville Street, Vancouver 1-800-663-2677 MARCH ONLY
6. Multicultural Helping House Society, 4802 Fraser Street, Vancouver 604-879-3277
7. South Granville Senior Centre, 1420 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver 604-732-0812



# UNEXPECTED RDSP ACCOUNT PENALTIES

BY DAVID CHEN, BSC, BA, CPCA — DC COMPLETE FINANCIAL

When the RDSP first came out, I studied the account inside and out and found out that if they were set up with a Deferred Sales Charge (DSC), it could create a huge unexpected penalty to the owner of the account. I run into RDSP's set up with DSCs all the time but a recent case I consulted on demonstrated the tremendous cost the DSC creates.

Under federal law, if the RDSP has to be shut down or there is an early withdrawal, grants and bonds have to be paid back first, and any Deferred Sales Charge penalties or investment losses are taken from the family's deposit. What can trigger a need to pay back grants and bonds include:

- No longer disability tax credit eligible (due to death, recovery from disability, no longer qualify under current or future disability tax credit eligibility rules)
- Need to withdraw money within 10 years of receiving a RDSP grant and/or bond

On a recent case, I saw firsthand how this warning was not considered, and the unexpected penalties the family is facing shows how big this problem may be.

In this case, the beneficiary was misdiagnosed with regards to the disability. The new diagnosis suggests that the person may be terminal in the next few years. The financial advisor involved chose to lock down the RDSP account with a Deferred Sales Charge and now the family is facing the reality that should the child pass away in the next few years and the RDSP has to be taken apart, the grants and bonds will be paid back to the government and the Deferred Sales Charge calculated from the whole deposit could trigger a penalty as high as 24% from the money the parents have deposited into the account.

For example a \$100 withdrawal with a DSC can trigger a \$75 repayment of grants and bonds and a \$6 DSC penalty taken from the original \$25 contributor deposit representing a 24% penalty from the contributor deposit. This case shows firsthand how an unexpected change in the beneficiary's condition may trigger an unexpectedly large penalty to the account.

Remember, there is no requirement by law that an investment account has to be locked down with a DSC (this option is selected by the investment advisor or financial institution to pay them more commission). The simplest solution to avoid this unexpected penalty is to insure that your RDSP account does not have a DSC option active on the account.

If upon checking your account you have found that your RDSP account has a DSC option active on it, contact a financial advisor regarding how to remove this option from your account and avoid triggering an unexpectedly large DSC penalty.

**DON'T FORGET TO UTILIZE  
THE FREE INCOME TAX  
PREPARATION SERVICES  
LISTED ON THE LEFT <<**

## DDA SPRING 2015 WORKSHOPS

### FEB 28 2015 FINANCIAL PLANNING: KNOW SOMEONE WITH A RDSP OR RESP? AMERICAN?

10AM-1PM  
NO COST

Changes are coming! Want to know about trusts? Come to this workshop!

3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

Pre-registration required. Please contact Terry Schenkel at [tschenkel@develop.bc.ca](mailto:tschenkel@develop.bc.ca) or 604-233-5433 to register.

### MAR 26 2015 WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MY CHILD TURNS 19?

7PM-9PM  
NO COST

How do I help with decisions? Come to the workshop to find out more about how a representation agreement is a valuable tool.

3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

Pre-registration required. Please contact Terry Schenkel at [tschenkel@develop.bc.ca](mailto:tschenkel@develop.bc.ca) or 604-233-5433 to register.

### MAY 23 2015 YOUR CHILD'S MEDICAL CONDITION & THE DISABILITY TAX CREDIT

10AM-12PM  
NO COST

3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

Pre-registration required. Please contact Terry Schenkel at [tschenkel@develop.bc.ca](mailto:tschenkel@develop.bc.ca) or 604-233-5433 to register.



## Johann at Starbucks

Johann is celebrating his 6th year as a Café Attendant at Starbucks. His excellent stamina, professionalism, and reliability has made him a valued member of the Starbucks Team. He currently works at the Starbucks located at Vancouver General Hospital. His duties include bussing tables, stocking shelves, filling the condiment stand and washing dishes. Johann enjoys socializing with his co-workers and contributing to the team atmosphere. Johann is a punctual, honest, and sociable person who enjoys the interpersonal and responsible aspects of his position. Congratulations Johann!

*"A hardworking excellent team player"*

— Chad Lloyd, Manager (Starbucks)

# EMPLOYER PROFILE: MEINHARDT FINE FOODS

In an interview with employer Michael Meinhardt of Meinhardt's Fine Foods, Michael speaks about his experience and the success of hiring employees with developmental disabilities.

Interviewed on January 26th with Michael Meinhardt – Meinhardt Fine Foods

## 1. How did you hear about Jobs West?

Jobs West approached us back in 2012 to provide information on their free services that assists employers to find, hire, and train new staff. Since 2012 we have hosted 4 short term work trials and hired 1 long term employee, Lenard, from Jobs West.

## 2. How did Jobs West help you?

The staff toured the worksite and asked lots of great questions about our needs. They completed a job analysis and created a job description that met our current needs. The Employment Specialist returned a couple days later with a couple of pre-screened applicants that matched the skills and expectations of the position. Instead of the traditional job interview, Lenard completed a working interview. This is something I've never done before but understood that although Lenard has the ability to verbalize his strengths and abilities it was great to see him working and doing the tasks. After a short working interview and free onsite support and training from Jobs West we hired Lenard!

## 3. How has Lenard impacted your company?

Lenard is a great role model to the other employees. Lenard comes in, every shift ON TIME and ready to tackle his daily task. Lenard maintains a consistent output on his packaging, does a nice display of



**JOBS WEST**  
**EMPLOYER PROFILE**

his packaged goods on the retail floor shelves, and does special data entry projects. He is respectful to coworkers and customers. Lenard always ask questions when he is unsure on how to do things in order to avoid doing the same thing things twice. Lenard is a charming fellow to be around and a VALUED MEINHARDT FINE FOODS EMPLOYEE.

## 4. Do you have anything to add?

We know that Jobs West will be available in the future if Lenard needs retraining or if a position is available we'll be sure to contact Jobs West! I hope to see other companies hire individuals with developmental disabilities not because it's the right thing to do but because it's a good business decision!



## 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!



**MDT Child Educational  
Resources**  
14750 108 Ave  
Surrey V3R 1V8



**Cloverdale Bibleway**  
18603 60th Ave  
Surrey V3S 7P4

**Steveston Buddhist Temple**  
4360 Garry St  
Richmond V7E 2V2



**Petro Canada(7-11)**  
1245 Lonsdale Ave  
North Vancouver V7M2H5

**Nanaksar Gurdwara**  
18691 Westminster Hwy  
Richmond V6V 1B1



**Queen's Cross Pub**  
2989 Lonsdale Ave  
North Vancouver V7N 3J3



**Dream Pizza**  
1992 McCallum Rd  
Abbotsford V2S 3M6

**TO LOCATE A BIN  
NEAREST YOU, VISIT**

**[WWW.DEVELOP.BC.CA](http://WWW.DEVELOP.BC.CA)**



# FAMILY SUPPORT & ADVOCACY? WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?



BY MICHAEL HAJDUK, FAMILY  
SUPPORT WORKER - CHILDREN

Many families are not aware of the Family Support and Advocacy service that DDA provides. However, once the family with a child, teen, or an adult gets connected with a Family Support Worker and realizes that there are some available resources for their child that they were not aware of, their usual reaction is "If I had connected with you even earlier, our journey would be much easier... Thank you so much!" So, how and when would a family benefit from this service?

## TRANSITIONS

All life transitions are stressful for all of us — preschool to kindergarten, elementary to high school, high school to college and so on. Sandy was very thankful for our support during the transition of her young son with severe autism from a private school to the public school system. We helped her to connect with the professionals at VSB who are in charge of the special education program, accompanied her to meetings with school administration and the school based team, and made sure that her voice and her concerns were heard. We also helped her writing an information letter introducing her son to the teachers and professionals that are going to support her son at school, as well as his new peers to better understand her son's strengths and needs.

## ADVOCACY

Janet asked for help advocating for more school support for her son with autism. She was referred to the right contacts at VSB who instructed her to present her request in writing. We helped her write her request and supported her strong advocacy for her son. At the same time, she felt proud of herself for what she did for her child.

## MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS

Sam was relieved to be involved in making decisions about his daughter's school by being an important part of her Individual Educational Plan team. We offered our support by accompanying him at IEP meetings.

## REFERRALS

Linda was concerned with her 6 year old daughter's development and suspicious of a possible autism spectrum disorder. We referred her to the Sunny Hill team for diagnostic assessment, explained the referral process and supported her journey.

## EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

Parents at the Bollywood Maza parent support group brought up their concerns with the transition of their children to high school, so we invited a Low Incidence Special Needs Transition Consultant and a Resource Teacher from VSB to the parents' group. The parents had an opportunity to ask questions and get first-hand information.

## Parent-to-Parent Support

"This is the only place that I don't need to worry if my son (who has autism) is loud or is running in a circle... I know no one would judge me here and think how bad a parent I am.... This is my break", says one of our Bollywood Maza moms.

## Respite Program

Parents who are members of DDA can enjoy a break with complimentary overnight stay at a local hotel. All they need to do is to organize care for their children for the night and luxuriate in a hot bath, enjoy the quiet, eat room service or at a restaurant and enjoy some precious "me" or "us" time.

## FAMILY SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY SERVICE IS FREE, NO REFERRAL IS NEEDED

Just pick up the phone and dial **604 301 2831** for Michael who supports families with children, or **604 233 5433** for Terry, who supports families with youth and adults.



# SAVE THE DATE

## DDA OUTDOOR MOVIE NIGHT

### FRIDAY AUGUST 14, 2015

## STARBURST SPRING 2015

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, 604-928-8289 or john\_  
tsang2000@yahoo.ca

### DDA YOUTH IN TRANSITION

Support information for transition to adulthood.

**MEETING:** March 4 & May 6 at 6:30pm

**PLACE:** Developmental Disabilities  
Association Kaslo Location,  
3455 Kaslo St., Vancouver

**MEETING:** April 11, June 6 at 10:30am

**PLACE:** Vancouver Resource Society,  
2006 West 10 Ave, Vancouver

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

### BOLLYWOOD MAZA

Support to families in Hindi and Punjabi

**MEETING:** Every Wednesday 3:30 to  
4:30pm

**PLACE:** 4948 Fraser Street

**CONTACT:** Michael Hajduk 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 or Trinh  
Tran at trinhhope@gmail.com

## 3 WAYS YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT DDA

Here are 3 ways you can easily  
make an impact in the lives  
of children and adults with  
developmental disabilities.

1

Donate clothing or bottles at  
any of our bin locations.

2

Host a donation bin at your  
business.

3

Donate used clothing from  
your home — call our office  
to arrange a pick up

By donating used clothing or by hosting a bin, you are helping fund  
essential programs and services for people with developmental  
disabilities in Vancouver and Richmond.

To find out more, please call 604 273 4DDA or visit [www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca)

## VISIT OUR SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLETS TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING AT DDA AND YOUR COMMUNITY.



**BLOG:** [www.dda604.com](http://www.dda604.com)



**FACEBOOK:** [facebook.com/dda604](https://facebook.com/dda604)



**TWITTER:** [twitter.com/dda604](https://twitter.com/dda604)



**YOUTUBE:** [youtube.com/dda604](https://youtube.com/dda604)

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We welcome your comments and feedback. Kindly direct all comments and submissions to [tcheung@develop.bc.ca](mailto:tcheung@develop.bc.ca).