



Vernon and District Association for Community Living

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



DEBBIE RICHTER

2023 has been a very productive year for the Board of Directors, Executive Management and all staff at VDACL. I am proud to be part of VDACL's exceptional team that has completed/started all objectives on the 2020 Strategic Plan. We have built a very strong Association that provides quality programs and services to people with developmental disabilities, and I am sure VDACL will continue to excel in the Community Living sector.

Highlights of the 2023 year include:

- Capital improvements were started on many VDACL facilities. Thank you to the NOFMH Foundation for funding these improvements.
- The process of looking at the property development of the Venture Centre will be starting in 2024. Catalyst Community Developments Society will be conducting a Pre-Viability Analysis.
- The Bottle Depot in Lumby was sold this year. The facility was no longer meeting the needs of VDACL, and the sale will allow us new options to provide quality person-centered programming.
- Throughout the year, Board Directors, Management, and staff all worked diligently preparing for the CARF accreditation process in October. VDACL received a 3-year accreditation again. Congratulations and a job well done to all involved.
- Board Directors enjoyed attending many of the events that VDACL hosted for participants and staff during the year.

Looking forward to 2024, the VDACL Board of Directors, Executive team and staff will be working together on a new Strategic Plan. This plan will contribute to VDACL's success in meeting our mission to advocate on behalf of and provide quality programs and services to people with developmental disabilities and our vision of a community where people with developmental disabilities are accepted and respected.

I would like to thank our talented and dedicated Board Directors, Executive team and staff for embracing the expected and unexpected and finding solutions to the challenges faced, while always keeping the needs and aspirations of our participants at the forefront. To our participants: Thank you for trusting us and allowing us to share in your hopes and dreams.

Debbie Richter
VDACL Board President



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



RYAN CUCHERON

Sometimes it can be hard to see the value in the work we do together. The challenges faced by our sector and the community as a whole can appear daunting. But what we must remember is that if for even one day a person can make a difference for an individual in our programs then we are adding value.

I am honoured to once again provide you this annual report as the CEO of Vernon and District Association for Community Living (VDACL). It has been an incredible year for the organization and everyone that is a part of it. 2023 was a wonderful and challenging year all at the same time.

VDACL was able to complete the 2020 Strategic Plan, which was quite an accomplishment due to the global pandemic and local wildfire situation that offered many roadblocks. We were able to add key positions that will strengthen our team, as well as begin the process of assessing our main site property for possible future uses. In addition, VDACL was able to start offering more diverse programming to youth that were beginning their journey toward adulthood and independence. This programming has been both rewarding and challenging at times for the organization and the staff: A view for many into the challenges faced by young people today and a sign for community leaders like VDACL of what we need to offer to help these individuals be successful.

The past year also saw rising inflation affect our programming costs and many in our community felt the effects of these increased costs. It has forced us to think of creative ways to continue offering our high level of service. 2023 also taught us that if we can collectively come together as a team at all levels, Board, Management, staff and participants, we can accomplish great things together.

I hope we can continue our great organizational momentum into next year, and collectively leave a lasting impact.

Ryan Cucheron
Chief Executive Officer

WHO WE ARE



OUR MISSION

We advocate on behalf of and provide quality programs and services to people with developmental disabilities

OUR VISION

We envision a community where people with developmental disabilities are accepted and respected



OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Association is committed to helping people with special needs achieve the fullest possible independence and community participation according to their wishes

VDACL acknowledges with gratitude that we provide services and occupy space on the traditional, unceded territory of the Syilx/Okanagan people.

WHO WE ARE



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Debbie Richter - Board President
Mark Corbett - Board Vice President & Chair of Finance Committee
Perry Wainwright - Chair of Governance
Bob Corbett - Chair of Personnel Committee
Susan Morris - Secretary & Finance Committee Member
Ross Shannon - Governance Committee Member

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Ryan Cucheron - Chief Executive Officer
Peter Ortman - Chief Financial Officer
Janet Hackman - Chief Operating Officer
Melanie Eliason - Director of Employee Relations

ACCREDITED PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Behavioral Services
Community Housing

- Cedar House
- Centrepont
- Dobie House
- Hawthorn House
- Mulberry House
- Willow House

Community Inclusion

- Venture Connections
- ACT Program
- Life Skills
- Community Outreach
- Armstrong Outreach

Community Employment
Employment Services

Home Share

Semi-Independent Living

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Manager of IT - Ismail Ismaili
Manager of Operations - Blake Fredrickson
Manager of Health Services - Bonnie Smith
Manager of Behaviour Services - Liberato Jimenez
Manager of Home Share - Jo-Ann Hansen
Manager of Maintenance - Tim Lennox
Program Registered Nurse - Rebecca Nordman
Home Share Coordinator - Courtney Neihaus
Home Share Coordinator - Stacey Wasylnka
Home Share Coordinator - Delma Ingram-Fehr
Program Coordinator - Tammy Williams
Program Coordinator - Michelle Gariepy

Program Coordinator- Shannae Smith
Program Coordinator - Shelly Kopera
Program Coordinator - Val Bosk
Program Coordinator I - Marie Beaudoin
Program Coordinator I - Nicole Dew
Program Coordinator I - Danny Canabe
Program Coordinator I - Chellaine Harms
Program Coordinator I - Garth Wells
Payroll and Benefits - Sarah Hickey
Accounts Payable - Rebecca Ogden
Administrative Assistant - Maja Berti

CATALOGUE OF SERVICES

VDACL is a not-for-profit organization that offers programs and services to adults who are eligible for CLBC funded supports. This year we are celebrating our 68th year of providing quality services to adults living with developmental disabilities. From housing, to employment, from outreach to art and recreation and beyond, we create person centered programming that enriches lives and builds friendships.



COMMUNITY INCLUSION/DAY SERVICES

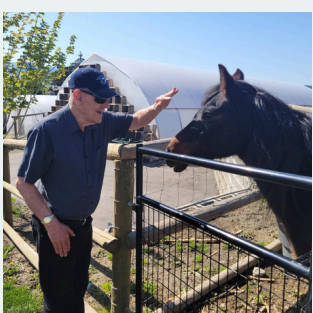
Venture Connections provides supports and services both in-house and community based, focusing on providing opportunities for participants to strengthen community ties and build relationships.

The ACT Program focuses on making learning opportunities available to our individuals, pursuing activities and resources in literacy, numeracy and art. The program incorporates classroom and community learning.

CIVITAL Program provide 1-1 support to individuals based on their unique needs through in-house and community based activities. The Armstrong Outreach program enhances the health, self-esteem and community inclusion of the participants through community recreation.

Lifeskills Outreach support participants in activities that focus on daily life skill building (e.g. cooking, shopping, and finances), relationship building, recreation and skill building activities.

Behavioural Services provides professional behavioural and counselling support to participants with complex behaviours.



CATALOGUE OF SERVICES

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Venture Employment Crews work in collaboration with various community partners to provide work experience in a variety of settings including food preparation, retail, industrial, and hospitality. This skill building program can lead to VDACL paid work opportunities in a staff supported work environment.

Community Employment is a program that assists participants in achieving their employment goals by providing support throughout all steps of gaining and maintaining employment.



COMMUNITY HOUSING PROGRAMS

Residences: Cedar House, Centrepont, Dobie House, Hawthorn House, Mulberry House, Willow House
Our residences provide around-the-clock care for individuals requiring more staff assistance and support. Each residence provides a modern, inclusive environment, which is fully accessible to persons in care, their families and friends. Individuals are actively involved in their community.

The Home Share Program offers alternatives to staffed residential homes by providing individuals with an opportunity to live within their community with related or non-related families.

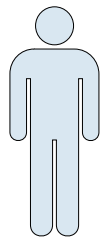
Semi-Independent Living is a growing program that offers supports to individuals living alone or in cluster-type housing. Staff provide life skill building support in areas such as money management and housekeeping in order for individuals to live as independently as possible.



SERVICE AND IMPACT



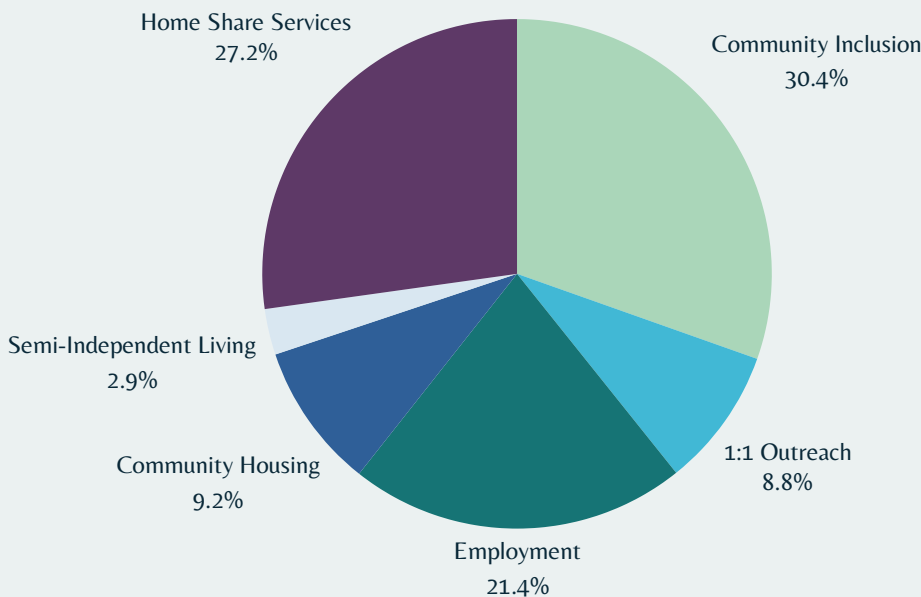
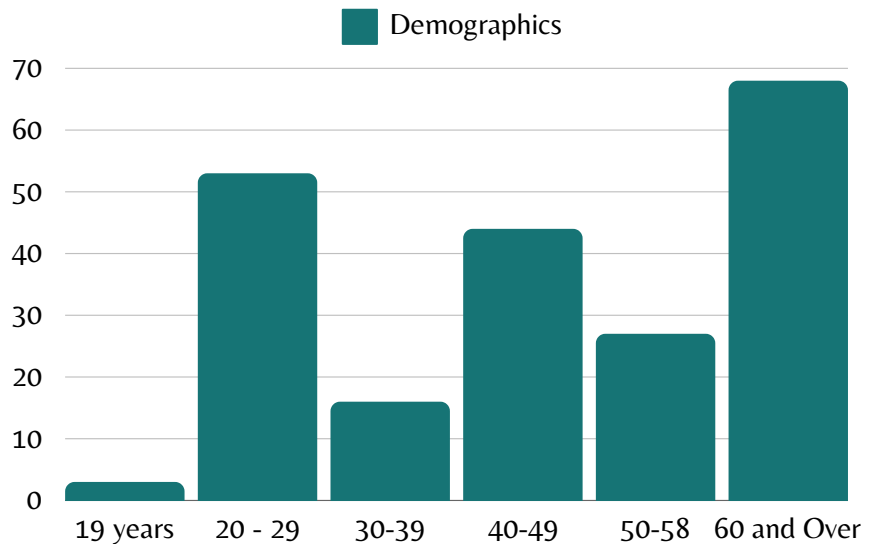
In 2023, VDACL provided services to 254 unique individuals. As indicated below, VDACL's largest population of persons served were 60 years or older. The fastest growing population is individuals aged 20-29.



113



141



The largest population served is in our Community Inclusion Programming: ACT, Venture Connections, Therapeutic Work, Armstrong Outreach and Lifeskills

DID YOU KNOW?

TOTAL NUMBER OF 1:1 SUPPORT HOURS GIVEN

16,444

TOTAL NUMBER OF SERVICE DAYS

365

741

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE PARTICIPANT GOALS IN 2023

166

TOTAL NUMBER OF GOALS ACHIEVED

STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS



VDACL prides itself on its ability to continue to look for ways to improve our work environment for our employees, our relationships with our community partnerships, and most importantly, the services we provide to our participants. In 2020, we embarked on a new strategic plan that guided our growth over the past three years. In 2023, VDACL completed the following strategic achievements:

- Began the Supported Living programs to support youth in transition which increased semi-independent living programs from 4 to 12 individuals
- Developed and implemented the Willow Suite Project as part Home Share Transition Program in partnership with CLBC
- Created housing partnerships with Vernon Native Housing and private owner groups to aid in housing security for our participants
- Began a Pre-Viability study on the property located at the 4240 Alexis Park Drive site to explore development potential
- Expanded programming hours to extend into the evenings for Community Inclusion and Supported Living individuals
- Worked with consultants to create a business plan to expand Cycle Cycle social enterprise
- Increased the capacity of the Place (Lunch) Program
- Completed a new Fundraising Plan to be started in 2024
- Established social opportunities to grow and strengthen networks within the Home Share department
- Explored potential new branding options for the organization
- Completed the following management plans: Communications Plan, Training Plan, Succession Plan
- Addition of three new vehicles to our fleet
- Complete the Willow Suite renovations
- Completed Willow House bathroom renovations
- Completion of ACT/Lifeskills front entrance renovations

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Implemented Leave Management system
- Implemented digital receipt submittal app
- Implementation of On-Call app
- Implementation of Risk Identification and Vulnerabilities Assessment
- Installation of new flooring at Venture Connections
- Creation of Program Asset/Maintenance Management system on ShareVision
- Creation of Participant Asset Management system on ShareVision
- Creation of file management system to be implemented 2024



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ASSOCIATION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023



CARF ACCREDITATION

CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) is an accreditation body that ensures a service provider's commitment to continually improving services and serving the community to a high standard. A survey team from CARF visited us at VDACL in October 2023 and it was an overwhelmingly positive experience with great feedback and few recommendations. VDACL is proud to receive our seventh consecutive three-year CARF accreditations, which is the highest level of excellence in our industry. As part of the survey, the surveyors interviewed people who receive services, their families, our staff, and others. Some questions the survey team members asked are:

- Do we provide a clean and safe setting?
- Do you receive the services you need and want?
- Are you treated with respect?
- Do you take part in planning your services?
- Are you told what you need to know about your services?
- Are your questions answered in a way you understand?
- Do you know where to go with questions or concerns?

RESULTS - AREAS OF STRENGTHS IDENTIFIED

- Strong community presence and partnerships in providing social, educational, vocational, and recreational services for the past 68 years.
- Families and caregivers expressed that their person could not be better supported valued or encouraged than they are at VDACL.
- VDACL's Board of Directors is an active, engaged and progressive board that works diligent and transparent process.
- Staff members at VDACL feel truly supported, respected and valued by leadership.
- Personnel value their roles and prioritize relationship building, enhancing existing programs, implementing new programs, and providing quality services.



Members of the Executive Team Melanie Eliason, Janet Hackman, Ryan Cucheron, and Peter Ortman with Board Members Debbie Richter and Mark Corbett present members of the CARF Survey Team with custom art work from the ACT Program as gifts of appreciation.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



Community engagement and meaningful recreation activities are very important to VDACL and the individuals we support. Here are some of the highlighted activities and experiences of 2023:

- Vernon Winter Carnival
- Camp Arbuckle
- Ellison Park Marshmallow Roast
- Participant Christmas Party
- Armstrong IPE
- SplatSin Community Center Exploration
- Vernon Adaptive Accessible Paddle Boarding
- Heaven Can Wait Pontoon Boat Trips
- Enderby Pool Days
- Alan Brooks Nature Centre
- Sovereign Lake Snowshoe Trip
- Fishing in Polson Park
- Vernon Viper's Games
- Venture Connection's Sports Day
- Davison Orchards
- Vernon Okanagan Regional Library
- Vernon Science Centre



ART AUCTION



Two VDACL programs, ACT and Venture Connections, hosted an Art Auction and Artisan Market in November to showcase the amazing work that staff and individuals in these programs have done this year, and to raise funds for their programs. The night was a huge success, with drinks, snacks, live music, and lots of beautiful art pieces and crafts to choose from.



CELEBRATION DAY

This years "Take Me to the Ocean" Celebration Day Party at Paddlewheel Hall went swimmingly, and included a delicious lunch, dancing, and lots of "under the sea" costumes and characters.



CYCLE CYCLE

Our Cycle Cycle program not only sells bikes, but also bike parts, everything from handlebars, to seats, to tires. Every person in the shop helps with the many steps it takes either to repair and restore bikes or strip them for parts. This year, Cycle Cycle has received a 2023 Quality Business Award for Vernon's Best Bike Shop!



TORONTO TRIP

Centrepont is one of our Community Housing programs that supports 2 individuals to live and work in their community. This year, these two adventurers (plus two equally adventurous staff) went on an epic trip to Toronto! Their whirlwind 5-day Canadian getaway vacation included a long plane ride, a hotel stay, rental car, and trips to Niagara Falls, a Rob Zombie concert, Ripley's Aquarium, and many awesome memories!

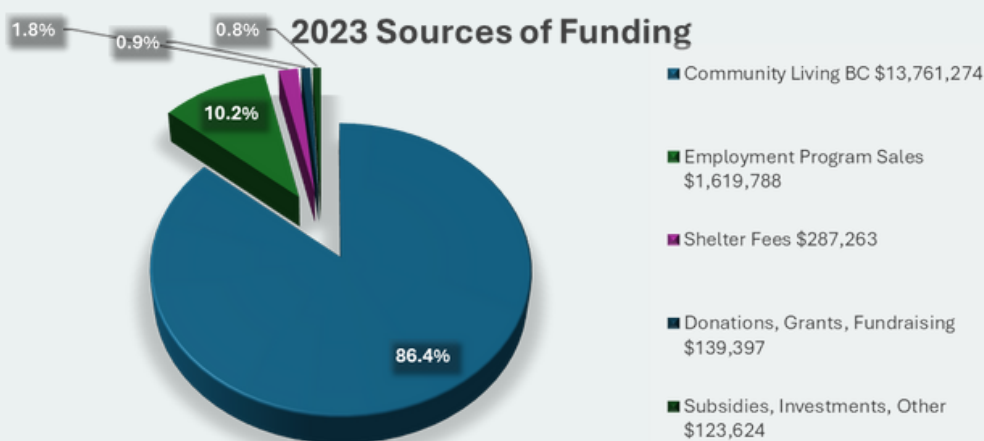
FINANCIAL REPORT



In 2023, we were able to complete some much-needed facility improvements at our Association. This includes lighting upgrades at Venture Connections and a renovation of the hallway, bedrooms and bathrooms at Willow House in Armstrong. The Willow House renovation improves accessibility and creates a more comfortable living space for the folks that call Willow House home. We also created a separate suite at Willow House that provides a safe place to stay for people learning how to live independently.

Thank you to CLBC for helping with the cost of creating the Willow Suite.

The completion of these projects is due to the hard work of our maintenance team at VDACL and the partnerships they have created with local suppliers and tradespeople. This includes Three Jay Electrical, Home Building Centre - Vernon and BX Mechanical. We are lucky to have community partners that are there when we need them, work great with the people we serve and provide quality services.

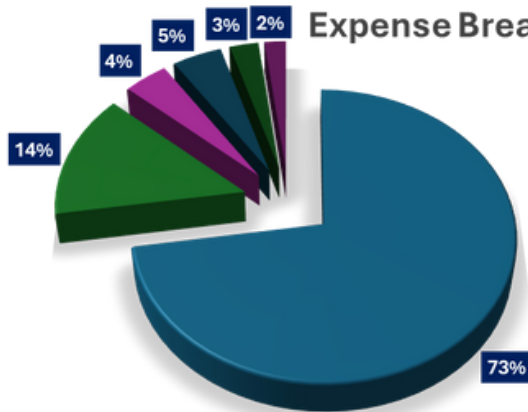


2023 saw a 19% (\$2.2 million) increase in funding from CLBC. \$720,000 of this increase is retroactive funding towards important wage increases for our unionized staff.

Our employment program sales decreased 9% from 2022. There are two reasons for this:

1. We sold our Lumby Bottle Depot in August to focus more on our social enterprises in Vernon that provide more accessible skill building opportunities.
2. The lumber industry suffered a downturn which reduced customer orders for our woodshop products.

FINANCIAL REPORT



■ Staffing	\$11,353,563
■ Home Share Contractors	\$2,191,329
■ Employment Program Materials	\$647,571
■ Facility Costs	\$724,499
■ Program Costs	\$420,578
■ Administration	\$313,047

Administration costs include insurance, office supplies, professional fees (such as financial statement audit costs and counselling services) utilities, and telephones. We were able to decrease these costs 5% (\$16,000) from the previous year.

Program costs include food, recreation, program supplies and vehicle costs. We were able to decrease these costs by 6% (\$25,000) from the previous year. A couple ways we did this are:

1. Purchasing an electric vehicle and continuing to take advantage of Armstrong Co-op's membership rebate program.
2. Changing how we shop for food in our community housing programs. Online ordering and buying in bulk saved money without changing the quality of meals being prepared.

Being able to reduce these costs is an impressive feat for VDACL during a year of price increases across Canada. These savings allow our Association to use the money for more events like our day at Camp Arbuckle.



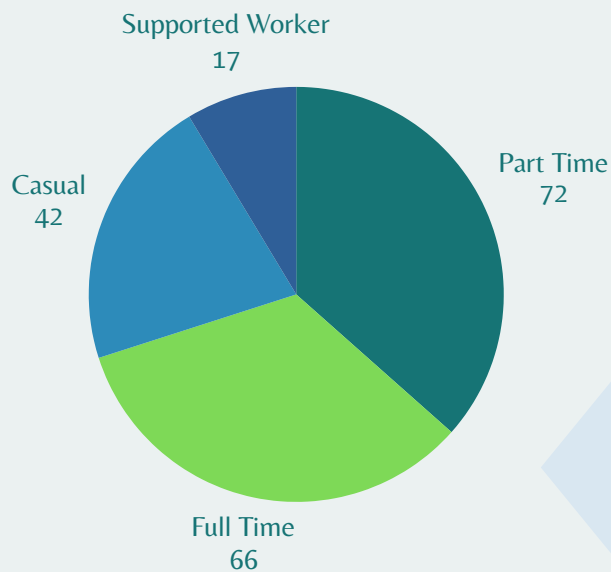
OUR EMPLOYEES



WHO WORKS HERE

At the end of 2023, VDACL employed 197 staff!

- 166 BCGEU Union staff members
- 14 Excluded/Management staff
- 17 Supported Workers



36

New Staff Hired in 2023

73

Internal Job Postings Filled in 2023



2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2023 VDACL supported three staff to obtain their Health Care Aid Certificate and registration through the Health Career Access Program.

In March 2023 VDACL switched benefit providers and now offer Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health and Benefit coverage to all eligible staff. In addition we offer an Employee and Family Assistance Program to all our staff.

Our Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee received an award of excellence from BCGEU in 2023, acknowledging their hard work and collaborative commitment to safety.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING



Upon hire, we ensure our staff have a combination of education, experience, and a desire to help others. Staff are also required to obtain the following certifications:

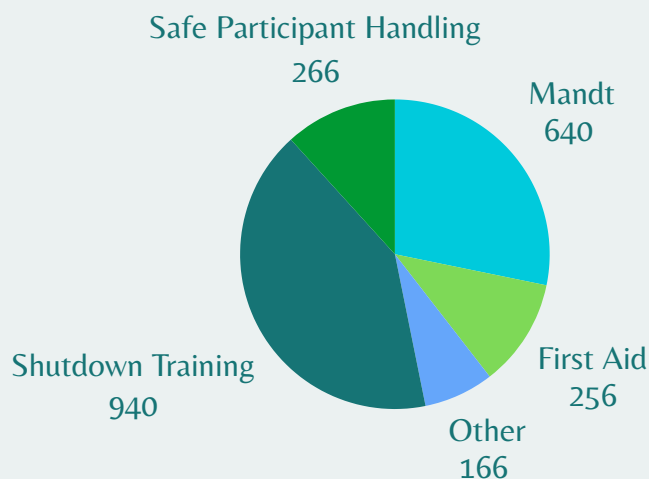
- First Aid
- Food Safe
- Mandt Training
- Safe Participant Handling

Safe Participant Handling - 4 hour course that teaches best practices for transferring and repositioning individuals who require assistance.

Mandt Training - 2-day course that teaches positive behaviour supports, crisis intervention, and relationship building skills to ensure all staff are prepared to support in any situation!

These courses are taught right here at VDACL and we are lucky to have skilled instructors on our Management team.

2023 TRAINING HOURS



2023 In-Service Shutdown Training Topics:



STAFF APPRECIATION



The staff at VDACL do amazing work all year! We show our appreciation in the following ways:

- Each program has a staff recognition budget to use to treat the staff and show appreciation throughout the year.
- Every month, a nominated staff is selected at random to receive a Gift Card and the title of Employee Of the Month.
- This spring, we rented the local movie theatre and invited all our staff and their families for a night out.
- Each year we host a Christmas Party for all staff and a guest to mingle, eat, dance and celebrate the year's successes together.
- Our Annual Service Awards are presented to recognize the dedicated staff who have been working here for many years!
- All staff receive a Gift Card as a year-end bonus.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Raffy has worked at VDACL since 2021 and has been both a Support Worker and a Program Coordinator. He is a flexible team player who helps out in multiple programs. He is very generous and kind to those around him and is proud to advocate for person-centered care. "We can always choose to be the source of hope and inspiration to others." In his spare time, he makes tiktok videos and other social media output, draws, reads, and sees himself traveling in the future. Raffy is a proud LGBTQ+ community member and is proud of the work that he does at VDACL.



CELEBRATING OUR STAFF



It's the dedication of our staff that makes VDACL great! As we say "Goodbye" to some staff we congratulate others on reaching their milestones.



Val Bosk

— HAPPY —
Retirement



Jane Hewison



Jim Lanaway



Shelley Everton



Blinda Gilbank



Kelly Taylor



Barb Richards



Sabrina Fairweather



Sam Raphael



Katrina Hogaboam



Amy Parlee



Olivia Valara



Jayne Fischer



Blake Fredrickson



Colin Reid



Justin Arcand



Syama Moniyan



Annette Perreault



Belkis Gies



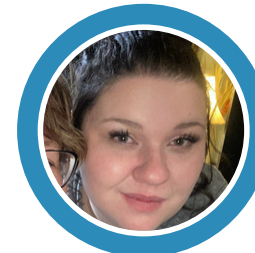
Jave Desamito



Aaron Jamin



Eva Froleck



Vanessa Kupser



Danny Canabe



AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE



We are proud of the diversity of our workforce at VDACL. It is rich in culture, compassion and caring. We ensure our commitment to inclusion and diversity in the following ways:

- As part of staff orientation and once annually, all employees must complete an online course on Diversity and Inclusion.
- Every job posting states "This position is open to all applicants regardless of gender identity."
- During Pride Month we hang a pride flag to show our commitment to inclusion and equality.
- VDACL is proud to sponsor staff to obtain their permanent residency status through the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) Program. In 2023, two staff obtained their permanent residency status through this program, and two more applications are pending.
- We participate in events that promote inclusion, such as Pink Shirt Day, our Multicultural Potluck Party, Orange Shirt Day and offer training on Indigenous Awareness and Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging.



MULTICULTURAL POTLUCK

During Multicultural Week, VDACL took time to celebrate the contributions of our multicultural communities and to appreciate the way diversity enriches all of us! Staff and participants from multiple programs gathered to celebrate our diversity with a Multicultural Potluck Party, featuring a variety of culturally inspired foods prepared and shared together with one another.



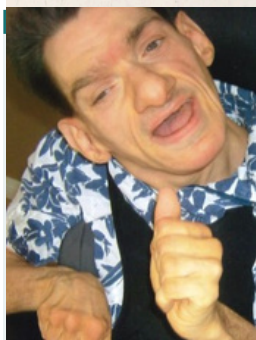
MEANINGFUL MEMORIES



Greg and Pete attended high school together in the 1970s in Langley, BC. They both moved away and then hadn't seen each other since, until a chance meeting during a Community Inclusion outing reunited them. Now they'd like to see each other more often, with a goal of an outing to a restaurant in the future to continue their friendship.



Our Community Employment Program works hard to support individuals to gain and maintain employment in the community. Jason has been working at the Vernon Walmart as a greeter for 10 years now, and he has recently expressed a desire to vary his job roles by adding restocking to his duties. However, he was unable to push the restocking cart safely, due to its weight and size. Justin, a determined VDACL Vocational Counsellor, partnered with an engineer from the Tetra Society, a non-profit organization that provides volunteer engineering design and construction of assistive devices for people with disabilities. Together, they developed a hitch system attached to the restocking cart that also attaches to a specially designed hinge, allowing Jason to propel the cart safely through the store and detach his chair easily when needed to place items back on the shelves.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Jason called Dobie House home for over 20 years. His kind and gentle ways will be missed by his housemates, support staff, and Pookie the Cat. Jason gave us his trust, love, and kindness, and we will honour him by sharing his story and practicing the lessons that he taught us. With love and gratitude we say "Fly high, little bird! Enjoy whatever comes next, you will be forever missed."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



VDACL is very grateful for the fantastic relationships that we have built with community partner organizations over the years. We appreciate all the support they provide to the individuals we serve.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

PARTNERS

- Community Living British Columbia
- Okanagan College
- City of Vernon
- ShareVision
- Regional District North Okanagan
- Government of Canada
- School District #22
- WINGS
- Total Restoration
- BC General Employees Union
- Tolko
- CARF
- District of Coldstream
- Kalamalka Rotary Club
- The Morning Star
- Rona
- ComVida
- Telus
- Pacific Blue Cross
- Federation Association Benefit Plan
- Downtown Vernon Association
- Nolan's Pharmasave
- Interior Health
- Vernon Adaptive
- Okanagan Quality Life Society



- BC Housing
- VantageOne Credit Union
- Community Foundation North Okanagan
- BC CEO Network
- Community Social Services Employers Association of BC
- Microsoft
- Castanet
- City of Armstrong
- PosAbilities
- Vernon Native Housing
- WorkSafe BC
- HR Downloads
- DDMH/HSCL
- Excel Career College
- ReMax Vernon



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