

Connections

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Andrew Graduates from College and Looks for Future Employment

As a recent graduate of Kwantlen Polytechnic University's Access Program for People with Disabilities, Andrew now has his sights set on a new challenge: securing a permanent job within his home community of North Delta.

As part of his training in Kwantlen's Work Exploration program, Andrew learned how to make a resume and apply for a job, gained experience in several work environments and passed courses in First Aid and workplace hazardous materials management.

"I felt it was a very positive experience," says Andrew. As part of the course, he participated in five separate work experiences, ranging from administrative work at Revenue Canada to washing dishes at iHop.

Gertrude Larmer, who has been living with Andrew as his Home Sharing Provider for over nine years, says the Kwantlen program gave him a level of confidence and preparation that he hadn't had before. "A lot of our people don't have job experience and don't know how to look for a job. Others don't have the confidence to try... Andrew worked very hard at everything he tried, but it was the Kwantlen program that brought these qualities out in him."



Andrew (on left)

Although Andrew is currently working on a part-time contract at the Scottsdale Mall, where he does gardening and maintenance work, he's already been approached by DCLS's Solutions Employment Services to develop a strategy that will enable him to secure permanent employment. His plan is to work with Solutions Employment to secure a part-time job and then eventually transition into full-time employment.

Andrew says his preference would be to work in the retail sector, "or just in any other job where I can stay busy all the time."

Having completed the Kwantlen course and gained the confidence he needs to tackle the job market, Andrew has some advice that he would like to pass on to others. "I would advise anyone to give it try. It doesn't matter what you do. Just try anything."



Delta Community Living Society

People who value people



Going the Extra Mile

Irene Laird,
Intensive
Adult
Residential
Care Worker

What is your role at DCLS? I'm a full time Intensive Adult Residential Care Worker. In

addition to things like scheduling and paperwork, my role is to support the people who live at House 4 – whether it's at home or out in the community. Part of my role is to ensure that whatever activities the individuals at House 4 want to do or are anxious to do that we're there to support them, take them there and to make sure everything is set up for the most positive experience possible.

What do you like best about your job?

I like the days when you see the people we work with growing, or you see an individual doing something that maybe they thought, or even you thought, they weren't able to do. We also have a great team rapport here at House 4. If you need support in one of your jobs, or you have to leave a task half way through, I know I can always count on someone to pick up on whatever it is I had to leave.

What's the most challenging aspect of your job?

Sometimes it's not the individual; it's the system we work in and the rules and regulations that go with it. Of course, the (rules and regulations) always need to be there and we all have to be responsible and accountable.

Are there any things you're doing now, or planning to do in the future, to ensure that the people living at House 4 have the highest quality of life?

As you get to know the people we work with better, you start to see more clearly what their needs are. One individual I work with, for example, has family living in Kelowna. He always gets very emotional when he comes back from there or talks to them on the phone. So you just know he misses them. Recently, I've been trying to see if we can set up Skype for him, so he can see and talk to his family on a more regular basis. If that doesn't work, then we'll just find a different route.

What is it that makes you 'go the extra mile' for the people supported by DCLS?

I enjoy the people we work with the most. I've been working at House 4 for nearly 15 years, so I've been working with a lot of the same individuals from their late teens to their 30's. It makes me feel really good to see those same people growing as individuals over the course of several years. Besides, who wants to do something if you don't feel good doing it?

In Memoriam:



Francis Flynn

(July 27, 1958 – September 06, 2011)

It is with great sadness that we share the news of Frances Flynn's passing at the age of 53. Frances was born on July 27 1958 and passed away after a tragic accident. Our deepest condolences go to Frances' many friends and family; her mother Jean, sisters Laura and Maureen, brothers Michael and Pat and her home sharing providers Brigitte Reme and David Longpre and their children Sydney and Jason. Brigitte and David provided a wonderful home for Frances for the past 8 years.



Simon Petersen

(January 12, 1968 – August 24, 2011)

It is with great sadness that we share the news of Simon Petersen's passing at the age of 43. Simon passed away after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Our heartfelt condolences go out to Simon's many friends and family, his father Nissan Butts, mother Terry Petersen, Grandmother Betty Carr, sister Janice and his committed and supportive home sharing providers, Sherry and Drew Widen, their son Keiffer and daughter Danielle. Together, they created a wonderful and inclusive life for Simon.

CARF Surveyors Evaluating DCLS



From October 26-28 the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) will be conducting an on-site review of all DCLS operations to determine whether the organization qualifies for accreditation for the next several years.

Founded in 1966, CARF is an international, independent, nonprofit accreditor of human service providers and networks. Its mission is to improve the quality, value and outcomes of the services delivered by these organizations through a consultative accreditation process where the ultimate goal is to enhance the lives of persons-served.

As a step towards accreditation, a service provider invites CARF to send a team of professionals, called surveyors, to visit its sites and evaluate the quality of its services. As in the previous surveys, CARF representatives will consult with DCLS staff members and interview families and people who rely on our services. If you would like to speak to the CARF surveyors please contact Anita Sihota at asihota@dcls.ca or 604.952.6482.

Accreditation is critical to DCLS, as it gives the families and individuals we support confidence in their selection of our organization as a quality service provider. CARF Accreditation also demonstrates to families and the wider community that our organization is continually striving to improve its efficiency, fiscal health, service delivery and overall customer satisfaction.

Lucy Schmand Describes the Creation of the DCLS

Born in Holland, DCLS founders Tony and Lucia 'Lucy' Schmand immigrated to Canada in 1958 with their three sons. Prior to that, they lived for several years on the Caribbean Island of Santo Domingo, where Tony worked as a supervisor on a BC Sugar plantation. Their oldest son, Paul, who was born with cerebral palsy, still attends DCLS's 64th day services and lives with a Home Sharing Provider.

"It was lovely living there on a sugar plantation ... I had no problems or was homesick," she says. While they were on the Island, BC Sugar was repurchased by the Provincial Government and Tony's employment ended. After returning to the Netherlands, where they had Paul "very well tested" in an academic hospital, BC Sugar gave them the opportunity to move to Canada.

"We had a choice where the company would place us... We knew quite a few Canadians from the sugar company (living in Vancouver). They said there is a real good facility at GF Strong in Vancouver."

After landing in Vancouver, Paul attended GF Strong for one year. He then went to pre-school in Vancouver for a year and a half. At that time there was no tunnel leading to Vancouver and travel between Delta and Vancouver was becoming a challenge for both Paul and his family.

The young family heard that there was support available from the Delta Association for Handicapped Children. The Association operated out of the basement of the United Church and offered a limited set of courses two or three mornings a week.



"So we agreed that Tony would start working with the Delta Association. Then we worked to have (the Association) be recognized by the School Board and to have better services."

What was Tony like?

He was very driven. When he had something in his hat he would find the people who supported him... he was very good (at finding) ways to do those things.

What did Tony think of the institutions that were housing mentally disabled people at that time?

He sure wasn't for it... We never would have put Paul in there.

Tell us about how the Variety Farm got started.

It was 1962 (when) Tony said, 'I have to do something to ensure that the kids have something to do after school'. He started working on it days and evening... There was a radio fundraiser done by Pat Burns. From that first money that was raised he was able to buy the 10 acres where DCLS is now... Tony then went down to Ottawa and they gave him the 100 acres from the (Delta) airport on lease for a dollar or so a year... There were just a few kids (at first), but the community was accepting them and people would come out and buy the beans and the potatoes and the eggs from the farm. Sales from what was produced went really well.

What role did you play in supporting Tony's work?

We had many garage sales at the United Church. They were well attended. Not that you got very much, maybe close to a thousand dollars. But that was a lot of money then... I supported Tony in anything I could do. Like ticket sales. He would raffle off boats, trucks -- anything to get money for the farm.

Are you proud of the role your family has played in founding DCLS?

I am proud that it is (still) there and still running fine and recognized... you have come far.

DCLS Celebrating Community Living Month



October is Community Living Month in the Province of British Columbia. This year's month-long celebration will recognize the contribution of those individuals, families and community members who are working to create more inclusive communities and greater opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. To celebrate Community Living Month 2011, DCLS is organizing community awareness and engagement events throughout its service region. Visit our website for information on DCLS events, www.dcls.ca.

Planning for the Future

DCLS is committed to the development and implementation of a strategic plan every three years. At the end of 2010 DCLS completed its previous strategic plan; much was accomplished during the past few years. The organization focused its efforts on personal networks, community awareness, political advocacy, funding, and quality services.

The strategic planning process enables the organization to examine the current environment that the organization is operating in and reflect upon the internal activities of the organization in an effort to ensure that the goals of the Society reflect the wishes and desires of stakeholders. As part of the process to develop a new strategic plan, this past year the Society actively sought input from a variety of stakeholders.

The approach to strategic planning was designed to allow planning participants to engage in a series of discussions to deepen common understanding of the context in which the Society currently operates, undertake an exploration of the internal strengths and weakness (or challenges faced) of the organization, the potential opportunities and threats that the organization currently faces and agree upon a number of key strategic directions and actions.

A number of pre-event sessions were conducted with key stakeholder groups (self-advocates, employees, senior leadership, community and family members, external community living movement informants both locally, provincially and nationally) to ensure that the organizations' future plans and goals reflected the input of as many stakeholders as possible.

During this process the Board of Directors also reviewed the Mission, Vision, and Ends Statements of DCLS and recommended appropriate revisions. The process also assisted the leadership in identifying key strategic priorities: Organizational Sustainability, Service Excellence, Quality of Life and Communication.

Further work will be undertaken over the next several months to translate key strategic directions into measurable objectives consistent with the key directions.



Annual General Meeting Takes Place at Resource Center

DCLS held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) under sunny skies on September 10, 2011. The event, which was held once again at our Workplus location adjacent to the Resource Centre, included 150 employees, members of the Board, individuals and families supported by DCLS.

The AGM event is an annual forum at which the Board of Directors meet, review fiscal information from the past year, elect new members and make decisions on important issues. In addition to a barbeque and live entertainment, the DCLS AGM also celebrates the achievements of the people we support by announcing the recipients of the Tony Schmand Memorial Awards.



Delta Community Living Society

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Contact Us

If you have any questions about Delta Community Living Society and its programs and services, please contact our Resource Centre, or email the appropriate individual.

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Board of Directors

Delta Community Living Society (DCLS) is committed to the highest standards of governance and accountability. Members of the Board are volunteers from the community and family members of people with developmental disabilities, who share the values of DCLS.

President Wayne Stolen | Vice President Brenda Nagata | Treasurer Robert Hopper
Directors Don Boyle, Paul Brooks, Ralph Davis, John Grimwood, Barb Helmer, Ian Taylor, Julian Thorsteinson, Jill Wallace