



ANNUAL REPORT 2012



2011-2012 BOARD MEMBERS

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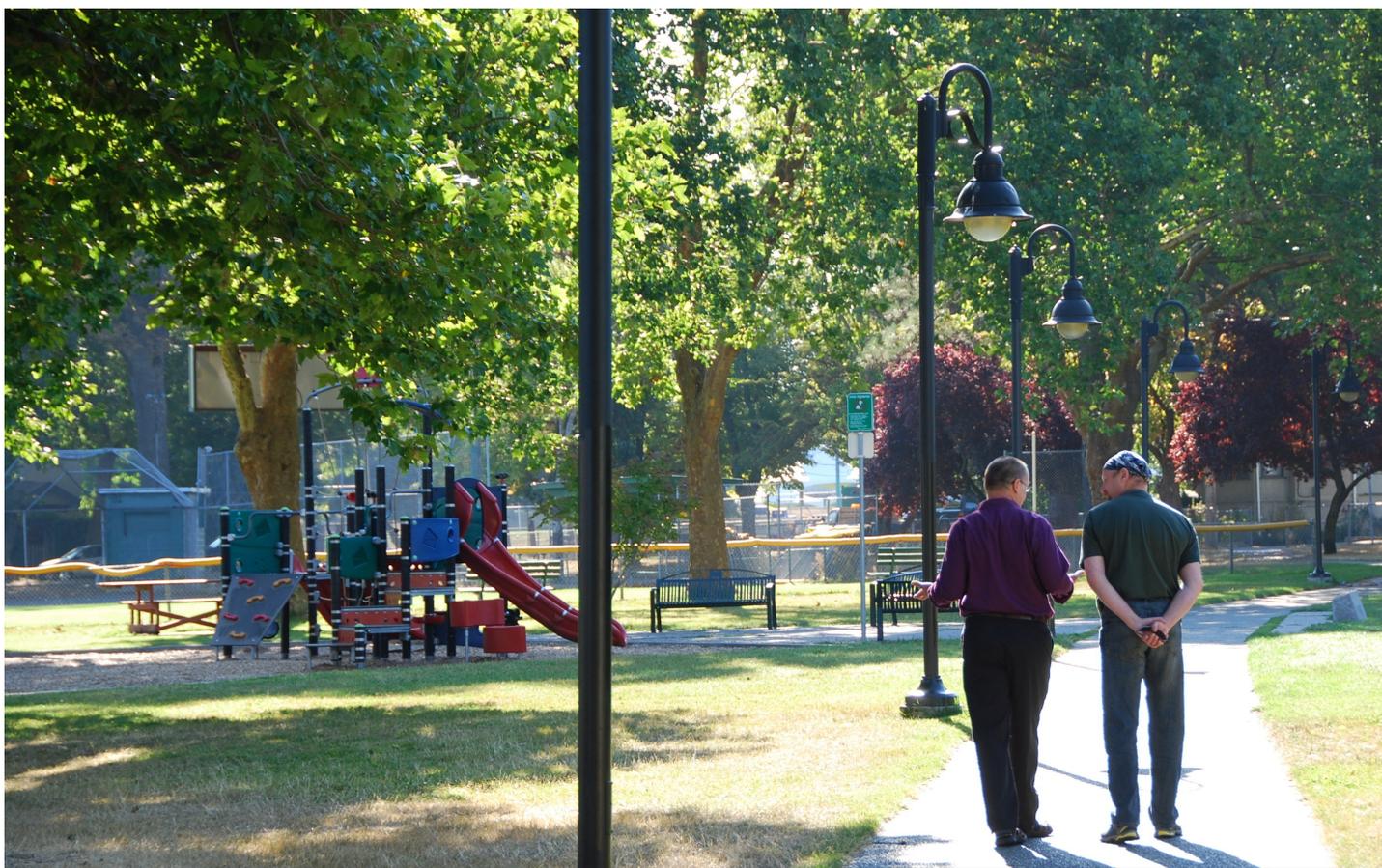
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Director of Resource Development
(ex officio)

HELEN LANG
Director of Client Services
(ex officio)



The mission of the Victoria Brain Injury Society is to provide support, education and advocacy to people with brain injuries, to empower them to move toward emotional, economic and social self-reliance

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As President of the Board of Directors I am honoured to be one of many volunteers that are committed to serving the Victoria Brain Injury Society.

I have always been impressed with this exceptional society and the leadership of its staff and volunteers. The Victoria Brain Injury Society is a remarkable organization that provides support, education and advocacy to people with acquired brain injury on southern Vancouver Island and the increasing demand for our services shows us just how important this society is to our community.

We have experienced yet another year of amazing growth not only with new programs, but with new faces, new board members and new volunteers. We also spent time, energy and resources on developing infrastructure behind the scenes to ensure we have the right tools in place to continue to serve the people, families and friends who have been affected by brain injury.

We witnessed the amazing growth of the society in 2010 and 2011 and recognised the need to create infrastructure within our society to strengthen our foundation. In September we began a formal assessment of the Victoria Brain Injury Society that reached out, through interviews, to our staff, board members, volunteers and clients to receive feedback as to what we are doing well and where we could improve. I thank all of you that volunteered to participate, as this feedback has been supportive, constructive and a great jumping off point from which to move forward.

We launched a new website this year that includes many new features which allow us to communicate with our members, sponsors and supporters and showcase the many amazing things we do. Our staff and volunteers have been working very hard to utilize our new database to help streamline our tracking and increase our internal efficiency. We also had an external financial audit conducted to reassure both our donors and ourselves that we are financially sound. All of these implementations have reinforced our society's ability to move forward with confidence.

Amongst our new infrastructure we still have our pillars that hold up this society and keep it strong. Looking back at this last year I'm very proud of how our staff, our board and our volunteers have risen to the challenges of growth and change.

As VBIS continues to grow, so must our staffing to accommodate our development. We have added so many new smiling faces in our office. We have some amazing new programs and we fine-tuned some of our established ones to meet the demands of our growing membership. With the expansion of our offerings brings new, talented people whom I know are passionate in their dedication to the Victoria Brain Injury Society. Yet we still have the experience of established staff members that help us stay strong and stay the course.

Our Board of Directors is always evolving as well. This year we say goodbye to a few amazing volunteers that have given so much over the years and my message to them is one of enormous gratitude. Thank you for all the years of dedication, advice and passion for this great society. It hasn't gone unnoticed and your support has made us stronger. It is now time for others to carry the torch and bring different skill sets and experience to the table and continue your work. And when I look at our board today, I have the confidence in their abilities and commitment to VBIS and I look forward to another year of working together.

And to our volunteers a huge thank you as well. Cynthia Ozick once said, "We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude." Here at the society we know the value of our volunteers and don't take them for granted. Giving their time and talent, it is the volunteers that help us do what we need to do. Every year we have a volunteer appreciation celebration, but every day we are very thankful for the energy and commitment they share with us.

Finally, a special thanks to our many supporters and donors. Without you we could not keep our doors open. Through your generosity we continue to strive to meet the need of our community.



In conclusion, it's been a year of growth in structure, strength and support. We've developed our infrastructure to reinforce our foundation and this makes us stronger, allowing us to meet the challenges that lay ahead. Never have we served and supported so many members through our programs and we are very proud of our achievements. Someone once said, "Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something."

So, thank you **everybody** for your commitment to this amazing society. I look forward to the years ahead, as the Victoria Brain Injury Society continues to shine.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Stephen McKenzie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

STEPHEN MCKENZIE

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICES



The past year has validated for us that the Victoria Brain Injury Society is greatly needed and is making a big difference in the lives of brain injury survivors. We have witnessed courageous, compassionate

acts of outreach. We have seen and heard stories of amazing kindness, strength and hope from survivors and families as they reshape their lives. We have seen an increased awareness across the country and in Victoria about the life-altering effects of brain injury.

As awareness about the very serious impacts of brain injury increases, more and more people are accessing our services. During the past year more than **700 people** walked through our doors. That is an increase of 200 individuals. With only five staff members, resources are stretched. We are fortunate to have over **75 active volunteers** to help us run all ten of our programs and our day-to-day operations – we couldn't do it without them!

Our **Peer Support Program** is still the bedrock of our work. The hope and comfort that comes from survivors speaking to fellow survivors cannot be adequately described. The statements, "I am not alone" and "someone understands" are frequently spoken in gratitude to our Peer Supporters for their wisdom and comfort. Partnering with the Peer Support Program is the **one-to-one case management** that our two seasoned staff provide. Our staff are there to support individuals as they deal with the enormous strains placed on their relationships, emotional and physical health, housing, employment and financial stability. They also provide much-needed education. Addictions, loneliness, depression and confusion are always close by.

In order to meet the increased demand for our services we have added several new programs, including a Walk and Run Group, a Music Therapy Program and an addictions recovery program geared specifically towards brain

injury survivors, called Awareness-Choices-Education (ACE). We have also initiated an Orientation Program that helps new clients connect with us more quickly.

We continue to have well-attended educational programs, including **Acquired Brain Injury 101**, **Coping Strategies I** and our **Creative Arts Program**, which is a holistic approach to recovery that offers survivors a chance to use the creative process of art-making to improve and enhance their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

This year we were able to expand our **Volunteer Program**, thanks to a generous grant from the United Way of Greater Victoria. This program provides a safe environment for survivors to gain positive living skills and work experience while learning to deal with the challenging impacts of their injury. The program provides support, training and volunteering opportunities which enhance self-esteem, create positive relationships, increase capacity for self-reliance and build community connections.

It is well known that a brain injury not only affects the survivor but also family and friends. Responding to this need, and our desire to support everyone who is impacted, we have expanded our monthly **Family Support Group** to a weekly drop-in meeting. This group provides counseling, comfort, information and understanding. In addition, we continue to provide families with private counseling sessions throughout the week.

The task of supporting those with brain injury is one we share with others and so we continue to reach out through our partnerships. A VBIS case manager attends weekly family groups at the VGH Neuro Science Unit to let families know we are here for them when they are ready. Additionally, we visit patients in the VGH In-Patient Rehab Unit, offering encouragement and inviting people to reach out to us. VBIS volunteers continue to support the **P.A.R.T.Y. Program** at VGH by speaking to high school students about the causes and effects of risky behavior resulting in brain injury. We have even had an international impact.

Two clinicians from Japan visited VBIS for the second time, to learn more about what makes our Peer Support Program so successful.

We are very fortunate to have undergraduate, Masters and PhD students volunteering with us and working alongside brain injury survivors. Together they are learning new skills and supporting one another. We have contributed to two research projects, one which identified the positive effects of mindfulness work on brain injury and the other which provided groundwork for a mapping app for electronic devices (i.e. smart phones) that would assist brain injured survivors in navigating through unfamiliar streets.

Finally, through a generous grant we were able to complete a thorough **Needs Assessment**. This assessment, run by Community Social Planning Council, identified that ninety-one percent of our clients felt we were providing exceptional service and were very satisfied with our programming. What did they say was missing? More... more locations, more staff to see more people, more of what we are already doing.

We are grateful for the resources we have received in this last year. We have strong support from the people that help make this possible and inspiration from the wonderful people that continue to walk through our doors every day. And as we see our survivors do every day, we will meet the challenges of the next year with determination, hope and laughter!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen Lang".

HELEN LANG

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

I vividly recall the hits that took all-star hockey player Sidney Crosby off the ice and almost ended his career. He sustained a concussion, couldn't maintain his balance, lost his hand-eye coordination... constantly felt tired and 'foggy'. And Crosby was lucky – imagine losing your memory, your ability to think clearly and quickly, being unable to feel like your 'old self' ever again. Welcome to the world of brain injury.

It was shocking for me to learn that brain injuries are the number one killer and disabler of people under the age of 44 and are more prevalent than breast cancer, spinal cord injury and HIV/AIDS **combined**.

It feels like the world is just starting to wake up to the severe, life-altering impacts of brain injury. And one can only hope that this new-found awareness will come with greater supports for brain injury survivors and their families.

This support can't come soon enough. Due in part to the spotlight on concussions and brain injury in the media, more individuals have been accessing our services than ever before. Our numbers jumped from 500 to 700 in this past year alone. This influx of clientele facing a broad spectrum of health needs has been a catalyst for growth within our organization. We have started several new programs, doubled our operating budget and created new staff positions.

None of this growth would be possible without our dedicated staff, passionate volunteers and steadfast donors and supporters. We have received an outpouring of financial support to help get us through this period of development and transformation. Our **Annual Gala Fundraiser** grossed over \$60,000 in 2011 – a demonstration of the phenomenal community support we have garnered.

Thanks to a generous grant from the **United Way of Greater Victoria** we were able to purchase a Client Management Database that has enabled us to modernize our system and produce detailed reports for our funders. The United Way also funded our Needs Assessment, with the help of the **Vandekerkhove Family Foundation**.

And to top it all off, the United Way funded our Volunteer Program for the next three years!

We are also thankful to the **BC Hydro Employees' Community Service Fund** and the **City of Victoria** for their contribution towards our Community Awareness Project. This project raises awareness of brain injury through a dynamic public engagement strategy. **BC Gaming** funded our Coping Strategies I Program. The **Vancouver Foundation, Harbourside Rotary** and the **Hamber Foundation** generously funded our Peer Support Program and the **Sara Spencer Foundation** provided greatly needed funds to renovate our group room.

We also owe unending thanks to the **Vancouver Island Health Authority – Brain Injury Program** for providing with sustainable core funding year after year.

The overarching goal of our society is to lend a supportive and helping hand to those living with a brain injury and to work with survivors to build their capacity to become actively involved in the broader community once again. Your continued support allows us to carry on with this important work.

We are deeply appreciative of your compassion and commitment.

THANK YOU!



NICOLE NELSON



Client Quotes

"I don't know where I'd be without the Victoria Brain Injury Society," said Andy. "Probably living on the streets. They give you the tools to work with, and the support, which is critical."

"I feel like the society has given me purpose again," said Caitlin. "It has given me the feeling that I can do anything... that I can give back and **pay it forward**. I can spread the message, give back and help people because of the help I received."

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2012	2011
REVENUE		
Brain Injury Program - VIHA	\$ 123,869	\$ 123,869
Fundraising	61,233	53,187
Grants	49,504	42,645
Donations	21,350	13,543
Contract Revenue	11,440	9,840
Advertising	4,625	5,480
	272,021	248,564
EXPENSES		
Wages and Benefits	193,323	161,916
Rent and Utilities	31,199	26,140
Office	22,101	16,776
Fundraising	24,554	26,585
Contract Facilitators	12,998	-
Support Programs	7,832	6,185
Database	7,220	-
Utilities	2,955	2,993
Insurance	2,905	2,717
Advertising and Promotion	2,067	1,589
Professional Development	1,850	1,848
Interest and Bank Charges	1,578	1,443
Repairs and Maintenance	1,079	887
Dues, Fees and Licenses	631	534
Moving Costs	-	10,702
Donations	-	1,000
	312,292	261,315
REVENUE IN EXCESS OF (LESS THAN) EXPENDITURES	(40,271)	(12,751)



2011 | 2012
YEAR IN REVIEW



Victoria
Brain Injury
Society
EST. 1983



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

VANCOUVER ISLAND HEALTH
AUTHORITY—BRAIN INJURY
PROGRAM

UNITED WAY OF GREATER VICTORIA

VANCOUVER FOUNDATION

VICTORIA FOUNDATION

BC GAMING

CITY OF VICTORIA SPECIAL
PROJECTS GRANT

HARBOURSIDE ROTARY

HAMBER FOUNDATION

HYDRECS FUND

VANKEKERKHOVE FAMILY
FOUNDATION

SARA SPENCER FOUNDATION

GIFTFUNDS CANADA

THRIFTY FOODS

AND A SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF
OUR GENEROUS INDIVIDUAL DONORS!

Thank you for placing brain injury
survivors at the center of your charitable
giving and for making a difference in the
lives of others.

We could not do this important work
without you!



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