

ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

Victoria
Brain Injury
Society

EST. 1983



2012-2013 BOARD MEMBERS

STEPHEN MCKENZIE
President

ATHOLL MALCOLM
Director-at-Large

DON ANDERSON
Vice-President

MURRAY LANGDON
Director-at-Large

NATALIE FOLEY
Secretary

BARBARA TOLLER
Director-at-Large

FRANK LEE
Treasurer

PATRICK CORNEY
Director-at-Large

CONNIE MCKENZIE
Director-at-Large

2012-2013 STAFF MEMBERS

NICOLE NELSON
Executive Director

SHARON STEWART
Accounting Clerk

HELEN LANG
Director of Client Services

KATUSHA DMITRIEVA
Program Facilitator

ANNA MCLAUHLAN
Manager of
Administration/
Volunteer Coordinator

CARMEN EISENHAUER
Music Therapist

LEIDI FORTNER
Case Manager

ALEX GILCHRIST
Case Manager



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

It has been thirty years since the Victoria Brain Injury Society open its doors back in 1983. We called ourselves the Vancouver Island Head Injury Society because we were the only non-profit brain injury service provider on the Island back then. Today our staff networks and shares insights and ideas with Brain Injury Associations throughout the Island and the mainland as brain injury awareness and services continue to expand and strive to meet the needs of our communities. Like our brother and sister societies, the Victoria Brain Injury Society is continuing to grow and provide support, education and advocacy to people with acquired brain injury here on southern Vancouver Island and the increasing demand for our services shows us just how important this society is to our community.

Here we stand today, celebrating our 30th birthday and look how far we've come. VBIS has expanded our services and programs and we have never served as many members as we have this past year. When I think back to when I first started with the Board of Directors in 2007 our society was tucked away in a little corner on Queens Street, just bursting at the seams. Today, when I walk through the hallways of Pembroke, I can't help but smile as I can feel the warm energy within our walls and this comes not from the building, but the people within it.

I believe, and I am sure you would agree, that it is the people within VBIS that makes our society so wonderful. We have an amazing, dedicated team of staff that are passionate about what they do, and they deliver our services with integrity and compassion. Our 90+ volunteers have many roles in supporting our Society and they tirelessly give of their time to help out where they can. I'm always inspired by our volunteers as we would not be able to do the wonderful things we do without the help and support of so many.

As the Victoria Brain Injury Society continually strives to meet the demand of our community we do need more than hope, help and big hearts. We do need funding to help us help so many and this is a good opportunity to thank our donors and funders, because they give us the means to deliver our programs and services. Thank you for your generosity!

Serving on the Board of Directors for the last several years I have been honoured to be a part of this outstanding team of volunteers that meet at all hours of the day to get the job done. I truly have enjoyed working along side of this group of passionate people and I'm very proud of the work we have done together over these past few years. This year, for example, one accomplishment we should be proud of was filling our absent role of an Executive Director. As many of you may or may not know, VBIS has been without a full time ED for many years. This year, we extended an offer to someone who has shown leadership, enthusiasm and will add strength to our society. Nicole Nelson was our first choice for this role and we believe she will represent us, the members, the staff and the volunteers of the Victoria Brain Injury Society with pride and passion.

This year, I am stepping down as Board President and I am very confident in the abilities of the Executive and my fellow Board members who will continue to serve the Victoria Brain Injury Society and help make the next 30 years even more successful in serving the needs of our community. It has been my privilege to have worked and volunteered alongside so many of you over the last seven years, and I am so proud of the work we have done together.

Happy 30th Birthday VBIS!



STEPHEN MCKENZIE



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We have experienced exponential growth over the past couple of years. Our client intake has increased by 40%, we have added several new programs and our staff have continued to steer the ship with grace and determination despite an increasingly formidable workload. Their energy, enthusiasm and commitment inspire me each and every day.

Our **Case Management Program** is a fundamental element to the support we provide. We are eternally grateful to the **Vancouver Island Health Authority** for funding this pivotal program that allows our case managers to meet with each individual who walks through our doors, one-on-one.

Our Peer Supporters have done a phenomenal job in providing daily support for anyone needing a listening ear. The **Peer Support Program**, funded by the **Vancouver Foundation** and skillfully facilitated by Alex Gilchrist, empowers brain injury survivors to recognize their own capacities, their strengths and their expertise. They create an atmosphere of comfort and belonging that is unsurpassed.

Thanks to the dedication of our outgoing Director of Client Services, Helen Lang, the **Family Services Program** served over 60 family members this year. We have **VIHA** and **Island Savings** to thank for funding this critical program, as well as the family members themselves, who work tirelessly to support their families despite overwhelming challenges.

One of our most successful endeavors to date, the **Coping Strategies Program**, was expanded this year to include two concurrent sessions. We are thankful to

BC Gaming for increasing our funding to allow us to grow our services, for the growing number of clients! Program facilitator Leidi Fortner continues to use her creativity and knowledge to develop this program in new and exciting ways. Leidi also facilitates the **Awareness Choices Education Program**, for survivors who have experienced addiction challenges. I have watched the group members support each other throughout the year and I am inspired by their courage, perseverance and camaraderie.

Last year we decided to address a gap in services for youth who have experienced a brain injury, so we developed the **Youth Supporting Youth Program**. Thanks to the generous support of **Coast Capital** and **TELUS** we are now running this weekly program for youth ages 18 – 25.

After a short hiatus, our **Music Program** began making joyful noise again, funded by our wonderful supporters at the **Harbourside Rotary**. I love Tuesday afternoons, when the music drifts through the walls, into my office!

The popular **Creative Arts Program**, funded in large part by **OPUS Art Supplies** this year thanks to their very successful fundraising drive, continued to provide an open space for brain injury survivors to flex their creative muscles.

I am always taken aback by the passion and dedication of our volunteers. Thanks to a generous three year grant from the **United Way of Greater Victoria** – and the remarkable tenacity of our Volunteer Coordinator, Anna McLaughlan - we have a robust **Volunteer Program** that boasts over 90 volunteers! Whether they are running reception, helping to facilitate groups or organizing special events, our volunteers are an invaluable part of our team.

Thanks to a grant from the **City of Victoria**, and partnership funding from **VIHA**, our

Community Awareness Program is growing stronger each year. We are very thankful to have Dr. Beauchamp, retired professor and clinical neuropsychologist, giving presentations to local social service providers, to help educate them on the causes and consequences of brain injury. I have also had the absolute pleasure of making presentations about our society to local businesses, organizations and funders. Not a single presentation has gone by without an audience member expressing how someone in their life has been touched by brain injury. It is bittersweet to hear their stories of survival, but to know there is a place they can come for comfort, friendship and learning.

We have built so many remarkable memories over the past year, from the Annual Picnic in August where VBIS's very own band, the "Forget-Me-Notes," got everybody dancing, to Mrs. Claus showing up at our Holiday Celebration (or was that one of our receptionists, Michelle?!), to Bob shaking hands with the mayor at the Victoria Day Parade. We had 30 – yes, 30! – volunteers help make our Annual Gala Fundraiser a resounding success. We watched in awe as Caitlin Saunders – who was told she may never walk again – crossed the finish line of at the half marathon.

I have been inspired, motivated and completely amazed by everyone connected to this organization. I am looking forward into the future and have no doubt in my mind that we will continue to grow, to support one another and to create a stronger, more resilient and more livable community for us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Nelson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

NICOLE NELSON

MESSAGE FROM PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

“Then came the most wonderful part of my journey through VBIS. It was when I was offered the Coping Strategies program. For the first time I sat in the room of about 15 other people and I knew I belonged. I knew there were connections that would form into lifelong friendships. This course was taught in such a way that it explained brain injury scientifically, giving it validity, but what struck the biggest chord was that it gave very clear examples of what would happen if we didn’t learn to cope in our own ways. For example, we learned the importance of allowing ourselves to take breaks and not become overtired. Becoming extremely fatigued is common with a brain injury and may result in low patience, irritability, emotional outbursts, etc. Over the 20 weeks these bonds of trust and understanding and friendships grew and **you could see each and every one of us supporting each other with passion and perseverance and conviction.** Over time, as we each learned more and more, you could see the confidence of each and every group member grow through the journey. That confidence grew and grew.”



Coping Strategies Program Participant
Funded by BC Gaming



“I feel it was the counselling sessions and the A.C.E (Awareness Choices Education) program that increased my chances of survival in the outside community. I’ve been to so many support groups and programs that I think I could teach them! But A.C.E. is different. The A.C.E. program is less formal – you don’t have to worry about admitting your stumbles and people pushing you away or shunning you from the group. In this program you can say what you did, recognize it was wrong, get over it and move on. **They take a personalized approach to everyone’s challenges.** The group gets to know one another really well and we all make recommendations to each other. Also, the group runs every week on an ongoing basis, which allows us to practice what we learn every week. Even though I have all the knowledge in my head, if I don’t put it to use, I lose it – that is part of my brain injury. This group was not only a starting point for my journey in recovery, I also use it as maintenance.”

Awareness Choices Education Program Participant
Funded by VIHA

“After a time of being a client myself at VBIS, I took their peer training course and started volunteering my time to help other people with brain injuries to bridge back into their lives too. Just as I have been able to help them, the clients at VBIS have helped me and continue to help me. All of these people understand what it is to live with a brain injury....Very often, the full assistance needed for people with brain injuries can only be achieved with the help of their peers. **It takes the company and community of the people at VBIS to truly reflect my experience back to me in a language I can understand and re-shape myself with.** It is inside this understanding that I am made more aware of my accident and the damage it caused as well the person I have become through it. I can better see my changed abilities and the gifts I still hold. It is within the safety of VBIS, with its deep resources of practitioners and information, that I am seeing myself as a member of society again.”



Peer Support Program Participant
Funded by the Vancouver Foundation

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2013	2012
REVENUE		
Brain Injury Program - VIHA	\$ 123,869	\$ 123,869
Fundraising	61,007	61,233
Grants	100,755	49,504
Donations	16,606	21,350
Contract Revenue	8,070	11,440
Advertising	4,446	4,625
	314,753	248,564
EXPENSES		
Wages and Benefits	228,948	193,323
Rent and Utilities	31,505	31,199
Office	34,857	22,101
Fundraising	22,095	24,544
Contract Facilitators	3,420	12,998
Support Programs	3,898	7,832
Database	-	7,220
Utilities	3,045	2,955
Insurance	3,281	2,905
Advertising and Promotion	1,819	2,067
Professional Development	985	1,850
Interest and Bank Charges	1,259	1,578
Repairs and Maintenance	2,001	1,079
Dues, Fees and Licenses	773	631
	337,886	312,291
REVENUE IN EXCESS OF (LESS THAN) EXPENDITURES	(23,133)	(40,270)



2012 | 2013
YEAR IN REVIEW



Arthur L. Eby
Valued Volunteer and
Peer Supporter
1982 - 2012

Super Star
Volunteers

Brain Injury Society
EST. 1983

Alex

Victoria
Brain Injury Society
EST. 1983

Gift Program

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

VANCOUVER ISLAND HEALTH
AUTHORITY—BRAIN INJURY
PROGRAM

UNITED WAY OF GREATER VICTORIA

VANCOUVER FOUNDATION

BC GAMING

CITY OF VICTORIA

HARBOURSIDE ROTARY

VANKEKERKHOVE FAMILY
FOUNDATION

SARA SPENCER FOUNDATION

THE LEON AND THEA KOERNER
FOUNDATION

QUAIL ROCK FOUNDATION

ISLAND SAVINGS

COAST CAPITAL

TELUS

THRIFTY FOODS

CHARLTON L SMITH CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION

GREATER VICTORIA SAVINGS AND
CREDIT UNION FOUNDATION

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



830 Pembroke Street, Victoria, BC V8T 1H9

T 250 598 9339

admin@vbis.ca

www.vbis.ca