

Annual Report



For the year ended March 31, 2020

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Message from our Board Chair

On behalf of myself and the VBIS Board of Directors, thank you to our clients, volunteers, staff and donors for your interest in and commitment to our organization, which has played a profound role in our past successes. With your continued involvement and input I believe VBIS has a bright future ahead.



To be sure, this last year has been filled with a unique set of challenges. VBIS ended the 2019 calendar year facing significant financial and operational uncertainty stemming from our transition towards a new leader for our organization. Pam Prewett had only a few months to settle into her new role and develop a fresh strategy for our fundraising and budget before the global pandemic upended all our lives and plans. And large as those twin problems proved to be, they were both dwarfed by the sadness felt by our community with the tragic loss of a dedicated VBIS staff member, Jaime Traynor.

Through a time of extraordinary difficulty, Pam has consistently exceeded our expectations during her first year as executive director. She has tackled every personal and professional challenge arising on the job with good judgment, a positive outlook and an open mind. Thanks to Pam's dedication and hard work, our fundraising has markedly improved, our spending is well-controlled, and critical client services have continued even during the worst of our ongoing health crisis.

Good management allows one to stop being "reactive", and start being "proactive" – which is the enjoyable part of service on a volunteer board. While structural challenges arising from COVID remain with us, we are looking ahead in the following year to expanding our service delivery model to provide more and better programs for VBIS clients, while expanding both our client and donor base through better community outreach. Other changes and improvements, developed in consultation with board members, staff and stakeholders, will follow as VBIS continues to evolve and grow. Your participation in that dialogue plays an essential role in our ongoing process of re-invention. I look forward to working with you as we cross what I hope will be slightly calmer waters in 2020-21.

Wyatt Pickett, Board Chair

Message from our Executive Director

Last November 2019, Don Anderson stepped down from his position as interim Executive Director. Since 2010, Don has been involved with VBIS either on the board or as acting ED. Don has been the face of VBIS and has done a tremendous job in supporting brain injury survivors and their families. I am honoured to have been chosen to fill the Executive Director position but I am also aware of the big shoes I have to fill. Nevertheless, my gratitude extends to the Board for their trust and confidence in me.



Where are we now?

We have worked hard to provide support, education and advocacy to brain injury survivors and their families over the past year, but there is still much more we can do. Our community progresses with more people attending support groups and the new *Brain Injury And Substance (BIAS)* group – the revamped *Addiction, Choice, Education (ACE)* - getting off to a great start. We continue to value our partnerships with Island Health, the Brain Injury Alliance and the United Way of Greater Victoria. Ongoing funding from these organizations has added a much needed boost to our finances and allowed us to continue providing our programs and services.

Where do we go from here?

We, as an organization, still have much more to do. Support is at the heart of VBIS's services. Through awareness and advocacy, we can increase public understanding of brain injury and its impacts. Through education, we can help survivors and their families learn how to live and thrive with a brain injury. Lastly, through support, we can help each other towards a new beginning. How do we get there? We need to review our capabilities and strengths, and develop a new strategic vision to achieve our many goals and plans, one at a time. VBIS cannot do this alone, you are the reason we are here and we count on your input and support.

I want to acknowledge the invaluable time that our staff and volunteers contributed to the success of our major fundraising event—the Black & White, Because Grey Matters gala. This year's event raised over \$42,000 and increased awareness in the community about VBIS and the important work we do for brain injury survivors. Finally, all the good work that VBIS accomplished wouldn't be possible without the dedication, passion, and expertise that our Board of Directors brings to the organization—for that thank you!

Pam Prewett, Executive Director

Impact Story



The day that Eric M realized that something was wrong with his brain started out like any other day.

As a child growing up in Alberta, Eric was diagnosed with ADHD. Then in 2007, after he had moved to BC, he was diagnosed with a bipolar disorder. But it wasn't until the day that Eric, working for UPS at the time, parked his truck one day and freaked out.

*"I didn't know what it was but I knew **something was wrong with my brain** and I knew it was not bipolar."*

Eric saw a doctor and for two days did a variety of brain testing. He was ready for what he discovered – that several concussions due to being thrown or dropped as a small child, in addition to sports related incidents, had left him with a brain injury.

In 2019 a doctor with the Cool Aid Society told him about VBIS. Out of work and living in a shelter, Eric attended ABI 101 at VBIS in November and what he learned changed his life.

*"Thanks to VBIS, the biggest thing for me was learning that **I'm not the only one.**"*

After attending ABI 101, Eric started the Coping Strategies program in January 2020, and credits the group with providing him with a supportive network of like-minded people who understand what it's like to navigate the day-to-day life of a brain injury survivor. "Brain injury is not always straight forward," he says. "VBIS taught me that my brain isn't the same and that's okay. It's what you do with that knowledge that counts."

MISSION

To support, educate, and advocate for adults with acquired brain injuries and their families; and to increase community awareness about acquired brain injuries.

VISION

To empower people with acquired brain injuries to maximize their quality of life.

2019 - 2020 Highlights

of Visits:

Art Therapy - 314

Yoga - 72

Mindfulness - 297

Walk/Run Program - 89

Music Therapy - 165

173 Completed intakes

PROGRAMS IMPACT

Individual support



Case managers worked with **286** individuals to navigate their new reality in a way that best suits their personal needs. Done through offering individual support services, free of charge, to any individuals living with an acquired brain injury, individual case management also assists family/friends to help a person with an acquired brain injury to maximize their rehabilitation potential and to live as independently as possible.

Peer Support



Peer supporters are volunteers who have experienced an acquired brain injury themselves and “get it”. These special volunteers supported **2096** members, facilitating group conversations, answering questions about brain injury and referring survivors to useful community resources. Peer supporters pass on useful coping techniques and share their experiences with other survivors and their families.

Coping Strategies



44 individuals attended Coping Strategies, a 24 week program that is an informative, in-depth course for people with brain injury. Strategies of daily living and dealing with the effects of brain injury are looked at, and several guest speakers are included throughout the program.

Acquired Brain Injury 101



ABI 101 is an informative introduction to brain anatomy and brain injury. In this 4 week knowledge-building course, **34** individual group members had discussions concerning brain function and brain injury with focus on causes, effects, recovery and more.

Brain Injury and Substance



16 individuals attended BIAS, a support group with a goal of offering a safe space for the survivors of brain injury to explore problematic substance use and how it uniquely effects the brain injury symptomology.

The illustration (below) shows the process for a client moving through VBIS

Intake Coordinator does initial assessment

Client attends programs and/or sees a case manager

After a goal has been completed, client can exit or attend another program

Peer support is available during the entire process

Financial Summary

	2020	2019
REVENUE		
Brain Injury Program—VIHA	\$ 167,114	\$ 153,732
Grants	162,837	234,064
Fundraising	41,708	32,069
Donations	18,413	22,008
Contract Funding	230	150
Rental	-	525
	392,681	443,319
EXPENSES		
Advertising and promotion	1,399	634
Amortization	605	2,228
Bad debts	-	50
Contract facilitators	12,400	12,650
Dues, fees and licenses	4,668	1,516
Fundraising	16,225	21,425
Insurance	3,051	2,900
Interest and bank charges	2,065	1,455
Office	33,739	31,031
Professional development	5,553	312
Program support	3,004	4,806
Rent	56,583	54,501
Repairs and maintenance	2,440	3,502
Telephone	2,119	2,763
Wages and benefits	338,939	262,331
	482,790	402,104
REVENUE IN EXCESS OF (LESS THAN) EXPENDITURES	\$ (90,209)	\$ 41,215



Looking Forward

Staff changes in 2019/20 have provided challenges this past year. Although the Society reported a loss in 2020, this is not expected to be a permanent issue, and the board and management have implemented strategies for 2021 and onward to ensure that this does not continue. With firm leadership and solid staffing in place, we look forward to 2020/21!

Executive Leadership



Wyatt Pickett
Board Chair



Barbara Phillips
Secretary



Trevor Jones
Treasurer



Adam Harnden
Board Member



Lynn Chenier
Board Member



Varun Dhau
Board Member



Gerald Hartwig
Board Member



Richard McGuigan
Board Member



Pam Prewett
Executive Director

We Need Your Help

Every Penny Matters

Donate – We welcome your generous donations, which allow us to continue offering essential services, free of charge, to people whose lives have been forever changed by brain injury.

Consider a monthly gift, which will help us expand our programming and cut down our waitlists.

For more information and to make a donation visit our website at www.vbis.ca/how-you-can-help/ or call us at 250-598-9339.

Registered charity #122452121 RR0001



Volunteer and Help Us Support People Through the Complexities of Brain Injury

If you have a passion for supporting people in the community and would like to volunteer with us, call us at 250-598-9339 or email volunteer@vbis.ca.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- **Program Assistant/Facilitator**
 - Working with clients
 - **Reception**
 - Office/Administration tasks
- **Planning events/community outreach**
 - Peer Support Assistant
 - **Fundraising and Advocacy**

Andrea, master's student studying **Neuropsychology** at the University of Victoria, is passionate about volunteering:

*"Volunteering at VBIS has taken my understanding of the intricacies of brain injury **beyond the black and white** of text book pages and coloured it with the real-life everyday experiences, struggles, triumphs and insights of individuals living with brain injury"*

Thank You to Our Individual Donors

The generosity of our donors is the lifeblood of the Victoria Brain Injury Society. All of our programs, as well as the personal growth and recovery of our clients, are dependent on the continued support of the donors below. We thank you!

Acheson Whitley Foley Sahota	Jasmere Dhillon	Cathy Koshman	Raymond James Ltd
Don Anderson	April Dorey	Simon Lamond	Leonard Regan
Carol Aston	Rehabilitation Ergo	Brenda Martin	Keith Rettinger
Bill Borges	Raisa Frenette	Peter McKay	Gwynne Russell
Avery Brohman	Nadia Haayer	Steve & Connie McKenzie	Ron Skelton
Ray Cao	Sharon Hadden	Debbie McNeil	Dominic Smith
CDG Coast Dynamics Group Ltd	Hartwig Industries Inc	Colleen Melville	Brita Sorensen
Eileen Closs	Heather Manners	Casey Milone	David Southern
Colliers Macaulay Nicolls Inc	Leanna Hill	J David Naysmith	Krissi Spinoza
Melanie Courchene	Leo Hinse	Gordon Newton	Cedric Steele
Jeffrey Cullen	Brenda Hurd	Treva Newton	Dan Werstuik
Varun Dhau	James Hutchison	Trevor O'Brien	Wyatt Pickett Law Corp
	Therapeutics IceKap	Barbara Phillips	Nathan Yu

The *Black & White... Because Grey Matters* gala raised over \$42,000 this year.

The following businesses were instrumental in providing services, products and donations that helped raise this amount at the gala.

Accent Inns	Crag-X Climbing Centre	LA Limousines	Portofino Bakery
Adrien Lepage	Darcy's Pub	Laurette Nedelec	Sea Cider Farm & Ciderhouse
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria	Deco De Mode	Market on Yates	Shampoo Hair Bar
BC Lions	Driftwood Brewery	Miniature World	Sirene Chocolate
BC Transit	Escents	Munro's Books	Smile Esthetics
Belfry Theatre	Fernwood Inn	North Park Bikes	Terrace Beach Resort
Bin4	Flavour	Oak Bay Beach Hotel	Toque Catering
Blackball Ferry	Floyd's Diner	Oak Bay Bicycles	Victoria Conservatory of Music
Bolen Books	Fly Over Canada	Old House Hotel	Victoria Distillers
Bon Macaron Patisserie	Goldstream Bicycles	Orca Spirit Whale Watching	Victoria Exercise and Rehabilitation Centre Ltd.
Bug Zoo	Hotel Grand Pacific	Pacific Coastal Airlines	Victoria Fire Department
Burtchart Gardens	Hotel Zed	Pacific Opera	Victoria HarbourCats
Caffe Fantastico	Il Covo	Pacific Sands	West Shore Recreation
Canoe Brewpub	Il Terrazo	Peppers Market	WestJet
Carla's Pet Portraits	Imax Victoria	Phillips Brewpub	
Cedar Hill Golf Course	John's Place Restaurant	Pizza Prima Strada	

Thank You to Our Funders

Without the support of the funders below, the Victoria Brain Injury Society would not be able to provide the programs and services to brain injury survivors and their families. We thank you!



**The Quail
Rock
Foundation**



**MUSIC
HEALS**

