



Hello, and welcome to BC Rehab's 2014 Annual Report

Many British Columbians live with a disability resulting from accidents, disease or other trauma, and our medical system, admirable as it is, does not always respond as quickly or as thoroughly as it might to solve issues faced by these individuals. During 2014, we at BC Rehab continued with our mission of providing assistance to individuals whose lives have been affected by a physical disability and for whom the resources needed to help them in their journey towards personal independence are not otherwise available, and working with other organizations that have similar objectives. We know from the letters and reports we receive how much of a difference even just one small piece of equipment or facility - a manual wheelchair that enables access to the community, an accessibility ramp to a social hall, sip and puff hardware for controlling a variety of devices, adaptive outdoor recreation programs - can make in such a journey. BC Rehab is there for people who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

In this review of our activities in 2014 you will find updates on existing programs and information on new initiatives, such as the Gert Vorsther Memorial Bursary. Our work would not be possible without the generous contributions we have received from many individuals, businesses and organizations. Your generosity and thoughtfulness throughout 2014 enables us to continue fulfilling our mandate to support people with physical disabilities in BC. We thank all our committed volunteers, generous donors and dedicated staff for their continuing support for BC's disability community in 2014. With your continuing help, BC Rehab will support individuals living with a physical disability throughout 2015 and beyond.

Ian Muirhead, Chair



Vancouver's Downtown Eastside - BC Rehab's outreach program in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside has been thriving since its inception in 2013 when we began offering free mobility device repairs to residents in need. June 18th wheelchair repair project at UGM event at CRAB Park.

“Thank you so much for approving the grant for my attendant control joystick. Having the attendant control joystick allows the staff to assist me when we are in a difficult area to around more easily and also the possibility to take control if I have a seizure. This allows me to keep safe in my home and in the community without the stress and worry.”

A. Williams



The Gert Vorsteher Memorial Award



The Gert Vorsteher Bursary – At BC Rehab, we are constantly looking for new ways of meeting the needs of the community we serve. In 2014, we began a new bursary program for British Columbians with a physical disability who intend to pursue post-secondary education that will lead to employment and greater personal independence and who demonstrate financial need. We call it the Gert Vorsteher Memorial Bursary, as it is funded from the legacy left by Mr. Vorsteher. Each bursary is \$5,000.

driven him to continue his educational goals at Camosun College where he will pursue his Golf Management diploma.

We are thrilled to be able to lend a hand to these two young men in their striving for post-secondary education, and we know that if they continue to focus on their goals, they will succeed.

We are now taking applications for the next Gert Vorsteher Memorial Bursary awards! The deadline is June 30, 2015, so please go to www.bcrehab.com if you are a full-time or part-time student at a post-secondary institution in BC.

One of the highlights on BC Rehab's calendar is the annual Gert Vorsteher Memorial Awards ceremony, which is held in the gymnasium at the GF Strong Centre. This was our seventh annual award ceremony and on May 14th eight individuals from across British Columbia were recognized for their extraordinary efforts and determination in reaching both their personal and physical rehab goals. The awards, each accompanied by a cheque for \$5,000, were the inspiration of Mr. Gert Vorsteher, a GF Strong alumnus who left a legacy for BC Rehab to make these awards possible. This year's recipients are: Josh Darmawan, Surrey; Michele Grant, Whitehorse; Amit Sharma, Surrey; Kyle Jacques, Vancouver; Thomas Martin, Penticton; Lisa Chan, Vancouver; Norine Chubb, Vancouver; and Adel Othman, Vancouver.



2014 Gert Vorsteher winners: Lisa Chan, Norine Chubb, Adel Othman, Michele Grant, Thomas Martin, Kyle Jaques, & Amit Sharma

Each recipient has a different story, but they all share a spirit of resilience and determination. Lisa Chan used her funds to register in a web design course at Selkirk College. She is also a contributor to BC Rehab's vendor program at GF Strong. Thomas Martin sustained a brain injury and fractures in his neck and back from an ATV accident in 2009. Following the accident Martin was unable to move, but through hard work he has continued to improve and has applied to an entrepreneurial course through Work BC.



The first two awards of this bursary were made to Jordan Marks, who lives in Anmore, BC, and Kaydon Sisett, who lives in Maple Ridge, BC.

Jordan is 23 years old and lives with spinal muscular atrophy, a disease of motor neurons in the spinal cord and brainstem. Mark has been involved at an executive level with the organization that governs wheelchair soccer in North and South America and has dedicated countless hours to Muscular Dystrophy Canada and school clubs. Jordan has been accepted into the Faculty of Law program at the University of Victoria, where he will pursue his JD degree.

Kayden is 19 years old and lives with arthrgryposis multiplex congenita, which causes muscle shortening. Kaydon has completed his first year in the business administration – golf management program at Camosun College in Victoria. He is active in his local community helping with Christmas Hamper Society, volunteering at elementary and secondary schools and mentoring young students. Kaydon's passion for sports has

“Thank you very much for the grant of \$500 to pay for the installation of my door opener. The door opener has made a considerable difference in the quality of my life. Not only can I open and shut my door easily but I can also let others in when I can't get up. The cost of the instillation was more than I could have ever afforded and I really appreciate that BC Rehab was there to help.

Sincerely, S. Rogers”



BC REHAB IN THE COMMUNITY

Horsefly is a community of approximately 1,000, situated in the foothills of the Cariboo Mountains, 52 kms east of 150 Mile House, on the Horsefly River. How's your BC history? Where was the first gold find in BC in 1859 that kicked off the Cariboo Gold Rush? Right, it was in Horsefly. Today's residents of Horsefly have worked hard to make their community as accessible as possible and so when they approached BC Rehab for financial assistance for a ramp to their Seniors Activity and Wellness Society centre, the last facility in the community that did not have adequate accessibility, we responded with a gift of \$5,000 to help them out. The project was completed in July with additional financial assistance from the Truck Loggers Association and able volunteers who did the heavy lifting. Horsefly can now has bragging rights to being the only completely accessible community in BC. Congratulations!



THANK YOU!

PADS is very thankful for BC Rehab's generous Puppy Sponsorship donation for 3 puppies. The puppies happy and healthy and out to puppy raising homes. Bacchus, Airlie and Rumba are happy to know you've sponsored there first year and are hard at working during puppy classes to make you proud. Please go to www.pads.ca to get updates on the three puppies.



Bacchus



Airlie



Rumba

At BC Rehab we've been improving accessibility and opportunities for British Columbians with physical disabilities since 1994. Through our various programs and services, we help close the gaps between people with and people without physical disabilities.

Student Solution

BC Rehab has sponsored the Student Solutions Expo at GF Strong for 24 years. This important event gives post-secondary students the opportunity to investigate assistive technology and how it can affect and improve the daily lives of people living with disabilities. Students collaborate with AT users and develop their own ideas for new products and services. The Student Solutions Expo is invaluable, as it raises awareness in its participants of the needs and challenges of people with physical disabilities; this awareness and knowledge stays with the students throughout their careers.

As in past years, there was a remarkable variety of ingenious new products on display in the GF Strong cafeteria on April 17 - 34 in total, products of the creative minds of students in the Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy program at UBC and the Art + Design Industrial Design Program at Emily Carr University. For a list of all the entries, go to http://www.assistive-technology.ca/docs/sol_brochure2014.pdf. Here are three that stood out for us:



Elevate Adult Carrier - Emily Carr students Nicole McKenzie and Brian Tait designed a novel system for transporting adults with paraplegia over short distances where a wheelchair could not go, such as down a rocky path to a beach or along a forest trail. The product could be used in many situations, including in the evacuation of a building where the elevators were not functioning.

Tug-A-Plug - UBC students Winnie Yip and Sarah Chow observed that standard Canadian electrical plugs are small, narrow, and oddly shaped, and that individuals with arthritis who have weak pinch and grasp strength in the hands may have difficulty removing plugs from wall sockets. The majority of adaptive solutions for plug removal are designed in the United Kingdom, and are not compatible with Canadian outlets; they also require considerable grip strength due to their small handles. Their answer - TUG-A-PLUG, an adaptive device designed for anyone with limited hand function. TUG-a-PLUG features an elongated, compressible and soft textured handle that minimizes the force required for removal of a plug by maximizing the surface area of the operator's hand on the grip.

GenuStep - GenuStep was designed by Evan Hutchinson at Emily Carr to provide a supported kneeling mobility aid with increased support and stability for an individual with a below the knee amputation by bolting the device onto the user's cane or crutch, eliminating the need for straps and cumbersome components.

Doug Gayton has been the leader and driving force behind Student Solutions Expo since its inception. Sadly for the program, Doug has, after a long career at GF Strong, retired. We at BC Rehab extend our sincerest thanks to Doug for his dedication to Solutions and all his other good work on assistive technology over the years, and wish him all the best in his retirement, although we suspect he won't be idle.



Vroom! Vroom! Margaret gets her Driver's Li-



Margaret is a familiar face around GF Strong. In 2006, Margaret suffered a stroke that left her with partial body paralysis and a near inability to speak. With a lot of work and commitment, Margaret had to re-learn how to communicate verbally. You might hear Margaret laughing before you see her, and her laugh is contagious. She is a delightful person who has an infectious positive attitude and who always has a story to share about her grandchildren or great-grandchildren! Margaret is an active member of GF Strong's stroke recovery group, and she never misses their sessions on Tuesdays. When she first had her stroke, the idea of getting back behind the wheel of a car seemed out of reach, but now that is exactly what she is doing. BC Rehab was able to provide this exceptional lady with the funding necessary to go through the GF Strong Driving School and obtain her BC Class 5 Drivers Licence. Way to go, Margaret!

Our year in **NUMBERS**
your donations help us assist people with disabilities in BC

75 individuals affected by the **Mobility Outreach Service** in Vancouver's downtown eastside

2 Gert Vorsteher Memorial Award winners

89 individuals helped through the **HYDRATION PROGRAM** at GF Strong

8 Gert Vorsteher Memorial Bursary winners

24 people directly assisted through the **BC Rehab Individual Grant Program**

420 people participating in BC Rehab sponsored projects across BC

We've launched a new website! Take a look at it at www.bcrehab.com, where you will find news about our programs and services, updates on community events, information on our funding programs and application forms.

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