

The Importance of Language to Me

submitted by: Yin Wu



My name is Yin and I came to Canada with my parents ten years ago from China. My mother tongue is Mandarin and now my English is fluent too. I have been living in a home share overseen by Community Living Society for more than a year now. I am living happily in Pitt Meadows. Pitt Meadows is a medium-sized town and has beautiful views and friendly residents.

I think learning a language is the most efficient way to know other people's culture. Without language, people cannot communicate and understand each other, which is not good from my view. I started learning the Japanese language over six years ago and now this language has a lot of special meaning to me. At first it was a struggle but now it is getting easier due to more practice. The Japanese and Mandarin

languages have so many similarities, but also a lot of differences. Many words with the same roots are shared between the two languages, but the grammar is so different.

I attended the Japanese/English Translation Workshop from September to December of last year. It was a joy to talk with fellow students and the teacher. Every language is special, comparing the similarities and differences between them is somewhat like time travelling to me.

Near the end of the translation class I started volunteering at the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre as a member of their translation team. I have been there a few times now and helped people translate historical materials from Japanese to English. I feel really proud of myself for using my language skills to contribute to society and I look forward to continue volunteering at the Japanese Cultural Centre.

I would like to express my gratitude to Community Living Society for their ongoing support, I feel more relaxed now. Life is about learning and continuous improvement, the road to success is always long but I think if I keep moving forward, one day success will come.

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Update from the CEO

by Ross Chilton, CEO



We had a very busy and productive start to the year at CLS. I would like to thank all of you that participated in one or more of the many sessions and consultations we hosted.

John Talbot, an experienced Facilitator with a strong background in community living, engaged self-advocates, families, staff and key stakeholders in a dialogue on The Future of Home. The feedback and suggestions offered during these sessions will be incorporated into a ten-year housing plan for CLS. We know the challenges are significant and so are the opportunities to lead.

Graham Bullen returned to CLS to facilitate two employee groups on the topic of employee engagement. Over 40 employees participated in an important discussion about what contributes to, or distracts from, their engagement to the work and CLS as an organization. As was the case in 2014 we will use this information to look for ways to increase engagement leading to better support for individuals as well as our ability to recruit and retain great employees.

All CLS employees and home share providers had the opportunity to complete the privacy training developed by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) for all of its service providers. This training is an important reminder about the essential nature of privacy and taking all steps to ensure that we are protecting and respecting the information that we access, share and store related to individuals and families. We all value our own privacy and need to be vigilant in protecting the privacy of others.

We invited Julie Beadle-Brown back to CLS to conduct sessions on Person Centred Active Support with families, employees, managers, and representatives from our funder CLBC. Julie last provided training for CLS in 2015 and this was a fabulous opportunity to reconnect with the core elements of Active Support and to reinvigorate our commitment to this approach. The feedback on all the sessions has been very positive and we will look to bring Julie back sometime in the next couple of years. We are also exploring a potential research partnership between CLS, the University of Kent, and the UBC Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship on Active Support.

Julie did engage us on many important aspects of Active Support. I would like to briefly touch on one topic that resonated with me. Julie reminded us about the value of brief encounters. While it is important that we remain focused on facilitating meaningful and lasting relationships, there is also something important in the many daily and brief opportunities to connect. I reflected on this personally.

Recently we had the challenging task of finding a new dentist for our son. This can be quite a stressful experience as it is important to our family to find someone that understands disability and knows how to support and engage their patients. Our son was welcomed into the new office by the front desk staff. They had arranged many things in advance to make it easier for him and for us. He was respected and got the help he needed without any unnecessary stress.

For the staff at the dentist's office this was one of many brief encounters with patients that day. They won't see my son for another six months and they may not have realized how much the way they connected with us made a big difference. That difference will last long beyond the appointment as he and we are now not dreading the next appointment and know that his dental health is in good hands.

I also reflected on how I behave when presented with brief encounters. While I am not always at my best, particularly when there are many things on my mind, I realize that I can be more present more of the time. Recently when on vacation I worked at responding differently when asked about my day by hotel and restaurant staff. I sincerely asked about how their day was going. While I typically do that I made a point of asking as someone who is truly interested. It must have just been the tone of voice but almost every time they noticed a difference in how I asked and responded in a much more engaged way.

While engaging more meaningfully in brief encounters won't change the world it might just make life a bit better. For the people we support I think we should remain committed to facilitating and maintaining lasting relationships with family, neighbours, and colleagues. Perhaps we should also look for how to make the most of the brief encounter moments that are present every day. Julie reminded me that we need both to remain connected and engaged with our community.

A Message from the ERC

We would like to welcome our newest committee member, Curtis Stelzer. Curtis has demonstrated a passion for Person Centred Active Support. He provides a vibrant fresh perspective to which we are grateful for. Great to have you Curtis!

As many of know by now the ERC is working to attend at least one staff meeting per location this year. We have exceeded the 10 staff meeting goal we set for the January to March 2019 period by attending 17 meetings. We will be at another 15 locations by the end of June.

Thank you for sharing your experiences, thoughts, strengths, challenges and appreciation. CLS employees are a true testament to the strength in diversity and character of the organization and there can be no better picture painted of that than to spend one hour speaking with you. Your commitment to your work is inspiring!

Your feedback has directly influenced the CLS to revise policies to the Class IV licensing requirements, medical reimbursements and premium compensation, and the employee referral program. We applaud the CLS Senior Management Team for listening to your feedback, and each of you for stepping forward and trusting that what you have to say will be heard.

Look for us at the coming 2019 Vancouver Sun Run on April 14th. The CLS Sun Runners team is poised to create more great memories. If you have missed the deadline and want to come cheer us on, contact Cate at csercombe@communitylivingsociety.ca for more information. If we do not see you at the Sun Run, we hope to see you at your next staff meeting.

Your Employee Representative Committee,

- Cate Sercombe
- Tyler Vittie
- Oliver Samonte
- Kesheiya Davidson
- Curtis Stelzer
- Jenn Hart
- Gilian Rhodes

One Man's Plans for his Woodlands Settlement

In November, 2018 I received my Woodlands settlement money and placed it in the bank.

Nick took me to Moore's at Park and Tilford and got me set up to buy a tailored suit, shoes, a couple of shirts, bow ties and a great scarf. I wore them all to the North Shore Christmas party on December 7th. In January I bought season's tickets to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra 2019 season at the Orpheum Theatre. I plan on purchasing a new trampoline in the Spring as well as plan a week's vacation to Penticton and Harrison Hot Springs later in the year. I will also get some new bedding and a few other clothes for my wardrobe. Then maybe a few touch ups on my cabin in the back yard at my house in North Vancouver.



Roy with his settlement cheque and the new clothes he purchased with some of the money

Jo Dickey Foundation

The Jo Dickey Foundation was established to help mentally and physically challenged members of the community in improving their quality of life.

It is the mission of the Jo Dickey Foundation to help provide the funds necessary to afford these unique individuals a chance to live in respect and harmony with the rest of society. We welcome grant requests all year round; however, the best time is September to May as the Foundation is off June to August and grants requested during that time will be delayed. To find out more about the Foundation, donate, or apply for assistance, contact:

**#310 - 800 West Pender Street
Vancouver B.C. V6C 2V6**

www.jodickeyfoundation.ca

We had our biggest mobile class (19 people!) at CLBC, and we've hosted 8 team building classes for the Surrey RCMP. We were part of the Vancity member marketplace at the Global Alliance on Banking on Values, where we were invited to demonstrate glass making and to sell our products. We would like to thank Candace, Tricia and friends for their continued support by booking multiple classes, and Edwina for hosting her Beta Sigma Phi group at our studio. We have an exciting couple of months coming up. We will be participating in the Art World Expo at Science World in May again this year! We've also received a grant from the City of Surrey to offer fused glass classes at local Elementary and high school for students at no cost.



Baby Announcement



Jayden Izahus Marier (Albus) was born on March 7th at 11:03 pm weighing in at 7.5 pounds.
Congratulations to Hayley Albus.
Hayley is a Community Living Counsellor with the Surrey Day Supports team.

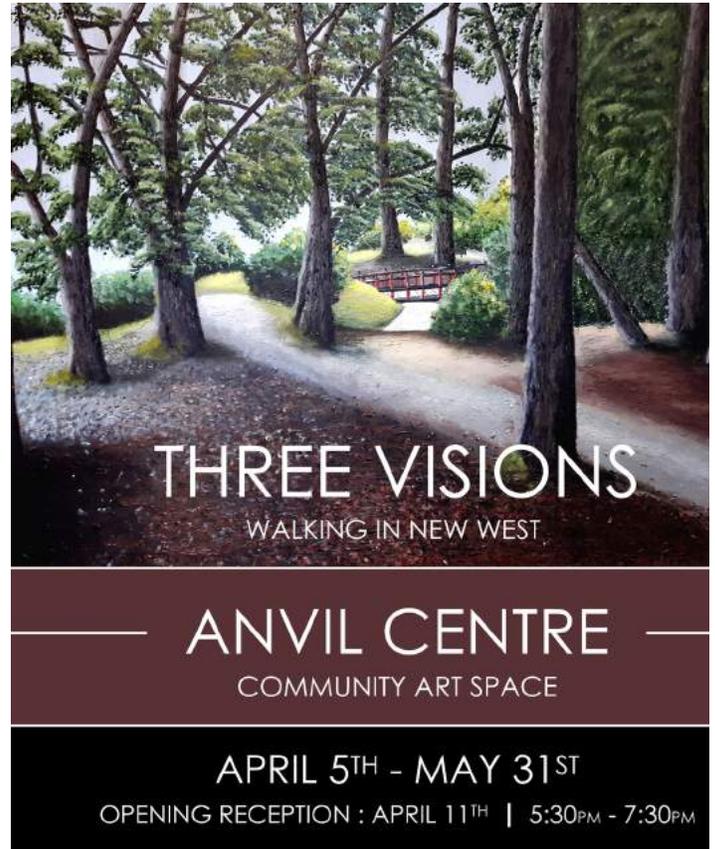
For the last two years, James Lash, Dan Tell and Sheri Lynn Seitz, have been walking through New Westminister photographing everything that interests them. As members of the Colour Collective group of painters, James and Dan have used several of these photographs as references for a series of paintings of the City.

Sheri Lynn Seitz is an accomplished photographer, whose photography has been the subject of several shows. Her Paddle Wheel photograph was chosen by The City of New Westminister for the banners lining 6th Street. Sheri Lynn's photos of the City have been Gyclee' printed and are part of the Three Visions exhibition.

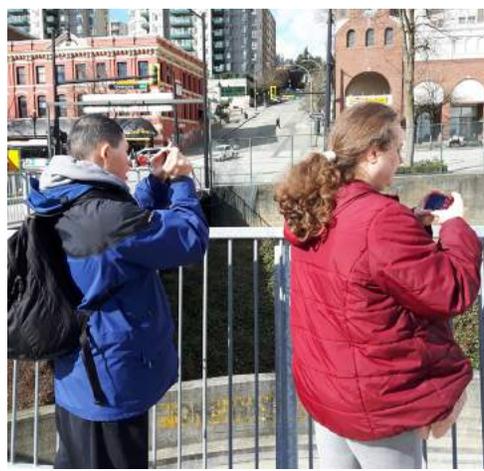
Altogether there are 24 pieces in the exhibition, which will be at the Anvil Centre, Community Gallery from April 5th until May 31st. Please drop by and help celebrate the exceptional work of these three artists.

As a painting instructor for the Colour Collective, I have witnessed how the landscape painting has a unique resonance with each artist that relates to their world and their view of it. Whether their artistic hero is an old master or more contemporary, each artist has studied and worked from a variety of references. Yet, each has found a meaning in the landscape painting that speaks to them as individuals and their relationship to their community. A house in the woods speaks of home and belonging or boats on a river, of freedom and travel, just as a garden in bloom suggests an inner life of peace and beauty.

It has been said that the Canadian spirit is rooted in the land, in the wild beauty of our country. That our reverence for the works of Emily Carr and the Group of Seven, is born from our attachment to place and nature. For those in our society, who have not historically been included, because of attitudes toward those labelled as "disabled," that reverence for the landscape painting can have a deeper meaning. For some, the landscape is a symbol of "being separate from" or a yearning for community and inclusion, while for others it brings a memory of deep roots and attachment to their place and time.



Dan Tell shows off his one of his paintings that will be in the exhibit



Sheri Lynn snaps some photos of New Westminister that are for the exhibit



James Lash working hard on one of his paintings that will be displayed

Employee



March 6th was a wonderful evening of celebration, laughs and awards as we honoured employees who reached milestone years of employment and special accomplishments at the Community Living Society.

Christine Tunn was the family speaker and moved everyone in the room as she talked about the experience she and her family have had over the years with the CLS and the wonderful staff who support her brother.

We were once again entertained by the talented comedian Julie Kim.

This year we had four nominated awards to congratulate employees and teams who exemplify the CLS Mission, Vision and Values. The team from Surrey Day Supports was presented with the Person Centred Active Support award by Dr. Julie Beadle Brown.

Years of Employment Awards

5 Years

Chris Klering, Renee Clark, Cate Sercombe, Collin Stone, Jessica Lee, Mona Purewal, Ralph Artiza, Roxanne Wiseman, Ellen Manlulu, Amanda Johnson (Smith), Karrie Thompson, Nicki Roberts, Brett Carlyle, Dianne Carey

10 Years

Monika Madarova, John Kopystecki, Josephine Wong, Abdi Hussein, Jessy Singh, Ed Villar, Dawn Berryman, Lani Mapanao, John Davidson, Alan James, Terry Greenwood, Lila Johnson, Inder Dhama, Lynn Smith

15 Years

Adelia Lamzon, Manfred Baker, Ahmad Shahlounezad, Kushma Narain, Nick Chitheka, Lorraine Lepine

20 Years

Shima Ali, Janice Logan, Rita Andrews, Duncan Williams, Kulwant Sidhu

25 Years

Maria Sussi, Rose Gillespie, Shannon Cole, Jukka Tuisku, Gregory Joiner, Delia Fabros

30 Years

Julie Haddock, Graeme Weeks, Francine Seaman

35 Years

Farren Gillaspie, Kris Okamoto

Awards Gala

Woodlands Parents' Group Award



This year the following employees were nominated by their peers: Amanda Peacock, Tara Walker, Dawn Berryman, Carl Danroth, Tony Maravilla, Mearon Michael.

Congratulations to this year's recipient - Dawn Berryman. Dawn has been with the CLS for ten years and received her 10 year award, as well she is part of the team that received the Person Centred Active Support award. Dawn has been instrumental in leading and supporting the successful move to smaller community embedded teams for folk in day supports. She goes above and beyond to ensure every person has choices. She is a strong advocate for justice and treats all people with respect and dignity.

Community Integration and Inclusion Award



This year the following employees were nominated by their peers for this award: Carl Danroth, Charlotte Casson, Jorian Sandau, Amanda Johnson (Smith), Connie Clark, Tiziana Nolet, Ashley Uppal, Kevin Sass, Nicki Roberts.

The winner of this year's award is Amanda Johnson (Smith). Amanda has been with the CLS since 2013 as an Individualized Supports Counsellor and now as an Assistant Coordinator. She has supported numerous folk in many challenging situations and is known for her ability and success in encouraging individuals to participate socially and increase their confidence and independence where others have been unable.

TEAM Award



This year the following teams were nominated for this award:

- Surrey Day Supports
- Ross Road
- Home Share
- Keith 2

This year's TEAM award was presented to Ross Road. The Ross Road team have demonstrated what a "TEAM" truly embodies. They collectively dealt with floods, new leadership, and being displaced for weeks from the home. Through this change and chaos they pulled together and made it a positive experience for the folks and the home.

Person Centred Active Support Award



There were multiple nominations for this inaugural award: Inder Dhami, Christina Clarke, Lenore Frank, Dal Krnetic, Stephen Robson, Keith 2 team, Surrey Day Supports team, Royal Oak team, 95th team, Shaun Vecchio.

Congratulations to the winner this year - Surrey Day Supports team. This team had multiple nominations for all of the wonderful examples of ways they all work to increase independence and choices. The individuals in the programs constantly tell us about their new friends and activities in community and how they enjoy their lives.



IN THE CO



Mackenzie is not afraid to get her hands a little yucky making some fabulous meatballs



Look who Craig bumped into at the Canucks game



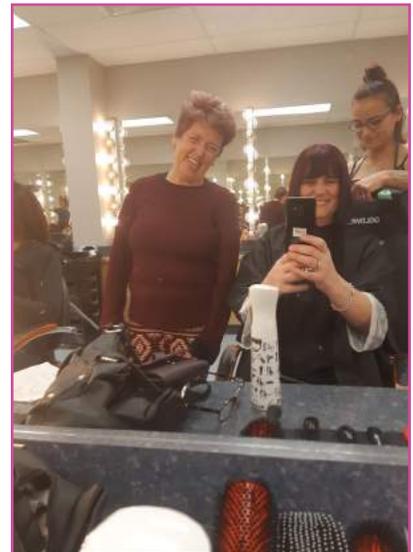
Roxanne and Dorinda enjoying tea and a drive on a wintery Sunday



Roxanne and Nigel in Vancouver with Larissa Petrillo from Kwantlen Polytechnic University at the UNA Vancouver – Think Global, Link Local networking event



Kiandra is training to be a hairdresser at Riverside College in Mission. On Wednesday Lynne and Judith went to see her to get cuts and colour. Great work Kiandra !!



Our Annual Summer Picnic is coming up

Date: Saturday July 6th
Time: 12:00 - 3:00
Location: Scandinavian Community Centre
6540 Thomas Street,
Burnaby



Look for the invitation soon



We are creating socially relevant theatre that engages, challenges and empowers.

A Theatre Company comprised of self-advocates supported by the Community Living Society has been created as part of the project. Lead by UBC CIC Researcher Dr. Leyton Schnellert and supported by production and technical teams with members from CLS and UBC Theatre and Film students, the Company will be performing *Romance, Relationships and Rights* May 15, 16 and 17 at the Anvil Centre in New Westminster and May 25, 2019 at the Inclusion BC Learning Event in Victoria, BC.

Watch for ticket information coming in April 2019.

Employee Profiles



Nigel Dadswell

Nigel Dadswell recently joined the CLS and is employed as the Recruiter. He works closely with the HR team. Here are a few details about Nigel:

What is your favourite thing about being a team member of CLS?

“You can always find someone to share a smile with.”

When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up?

“I’d like to think I’m still pretty young but when I was even younger I wanted to be a chef-architect-copywriter-lawyer.”

What is a passion or hobby of yours and why?

“There are few things that I enjoy more than being able to dedicate an entire day to cooking for a bunch of people I love.”

Where do you want to travel, but have never been?

“The Patagonian region.”



Amanda Johnson (Smith)

Amanda, currently employed as the Assistant Coordinator for Individualized Supports/Homeshare. She has been working with the CLS since 2013.

What is your favorite thing about being a team member of CLS?

“The focus of individuals first is my favorite thing about working for CLS, they have been an agency that stands by their mission statement and follows it completely.”

What is a passion or hobby of yours? Why?

“I am an avid reader I love to learn new things, I also enjoy badminton and tennis.”

What is your favorite book or movie? Why?

“Any book by Cathy Glass are my favorites they all tell a true story of a young life growing up in care and the challenges and hurdles they have to face.”

Would you rather go to the beach for a day or go hiking in the mountains?

“I would have to say hiking in the mountains as it is a great opportunity to explore.”



Abigail Frando

Abigail has recently joined CLS as the Junior Accountant. She works closely with the Finance team and will support payroll functions. Please join us in welcoming Abigail to the team!

What is your favourite thing about being a team member of CLS?

“I get to be surrounded with the pioneering members of CLS and learn a lot from them... and of course the lunch walks and beautiful view from the 7th floor.”

Do you have a hidden talent, and if so what?

“Sing karaoke... and play the organ.”

If you were an animal, which one do you think you would be?

“A bird – when I was young, I often dreamed of having wings and flying in a vast space.”

CLS Employment Program



Last May Michael was interviewed and hired at St Thomas Collegiate in New Westminster as a dishwasher/helper in the cafeteria. The job in the right environment is exactly what Michael wanted and needed. Since graduating from high school he had not quite found his way. He was lacking purpose, meaning and a sense of belonging somewhere and he wanted to earn a few dollars to do things he loves to do. This new job at St Thomas was the perfect fit for him, doing what he is best at. Michael loves to clean, to be social and being around positive people. He works with three ladies at the school cafeteria and proudly says that he is a “real lady’s man” now because of that. They really make him feel comfortable, included and are great natural supports. Recently Michael learned about time management as he was arriving much too early for his shift. They created a morning wall that lets him know when he should leave his house to get to work on time - not too early or too late.

Speaking of arriving too early to his shifts, Michael commutes all the way from North Vancouver to get to his job three days a week. He lived in New Westminster when he originally got the job. But Michael absolutely loves taking transit and he gets to take a seabus, skytrain and bus to work where he is able to interact with many people along the way. So when the move happened, taking all that transit actually benefits him. Michael had a dream of playing hockey so he learned how to skate and play hockey last year. In the winter he joined his first hockey league. He can’t wait for it to start up again next September. He also attends a bowling and basketball league where he has made many friends.

When Michael moved to North Vancouver last year he joined the Trevor Linden Club 16 to get fit and get to know people in his neighbourhood. He meets with a paid trainer on Tuesdays to run on the treadmill, do sit ups and push ups to get into better shape. He goes to gym several other days of the week and really likes the social interaction with the other gym members and staff.

Michael’s really loves his life these days and does not have any time to feel bored. He shops and does light cooking for himself. He even bought himself plane tickets to go see the MVA (Music Video Awards) in Toronto last year all on his own (genuinely, no one knew he did it). He is very independent and has created so many connections in his new life. He does all these things on his own now and he couldn’t be more proud of himself. If you were to ask Michael what catch phrases could sum up how he feels today he would say two things: “Life is Sweet” and “Whatever it takes”. Very wise words that we could all live by.



CLBC awarded Community Living Society a unique Pre-Employment Enhanced Skill Development program. What is unique about this program is we are collaborating with other Service Provider Employment Service teams to support their job seekers in developing critically relevant employment skills. This is a new model of support within CLBC and meant, in part, to build on the existing collaboration between service providers. This CLS Skill Development service works with the Job Seeker and their Employment Services team to identify existing employment barriers and then, through a combination of 1 to 1 and group work model, help each person develop strength in areas that they have identified. Already there have been exciting developments.

One job seeker, Mohammad, was very disinterested in the activities he was a part of in his Employment Service with another service provider. Mohammad wouldn’t engage with others and would often stare quietly out the window. His parents longed for a time when he could safely access his community by himself. Mohammad had lost any momentum he had built in high school and had become dependent upon his family in so many ways. Though Mohammad had training to use transit, he had limited opportunity to demonstrate what he had learned. His Mom exclaimed that it would be a miracle if he could confidently and safely go out on his own. This was seen as a key to Mohammad’s employment success.

The CLS Skill Development team worked with Mohammad and his parents to create a slow yet progressive action plan that provided enough support for Mohammad to safely demonstrate his transit capabilities. Mohammad started by showing us the steps he knew while we followed in support. Within three months, Mohammad was commuting to the group-work meetings by himself. He outpaced the action plan so quickly that we are now needing to develop more steps. Now, Mohammad is increasing his community awareness by exploring new routes and demonstrating all that goes with being out on his own... even knowing what to do when something goes wrong.

Congratulations to the following employees who have now been with the CLS for five years or more in April, May and June 2019



Amanda Smith	6 years
Monica Dowdell	7 years
Julie Lampitt	7 years
Evan Fragoso	7 years
Cindy Williams	8 years
Marian Ioana	8 years
Danielle Holtjer	8 years
Brandie McDonald	8 years
Hamid Khatami	9 years
Elena Unabia	9 years



Jenn Hart	10 years
Dawn Berryman	11 years
Leilani Mapanao	11 years
John Davidson	11 years
Alan James	11 years
Terry Greenwood	11 years
Bel Acero	12 years
Shu-Chi Wang	12 years
Janet Maure	12 years
Simi Bate	12 years
Ali Fard-Behbahani	12 years
Ruki Lawal	12 years
Ross Chilton	12 years
Comfort Coker	13 years
Dominique Gard	14 years
Chris Hopkinson	14 years
Chad Ford	14 years
Shammi Singh	18 years
Dee Blackmore	19 years
Kelly Hooper	19 years
Yvonne Fraser	19 years
Tony Maravilla	19 years



Jackie Farmer	20 years
Mobina Ali	20 years
Purnima Maharaj	20 years
Kulwant Sidhu	21 years
Carl Danroth	22 years
Marcela Herrera	23 years
Dawn Mahovlich	24 years
Wennie Tabobo	24 years
Hasia Hislop	24 years
Greg Joiner	26 years
Della Fabros	26 years
Daniel Watson	27 years
Tracy Quinn	27 years
Teena Shaw	28 years
Elke Tilgner	29 years
Francine Seaman	31 years
Lenore Frank	32 years
Farren Gillaspie	36 years

Congratulations!

We would like to welcome all new CLS team members and congratulate the following employees who have recently been selected for these following positions:

Ed Villar, Assistant Coordinator - 95th
 Rani Marwa, Manager, Supported Living – City Club
 Mark Embacher, Manager, Supported Living – Madison and 43 Hastings
 Abigail Frando, Junior Accountant – Admin Centre
 Cindy Leung, Team Lead - Madison
 Curtis Stelzer, Acting Assistant Coordinator - Southern Lower
 Shilo Schauer, Acting Coordinator - Southern
 Jenn Hart, Team Lead – Yukon, New Chelsea
 Edith Markser, Assistant Coordinator - Quadling B
 Elysia Bernard, Coordinator - LIFE
 Ashley Milligan, Team Lead – City Club
 Saveta Bikicki, Acting Coordinator – Norwood
 Max Sumner, Director of Community Inclusion



Congratulations to the following employees who were recently successful in obtaining their Class 4 Restricted driving license

Marni MacGillivray
 Ron Torres
 Stephen Bain