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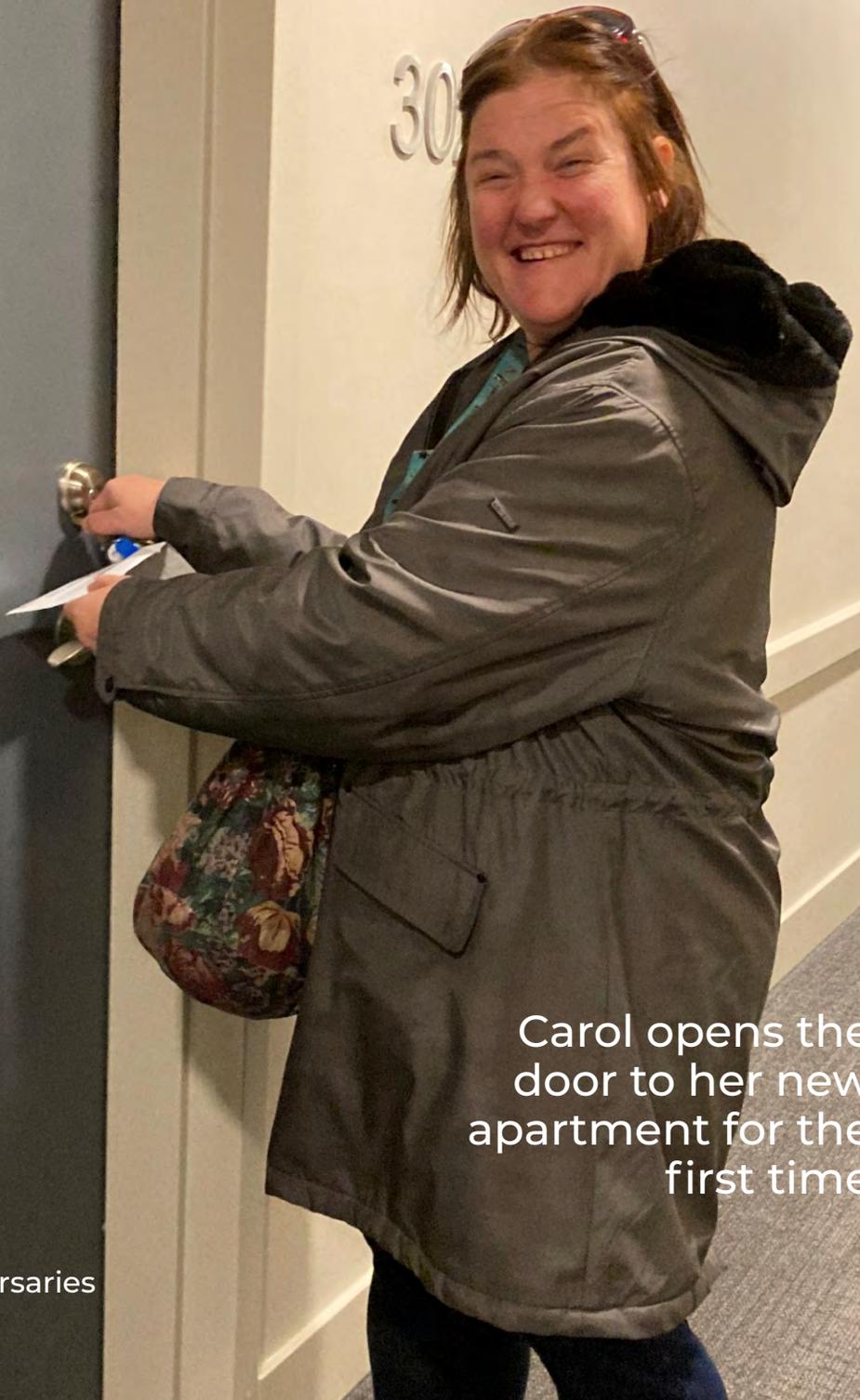
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Carol opens the door to her new apartment for the first time

Message from the CEO

CLS has been very busy over the winter months. This issue of the Connector is filled with celebrations and progress made during the last few months.

In November, the We Deserve to Work play opened to eager crowds. The theatre troupe was co-creating and rehearsing throughout the pandemic. Their hard work was on display for three shows at the Massey Theatre on November 18, 19 & 20. The theatre troupe will have their final performance in June 2023 when they take centre stage at the World Supported Employment conference held in Vancouver.

Despite the winter weather, 5 people moved into their brand-new apartments in Vancouver in December/January. Though our partnership with New Chelsea Society 5 people supported by CLS will realize their dreams of living independently.

Supporting people to gain meaningful employment continues to be an important part of our work at CLS. This summer, CLS will be expanding Employment Services to support 10-12 youth to find summer employment in the Tri-Cities area. Research in this area continues to demonstrate that early engagement in work leads to an increased likelihood of lifelong attachment to the workforce. Through a provincial grant, CLS, alongside of 8 other organizations, will be participate in a pilot project aimed at supporting youth with an intellectual disability to gain summer employment.

Finally, after a few years of restrictions on gathering during the holiday season, the people we support, their friends and families, and employees made the most of this season. This issue highlights the celebrations, connections and fun people had during the holiday season. Enjoy!

Janice Barr



Kelley Michelle Miller

April 26, 1970 - Feb 24, 2023

Kelley (meaning Lively) and Michelle (meaning Gift from God) were just the most fitting names for the lovely, and definitely Lively "Chef" Kelley.

Kelley's enthusiasm for Life and Fun was so infectious, that no matter what the weather looked like, having Kelley around Nelson House set the right mood.

One of Kelley's natural gifts was her amazing keen spirit that could detect any discomfort and even the slightest concern that the people around her could be experiencing. Her vocabulary might have been limited, but her gestures to let people know that she did care, was loud and clear. Staff at the Nelson house agreed with Glen, Kelley's dad, who also passed away from cancer, that "Kelley would have been a perfect nurse", because of her empathy. Her most famous line "What are you doing here?", which she asked as soon as people showed up at Nelson door, was her signature statement to remind people to be mindful, kind, and most important of all, to have fun. Kelley enjoyed life to the fullest. She grabbed every opportunity to visit Tim Horton's. She danced and sang songs with her roommates. She visited her parents and stayed overnight.

Covid - what Covid? Nothing could stop Kelley to find ways to show that life must go on, and that was when she turned into "Chef Kelley". She launched Cook with Kelley, that allowed her to stay connected with her many friends in a truly meaningful way. During her famous cooking show, broadcast via Zoom, Kelley shared some culinary tips and even included jokes and games that encouraged a lot of participation. Though separated by distance, Kelley was able to help a lot of her peers to deal with disrupted day program routines. We will miss you Kelley, but your jubilant laughter and your beaming smile will always stay with us.



Carol and her Aunt check out the view



The new kitchen



In Memory



Christina Pozzato

Dec 2, 1948 – Jan 24, 2023

Christina, as she was known by her friends, brought joy to those she was around. She loved to wear bright colourful clothing. She had a lively sense of humour. She greeted people warmly and conversed freely with them often about her two favourite celebrities: Elvis and Andre Rieu. Christina loved watching Elvis movies. She played Andre Rieu music all day long every day.

Christina was a spunky and determined woman. She knew where and how she wanted to live and was able to accomplish this through her strong self-advocacy skills. With her caregiver's, CLBC and her GP's assistance she defined and maintained the supports and services she received throughout her life. When her caregiver of twenty years retired Christina was able to stay in the house she lived in and the caregiver's daughter moved in to provide supports to her for her final years. Her wish was to remain in the house for her entire life and it made Christina very happy to do so.

Christina often spoke of her mother and how much she missed her. Christina passed on the anniversary of her mother's death thirty years later. She spoke of her desire to be reunited with her mother in heaven. We like to think of them finally together listening to Elvis sing.

Christina will be remembered fondly by all who knew her.

Grant Thompson

Oct 5, 1946 – Jan 10, 2023

"You can't beat me at bowling!" If you've heard these words, then you know Grant, as this would be the first thing he told you, even if he had never met you before. Grant was a long-time member of the Surrey Day Supports and was famously known for his love of bowling, hot cocoa and hamburgers, which he made sure he got every Friday. Grant would greet every person he encountered out in the community, always accompanied by the biggest smile that would warm your heart.

Of all the fun events that would happen yearly, Grant had his 4 favourites: the CLS picnic, the PNE, his birthday and Christmas. During the pandemic, he had to miss out on the picnic & PNE, and his birthday & Christmas weren't the same without the big celebrations. Fortunately this last year, we celebrated all these events and he could not have been happier, especially while getting his yearly picture with Santa. Grant made many friends throughout his life and worked hard on keeping those relationships - always keeping in contact with phone calls and arranging lunch dates.

Grant was a shining star in Surrey and his brightness will be greatly missed by all. His life was a blessing and his memory will be a treasure.

Harpreet Dhillon

We are very sad to announce the passing of one of our CLS family. On Jan 14, 2023, the world lost an amazing soul. Harpreet Dhillon, a counsellor, had worked with CLS for three years and was such a wonderful addition to the 216A team.

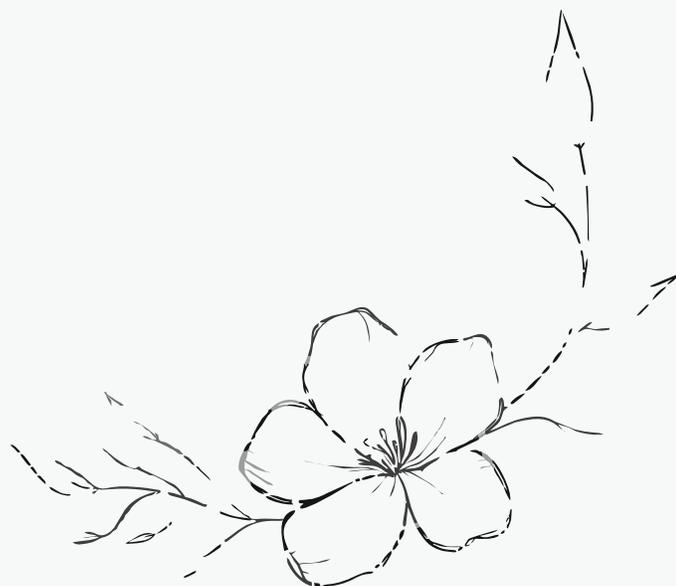
She will be remembered, cherished will be celebrated for her smile that had a tendency to make others smile. Harpreet kept such a positive outlook, a testament to her character and dedication to her job, the people that she supported, and her team at 216A.

We pass on our sincere condolences to her family and her young children at this very difficult time.

Raymond Nelson

May 31, 1936 – Jan 1, 2023

It is with a unique sense of sadness that we have said our final good bye to Raymond Nelson, on Sunday January 1st. Raymond passed away peacefully in his sleep in the place that he would call his home, Rosewood house. Those who know Ray will remember his loud booming voice, his love for Canucks hockey, going out for Pub nights, and watching his beloved TV. While Raymond was with us his voice would announce his presence in the house, but now that he is gone the silence instead speaks to an absence; a silence in our hearts that will take quite some time to fill. We will miss you Raymond, you have made an indelible mark on our hearts, and our sympathies go out to your brother, and innumerable nieces and nephews of your Family.



We Deserve to Work

Initial presentations of We Deserve to Work took place on November 18,19 and 20 and were a Resounding success! Congratulations to the Actor-Co-Creators and production team on creating and performing such an excellent and impactful play.

Employment for people who have disabilities is often a powerful mechanism to help them to feel part of their communities and to be seen and accepted as an equal member. Often people form relationships with co-workers and develop skills and abilities that can only be found through employment. It is also extremely empowering to have money that you earn and can use at your own discretion.

If you did not get an opportunity to see the play, there will be more presentations between March and June (schedule pending). **The final presentation** will be at the **2nd World Supported Employment Conference June 6-8th**, at the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre, hosted by: Canadian Association for Supported Employment (C.A.S.E.), Inclusion BC, the BC Employment Network(B.C.E.N.), and the World Association for Supported Employment.

We are resuming rehearsals starting February 12th and will continue every 2 weeks through to the final presentation in June 2023.



A NEW PLAY
by People with Disabilities Transforming
Attitudes about Employment





Sherrie's Community Connection Goal

Sherrie has a goal of connecting with her community and as part of this goal, she will write out cards with positive messages and hand them out to friends of her out in community, as well as to random people she meets in the hopes of brightening up their day. Sherrie chooses various different cards and adorns them with her signature drawings, while working with staff to write little notes wishing others "good days". She has built up many connections with local businesses on the North Shore and while she loves making other smile, she has also been fortunate to receive little gifts of appreciation in return for her thoughtfulness.



Retirement Time for Bill

Last year Bill turned 65 and told us all he was "retiring" from Day Support. Sure enough, he took his 65th birthday off, then re-joined us the following day. When we asked what his retirement plan would look like, he told us "I'm just here for a good time!" This year on his birthday, we presented him with a medal to commemorate his first year of retirement.



Ed Happy at Work

Ed told us during his last ISQLP that he wished to have a paying job. We tried various ideas, but the one that stuck and was successful was doing bottle returns from a Strata in Langley.



Owners in the building leave their bottles in the underground during the week and on Sundays Ed and I take the bags into a locked mechanical room where we sort the bottles. Once we have a few bags we take them to the recycle depot in Langley where Ed has made himself known to the staff. The depot tallies up the return and deposits the money. Ed is learning about saving for things he wishes to have and completing steps towards one of his goals.

To date, Ed has earned \$250.00 which he is saving towards purchasing a new leather jacket. Ed has met new people within the strata as well as at the depot. He is always happy to make conversation and eager to meet new faces.



Real Work Real Pay

CLS Employment Services encourages people to get a desirable job and to further develop their career...and to the benefit of their employer.

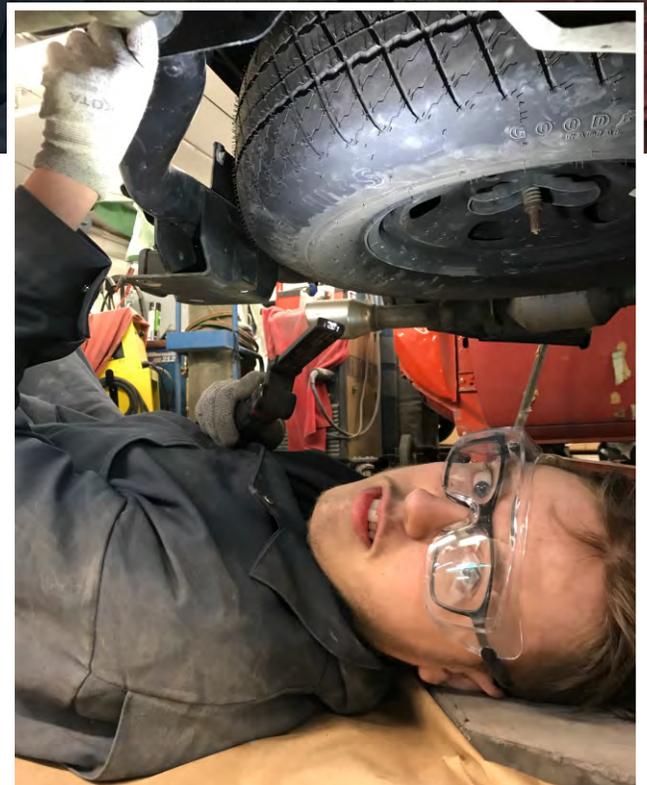
Job seekers are having greater success finding a job that they like. At the same time, we are hearing from many employers, how difficult it has been to find good workers.

Morita Auto Body in New Westminster has a great reputation for delivering high quality service. Owner, James Davies (aka Big James) started as a rookie 26 years ago and has always worked hard. He's a self-starter, a go-getter and he knew that doing auto body work was his calling.

James is now the owner of Morita Auto Body and demands hard work but understands investment and people. He also sees that the workforce is changing, and this has become a challenge. Younger workers don't seem to have the same drive as they used to or the same commitment to hard work that earns trust and respect.

CLS Employment Services began working with James and Morita Auto Body several years ago. They became the first employer we approached when a new job seeker, James, also known by his co-workers as "Jim, Jimbo, and Junior" expressed a strong desire to work in the autobody field. Jimbo, a hopeful apprentice, used a pre-apprentice autobody program at Vancouver Community College to explore his passion for cars. He discovered that fixing damaged cars and making them look beautiful again was fun and rewarding.

When Jimbo first started at Morita, he was given one day at a time to show that he deserved this opportunity. Coaches



helped him to understand the little things that add value to the shop like sweeping and emptying the garbage, prepping rebar or preparing primer. Jimbo is also learning essential elements of being a good co-worker and employee like just how much force to use to sand a door, or that when asked to do something, it is more helpful to say 'ok' than 'I know'. Due to his learning and hard work Jimbo now has a week at a time commitment from Morita Auto Body. It is encouraging that Big James now sees the effort and commitment from Jimbo. The next goal is a one-month commitment.

This is a great opportunity for Jimbo to prove himself. It's all anybody can ask for. He loves this job, and his co-workers are all rooting for him to succeed at Morita Auto Body.

Staff Profiles



Jasmine Sandhu
Finance Controller

What is your favourite thing about working at CLS?

My favourite thing about working at Community Living Society is being able to utilize my talents and skillset to make a meaningful, sustainable, and positive impact for the Society, the individuals it serves, and the community.

What is a passion or hobby of yours?

Fitness is a personal passion and hobby of mine which includes health and wellness. I also value continuous learning and growth for myself and the people around me.

If you could meet one person (dead or alive) who would it be?

Family is very important to me so I would choose either of my paternal grandparents. Both passed away while my father was young and I never had the opportunity to meet them. I've learned a lot about them through stories shared by family; nevertheless, it would be incredible to meet and get to know them on a personal level.

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

This is a tough one as there are so many amazing places in the world I'd love to travel. At this very moment, if I had to choose one place, it would be Africa and to experience an African Safari.



Luis Mata
Manager of Property and Fleet

What is your favourite thing about working at CLS?

My favourite thing about working here at CLS is to feel everyone has a passion for what they are doing to support the people we serve. It is very inspiring to work with such amazing and dedicated professionals.

What is a passion or hobby of yours?

I enjoy travelling and knowing new places, meeting new people, and learning about other cultures.

If you could meet one person (dead or alive) who would it be?

I would have loved to meet Cristobal Colon, one of the most famous explorers in the world.

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

I love the wildlife, and I would someday love to visit South Africa.

David's Birthday Bash



Photo Gallery

Day Program leaders attempt the Escape Room



Ed and Darrel at the Escape Room



Sonya volunteering at the Food Bank



Cari donates to the Kindness Meter



Cheryl out for a walk in the sunshine

Dan snags a photo with a RCMP member



Congratulations to Sky and Kayley



Sean's sister-in-law surprised him at his birthday dinner



3 years later, and we are still loading up the storage locker with PPE supplies



Donald visits the King Tut Exhibit





Crafts with masks when they are no longer needed



Janice Barr, Gillian Rhodes and Elke Tilgner from the CLS meet with the new BC Service Quality Advocate and staff



Supinder, Ryley and Melissa having fun in the snow



Mack and Andrew - a blossoming friendship

Manual works on his activity calendar



The Surrey Music Program is back !!!

There is a maximum capacity of 135 people for each session.

Singing hosts include Brian Zalo, Gord Oliver and Jared Gillard.

Every Thursday is energy-filled and lots of fun. It is open to the public, everyone is invited. You can follow the facebook page for more information: "Surrey Music Program".

Where: Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre
13458 107A Avenue

When: Every Thursday
10:00 am and 10:45 am

Come Join Us!



Joanne and Gary reconnect



Mack and Andrew



With
JARED
LYRICALCONNECTION.CA

With
BRIAN
Goodtimebookings.com

GORD OLIVER SOLO SHOW
GORDOLIVERMUSIC.NET
604-525-5137
GORD OLIVER



HALLOWEEN FUN 2022



Celeste prepares the treat bags



Lisa



Joan



Superman to the rescue



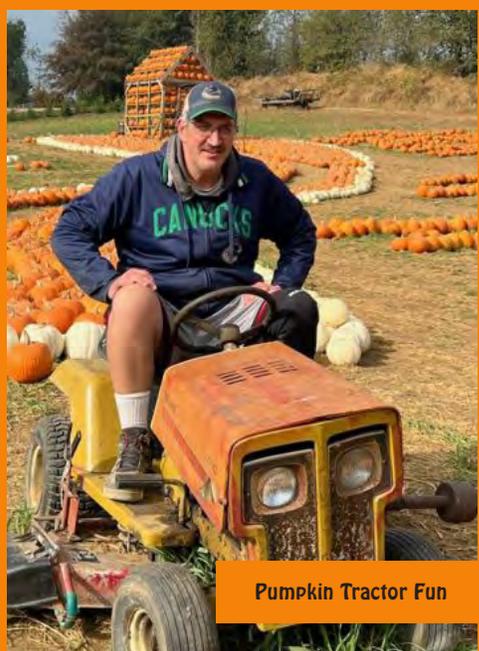
Rochelle and Joe handing out candy



Celeste



Miranda



Pumpkin Tractor Fun



Making scary Halloween decorations at Newmarket



Newmarket crew ready for trick-or-treaters

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

2022



48B Gilley and 149 celebrate

48B Christmas party



216A Open House

Rebecca making Christmas treats



Manual decorates his pottery Christmas ornament

Jacob proud of his gingerbread house



Kevin decorates his tree



The folks from Madison City Club and 43 Hastings



The Quandlin B ladies



Southern Open House



The crew from the retired Yukon home get together again



An Enchanting Village

For the 2nd year in a row, the group at Surrey Day Supports won 1st place in their category for their entry into Gingerbread Village. This year, their submission was an interpretation of their community and the things they participate in, such as Adopt-a-Street and the Community Garden & Library, all in a Star Wars theme. They won a cash prize of \$500 that will be distributed to each of the participants.

Gung hei fat choi

2023 is a year of the Rabbit, starting from January 22nd, 2023 (Chinese New Year), and ending on February 9th, 2024 (Chinese New Year's Eve). The sign of Rabbit is a symbol of longevity, peace, and prosperity in Chinese culture. **2023 is predicted to be a year of hope.**



Year of the Rabbit

... 2023, 2011, 1999,
1987, 1975, 1963,
1951, 1939, 1927 ...



Justin celebrates in Richmond



Justin finds a lucky rabbit to start the year of the rabbit



Pottery Works

PotteryWorks had a busy and successful Holiday Season. Highlights included the special Christmas market at Crystal Mall and our newest retail location at Great Wall Tea in Lougheed Mall. A huge thanks to Jimmy and the whole team at Great Wall for inviting us to be part of their newest location. Now that the Holiday Season is past, the artists have a new energy and the studio is busy and energized, creating new art. Our hand building and wheel throwing workshops are full and new pieces are emerging. An exciting new opportunity is happening with filmmaker Garima Soni in our studio, making a documentary about the Colour Collective artists. Garima is filming them painting and taking photos for the documentary about them.



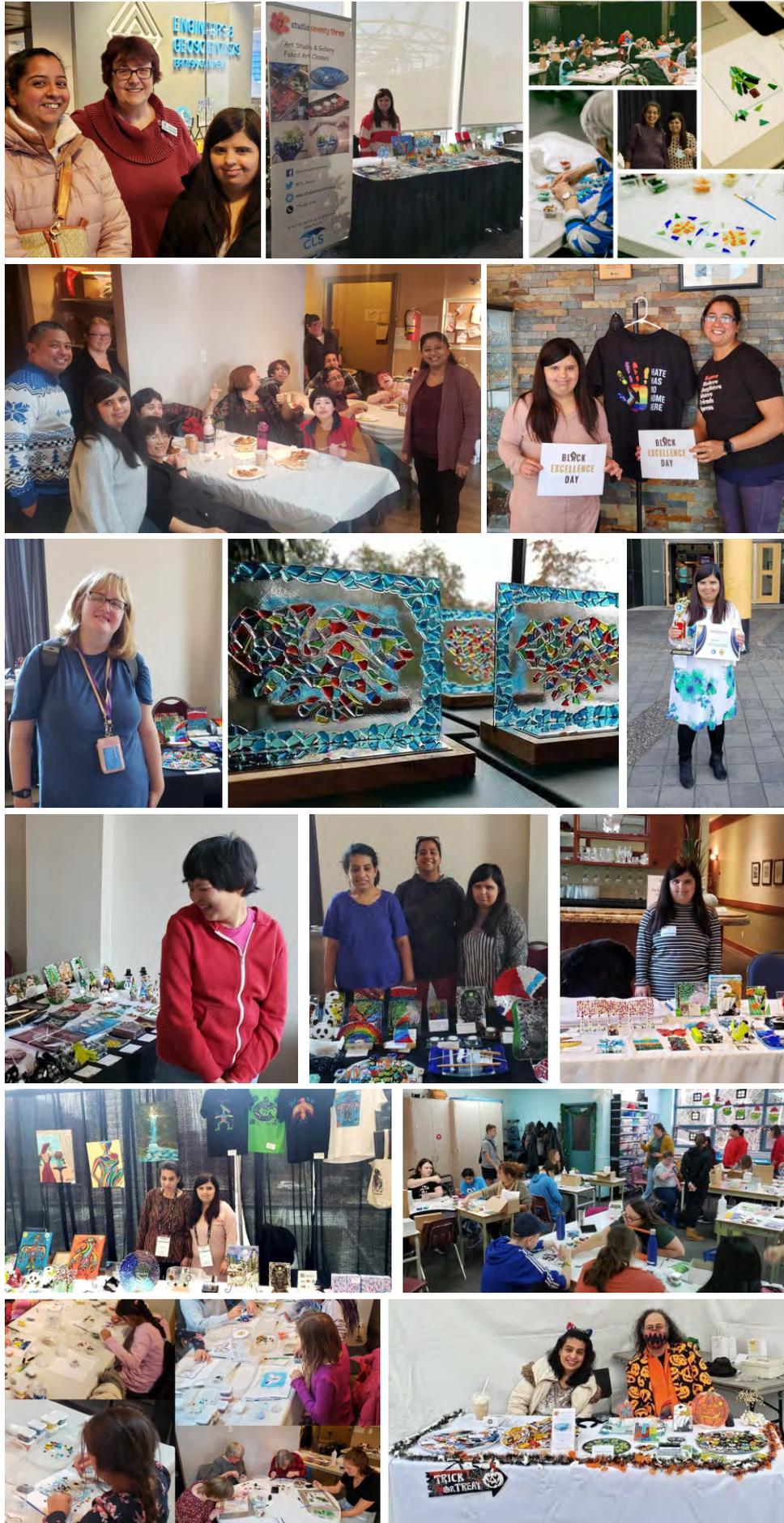
October started with us participating in a multicultural festival put on by Global Peace Alliance "End Racism. Build Peace." We also attended the Inclusion Art Show - in person!!! It was so great to see everyone. Thanks to the CLS Employment team. We created the awards for the Inclusive Employer Awards as well as attended the event at the Vancouver Golf Club. We decided to extend our rental space at Pacific Arts Market- the owner is very supportive of what we do and we appreciate it. We held a month-long exhibition at the Cultural Centre. Special thanks to Wendy Mould - Artist - Instructor - Presentation and producer of ACS Gallery Talks for creating a wonderful promotional video - [Studio73 Newton Cultural Centre](#). We can't forget about Spooktacular, put on by Newton BIA. How could we, right Hamid? Love the Suit!!

During the month of November, we attended two conferences; BC Association of School Psychologists and BC Non-profit Housing Association. We always enjoy taking part in events such as these! We had a couple of tables set up at the play We Deserve To Work. The sales were great; the play was even better!!

Once again we took part in Belindas Cafe - created from a United Way Local Love Fund Grant - providing opportunities for seniors to come together, socialize, create and collaborate.

We also found time to make 500 adorable penguin ornaments as gifts to all CLS employees.

After missing a couple years of in person sales at the head office of Engineers and Geoscientist of BC, we finally got to see everyone again. They are wonderful supporters of ours and have been so for 7+ years. We conducted a mobile class with some students from Walnut Grove Secondary. The kids had a great time, and so did we!! We ended our year by hosting a lunch for the artists and staff of Studio73, as well as our neighbours on either side of us. The neighbours did indeed come by, and we may or may not have had enough left over to feed us for the rest of the week!!



Employee Anniversaries

January - March 2023

Happy Work Anniversary

1 year

Azeezat Lawal
Shirleen Gao Szakaly
Lerma Macaburas
Annabel Salem
Trevor Forster
Alejandra Saldana
Farahdillah Meakin
Chi Nguyen
Nydia Amparo Soler Gomez
Maryam Rezaeezadeh
Kaylee Spaetgens
Natasha Kaloya
Joan Frias
Desiree Johnstone
Jessica Alvarez
Suleen Saini
Vina Aguilar
Riya Pathak

2 years

Viktoria Bako
Heather Jones
Sadia Khan
Winta Gebru
Ruth Adogo
Julianne Sweeney
Yasmin Hussein
Jennifer Malin
Ana Suwaji

3 years

Kulwinder Sidhu
Jessie Morris
Angela Mezzatesta
Ashley Gosal
Alexis Binns
Cheryl Kumar
Allison Boyce
Jennifer Barlad
Axel Lanciotti
Janne Del Portillo Arias
Vera Canning
Janice Barr

4 years

Meron Aregy
Saveta Bikicki
Abigail Frando
Mellany Hugo
Ramil Tiu
Nigel Dadswell
Dolly Motsumi

5 years

Kiranjot Sidhu
Alyssa Minniss
Rachel Fehr
Harpreet Grewal
Robin Gibson
Harminder Sekhon

6 years

Inderjot Sidhu
Robert Smith

7 years

Gloria Aragones Aliaga
Brima Kanu
Leila Kardan

8 years

Mingtao Liu
Daniel Cameron
Andrew Malin
Julie Maxim

9 years

Mary Powell

10 years

Leni Loconte
Brett Carlyle

11 years

Amanda Peacock
Tyler Vittie
William Crowe

12 years

Ronald Torres

13 years

Henry Nagel
Aneesha Naidu
Jessica Hopkins
Zane Mccarthy

14 years

Heidi Cain
Diane Ebner
Sara Marwa

15 years

Lila Johnson
Lynn Smith

17 years

Stephen Bain

20 years

Lorraine Lepine

22 years

Amy Saip
Parminder Dhillon

23 years

Charlene Francis

24 years

Kristi Wilken
Marta Mierzwinska
Paul Hetherington
Musare Iya-Songa

26 years

Laura Pedersen
Rani Marwa

28 years

Agata Leks

32 years

Doug Smith

Congratulations! Promotions & New Appointments

Vikki Ruppel
Job Coach

Aaron McQueen
Chief Financial Officer

Sandy Basi
Coordinator - IS 8

Sapana Patil
Team Lead Sardis

Jasmine Sandhu
Finance Controller

Luis Mata
Manager of Property and Fleet

Melissa Horrell
Manager

Camila Souza
Accounting Analyst



Jasdeep is excited to announce the birth of Asees Kaur Tiwana. Asees was born on December 30, 2022 and weighed 3.3 kg. Jasdeep works at the 158A home.



Baby Kylan was Born October 11, 2022 at 6:06pm and weighed 7lbs 5oz. He is the son of Megan Bohlander who works at the 95th home.

DONATE TODAY!

Your generous donations provide real opportunities for the individuals supported by the CLS to live life to the fullest.

You can contribute by sending cash or a cheque to:

Community Living Society
7th Floor – 713 Columbia Street
New Westminster, BC, V3M 1B2

Donation receipts sent to our office via cheque or cash will be issued for amounts in excess of \$10.

Donations via credit card can be made by visiting our website:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/m/5841/donation>

If you have any questions, please contact us at 604.523.0303 or

contactus@communitylivingsociety.ca

Thank you for your consideration.

JOIN TODAY!

Become a CLS Member

Date _____

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

There is no fee to be a CLS member. Memberships are renewed on an annual basis at or after the Annual General Meeting.

- Members must:
 - be 18+ years of age
 - be interested in advancing the purposes and supporting the activities of the Society
- Members cannot be:
 - An employee or contractor of the CLS
 - An employee of the government of the Province of British Columbia or Canada whose duties are concerned with the affairs of the Society.

If you would like to be a member of the CLS, please send this completed form to us:

By Mail:

7th Floor- 713 Columbia Street, New Westminster, BC, V3M 1B2

By Fax:

604-523-9399

By Email:

contactus@communitylivingsociety.ca