

# *Living a Good Life in Community*

NSACL

2018/19 Report to Community



# REPORT TO COMMUNITY



Nova Scotia  
Association for  
Community Living

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"She comes in every day and never wants to leave!"  
- Sophie, Supervisor

# WHO WE ARE

## *Living a Good Life in Community*

NSACL

NSACL is a provincial not-for-profit organization committed to ensuring that individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families have the support they require to live full and inclusive lives in community.

### **VISION**

All people, including persons with intellectual disabilities, belong and are fully included in community life.

### **MISSION**

NSACL is a province-wide, not-for-profit association of people with intellectual disabilities, families and others leading the way to build a just and inclusive society. We do this by empowering and supporting individuals and families, promoting rights and values in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and encouraging reform and collaborating with other organizations for social justice.

### **VALUES**

Equality  
Dignity  
Respect

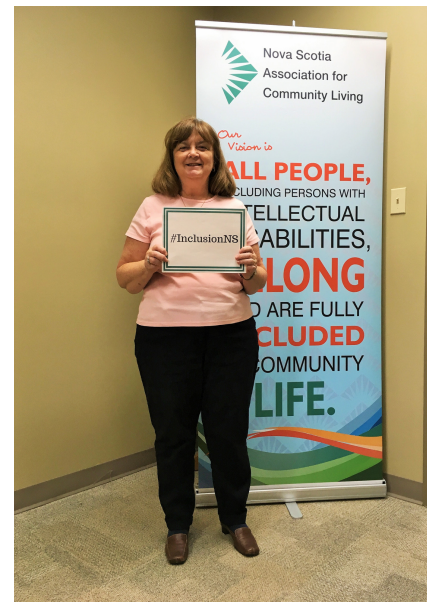
# FROM THE PRESIDENT

## NSACL Governance

Following up on the *Welcoming 2018: Finding Our Voices* report of March 2018, the Transition Committee, made up of Charlie McDonald (Chair), Stephanie Carver, Lew Crews, Ruth Strubank, and Carmel French continued to meet on a regular basis. In the summer and fall of 2018, the committee had morphed into the Steering Committee and its members met with representatives of the Department of Communities, Culture, and Heritage to discuss funding opportunities to assist NSACL in priorities planning. NSACL received a grant of \$7,999 and used this money to hire consultants Paula Hutchinson and Bette Watson-Borg to assist with developing a plan based on the Statement of Work they submitted to government. Board members and the consultants met for a full day on March 9, 2019 for discussions, and the resulting dialogue was captured in the consultants' report, *NSACL: Priorities and Planning*. NSACL has a special meeting planned for June 1, 2019 to discuss the report and determine actions to implement the suggested goals.

This year, NSACL set up several committees (Human Resource, Governance, Finance, Fund Development, By-Laws, and Nominations) with both board and community members sitting on these committees. Committees met regularly to ensure best organizational and governance practices and policies for NSACL.

As President, I was actively involved in the Human Resource, Governance, Finance, By-Laws, and Nominations committees throughout the year. Federal Connecting Community funds allowed NSACL to hire Lisa Scott, part-time, to assist with fund development and communications.



**CARMEL FRENCH**  
PRESIDENT

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

## **Interactions with the Provincial Government**

NSACL received the same base funding from government as in previous years.

NSACL has been very busy this year. To date we have received new funding from the provincial government to:

- deliver PATH training;
- offer in-service on sexual health;
- pay consultants to work with us to develop a priorities work plan; and
- develop and implement a pilot project on transitioning students with intellectual disabilities from school to community. Patricia Neves will spearhead this project.

NSACL has also been actively involved in issues concerning housing, inclusive education, and the Human Rights Commission Board of Inquiry on the right of individuals to live in their community. While the Commission acknowledged that the rights of the three original complainants had been violated, it did not extend its ruling to the 1000+ other individuals with intellectual disabilities who are waiting for community living options.

## **CACL**

As Nova Scotia's representative on the Canadian Association for Community Living Board (CACL), I have participated in the monthly meetings via conference calls. I have also been an active participant on the Institutes for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society (IRIS) Board, and chaired the CACL Board Governance Committee. This year, the CACL Board focused its attention on the following issues: 1) medically assisted dying; 2) developing and seeking funding for the My Home My Community initiative for safe and inclusive housing, 3) obtaining continued funding for the Ready, Willing and Able project - \$12 million secured, 4) legal capacity cases, 5) finalizing the name change, 6) family support, and 7) CACL/federation strengthening.

## **Personal Note**

I would like to thank everyone who has assisted in the revitalization of NSACL over the past few years. NSACL exists and grows because of the commitment of its dedicated volunteers and staff who share a common vision. I am totally amazed by the volunteers and staff who have shared their time, knowledge, and experience, not for personal recognition, but because they truly believe in the mission and principles of NSACL. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carmel French

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year has been an exciting one filled with new opportunities, ongoing challenges, transitions, and goodbyes. The many accomplishments would not have been possible without the support of the volunteers and staff who dedicate themselves to our mission and vision. There are many successes to capture and below are a few.

## **NSACL**

During this past year we applied to and received funding from Communities, Cultures and Heritage (CCH) to fund 2 projects. One grant allowed us to facilitate 2 Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope, (PATH) trainings. A total of 42 participants were trained representing 15 organizations from the disability community, sister equity seeking organizations, 6 NSCC campuses, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, residential service providers, immigration services, and Military Resource Center and Adult Service Centers. We have established a province wide registry of facilitators that is available to those requesting a PATH.

The second project funded by CCH allowed NSACL to engage in a Priorities and Planning 2019-21 process to develop a strategic work plan to guide the implementation of these priorities.

As we look forward to 2019-20 we have much to celebrate including 65 years of serving people with intellectual disability and their families in community. Stay tuned for ways you can engage and support us in this important milestone for the community living movement in Nova Scotia. Personally, I am excited about the work NSACL is doing with self-advocates, sister advocacy organizations, and other allies to form alliances in support of broader systemic changes to policies and practices supportive of living a good life in community.



**RUTH STRUBANK**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Many thanks to consultants Paula Hutchinson and Bette Watson- Borg, for their leadership and support of this important work for the future of NSACL.

NSACL received funding from the Department of Community Services (DCS) in a Prevention and Innovation Grant to offer Spreading the Word about Healthy Sexuality and Consent. Family support staff provided 23 sessions to over 300 participants from October – March in communities including HRM, Sydney, North Sydney, Port Hawkesbury, Louisville, Richmond, Clare, Yarmouth, New Glasgow, Wolfville, and Bridgewater. Trainer guides were developed to target residential service providers. Additional training materials were developed and sessions were added for self-advocates and families. In evaluations, 94% of participants said they would recommend this workshop to others. A comment from a self-advocate about a new thing they learned, “It’s okay to say no!” NSACL will continue to develop additional training materials and is engaged in conversations with potential new audiences.

NSACL received funding from DCS for a 1 year pilot through the Disability Support Program, Life Transitions: School to Community. This program will provide high school students with intellectual disabilities what their non-disabled peers have, access to knowledge and supports, choice, personal growth, and respect for their individual needs and goals as they transition from school to life in community.

Work continued through relationship building, knowledge mobilization and consciousness raising, to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities can live full and inclusive lives in community. Areas of focus included housing and supported living, human rights, inclusive education, health, and child protection and support. My work also included sitting on provincial and local committees to support these areas of focus.

These are a sampling of the work NSACL has been engaged in this past year. I am grateful for a “small but mighty” team of staff and the volunteers who bravely work to support people with intellectual disability to reach their full life potential. My sincere thanks to all of you. It is evident that NSACL has an important role to continue to push for investment in the full inclusion and participation of people with an intellectual disability. Living a good life in community is the human right of all Nova Scotians.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ruth Strubank



# FROM THE TREASURER

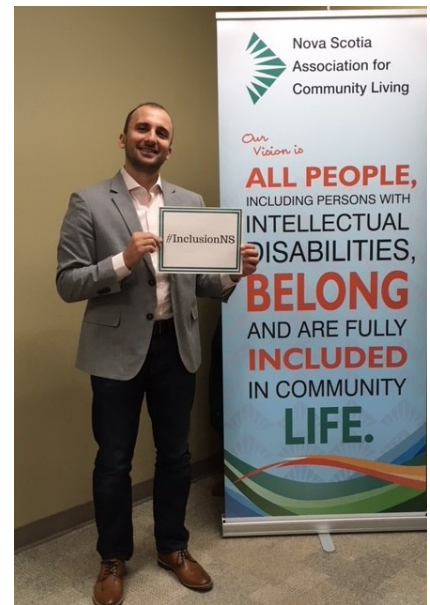
Last year has been a year of change for all of NSACL but especially on the finance side. Many of the changes that have been made this year will help NSACL limit risk and save time. We have enjoyed the improvement this year and have focused on other aspects of the Finances. Our main focus this year was making sure that the budget was being followed and that our losses for the year were to remain at the amount we had hoped for. This was accomplished as our deficit was smaller than initially budgeted for.

The Finance Committee met several times throughout the year, and our time was mostly spent to draft and review the budget for the year to come. We feel strong about the processes put in place to control the budget throughout the year and hope that our fund development efforts will improve next year so that we can invest in more projects and hire more staff to see the organization flourish.

I have enjoyed being the treasurer for NSACL for the last two years and hope to help with other roles within the organization in the near future.

A Financial Report will be presented at our Annual General Meeting with an opportunity to answer and discuss any questions.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ermal Loshi

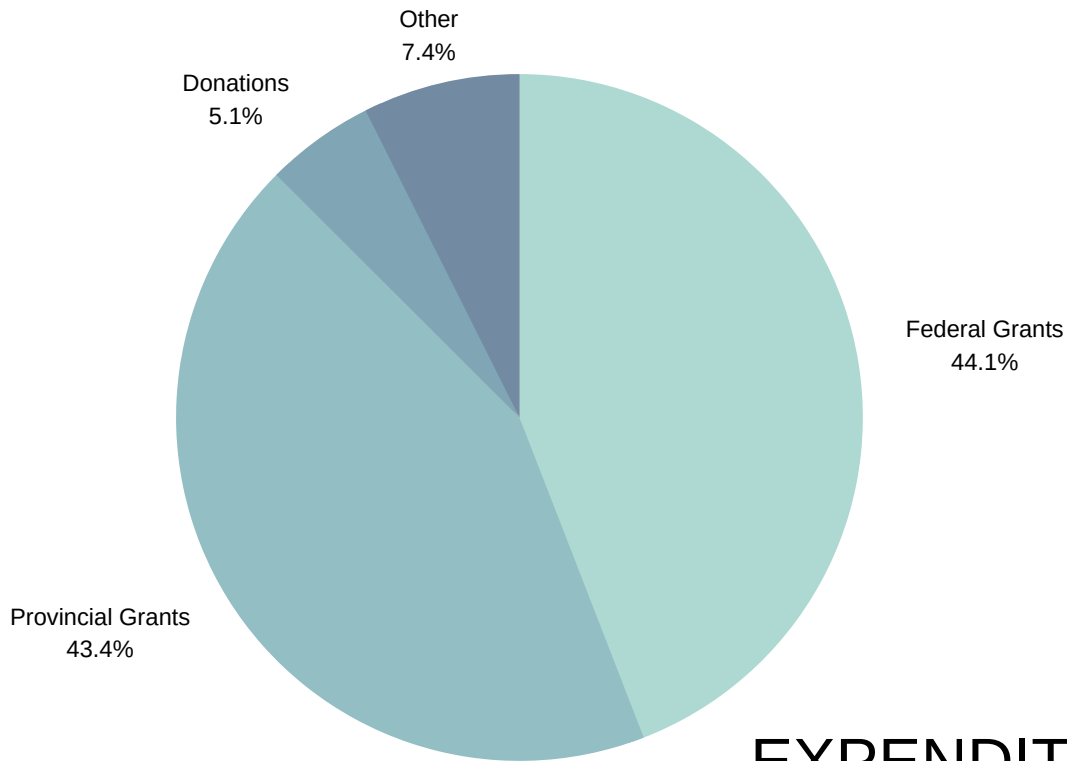


**ERMAL LOSHI**  
TREASURER

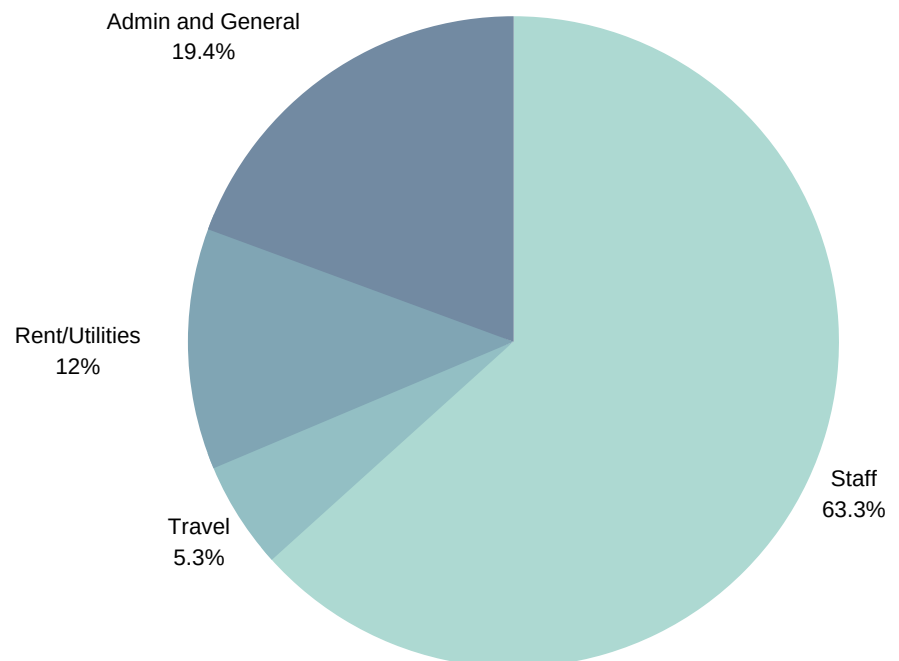
# 2018 - 2019 FINANCIALS

## NSACL

### REVENUE



### EXPENDITURES



# NSACL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



" I learned a lot through this training that I will definitely use in both my work with adults with intellectual disabilities in their employment journey, and my work with students with learning disabilities in their future employment and education goals." - PATH Participant

## **PATH - Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope**

Over 40 new facilitators are now offering PATH facilitation across Nova Scotia! With the assistance of a grant from Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, NSACL was able to deliver two sessions of PATH Facilitator Training to equity seeking organizations across Nova Scotia.

PATH is a person-centered planning tool that helps individuals plan their future. Used widely with persons who have a disability, though not limited to this use, the process involves a carefully ordered structure that uses graphics to focus energy and support memory. PATH also identifies supports and people that will help to accomplish the goals identified, guiding the individual toward the future they desire. PATH outcomes are achieved through a collaborative process by first planning backwards, from the vision of a desirable future to a detailed action plan.

With over 15 different not for profit organizations participating in our Facilitator Training, we are building a community that supports everyone living a good life in community!

We have created a database of PATH facilitators for Nova Scotia, connecting those seeking a PATH with those that are trained to facilitate.

We look forward to strengthening this network in the next year by training more facilitators and by developing tools that will strengthen the PATH delivery for facilitators and participants.



“I had never thought about the sexuality of people with exceptionalities.” - Participant

## **Sexual Health Training**

This year, with the support of a Sexual Violence Prevention and Supports, Prevention Innovation Grant, from the Department of Community Services, our Family Support Facilitators developed and delivered a four hour professional development module “Spreading the Word: Sexual Health and Consent for People with Intellectual Disabilities”.

This exciting project, based on the award winning Sexual Health Nova Scotia document, *Doing it Better*, offered information and practical activities to residential service providers across the province. Many residential service providers recognize that sexuality is a normal and healthy part of residents’ lives, but are unsure of how to support residents to access their rights, to prevent sexualized violence, and to engage in healthy sexual relationships. This training was enthusiastically received, with several participants requesting that we come to their organization to provide training to the entire staff team.

Although the original training was developed with service providers in mind, we had requests to present to students, self-advocates and parents/family members as well. In total, we presented to 23 groups, for a total of approximately 300 people. In addition, a family support facilitator was invited by other disability serving organizations, to facilitate a parent meeting, a sibling support group, and a session at the recent Connecting Community conference held at MSVU.

This is such an important topic, and we know that our work this year will help many people to “Live a safe and good life in community”.

## Family Support

During the past year the two part-time family support staff along with the Executive Director, helped families to navigate often complex systems in the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Annapolis Valley, Amherst and Cape Breton.

Across the province we directly supported 50 individuals and their families, as well as impacting many more families through our work on many committees and partnerships with like-minded individuals and organizations. We also fielded phone calls from 4 families moving from another province to Nova Scotia. Most of the referrals came from our sister ACL's across the country.

Some areas where we have provided support are:

- Students not receiving appropriate supports at school
- Students transitioning from high school with no plan for the next stage of life
- Access to appropriate medical and dental care
- Navigating disability support systems for new residents
- Accessing accessible, inclusive, affordable housing
- Wills and Henson Trusts
- Summer programs
- Reintegrating into community following incarceration
- Child Protection

Some of the more complex cases we have seen this year have been parents who have had their children removed from their care based on an assumption that a person with an intellectual disability cannot parent their child. In these cases, the onus appears to be placed on the parent to prove that they are capable, rather than on the province to prove that the parent is not.

In addition to these direct supports, we continue to work toward our vision of all people, including persons with intellectual disabilities, belonging and being fully included in community life through our work with various groups and committees, such as the Nova Scotia Respite Partnership, the Disability Rights Coalition (DRC), Community Homes Action Group (CHAG), Special Education Programs and Services Committee (SEPS), Disability Partnership and various other organizations.



# NSACL IN COMMUNITY



Supported Housing Summit hosted by Autism Nova Scotia



Press conference hosted by No More Warehousing



UN Special Rapporteur on Rights of Persons with Disabilities



Disability Rights Coalition, Community Forum

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## **Governance Committee**

The Governance Committee has met six times since the 2018 AGM, and has much to show for the diligent work of its members who are: Stephanie Carver (Chair), Lew Crews, Carmel French (ex-officio), Charlie Macdonald, Yvette St. George-Gillis, and Ruth Strubank (ex-officio). In addition to reviewing and updating the Terms of Reference for both the Governance and Nominations Committees, the Governance Committee has also accomplished the following:

- Initiated By-laws review (ongoing)
- Sub-committee made up of Lew Crews (chair), Carmel French, Sharon Whiteway, Roger Isnor & Terry Wilson
- Intent is to complete revision in plenty of time to bring to the AGM in 2020 for approval

### **Annual Rolling Agenda for Governance Committee**

- Recommendation that all committees and entire Board of Directors create rolling agendas to guide and streamline their work
  - Approved by the Board of Directors
- Roles & Responsibilities for NSACL Board of Directors
- Created clear description of roles & responsibilities of members of the Board of Directors
  - Approved by the Board of Directors

### **Collaboration with Nominations Committee on nominations for June 2019 AGM**

- Reviewed and updated Skills Matrix
- Made recommendations to the Nominations Committee about desired skills for new board members

### **Annual Board Survey**

- Created Annual Board Survey to assess Board effectiveness, which was completed May 2019 by all Board members, anonymously, online
- The Governance Committee will review and evaluate collected data, and provide a report to the Board

### **Welcoming New Board Members**

- Built on the existing NSACL orientation package, and proposed a number of other ways to ensure new Board members feel welcomed, well supported, and ready to contribute to the good work of NSACL

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephanie Carver, Chair



# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## **Human Resources Committee**

The Human Resources Committee was active this year. While the Committee is small, the members are engaged and enthusiastic in their wish to make sure that NSACL has strong HR policies and procedures that will allow fair and legal human resource management.

We began our work by completing an assessment of NSACL's current status of expected HR standards to gauge where our vulnerabilities were. The results allowed us to identify the following priorities for the year:

- Ensure HR policies are current, relevant and practical
- Develop and implement a Performance Management System for all employees

To ensure staff engagement and to gain necessary information to form our recommendations, we got feedback from all staff on current policies as well as their thoughts on the accuracy of current job descriptions. This information was valuable as it has allowed the Committee to move forward on both priorities expecting a revised set of Policies and Procedures will be ready for approval shortly and the Performance Management Process will be in place by the end of 2019.

I would like to take this time to thank the HR Committee members for their time and effort over the last year.

Respectfully submitted  
Jane Allt, Chair

## **Fund Development Committee**

The Fund Development Committee began meeting in August of 2018. It is a new committee of the NSACL Board with the mandate to prepare an annual fund development plan for the association. Historically, NSACL has relied on provincial and federal government grants to fund its operations. Recently, the Board has recognized that NSACL must diversify its revenue sources in order to create a sustainable organization. This is a new approach for the NSACL and it will take time to build visibility and presence such that we are more recognizable by potential funders.

I assumed the Chair of this committee in November, 2018. We have been meeting on a monthly basis to begin the compilation of a fund development plan for 2019-20. Our work is informed by the recent compilation of a Strategic Priorities and Planning document for NSACL. Nevertheless the committee is in the early stages of our mandate and there is much to learn about!

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

A key priority is recruiting committee members with fund development expertise. A second priority is equipping the committee with knowledge about fund development practices and opportunities as well as reviewing the local landscape to gain an understanding of where opportunities may exist to increase our revenue through different initiatives. An inventory of national, regional and local funding sources has been compiled and is being reviewed for alignment with the goals of NSACL. The work of committee is supported by Lisa Scott, our Fund Development and Communications Manager. My thanks to Lisa along with Ruth and the rest of the committee for their enthusiasm as we begin the a journey into the competitive world of fund development!

Respectfully submitted,  
Patti Conrad, Chair



The Inclusion Choir performs at the Disability Rights Coalition Community Forum.

# LOCAL BRANCH REPORTS

## **CACL-Clare Branch**

This was a busy year for us with the development of a small options home in Meteghan. We are now preparing to go to tender. The property has been purchased and the budget and design approved.

We have also been part of the Directions Council Home Services Nova Scotia social enterprise initiative, which was developed in conjunction with agencies across the province. We hired a social enterprise coordinator for one year with support from the Job Creation Partnership, are starting a feasibility study for the creation of low income housing, held an inclusive employment event at Université Sainte-Anne, produced two films on inclusive employment and finished several capital projects including the building of a sensory room and washroom in the wood shop downstairs.

As we didn't have a board member who could represent us on the board of NSACL, the NSACL board made an exception and allowed the executive director to serve as a representative for now. We are grateful to the board for allowing this so that we can remain connected to what is happening on a provincial level. Hopefully at some point we will find a member of our board who is willing to represent us.

## **St. Margaret's Bay and Area Association for Community Living**

Nancy Gilbert attended the Transition Bay meeting and found it an interesting concept with inter-generational housing. The Housing Coalition Meeting is being held at the SMBCEC on May 1, 2019. We'll get another update at next meeting. Nancy is on the committee to bring the needs of the disabled to the table not just the needs of seniors although she is one. A new student from Sir John A High is attending on Thursdays. Now there are 7 attending from the school.

**Programs** -Adult Life Skills – Tuesday mornings at St. Luke's only has 3 participants at this time; Deb and Glenda plus Jillian from SJA . Kyle attends on occasion if it is an outing. Pat MacDonald and Judi Magarvey often join the group as support. DAE -Still happening at the Superstore Community Room with Linda Donnelly providing the exercise program. There are 7 participants from the high school and 2-3 others.

Christmas Party – pot luck and gifts from Santa

**Fund Development**-1) Fundaze will be held on June 1, 2019 at St. Luke's Lower Hall, 2-6 pm. Theme is "Spring Fling". We are going to have the Cupcake Walk again and have some Spring themed games: Beanbag Toss, Sucker Pull, Golf, Bowling, Fish Pond, Boat Race, Plant table, jar with 2 -\$5 bills in it along with other items. Nancy will prepare a card with numbers on it for people to choose. There will be 5 door prizes plus 2 baskets with tickets on sale.

# LOCAL BRANCH REPORTS

Fundaze is our only fundraiser so we need the participants to start collecting pledges. Linda prepared kits and distributed them. We plan to have Best Spring Hat contest in place of costume, although spring outfits are encouraged. The band called Ralphie's Wheeling West Virginia Band will hopefully play at the event again. Food will be an organized pot luck. Requesting at least one batch of meatballs be non-pork. The number of prizes will be reduced...the idea of getting together should be prize enough. RBC is going to work the event and will provide funds toward Fundaze. Renee said she would look into cupcakes for the cake walk, but in the meantime, Linda Swim talked to Superstore and they will help with 15 large cupcakes and decorate and box them for the Cupcake Walk. 2) Bay Treasure Chest counting: The dates set for counting are May 15 and July 17. We hopefully will get a couple more however they may fall in our next fiscal year.

## **Halifax Association for Community Living: Inclusion and Family Support**

This year HACL focused on developing and offering two new programs: the transition support program and the peer support program. The transition support program has been a great addition to HACL. Our program director works with people with disabilities and their families closely to plan for the future, work on ways to manage stress, find and access supports (DCS/Community/ Health/Employment), and empowers them to advocate for the lives they want. The program works with people of all ages and can be short term support, or can be ongoing. The community response to the program has been overwhelmingly positive, with many people praising the program for fulfilling a need within the HRM.

The peer support program is made up of four groups that meet monthly; a self-advocate group, two parent groups and an adult sibling support group. We strive to make the program person-centred and participant guided. Staff merely help make sure the interests and goals expressed by participants are integrated into the programs. For example, we had several caregivers asking about the Disability Tax Credit so we brought in a representative from the CRA to discuss it and answer questions. We will continue to evaluate the needs and desires of each parent/sibling/participant at every meeting so we can plan our guest speakers and activities accordingly. So far all the participants have been enjoying the program, creating bonds with each other and finding new ways to access their communities!

We have also been working on several special projects this year, including a project with the Dalhousie Law School creating some plain language "know your rights guides" for people with disabilities and their families. Our staff have been doing presentations on planning and transitions and sit on multiple committees (like the Nova Scotia Respite Partnership). The Halifax Developmental Centre for Early Learning, our inclusive daycare, continues to offer exceptional child care to exceptional children!

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Carmel French  
Charlie Macdonald  
Sharon Whiteway  
Lewis Crews  
Terry Wilson  
Ermal Loshi  
Archie Kaiser  
Calvin Wood  
Jane Karrel  
Stephanie Carver  
Michael Waugh  
Patti Conrad  
Jane Allt  
Jeanne Whidden  
Helen Thibodeau  
Sharon Whiteway  
Nancy Park  
David Staples  
Carolyn Sloan  
Samantha Collier  
Tim Chipman  
Stephen Cooper  
Cindy Carruthers  
Anne Marie Dorey  
G&R Chartered Professional  
Accountants  
Department of Communities  
Culture and Heritage  
Government of Nova Scotia  
Rotary Club of Halifax North West





Nova Scotia  
Association for  
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