



2391 Crescent Way
Abbotsford, BC V2S 3M1

P: 604.852.6800
F: 604.852.2856

E: info@msasociety.com
W: www.msasociety.com



www.facebook/msasociety

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS!



MSA Society for Community Living

ANNUAL REPORT

2019—2020



This report celebrates and is dedicated to a very special friend of MSA Society for Community Living

Our Mission

The MSA Society for Community Living is committed to supporting persons with developmental disabilities to fully access & equally participate in their community.

Our Values

- We recognize that all people have gifts and are able to contribute to their community.
- We promote an environment of continuous improvement
- We value the diversity of the communities we serve
- We invite & encourage our community to participate & enhance the lives of the people we support
- We foster & support contributions from all our members
- We strive to communicate openly & proactively
- We promote choice & independence

Our Vision

We are dedicated to empowering individuals and their families to maximize their independence and enhance their well-being.

We inspire our employees to be imaginative, creative and flexible in their roles. We care for and respect one another. We communicate openly and proactively and nurture a team atmosphere. We foster and support contributions from all our members.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018—2021

ENHANCE & EXPAND DAY SERVICES PROGRAM

- Completion of two additional proposals with a focus on Life Skills and Employment (delayed due to COVID)
- Completion of building enhancements at McCallum site
- Plan developed for Crescent Way enhancements to be completed next fiscal year
- Increased community based activities

ENHANCE & EXPAND RESPITE SERVICES PROGRAM

- Continue to seek new funding supports to provide much needed respite

EXPLORE HOUSING & WHAT IT MEANS TO MSA

- Developed a Facilities Working group with Board Members and Leadership Staff
- Hired Catalyst to assist us in exploring housing options within MSA's capacity
- Catalyst provided the Board with a report providing us with information on our capacity.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Garth Green

Director: Jonathan Ratzlaff

Self-Advocate: Mike Palitti

Vice President: Esther Paterson

Director: Derek King

Treasurer: Rick Gendemann

Director: Jim Sikorski

Secretary:

Director: Wendy Beaulieu

HUMAN RESOURCES

2019-2020 has been both an exciting and challenging year for MSA society with many success and definitely some challenges with COVID-19 hitting our community full force near our year end. We also had two people retire, LaVerne Nickels (Operations Director) & Margaret Fair (Human Resources Director).

MSA has been working in collaboration with Royal Roads University, University of the Fraser Valley and Beedie School of Business to have students participate in research and developing Human Resources tools and processes. In addition, we had 4th year nursing students request to do their practicum placement with our Day Program. They developed resources for staff to use and gained valuable experience in learning about the Individuals we support. Furthermore, we hired two summer students with a Federal Funding Grant, one student worked in the day program developing a horticulture gardening program with the individuals and the other student worked in the administration department doing various projects and supporting the administration team.

During the past year we have worked closely with the shop stewards to enhance our work place culture and finding ways to support staff in their various roles. We are privileged to have a skilled and committed staff team at MSA. Our staff go above and beyond during the difficult times and are willing to support and assist whenever possible to enhance the lives of those we support.

Our Joint Health & Safety Committee continues work collaboratively to enhance our current practices and addresses any safety concerns that arise.

We were revising a number of Human Resources systems when COVID-19 arrived on our doorstep.

During the month of March, the Pandemic Response Team developed safety protocols, searched and secured Personal Protective Equipment and worked with staff to provide a work environment in which they felt safe and supported.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We have completed another, albeit trying, year of operation. The advent of COVID-19 and its impacts on our services has been immense. We are now entering a period where we hope to see some ongoing consistency, however it is likely that there will continue to be changes in the delivery of services as we transition to the "new normal". While it can be unsettling and disruptive to established routines, it is required at this time.



The profound impacts of Covid-19 has created a huge amount of work changes for our employees and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to them for the attitudes they have displayed and the manner in which they have dealt with the changes. The Board has received a letter from our funder (CLBC) praising the work done by Julie, the leadership team and all the staff at MSA. It is particularly gratifying to your Board to know that the work we have done as an organization is recognized by external organizations such as CLBC.

The Board along with the Leadership Team focused a number of initiatives throughout this past year designed to improve and enhance our effectiveness and efficiency. Recognizing that we may be able to leverage the value of our real estate holdings and our financial resources resulted in us spending considerable time exploring the feasibility of one multi-purpose building. The hope was that we could increase our cost effectiveness, provide additional housing and be able to operate some other needed services. To facilitate that objective we engaged a consulting firm with experience in helping non-profits develop housing proposals. Unfortunately the conclusion of the feasibility study did not provide any proposals that the board was willing to endorse.

Another initiative that came to conclusion this past year was the development of a new MSA website. Long overdue, our new website is much more vibrant, user-friendly and provides a fresh new introduction to our organization. If you haven't already viewed it please do.

LaVerne Nickels announced her retirement this year after many years of dedicated service to MSA. We all owe Laverne a great debt of gratitude for everything she did for us. It is sad to see her leave but we are all fortunate to have known and worked with her. We wish Laverne all the best in her much deserved retirement.

Lisa Lowe was a board member for the past 9 years, stepped down and is now working for us as our Admin/Operations Administrator.

I also want to thank my Board of Directors for their contributions this past year. We are lucky to have people of their caliber contributing to the operation of the MSA. They have all contributed their talents and time to our success and I look forward to working with them in the coming year. We welcomed Wendy Beaulieu as new member to the board this past year and I know her experience will help us immensely.

Finally, I would like again to express my special thanks to Julie Pariseau and all the staff whom have worked diligently at keeping MSA functioning effectively in the most difficult operational time. who see what they do as more than just a job !

Sincerely:
Garth Green, President
Board of Directors

LOOK WHAT'S NEW AT CRESCENT WAY

Staff at Crescent Way have been busy creating wonderful rooms for our folks to come back to. It's truly been transformational as the creativity and talent of our staff pull together to create such a joyful space for all to safely be in.



Thank you to the staff for cleaning up the grounds, it looks fantastic !

THANK YOU LAVERNE !

Over the years LaVerne had many roles in MSA from employment, to support worker, to operations, human resources, you name it LaVerne likely did it in at some point in her service. LaVerne cared deeply for the people we support regardless of her role, they were always forefront in her mind. She was instrumental in so many MSA accomplishments, it is impossible to name them all but one particular accomplishment that I would like to highlight is her pursuit and success in having MSA accredited by CARF. The undertaking of preparing the agency for their first CARF was enormous and LaVerne remained committed to ensuring the MSA met the required standards. As a leader in MSA, she ensured we remained on track, cared for those around her, and all the decisions that were made were Person Centered and involved the Individuals we support. MSA has lost a valuable staff member but LaVerne remains connected to the organization through her dedication to the Individuals she supports as a Home Share Provider. We wish LaVerne the best on her new journey and are excited to hear about what life brings her way in the future.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT



***“BE STRONG, BECAUSE THINGS WILL GET BETTER.
THOUGH IT MAY BE STORMY NOW, IT NEVER RAINS FOREVER”***

Although this report is a reflection on the accomplishments during April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020, I feel I must acknowledge our current circumstances of COVID-19, that arrived on our doorstep and changed all our lives at MSA on March 25, 2020. We closed our doors for a short period to time, to reflect on how we would continue to support Individuals, staff, families, caregivers and our community. All those who are part of MSA showed incredible determination, commitment and resilience as we came together to support each other, and once again highlighting the true heart and strength of MSA.

Relationships are the corner stone to the success of an organization and MSA has always focused on building and strengthening relationships with funders and the community. Our internal relationships with each other continue to strengthen as we care for each other, support each other and build each other up through adversity and in good times. We engaged in two significant training events in 2019-2020 to provide leadership and staff with tools to embrace our Person Centered Philosophy and to take a collaborative approach to our work.

First, in partnership with Semiahmoo House, all MSA staff were trained in Person Centered Thinking—this approach aligns with MSA’s philosophy and is intended to support us all to focus on the relationships and provide us with the tools to embrace Person Centered Thinking with the people we support. A big thank you to Lynn Ford and Nolda Ware for the time and energy they devoted to MSA. Secondly, we held a three day leadership enhancement training covering topics such as communication and leadership style, conflict management, vulnerability in leadership, and building trust. The skills and tools learned during these three days unknowingly prepared MSA’s leaders to navigate the rough waters of a pandemic and supporting Individuals, families, caregivers, each other and the community during this difficult time.

MSA hired a new IT company, Myriad Inc. and together we have upgraded and modernized our computer systems to become more efficient, secure and user friendly. In addition, we partnered with Meghan McMahon, to revise our website. We are grateful for both of these relationships and their knowledge and expertise in supporting us in navigating the world of technology.

As noted by the President, we engaged in a process, which helped us develop an understanding of our capacity in the area of housing. Although we closed one door for now, we will continue to explore other possibilities in the year to come. We have written and submitted proposal’s to expand services for youth and adults however, COVID has paused those initiatives as we focus on the new and changing needs of our community. It is with mixed emotions, we said good-bye to LaVerne Nickel who retired after serving MSA for 23 years.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to the Board of Directors, leadership team and staff who support the people we serve. COVID-19 has and continues to be the greatest challenge MSA, alongside the community has ever faced. We will continue to walk beside the individuals we serve and each other with kindness and compassion.

Respectfully,

Julie Pariseau, Executive Director

HOME SHARE & RESPITE

This past year our Home Share program has experienced some exciting growth as we have vetted six new Home Share Providers, successfully transitioned 3 Individuals into new Home Shares and have welcomed three new Individuals to the MSA Home Share program ! These new connections create opportunities to expand our partnerships and community relationships. We look very forward to ongoing growth in our Home Share program as we continue to respond to the changing needs of supported Individuals and our growing community.

We have really appreciated the flexibility and thoughtful responses of our Home Share providers as we worked together to create safety measures and procedures in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our Home Share Providers have supported the Individuals living in their homes and with their families with outstanding levels of understanding, care and kindness as we have navigated through these difficult times. Through all of these adjustments and challenges our supported Individuals and Home Share providers have remained positive, grateful and very creative taking all necessary measures to keep the individuals they support, their families and themselves comfortable and safe.



***SHARE YOUR HOME
SHARE YOUR LIFE!***

MSA Society continued to provide safe and nurturing overnight respite services during 2019-2020. The individuals supported in this program were given consistently scheduled opportunities to participate in a fully staffed program that delivered community inclusion activities, meals prepared to reflect specific preferences and needs as well as times of fun, friendship and engagement with other supported individuals.



DAY SERVICES

MSA Society delivers a variety of opportunities to 70 individuals in its large community-based leisure and recreational program. The staff team is made up of 28 devoted and skilled people who are dedicated to enhancing the lives of the people we support.

Our staff have worked together with the folks we support to develop new on-site and community activities. All of our activities are intended to provide each person with new experiences that encourage learning, making friends, and having fun.

We were delighted to welcome a new Manager on Board this past year, Natasha Desrosiers. Natasha has been with the organization since July 2020. She brings a wealth of knowledge, creative ideas and has a strong passion for serving the people we support. She is creative, compassionate and is committed to a person centered approach.

It is with deep sadness that we said good-bye to Melissa Cooper as she moved on after 22 years of service to MSA Society.



In loving memory of Jenny O

In addition, we have grieved the loss of two individuals who have participated in our program for many years. Their passing is a great loss for their families and both staff and their friends here at MSA.

This year ends with COVID-19 on our doorstep, as we briefly closed the program for 5 days on March 25, 2020 (6 days prior to year end) to develop a new way of supporting individuals and their families/caregivers.

We know that the next year will be different, new and there will lots of unknowns but we also know that MSA remains committed to serving people and striving to provide quality experiences, enhancing lives and building relationships.



In loving memory of Billy D



RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

We all need a place to call home. A place where we can relax, recharge and enjoy the company of friends and family. MSA continues to provide safe and supportive residential environments where individuals are invited to participate in community outings and events, connect with family members and enjoy the fun and dignity of being part of a caring, respectful and compassionate home.

In March of 2020, it became very clear that we would need to make significant changes in order to respond quickly and responsibly to the increasing presence of the Covid-19 virus. We know how difficult this must have been for the families and the individuals and we are very grateful for the cooperation and support we received during this time.

As we learn to live with Covid-19, while continuing to provide a very safe and clean environment, we have been able to expand our visitation policy to include short face to face visits in our homes. The dedication of our staff and their concern for the safety and wellbeing of the people we support has been very moving during this time. It takes a village – and we are very grateful for all those who are part of our village!



In Loving Memory of our dear friend Janise

On March 27, 2020 the MSA community was saddened by the passing of our very special friend, Janise M. Janise lived with MSA Society since 1991. She was greatly liked by everyone who met her and she shared her joy and love for life with everyone she came in contact with. She enjoyed trips to the mall and walks in the neighborhood. Janise also liked to go for milkshakes and spend time with her housemates. Janise will be deeply missed by her friends, family, and the staff who have had the privilege of supporting her at MSA. We will be placing a plaque in our memorial garden at Mill Lake in memory of this very special woman.

