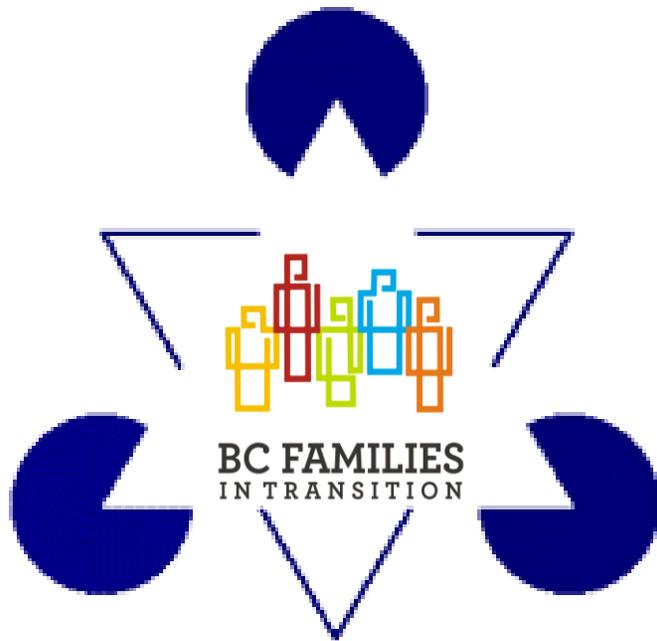


ANNUAL REPORT



2013-2014

899 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1H6
Phone: **250-386-4331** Fax: 250-386-4301
1-877-386-4333 (Toll Free Legal Information line)

www.bcfrit.org

VISION STATEMENT

BC Families in Transition is the province's premier agency for all family members facing change and challenges in their relationships. BCFIT's professional staff combines current knowledge with training to provide a wide range of caring, timely, and effective services.

MISSION STATEMENT

BC Families in Transition helps children, youth, and adults manage the challenges of separation, divorce, or transition to a new family structure. Our highly qualified staff, working with other community agencies, provides information and practical and emotional support so people facing these challenges can make the decisions that are best for everyone. BCFIT believes all individuals can find ways to move forward in their lives when family relationships have changed or are changing.

Executive Director

Richard Routledge, MA, RCC (until August 2013)
Bruce McGuigan, MA (as of August 2013)

PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

First Response Services

Raji Goel, Dip. Office Admin
Sandra Teiffel, BA, Dip Ed
Stephanie Slater, BSc.
Alison Murray*, BA, MA(in progress)
Erin Flannery*, MSc, BA(H)
Sherry Sheideman*, BA
Teah Scotten*, BA
Yin Yee Yip*, MA

Parenting After Separation

Lionel Zelniker, MA, MSW
Doug Woodall, MSW,
Dip. Process-Oriented Psychology
Jane Taylor Lee, MA, CCC
Ava Bahrami, MA, CCC
Craig Holm, MA, CCC

LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Pam Rudy, BEd. – Legal Support Services Coordinator
Doug Woodall, MSW,
Dip. Process-Oriented Psychology
Marie-Christine White,
Comprehensive Family Law Mediator

Court Support

Tammy van Hinte*
Financial Specialist
Theo Schmidt,
Certified Financial Planner

COUNSELLING & THERAPY SERVICES

Ava Bahrami, MA, CCC
Barbara Green, MA
Craig Holm, MA, CCC
Dawn Cox, MEd, RCC
Jette Midtgaard, MSc (Clin. Psych.), RCC
John Ricker, MA, RCC
Lionel Zelniker, MA, MSW

Luciana Daghum, MA, CCC
Michelle Popielarz, MA (in progress)*
Sarah Chettleburgh, MEd, CCC
Shelaine Grant, BSW
Sophie von Herrmann, MA
(Expressive Therapies)
Susan Farr, MEd, RCC

“BEHIND THE SCENES”

Computer Technician

Melvin Klassen, BSc*

Bookkeeper

Linda R Barry, CGA

Fundraising

Patricia Shuckburgh*

Website Designer

Darcy Paterson*

*Volunteer during the past year

STATEMENT OF VALUES

Safety and Well-being – We are committed to the ideals of safety, well-being, and justice for all family members, with the welfare of children our top priority.

Responsibility – We are committed to the highest standards of excellence in service-delivery and organizational management. This includes responsible, compassionate, and ethical care for everyone who uses our services as well as a commitment to ongoing training and support for our staff and volunteers.

Autonomy – We believe people are responsible for making decisions that are right for them in their own lives. Our role is to support this process.

Diversity – We embrace diversity, including that of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, ability, income, and sexual orientation.

Inclusion – We are committed to creating an inclusive workplace that welcomes input from all staff, contractors, volunteers, members, and clients. As a team, we draw on the resources, skills, and abilities of our team members in order to best serve our clients.

Respect – We are committed to respectful behaviour and communication, both within our workplace and in our community.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The word “transition” is a most familiar word for our organization and those of you who are Society members and supporters, know this well.

We began this year with a challenging transition in leadership following the retirement of our previous Executive Director, Richard Routledge, who worked tirelessly if not sacrificially for years to build BC Families in Transition to its recognized stature of service excellence.

Upon Bruce McGuigan's completion of six years of service on the Board last year, it was a Board governance requirement that he step down. Fortunately, Bruce stepped forward soon after to express interest in serving as interim Executive Director until such time as a permanent replacement could be found.

During the months that followed, Bruce engaged with the board and staff most effectively to bring about the fiscal stability that was needed in the wake of the hard hitting challenges of late 2013. During that time the Board met frequently with Bruce to work on the timely and immediate actions that were required. We can now report that this stage of the transition has been completed successfully.

In January, the Board then looked seriously at the matter of appointing a permanent Executive Director. Following full Board discussion and communication with key funding stakeholders of our intentions, the Board unanimously approved the permanent appointment of Bruce as our Executive Director.

So it is with pleasure that we welcome Bruce and thank him for his vigilance and effectiveness, not only with strong fiscal management, but also for working so well and positively with our most valuable resource - our professional and dedicated staff who deliver life transforming services to the individuals and families we serve.

It has been a privilege to serve with my equally dedicated Board colleagues once again this year. I feel confident that the future is bright after much of the “heavy lifting” experienced this past year. I, too, will be transitioning this year after four years of service, knowing that I am stepping off a ship that is catching the wind for full-ahead sailing.

Thank you for the opportunity to have served during this time!

Greg Hatton, President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The 2013-2014 fiscal year has been one of transition for BCFIT. Financially, we are now in excellent shape. We began the year with a deficit and completed the fiscal year on budget. We developed new management tools to ensure operational efficiency. During the year we reviewed every aspect of the agency's operation. Our service delivery model has changed to fewer staff and contractors doing a wider variety of roles. Every program was reviewed to improve services and reduce costs. Despite all of the changes, we finished the years having helped as many individuals and families as we have in most recent years.

Nothing has changed about who we are and what this agency does. BC Families in Transition has a broad mandate to help all generations through relationship transitions including separation/divorce, family conflict, changes of partners or parents, loss of a family member, and other situations which can threaten the stability of a family.

I am frankly surprised to find myself in the role of executive director at BCFIT. At the last Annual General Meeting I stepped down as board president as my six year term was completed. At the same time, Richard Routledge was compelled to resign due to health issues. The board asked me to come in a temporary part-time role while the board determined priorities for the agency as we moved forward. At the end of my contract the board asked me to stay on and I accepted. My role is to manage the operations of the agency through supervising the staff, developing agency policy, financial management and fund raising. I am privileged to support the work of dedicated professional counselors, group facilitators, and legal advocates all of whom do critically important work. This has been the most rewarding employment experience of my life.

Bruce McGuigan, Executive Director

FIRST RESPONSE SERVICES

First Response Services is the first point of contact for our clients. Our staff, contractors, and volunteers are trained to respond to clients in their first contact with the agency, and every subsequent visit. They are not “receptionists”. They are more like an emergency ward triage team. They answer 30 to 60 calls a day in addition to the clients coming in the door and determine their needs and how to best meet those needs. About 1 in 5 inquiries are referred to other agencies.

This year we made significant changes in First Response. We brought in new fee assessment and payment systems. We changed all of the forms. We completely revised our counseling and group program intake processes to improve services to our clients. Thanks to a grant from the Law Foundation we were able to update all of our computer systems—they were so old Microsoft no longer supported the software.

One of Raji Goel’s multiple roles is coordinator of First Response. Next year will be Raji’s 20th year with BC Families in Transition. Sandra Teiffel, a retired school counsellor with 30 years’ experience, joined us as a volunteer in 2006 and is now an employee managing the intake process. Stephanie Slater also started as a volunteer but for the last year has been helping in first response and intake. We also relied heavily on volunteers who are remarkable well qualified: Erin Flannery; Sherry Sheideman; Teah Scotten, and; Yin Yee Yip.

First Response is a critical element of our agency and much much more than just ‘reception’ however it remains unfunded by any major funder and is supported by fee revenue and general donations.

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

We have been running our Caught in the Middle program since 1985. For thirty years we have done everything we can do to improve and update this program and to respond to the needs of our clients. This year we made major changes:

- Group intake: We now do simultaneous group intakes for children and adults. This process allows us to better assess the preparedness of clients for a group setting. In some cases, we follow up with individual meeting to ensure that the program will benefit the client.
- Monthly programs: We now have monthly starts for the program from September to May rather than running two simultaneous programs three times a year. Formerly, clients could wait up to five months for their group sessions to start. Except for the summer break, we can move from intake to program in not more than six weeks.
- Eight week program: Formerly our adult sessions were ten weeks, and children eight. This left many newly single parents having to arrange child care. Now both the adult and child programs run eight weeks. This change also facilitates our monthly start cycle.

- Materials update. We have completed a thorough review and revision of the materials and reformatted it into the 9 week program (intake and 8 sessions).
- Expanded team: Our delivery team for this program has expanded to allow us additional flexibility. When demand is high we are now in a position to start two or more groups with each cycle - giving us the capacity to run 20 or more programs a year if needed.
- Supportive counseling: For those who attended our group intake night, and for those in the program, we offer low-cost supportive counseling.
- Drop-in: In response to participant requests, beginning in the new fiscal year, we will offer low cost drop-in programs for those who have completed the program.

Caught in the Middle is an immensely successful program that we are able to provide thanks to funding from the United Way, Gaming, and The Ministry of Children and Family Development

PARENTING AFTER SEPARATION

Parenting after Separation is a province-wide program created by the Ministry of Justice, and we have been contracted since 1997 to provide it for the community of Greater Victoria. It is 3-hour information session with some group interaction and individual assistance. It includes an introduction to the family legal system and a large amount of information about co-parenting, with discussion and a problem-solving focus. Given that the family law system in BC has been overhauled this year with the introduction of the *Family Law Act*, our Parenting after Separation program is an especially important community resource.

Our contract with the BC Ministry of Justice specifies there must always be 1 male and 1 female presenter, and whenever possible there is a guest speaker from the Family Justice Centre.

Although Parenting after Separation is mandatory for many people as part of their legal proceedings, about a third of all participants attend voluntarily.

This year we our contract was increased from 36 sessions to 38. Each session has, on average, 26 participants. Year after year our Parenting after Separation program is the most widely-requested and widely-attended in the province. Each participant receives a completion certificate which is valid at court for 2 years, and we are seeing increasing numbers of people having to re-attend when their court cases take longer than 2 years to complete. We also continue to see waiting lists up to a month or longer.

As agency administrator, Raji Goel coordinates the Parenting after Separation program and our First Response Services team handles participant registration and confirmation call-backs. Lionel Zelniker—a social worker and group counsellor for over 40 years—has been involved with Parenting After Separation since 2002. Jane Taylor Lee has been involved since 2009. This year we expanded the team with Ava

Bahrami and Craig Holm. All 4 facilitators are exceptionally talented and this is evident once again in the program evaluations. Most participants are compelled by court order to take the program many are hostile but in the end over 90 percent of them state the workshop was very helpful. In the evaluations we are frequently told by participants that they wish the workshop could have been longer.

PARENTING WITH A NEW PARTNER

Parenting with a New Partner began in 2006 with a grant from the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, and we have continuously refined the content and the format. The purpose of this program is to help parents who have added a new partner into the home and thereby become a 'blended family,' and who have found stress in the new family relationships to be a result. Becoming a blended family is almost always a difficult transition and our group provides a context to examine and enrich the changed relationships, both between the partners and with the children/stepchildren. Staff member John Ricker coordinated this program superbly once again this year, in the process conducting many intake sessions to help couples determine whether a group program or couples counseling would offer a more effective approach. Once again Barbara Green provided all the group facilitation, maintaining a dynamic atmosphere which fully engaged the participants. We provided 2 Parenting with a New Partner courses this year.

Parenting with a New Partner is an unfunded program. We try to schedule it for times in which our group rooms are underutilized and rely on fee revenue to make it run, necessitating relatively high enrollments and a reduced flexibility on ability to pay. The coordinator role is supported by general donations.

LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Our Legal Support Services Program (LSSP) under the coordination of Pam Rudy, full-time advocate, part-time advocates Marie-Christine White and Doug Woodall, and court volunteer, Tammy van Hinte, provided outstanding services in all areas of this program. There was some concern at the beginning of the year that the opening of the Justice Access Centre nearby and their small overlap in services with ours would have a negative impact on our program statistics. **In fact 2013-2014 was the busiest year on record.**

The advocates provided family law information and advocacy services to 3,640 persons over the past fiscal year, of whom 631 were seen in the office and an all-time record high of 1,983 individuals were assisted at Family Court in the Victoria and Western Communities Courthouses. This record number beat the previous year's record high of 1,674 individuals. The remaining 1,026 individuals were served via telephone, including our toll-free Legal Information Line.

Through advance training in anticipation of legislative changes, the advocates were very well prepared for transitioning into the new *Family Law Act* after it was implemented in March 2013. They immediately began informing clients in our office, at other community resources, and at family court about the changes. At court our advocates and/or trained volunteers are the link between self-represented litigants and the services of duty counsel. Our team is grateful to work in collaboration with the court clerks, judges and duty counsel lawyers of the Family Bar. We have earned the privilege of being the only people who are allowed to approach the clerks while court is in session to give them notes on which files are waiting to be seen by duty counsel.

The *Family Law Act* presented an opportunity for developing a presentation on "New Moms and the New Act" targeted towards young mothers in order to create awareness of how the new legislation addresses parenting responsibilities. We were able to share this presentation with young mothers and staff from three community programs: Best Babies, YMCA Young Moms in Residence, and Girls Alternative Program (GAP).

We are proud of our strong partnerships with community service providers that invite us annually to provide legal education on family law for their staff and clients. It has become a tradition that we provide updates on our services three times a year to law students at the UVIC Law Student Clinic; and annual updates to volunteer trainees at 1-Up Single Parent Resource Centre and Victoria Women's Transition House Crisis Line. We also initiated in-services with the Victoria Justice Access Centre when it opened next to the Victoria courthouse in September 2013 and we have been able to make cross-referrals to our respective programs.

Funding for this program has been from the Law Foundation of BC since 1988; and also more recently from the BC Gaming Commission. We are thankful to both for their ongoing financial support. Crystal Buchan, a family law lawyer, who upon "retirement" from being on our Board for many years, became the legal supervisor for our advocacy team approx. 10 years ago. Over the past year, she met with the advocates once or twice per month and was available by email or phone as needed. We are very grateful for her long-standing and tireless commitment to our agency.

With mixed feelings we acknowledged the resignation of Doug Woodall, who decided to retire from his advocacy position at the end of March. He was also a tireless supporter of our program for over a decade and we will miss him.

With the financial assistance of the Justice Education Society we offered 6 sessions of "Parenting after Separation Finances" which were co-facilitated by Marie-Christine White and Doug Woodall. Both received excellent evaluations from the participants. In addition to the information provided in these 3-hour free sessions, participants had the option of meeting with Theo Schmidt, a Financial Specialist in Family Separations and Business Disputes, who collaborated with us in offering consultations at a subsidized rate. We appreciate the continued support from the Justice Education Society and Theo Schmidt in assisting us to serve clients in

becoming more financially literate with respect to the financial obligations of their separation or divorce.

Looking forward to the coming year, we are already preparing to offer two new services, namely mediation and “New Ways for Families” classes, which will complement both our legal support and counselling programs.

Pam Rudy, Legal Support Services Director

COMMENTS FROM CRYSTAL BUCHAN, LEGAL SUPERVISOR

It has been my great privilege to again this year provide legal supervision to our excellent team of legal advocates consisting of Pam Rudy, Marie—Christine White and Doug Woodall (now retired) , with volunteer services from Tammy Van Hinte.

This amazing team assisted an average of 165 litigants per month at court, 53 individual per month at in office appointments, and 173 individuals at 29 organizations over the year who had presentations about family law. As always, I find myself in awe of the number of people served and the consistently excellent service that the public reports receiving.

A highlight from this year is the continuing and pivotal role the advocates have in the redesigned process for the very busy family remand days at the Victoria and Colwood Provincial Court Houses.

Judges continue to voice their gratitude for the advocates role in assisting Duty Counsel to identify those who need service, helping them get ready to see Duty Counsel, and helping Duty Counsel to ensure that they see everyone in due course.

Collaboration with community organizations remains very important to the team, and the advocates and I have continue to review effective ways to collaborate, to make effective referrals to other organizations, and to communicate about our work so that we receive effective referrals from others.

All reports that I receive, whether from Judges, lawyers, court staff and others providing service in our community, are that our advocates collaborate exceptionally with other service providers to the great benefit of the public.

It was with mixed feelings that at the end of March we said goodbye to our long—time advocate, Doug Woodall. Doug brought experience, wisdom, knowledge, compassion, humour and common sense to this challenging work. He will be missed, and we know he has great adventures in store for this second retirement.

Pam and Marie—Christine, as a newly formed two—advocate team, are working collaboratively to ensure that our program continues to serve so many and at the highest standard. This upcoming year promises many adventures as family law under the Family Law Act develops.

Crystal Buchan, Legal Supervisor

COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT

Our agency has offered group counselling programs since 1979, and an array of individual, couple, and family therapy services since 2006. Since then we have greatly expanded the size, scope, and versatility of this department to serve all ages, all walks of life, and all family configurations. By now we are able to respond to almost any family situation in which changes in relationships are the primary concern.

Despite some financial challenges in this fiscal year we met all of our goals for delivering counseling services, providing an average of 260 hours a month in individual counseling for children, youth and adults. A notable transition in service delivery in this area is a significant increase in the proportion of our services delivered to children and youth. This year, approximately 75% of our counseling clients are children and youth. In previous years it was seldom 50%. Generally, our fee for service recovery on Child and Youth Counseling is lower than for adults.

The department is coordinated by John Ricker MA, RCC and John also provides supervision to counselors working with adults. Last year our counseling staff consisted of: Susan Farr, MEd, RCC; Jette Midtgaard MSc (Psych), RCC; Dawn Cox, MA, RCC; Sophie von Hermann, MA (Expressive Therapies); Luciana Daghum, MA, RCC; Ava Bahrami, M.A. CCC; Sarah Chettleburgh, MEd, CCC; Craig Holm MA, CCC; Shelaine Grant BSW; Stephanie Slater BSc (psych); and Michelle Popielarz (MA in progress).

During the year, Board member Jane Taylor Lee, MA, CCC—who is an experienced therapist and a specialist with ‘high-conflict’ families—provided supervision for our practicum students and counselors who were working with children.

We are deeply grateful to the United Way of Greater Victoria and the BC Gaming Commission for their continued help and commitment in making this program possible. The Ministry of Children and Families also assists funding this program through a limited fee for service provided under the All About Me Program. We are pleased to announce that the Variety -The Children’s Charity - is assisting with funding in the coming year that will help with the increasing demand for child and youth counseling.

Bruce McGuigan, Executive Director

Income Statement

	Reviewed 2013-2014	Reviewed 2012-2013	Reviewed 2011-2012
Revenue			
BC Gaming	\$45,899	\$53,101	\$133,210
United Way	90,206	90,921	93,828
Law Foundation	91,200	91,200	91,200
Ministry of Justice	25,094	20,629	25,753
Fees & Miscellaneous	56,106	70,131	71,699
Ministry of Children and Family Development	42,000	42,000	42,000
Telus		10,000	
Foundations (other)	16,542	68,140	9,176
Amortization of deferred contributions	13,686	16,848	
Funding for Renovations		8,355	
	\$380,733	\$471,325	\$466,866
Expenses			
Program Delivery Personnel	\$195,161	\$257,412	\$243,711
Rent & Utilities	75,656	61,508	41,135
Contractor Fees	54,441	114,630	143,880
Administration*	15,776	19,297	29,420
Accounting/Audit	6,376	4,498	5,579
Supervision, Legal	5,000	5,000	5,000
Supervision, Clinical	4,280	4,638	6,365
Telephone, Fax, Internet	9,315	8,812	7,567
Amortization	15,672	8,913	7,558
Advertising	1,767	473	2,824
Security	2,843	2,738	858
Training & Travel	661	1,480	5,034
Memberships	1,358	363	714
Insurance	1,254	1,151	1,454
Program Development	1,886	7,060	3,451
Office Improvements			0
Moving Expenses		8,697	
	\$391,447	\$506,670	\$504,550
Loss on disposal of assets		(23,932)	
Surplus (Loss)	\$(10,714)	\$(59,277)	\$(37,684)

*includes bank charges, supplies, etc

Balance Sheet as at March 31st

2014 2013 2012

Assets

Bank Acct, Cash, GST Receivable	\$ 140,747	\$ 70,270	\$ 114,148
Funding Receivable	7,280	4,298	2,022
	\$ 148,027	\$ 74,568	\$ 116,170
Capital Assets	\$ 96,396	\$ 112,068	\$ 31,684
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 244,423	\$ 186,636	\$ 147,854

Liabilities

Fixed Operating Costs Payable	\$ 8,144	\$ 5,677	\$ 9,457
Variable Operating Costs Payable	15,021	16,901	13,618
Deferred Income	127,500	45,899	33,140
Deferred Revenue	88,959	102,645	16,848
Total Liabilities	\$ 239,624	\$ 171,122	\$ 73,063
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 4,799	\$ 15,514	\$ 74,791

\$ 244,423 \$ 186,636 \$ 147,854

TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to submit the Report on the financial situation of BC Families in Transition for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013 and also for the period April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

The statements have been reviewed by our Auditors, Obara & Co, Chartered Accountants in accordance with the Canadian Generally Accepted Accounting Standards for review engagements. I take this opportunity to thank Barry for the work conducted as well for his ongoing support of the organization.

A point of note is that, on April 1, 2012, we adopted the Canadian accounting standards for not-for profit organizations retroactively to April 1, 2011. The impacts of these are included in the statements that are a part of the Annual Report.

For both years, our financial statements have reflected continued stability indicating that our partners, contributors and supporters are alongside us and strongly support and believe in the family and people impacting services that BC Families provide.

Our Revenue/Income for March 31, 2013 showed a deficiency from expenses of \$59,277 but the following year had moved further downwards to \$10,715. Apart from

the increased cost for new premises and the decline in fees and miscellaneous revenues, there are no hidden surprises that are worth watching. Our cash position for March 2013 was sitting at \$57,526 while at March 31, 2014 we were sitting at \$125,406. This position will enable us to operate at a high level of efficiency and service the needs of our many clients.

BC Families in Transition has undergone several changes internally; with staff re-organization, re-vamping some of our services in order to manage these better and be more effective, the resignation of our Executive Director, Richard Routledge, for health reasons and the appointment of Bruce McGuigan as a Consultant and then subsequently offering him the role of Executive Director. I offer my sincere thanks to Richard for his contributions during the many years of leadership he provided. I also have to say a sincere thanks to Bruce McGuigan who has worked long and hard to revisit some of the core policies, processes, and programs that have been changed and also for ensuring that compliance with the pertinent legislation as well as for positively impacting the internal culture of BC Family in terms of staff engagement, satisfaction and motivation.

We look forward to enhancing our image and reputation with the donors while ensuring that all our core services are delivered a high level of quality and to expand our collaboration with new partners to continue the work that BC Families in Transition does on Vancouver Island.

If you have any questions regarding the information on the Financial Statements, please let me know and I can be of further assistance to you.

Ken D'Sa, Treasurer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-2014

Greg Hatton, BA -President

Jane Taylor Lee, MA, CCC - Vice-President

Ken D'Sa, BComm, CHRP - Treasurer

Paul MacRae, MA - Secretary

Bronwen Bell, LLB - Director

Malcolm McMicken, LLB - Director

Paul Miller, PhD* - Director

June Preston, MSW* - Director

AGENCY FUNDERS



BC Gaming Commission
Ministry of:
-Justice,
-Children & Family
Development



Individual Donations

Allen and Loreen Vandekerkhove Family Foundation



Our thanks to all who financially supported our organization