



Busy year makes for packed AGM agenda

Leadership coach Ian Chisholm walked more than 100 of B.C.'s social-service leaders into the pit of despair at the Federation of Community Social Services annual general meeting this month.

And they came out smiling, having picked up new tools from Ian on how to maintain leadership and focus during the challenging times affecting B.C. social services sector right now. Ian's lessons on leadership were part of a full two-day

program for Federation members that featured learning and skill-building sessions, small-table conversations, and issue updates. Members learned more about Aboriginal cultural traditions; cross-sectoral communication strategies; accreditation; MCFD's priorities; governance and organizational options and the importance of staying open to the 'difficult conversations' about how we add value to the lives of our clients and communities.



Ian Chisholm

The AGM gave Federation members another chance to raise money for youth bursaries (story page 2) through a silent auction. Over \$20,000 has been raised for bursaries in the past year, which the Federation awarded in June to 23 youth who have been in care and are currently studying for careers in the social, health or education sectors. Turn to page 2 for more on that.

Federation members: Sign on with the new members-only social media site for FCSSBC, launched at the AGM. Email us at mail@fcssbc.ca for an invitation.



Rebecca Ataya, left, and Jeanne Fike toss "grapes" for their Silly Fundraiser—which wasn't so silly, raising more than \$2,100 for youth bursaries.

Notes from the AGM

Minister: Real change in government's view of MCFD

Maintaining an open, honest relationship with B.C.'s social-service providers will be an important focus for the Children and Family Development Ministry in the challenging times ahead, says Minister Mary Polak. The minister is marking one year at the helm of MCFD.

"To see the work that happens, the passion of the people—to be part of the ministry and the opportunity to change people's lives—I'm loving it," the minister told people attending the Federation of Community Social Services AGM June 10-11 in Penticton.

"There are challenges in this ministry all the time. If we can get through them by being honest with each other, by being

open and holding back the curtain on the processes—that's what will make the difference."

The minister stressed that despite the cuts to preventive services in the September 2009 budget, "there's no question that prevention forms the basis of everything we do" in the ministry. But cuts couldn't be avoided in that budget, she added, and the government had no choice but to prioritize certain services.

Minister Polak kept her speech short in order to be able to answer more questions from Federation members. Hearing their concerns around a number of funding issues, she stressed that even though "all the dollars are sitting in (Health Minister) Kevin Falcon's office," there has

been a significant change in the way government overall views MCFD: "Everybody now gets that if we put the dollars here, we'll see real change in 20 years."

MCFD assistant deputy minister Doug Hughes gave a brief presentation on the resiliency-based Child and Family Services Assessment Planning and Practice initiative (CAPP). The Federation sent around the CAPP discussion paper to members in early June, and it's also available on the MCFD Website.

FOR THE RECORD—Mary Manning Centre is the primary provider of child-centered child abuse and prevention services in Greater Victoria. It supports the work of the ORCA Children's Advocacy Centre, but ORCA is not yet providing front-line service.



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SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Family Resource Programs: Caring through community

As any new parent learns, it's not easy being a mom or dad. It's lonely, isolating and sometimes downright baffling. And it's great to have someone to talk to and a place to go on days when it all feels a bit much.

That simple premise is at the heart of the 276 Family Resource Programs operating in B.C. Their work is centred on a grassroots concept developed in the 1970s that still thrives today.

Wherever you live in B.C., chances are there's a Family Resource Program (FRP) nearby. Housed in family service agencies, neighbourhood houses, schools and non-profit agencies, FRPs quietly carry out the important community work of strengthening thousands of B.C. families.

The FRP model essentially creates a supportive neighbourhood for families of young children—one with five core areas of service guiding its efforts.

These core services are the essence of the model. A genuine FRP will provide Family Support; Play-based Learning; Early Learning and Literacy; Parent Education and Learning; and Information and Referrals to other community services.

All FRPs are shaped around the five core services, says Marianne Drew-Pennington, executive director of the BC Association of Family Resource Programs. But specific programs and supports reflect needs of the individual communities.

For instance, an FRP will have a drop-in centre as part of its family-support mandate, says Marianne. But it will also have a variety of other family strengthening supports such as supportive counselling or food security programs.

"Supports can be as mild as creating opportunities for families to meet, or as intense as strong intervention for a parent with significant challenges," she says.

"A Family Resource Program provides a wrap-around service for families. It

would never be *just* a drop-in."

Families connect to FRPs for all kinds of reasons. And once there, they find they also end up connecting to each other. Wrap a healthy and supportive "neighbourhood" around a family and all kinds of good things can happen.



Parents who are struggling suddenly discover they're getting help to work through their challenges. They find better ways to parent—sometimes due to a program they're in, but often just because they're spending more time learning in a community of parents.

Meanwhile, their children are helped along in their development through creative play and early learning opportunities. They make new friends, too.

The association formed in 1989 to promote and support the FRP model. That includes maintaining a high degree of professionalism in all FRPs.

To that end, an eight-course Family Resource Program Certificate launches this fall at the Justice Institute of BC. Although the certificate is designed for practitioners working in parent/child engagement programs, many of the courses are relevant for childcare providers or child and youth-care workers.

The association has recently developed provincial standards for FRPs that it hopes agencies will voluntarily adopt. Twenty already have.

With a growing concern at all levels around children taken into provincial care, FRPs go back to the basics to give families the support they need to raise their children and keep the family together. They build on people's strengths, acknowledging that virtually all of them want to be good parents.

"We really feel the family-resource approach can have a tremendous impact on strengthening families," says Marianne. "They're very cost-effective, and they bring a lot of people through the door."

Calendar

July 1—HST takes effect

July 8—Proposed Northern Region Members' Teleconference 9:30-10:30am

July 15—Members' Webinar, general update 9-9:30 with special session 9:30-10:30 a.m. on MHS business transformation initiative

Heartfelt stories underline impact of Fed bursaries

Finding money for the coming school year will be just a little easier for 23 young people awarded more than \$20,000 in FCSS bursaries in June.

"All my life, I've struggled to overcome people's low expectations of an aboriginal in foster care," wrote one young man in his application for a bursary, available to any current or former youth in care studying for a career in health, social services or education.

Another wrote of the effort it took to graduate from high school at age 22—and of the excitement at seeing "a thousand doors opening around me at that point that I hadn't even known were there."

The successful applicants received bursaries of anywhere from \$250 to \$2,000 from the Federation, which raises the money through silent auctions and "Silly Fundraisers" at its general meetings and AGM. The number of people helped by the bursaries has grown dramatically in the two years since the bursary program was launched with an initial award of one bursary worth \$1,000.

At the June AGM, members raised \$2,123 toward next year's bursaries, with a goal of bettering the \$20,250 raised this year. MCFD Minister Mary Polak offered herself up for a lunch date as a silent-auction item at the March meeting, and at the June meeting slipped a \$20 personal donation to Silly Fundraiser organizer Jeanne Fike before beginning her speech.

Notes from the AGM

Mandate expanded for annual Award For Excellence

The CYCABC presented a plaque to the Federation in recognition of its mentorship and support. From left: Rob Bates, CYC Assn co-chair; Rebecca Ataya, director at large; Federation ED Jennifer Charlesworth; CYC Assn co-chair Amy Woodruffe; Elaine-Kaitlyn Wong, director at large; and outgoing Federation board president Nanette Taylor.



Congratulations to outgoing Federation board president Nanette Taylor (second from left) and Boys and Girls Club Community Services of Delta/Richmond former executive director Sandra Gebhardt, right, who were recognized at the AGM for their years of work on behalf of the sector and the people our agencies serve. That's incoming board president Shane Picken on the far left with Nanette, and Federation executive director Jennifer Charlesworth second from the right presenting to Sandra.

Two long-time members were recognized at the AGM for exceptional contributions to community social services.

Nanette Taylor, stepping down as the Federation's board president, was recognized for years of efforts on behalf of the Federation board and the sector.

Sandra Gebhardt, former ED of the Boys and Girls Club Community Services of Delta/Richmond, received an honorary membership.

Also at the AGM, a motion was passed to expand eligibility for the Federation's annual Award For Excellence to anyone working in the community social-service sector.

Recipients are recognized for years of effort and dedication around community social services, or for a significant and lasting contribution to the sector resulting from a short-term project or piece of work.

Notes from the AGM

'Our brand isn't working': Panel notes changing times

Co-ops, mergers and a new "brand" for the social services sector were all on the table at a panel presentation on organizational options for the sector.

Caroline Bonesky, of Fraserside Community Services, urged the audience to "focus on the mission that will create the greatest social value." An agency's focus on its own survival can sometimes result in mission drift, she added.

Anyone considering a co-op needs to look for partners with shared values, said Andrew Jarrett, of Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative. The co-operative's 13 members talked for two years before forming a co-op.

Christine Mohr, of OPTIONS Surrey Community Services Society, detailed the ups and downs of merging two agencies, as happened a year ago at OPTIONS. From having to unify five different benefits packages to understanding each



Common values are the cornerstone for a co-operative, said Andrew Jarrett.

other's cultures, it's been hard work, says Christine.

Tim Beachy, of United Community Services Co-op, challenged the audience to recognize the fundamental issues the sector is up against, including that "our brand is not working."

"Collectively, we've begun to sense we're up against limitations," he said. "Our model is bumping into them."

Fed membership expands

Welcome to our two newest Federation members: The School of Social Work at the University of Victoria and the Clements Centre Society in Duncan.

The School of Social Work offers studies for both a bachelor's and master's degree in social work, many of whom will ultimately work in the social-services sector. The school has more than 500 undergraduate and 60 graduate students, and this fall will open its doors to students with other kinds of degrees who want to get their master's in social work.

The Clements Centre was founded in 1957 by the parents of children with disabilities. Registered as a charity in 1974, the centre now has a budget of more than \$4 million and 85 employees. The two program streams at the centre focus on community living support and children's services, including early intervention, childcare referral, day programs and housing support for adults with disabilities.

Profiles of Nanette, Noreen, and Shane

Nanette Taylor

Outgoing president of the FCSS board of directors

Nanette's four-year presidency will perhaps be best remembered for her efforts in restoring a positive working relationship with MCFD.

Budget cuts to the sector in the last two fiscal years could have been much worse were it not for that relationship, says Federation executive director Jennifer Charlesworth, who counts Nanette as a key mentor who helped her make the transition into her own job during Nanette's first term as president.

Director of Services at North Vancouver's Hollyburn Family Services, Nanette has helped bring about improved communications on many fronts, from Webinars and newsletters to social media. She guided the Federation for years to do work on residential services, and that work got underway in January. Hundreds of youth, foster parents and practitioners from around the province will have been heard by the time that review, a joint initiative with MCFD, wraps up. The work will lead to a new five-year plan for residential care.

The team in the Federation's office has grown from 1.8 FTEs to 5 in Nanette's four-year tenure as president. Revenues have tripled, and membership is up 25 per cent.

Noreen Boudreau

Past president steps down after many years of service

Noreen has a well-deserved reputation as a bold and courageous leader and a strong advocate for the sector—as you might expect of someone who started into her first term as president of the Federation during one of the toughest years the sector has faced.

Elected president for the first of two terms in 2002, Noreen guided the Federation through very difficult times, during which the Federation office lost its funding from MCFD and had to reduce the hours of the ED, move to a smaller office and lay off support staff—all the while advocating for their struggling member agencies facing their own cuts. (Noreen's own agency, Janus Family Programs, lost 90 per cent of its funding that year.)

It was a tough start, but Noreen says it was definitely the most memorable period of her time on the board.

Since her early years when Janus joined the Federation as one of its first private-sector members, Noreen has seen the organization go through tremendous growth and development. She's proud of its progress, and of its stellar reputation.

Noreen continues her work with Janus as she steps off the board, and expects to keep busy with two children under the age of one who the long-time foster mom is fostering at the moment.

Shane Picken

Incoming president has lengthy history on the board

Shane may be new to the Federation presidency, but he's definitely no newcomer to the board. He's been on it for almost as long as he's been involved in the social-services sector—20 years and counting.

Shane recalls the mentoring and support he got from other Federation members when he was starting up his company, ARC Programs Ltd., which he runs with his wife Fiona. He's pleased all these years later to be able to be a mentor in turn for emerging leaders new to the Federation. Shane had also spent time on the CYCABC board by the time he joined the Federation, and knew he liked the work.

"I've always enjoyed being on the board for the opportunity to make a bigger difference, at the provincial level," he said. "The Federation has really provided that."

During his two-year tenure as president, he hopes to help the Federation grow into its new name, developing its membership even more to embrace all community social service agencies.

"The future of the organization is in all services," said Shane. "I'd like to see us attracting more members, meeting the more diverse needs of a larger membership, and increasing sustainability."

A warm welcome to our 2010-11 board members, with a few new faces and a number of returning directors:

President: Shane Picken, ARC Programs, Kelowna

Past president: Nanette Taylor, Hollyburn Family Services, North Vancouver

Vice-President: Position vacant

Secretary-treasurer: Michelle Fortin, Watari Youth, Family and Community Services, Vancouver

Directors at large:

- John Belfie, North Okanagan Youth and Family Services, Vernon

- Lynn Mace, Columbia Basin Family Resource Society, Fernie
 - Lynda Edmonds, SHARE Family&Community Services, Port Moody
- Regional reps:**

- Vancouver Coastal: Teri Nicholas, Family Services of Greater Vancouver
- A/Vancouver Island: Deborah Joyce (for Mitzi Dean), District 69 Family Resource Association, Qualicum Beach
- Interior: Tanya Behardien, Penticton&District Community Resources, Penticton
- Fraser: Ian Mass, Pacific Community Resources, Vancouver
- North: Dana Gorbahn, Highroad Services Society, Smithers

Three-year accreditation rates up for B.C. organizations

The number of B.C. agencies awarded three-year accreditation status has risen four per cent in the last year, says Daniel Stavert, chief advisor on accreditation standards with CARF International.

In total, 93.5 per cent of B.C.'s accredited social-service agencies have achieved the three-year status. That compares to just 88 per cent internationally, noted Daniel, who presented to Federation members along with CARF president and CEO Brian Boon.

CARF and COA representative Tobi Harrington-Murch also reported that they (and the Federation) worked with the Ministry of Children and Family Development to find solutions to the accreditation funding crisis earlier this year. While money was found to complete the accreditations that were in progress, there have been some policy and practice changes that agencies may be affected

by. Agencies that do not secure a three-year (CARF) or four-year (COA) status will not have their accreditation costs covered when they go for their next reaccreditation. Also, only programs funded by MCFD or Community Living BC, with contracts worth at least \$500,000, will receive money for accreditation. Aboriginal agencies are an exception and all will continue to be funded for accreditation.

A little creativity will be needed on the part of the accrediting bodies to help agencies whose programs are partially funded by MCFD or CLBC but still reliant on a number of other funders, says Daniel.

"We'll go back to our surveyors and see if we can find someone with a relevant skill set [for those programs] that would allow us to be able to accredit those additional programs without an additional charge," he said.

Best of luck, Amy!

The relationship between the Federation and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres just got deeper.

Federation staff Amy Woodruffe will be joining the BCAAFC team in July to carry on the work she began during a secondment last November on the Indigenous Outcomes Measurement Project (more on that project in an upcoming newsletter). While Amy will be based out of the BCAAFC, she will still continue her work on the Federation's emerging leaders program.

Amy considers it a "great honour" to have worked with the Federation, and praises Jennifer Charlesworth for her "deep contribution to my own learning and development as an emergent leader."

At the BCAAFC, Amy will be a policy-team member along with Warren Clarmont, Carla Bortoletto, Christine Atkins and Paul Lacerte (www.bcaafc.com).

Updates: CEO Network, Residential Review, new travel subsidy

Focus groups and consultations for B.C.'s residential redesign have been completed in the regions of Vancouver, Vancouver Island and the North, and will resume in September in the Fraser and Interior regions.

Recurring themes are emerging, and the findings are strikingly consistent and compelling. Federation executive director Jennifer Charlesworth will be working with MCFD colleagues analysing the results of the first round of consultations over the summer.

On June 30 the Federation wraps up its year long contract with the CEO Network to provide strategic advice and

secretariat support. Although the formal connection has ended, the organizations will continue to cooperate on common issues in the sector.

The Network's focus on CLBC relations and business practices within the community living sector has resulted in some positive changes for agencies. We wish the Network well!

A new travel-subsidy policy at the Federation will help



Marcel Aubin, former executive director of the Ooknakane Friendship Centre in Penitcton, spoke at the AGM about strengthening relationships and understanding between member agencies and aboriginal groups.

to \$300 in travel subsidy to attend one meeting a year.

A minimum of \$1,000 annually will be budgeted for this subsidy, with further fundraising done at general meetings if needed.

The subsidy will fund up to 50 per cent of the costs of travel and accommodation, to a maximum of \$300. Contact Federation executive coordinator Susan Choo for an application form and further details (susan@fcssbc.ca)

Subsidy recipients are expected to hold a meeting or teleconference in their community to share information and resources from the meeting they attended with others in their region.

smaller agencies from more remote areas of B.C. make it to the Federation's three yearly general meetings.

Organizations of agencies with budgets under \$1 million and located in the North, Interior, Central Coast or North Island are now eligible for up

VIEW FROM HERE: LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Without being too much of a Pollyanna, I'm feeling surprisingly hopeful these days.

Yes, we've got our challenges. But we're also finding all kinds of new strengths. We've got partnerships with government that we've never had before, and growing connections in the community that are bringing together all kinds of like-minded people to talk about social services. We've got new organizations like Board Voice and the Provincial Roundtable coming together to speak with a united, knowledgeable voice about the work we do.

And the future - well, it's going to be interesting, even if things do get a little uncomfortable along the way. I'm picking up a feeling out there that we're ready to have conversations on all kinds of fronts right now. It's exciting

to find ourselves talking about new ways of doing business, stronger alliances, and coming opportunities for more collaborative projects like the residential-care review. Challenging times do have a way of bringing people together and encouraging innovative and creative thinking.

I was in the audience for some terrific presentations at the Federation's annual general meeting earlier this month.



Faces at the Fed: Some random shots of our members hard at work at June's AGM in Penticton.



I listened to Ian Chisholm's presentation on how to have those difficult conversations we all know are necessary, and then a panel featuring agencies talking about really big things - mergers and niches and co-ops, even the future of the social-sector "brand." And I listened in on a number of powerful and difficult conversations playing out during the open-space sessions, on topics including MCFD's transformation initiative and the succession planning and emerging-



leaders work that we have underway. (Stay tuned for updates on actions we'll be taking on those issues and others from open-space sessions.)

The future is uncertain, but isn't it great that we're still out there talking about it? I've been taking part in some very tough conversations as part of the residential-care review, and hearing the stories from B.C.'s youth has been painful at times. But then I find myself inspired by the ideas and commitment people have for improving the experiences of these children/youth. I strongly believe that our work will make a difference.

If you haven't yet met Ian Chisholm, you'll get a chance to on October 20 at an all-day leadership workshop in Vancouver. Contact Susan at susan@fcssbc.ca to register. Ian will also be a regularly featured presenter at our general meetings.



THE FEDERATION HAS BEEN A RECOGNIZED VOICE IN BC SINCE 1982 FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES TO CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS AND FAMILIES

WE REPRESENT 126 DIVERSE, CARING AND COMMITTED MEMBER AGENCIES WHO SERVE THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH, WOMEN, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AND FAMILIES. WE WORK CLOSELY WITH ALMOST 80 OTHER BC AGENCIES DOING RELATED WORK.

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