



SOCIETY FOR MANITOBANS WITH DISABILITIES

An Inclusive and Accessible Society



2018 - 2019

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

WHO WE ARE



OUR VISION

An inclusive and accessible society



OUR MISSION

Working together to eliminate barriers to full and equal participation



OUR VALUES

Collaboration - Diversity - Innovation

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1. One SMD** - Reframe SMD as a single, cohesive organization at the governance and operational levels.
- 2. Brand awareness & strong communication** - We want to be understood by all Manitobans as the go-to organization for providing services and supports to persons with disabilities in our highly competitive and changing marketplace.
- 3. Sustainability** - Through a combination of financial & strategic planning, income diversification, sound financial administration, and improved revenue generation, improve the long term financial sustainability of SMD.
- 4. Fundraising** - Refocus fundraising on those activities that provide the greatest return on investment.
- 5. Innovation** - Develop & implement processes, products, methods, and outcomes that are new and create improvement.
- 5. Leadership** - Elevate SMD as a leader in service provision and client advocacy. Invest in leadership development at the governance and management levels.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: Dale Brownlee

Vice Chair: Peter Zacharias

Secretary: Michel Chartrand

Jennifer Lusby

Judy Wasylcyia-Leis

Joan McKinnon

Sylvio Sarrasin

Beverly Dobran

George Russell

Sonja Isaak

Robert Prokopanko

Bill Tucker

Camille Bertolet

Wendy Onslow

Auna-Marie Brown

Gail Smidt

OUR EXECUTIVE TEAM

Dana Erickson (*Chief Executive Officer*)

Lindsey Cooke (*Director of Provincial Services – Children & Youth*)

Jonathan Dionne (*Director of Provincial Services – Adults*)

Stephanie Jacobs-Lockhart (*Director of Human Resources*)

Jennifer Jason (*Director of Finance & Administration*)

Gerald Mirecki (*Director of Operations and Major Projects*)

Harry Schulz (*Director of Corporate Development*)



Annual Message From the **CHAIR AND CEO**



Dale Brownlee, Chair



Dana E. Erickson, CEO

The Society for Manitoban's with Disabilities (SMD) is almost 70 years old. First incorporated as the Society for Crippled Children in 1950 and then as the Society for Crippled Children and Adults two years later, the steady and dependable hand of SMD has been supporting Manitoba communities for a very long time. Interestingly, we changed our name again in 1985 to Society for Manitoban's with Disabilities "to reflect a contemporary image for persons with disabilities". And now, another thirty five years later, we are once again putting on a fresh face.

Changing the name of an organization with a rich history like SMD's is a very difficult decision. The reasons for such a significant change need to be well thought out. We want our name to further the contemporary image for persons with disabilities as well as help us stand out in a complex and competitive environment. A new name is a promise to our stakeholders: a promise to be leaders for an inclusive and accessible society and be innovators in working together to eliminate barriers to full and equal participation.

With a fresh new name and vision, it is an exciting time to be part of our family. Our organization is evolving in some very tangible ways! We experienced growth this year, as evidenced by an increase in revenues. We also continued expansion of our outreach services into more first nation communities; we started a social enterprise providing commercial cleaning services which provides meaningful employment at a sustainable wage to persons with disabilities; we are transforming our fundraising and Foundation; we began working with new financial institutions and pension administrators; our northern job training program got a huge support increase from the federal government; United Way Winnipeg renewed our contract for a further three years; we are supporting new self-help groups; and we became a funded agency of United Way Brandon & District. These are just a few of the many exciting changes in the last year that give us great confidence as we begin to tackle more ambitious new strategic priorities related to unity, innovation, leadership, fundraising, and sustainability while also embracing emerging new commitments with governments.

Preparations to celebrate our milestone 70th anniversary are underway. 2020 will be a time when we travel down memory lane as well as look forward to the many opportunities ahead to benefit all Manitobans. We have many successes to celebrate and hope all of you will have the opportunity to celebrate with us.

It has been a joy to lead an organization that has a new bounce in its step. Thank you to our board of directors for their strong governance and their courage making weighty decisions this year; to our staff who work hard and continue providing excellent service and supports for clients and families; to our funders for having confidence in us to deliver on our commitments; to our volunteers for their dedication and desire to help; to our generous and caring donors and sponsors whose support is so critical to resourcing our programs; and to the many more SMD supporters who cheer us on and care about the work we do.

The announcement of our refreshed brand (new name, visual identity and meaning) is planned for our annual members meeting on Sept. 19, 2019.

Sincerely,

Dale Brownlee, Chair

Dana E. Erickson, CEO

2019 AMBASSADORS



Paul Hamm
SMD Youth Ambassador

Paul is an energetic eleven year old full of determination. He likes to dance, make up rap songs, tell bad jokes and make people laugh. He is also very passionate about sports and was awarded a Yes I Can! award for athletics in 2016/17.

“It felt great. A lot of people were congratulating me. I thought to myself, this has got to be a big deal.” Paul shares with a big grin stretched across his face.

As a child born with Cerebral Palsy, Paul strives to not let anything slow him down. With support from SMD, he receives respite, therapy and service coordination and also participates in the Sledge Hockey Program. Last year Paul won the Mark Scheifele award for Break Out Player of the Year. He attributes his involvement with sledge hockey as a key ingredient in his motivation to be the best that he can be.

Paul is also active playing baseball, swimming and running cross country. “I forget about my Cerebral Palsy. I like to see how far I can go. I just go out there and have fun. I push other kids. I like to say, hey you are doing good. Let’s see more of what you got.”

The Yes I Can! Awards were created to recognize the achievements of students who have special needs and of the adults who support them. The awards are presented as part of the annual conference of the Manitoba Council for Exceptional Children.

In addition to his awards, Paul was selected as the 2019/2020 Youth Ambassador for the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities. As the Youth Ambassador, he will be the face and voice for SMD while attending various functions, events and campaigns. He will gain valuable experience speaking in front of small/large groups and the media while having fun meeting new people! We look forward to Paul sharing his story and being a champion for people of all abilities!



Mitch Krohn
SMD Adult Ambassador

Mitch is 45 years old, married and has four cats. Throughout his life he has actively been involved in the Winnipeg theatre community.

“I was part of an improv comedy troupe; I had my own theatre company; and I was an artistic director for another theatre company, so I was quite active.”

At 43, Mitch went into the hospital experiencing some chest pains. His day quickly changed when he was rushed to undergo emergency spinal surgery. He had two vertebrae fused in his central spine as well as his neck. In the midst of surgery, he suffered a stroke.

Recovery has been on going and it left Mitch in a wheelchair, unable to use his left arm. New barriers presented themselves as Mitch had to wait 6 months before returning home, “The only way into the house, was stairs. Before something like this happens you don’t think of these things, and then after something like this happens you kind of relook at your life and your situation.”

Due to limited space and building code requirements, a ramp was not feasible so they had a power lift installed with a deck built over top of their front steps. “Getting the lift was key to getting home. I can’t even imagine what it would have been like without it. I probably wouldn’t have been able to come home for an extra year if I was still without the lift.”

“SMD has helped me with the current manual wheelchair I’m in; I have to wait a bit to apply for a power wheelchair and they’ve helped me partially with the lift. The service has been wonderful.”

Through our Assistive Technology program, Mitch received support to cover some of the costs for his power lift. When asked if there’s a message he wanted to get out there he says, “It can happen anywhere, anytime...it all went downhill within a 24 hour period...now, life is changed completely!”

Like Mitch, a sudden life change can incur costs and barriers never thought of before. The Assistive Technology Program aids those in need and requires support and generosity in order to assist others. Mitch pointed out that even though he’s still going through the healing process, he feels very fortunate and lucky it wasn’t worse. “You just can’t quit, you have to keep going!”

Did You Know:

- SMD Wheelchair Services is funded through the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)
- SMD issues approximately 15,000 parking passes issued annually
- SMD has approximately 11,000 manual wheelchairs in Manitoba
- There are approximately 2000 clients using power wheelchairs in Manitoba
- SMD outreach services Indigenous Communities as far north as Nunavut
- 90% of children who are Deaf are born to hearing parents

SERVING MANITOBA

WINNIPEG LOCATIONS

- **Head Office**
825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5
Email: info@smd.mb.ca
Tel: (204) 975-3010
Toll-Free: 1-866-282-8041
TTY: (204) 975-3083
- **Wheelchair Services**
1857 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3E7
Tel: (204) 975-3250
Toll-Free: 1-800-836-5551
- **Parking Permit Program**
1857 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3E7
Tel: (204) 975-3257
Toll-Free: 1-800-836-5551
- **Communication Centre for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (CCC)**
1155 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3G1
Tel: 204-975-3062
- **Children's Service Coordination**
1155 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3G1
Tel: 204-975-3085
- **Provincial Outreach Therapy for Children (POTC)**
1155 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3G1
Tel: 204-975-3269



RURAL LOCATIONS

- **Northern Regional Office - Thompson**
303-83 Churchill Drive
Thompson, MB R8N 0L6
Tel: (204) 778-4277
Toll-Free: 1-888-367-0268
- **Eastman Regional Office - Steinbach**
Unit 9 - 227 Main Street
Steinbach, MB R5G 1Y7
Tel: (204) 326-5336
Toll-Free: 1-800-497-8196
- **Central Regional Office - Morden**
100 - 30 Stephen Street
Morden, MB R6M 2G3
Tel: (204) 822-7412
Toll-Free: 1-800-269-5451
- **Westman Regional Office - Brandon**
Room 140, 340-9th Street
Brandon, MB R7A 6C2
Tel: (204) 726-6157
Toll-Free: 1-800-813-3325
- **Interlake Regional Office - Selkirk**
382 Main Street
Selkirk, MB R1A 1T8
Tel: (204) 785-9338
Toll-Free: 1-888-831-4213
- **Parkland Regional Office - Dauphin**
Room 411, 27-2nd Avenue
Dauphin, MB R7N 3E5
Tel: (204) 622-2293
Toll-Free: 1-800-844-2307

SMD PROGRAMS & SERVICES

★ Programs you can support!

* Government Funded

FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

We provide the following programs and services:

- * Children's Service Coordination (CSC)
- * Provincial Outreach Therapy for Children (POTC)
- * Communication Centre for Children (CCC) who are Deaf or hard of hearing
- * Wheelchair Services
- * Employment Preparation Centre (EPC)
- * Thompson Supported Employment Program (TSEP)
- * Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

- ★ Recreation and Leisure
- ★ Self Help Clearinghouse
- ★ Assistive Technology
- ★ Ethno-Cultural
- ★ Travel Assistance

FOR ADULTS

We provide the following programs and services:

- * Wheelchair Services
- * Employment Preparation Centre (EPC)
- * Pathways Program
- * Thompson Supported Employment Program (TSEP)
- * Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
- * Parking Permit

- ★ Travel Assistance
- ★ Assistive Technology
- ★ Recreation and Leisure
- ★ Financial Empowerment
- ★ Community Education and Training
- ★ Self Help Clearinghouse
- ★ Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- ★ Ethno-Cultural

To Support & Grow The ★ Programs

CLICK HERE





John Michael (JM) 2nd from left with family

THOMPSON FAMILY OVERJOYED & THANKFUL!

John Michael (affectionately known as JM) started to receive services through SMD when he was only one and a half years old. An Audiologist referred JM to SMD when it was discovered he had profound hearing loss bilaterally. A surgery was required for implantation of bilateral cochlear implants. Ana Bautista, JM's mother admits, "This was very hard to accept, but we keep moving forward and are thankful for SMD in all they were able to help us with. They provided a lot of support for our family. I was working part-time and financially, it was difficult. SMD has been there for financial support and JM is improving a lot through Speech Pathology and his overall behaviour."

JM has visited Winnipeg multiple times from their home in Thompson, Manitoba for surgeries and Speech Language Pathology appointments and SMD has assisted the family financially with travel costs. His family is also receiving respite services.

"SMD is very helpful in providing multiple connections to the proper resources that are required and when we meet with the staff, we feel like family."

When asked what message Ana would like to spread to others who might be going through a similar situation, she proudly states, "As a parent/mother, never give up on your child. No matter what condition they have, show the love and care for them."

JM and his family are currently learning American Sign Language (ASL) through our *Deaf and hard of hearing program* to augment his communication skills and are finding it very helpful. "JM is doing more sign language and his communication has been improving."

READ MORE >



Sklyer in front of Riverview Restaurant

Natalie Lagace Sr. Job Coach at Boreal Discovery Centre

Tim Preston & Quentin at Canadian Tire

INNOVATIVE PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Creating New Opportunities For Businesses & Students

Our *Thompson Supported Employment Program's (TSEP)* innovative **Pathways Program** was developed out of the need to bridge the gaps in transition to adulthood for students with barriers to employment.

We recognized gaps where youth transitioning to adulthood that have intellectual and/or learning disabilities did not always meet eligibility criteria for Community Living Disability Services (CLDS). Therefore, a proposal was sent to the School District of Mystery Lake in May of 2016. TSEP proposed a partnership and pilot program with the School District to provide off campus assessment, pre-employment skills programming and the opportunity for unpaid work experience with local employer partners for Pathways Students in their final year of high school.

The School District was interested to partner and in September of 2016 the TSEP-Pathways Program began. The program was very successful and in 2017/18, TSEP was able to secure funding from Manitoba Education & Training. This enhanced the program and also included paid training and on the job opportunities for students. We continued to receive funding in the 2018/19 school year and currently have 11 students accessing the program with four progressive employer partners. These include **Riverview Restaurant, The Boreal Discovery Centre, Canadian Tire, and the Northern Inn & Steak House**. All of these businesses understand that diversity in the workplace benefits everyone and we thank you for partnering with us. Please enjoy some testimonials from the employers and students.

"We enjoy having Alexander as part of our team. We've exposed him to everything from the care required for a multi-tank sturgeon ecosystem to the task of cleaning toilets. We try to teach him about the importance of the mundane tasks and emphasize making good impressions when interacting with visitors. We also learn from him as he brings his own experiences into the conversation. He is a willing worker who always shows up on time and we hope his experience with us helps him in his future endeavours." Boreal Discovery Centre

I didn't mind working there and enjoyed it. I liked helping customers find items they were looking for." Tim (student) at Canadian Tire

"I have been getting better at organizing the dishes and doing them faster." Sklyer (student) working at Riverview Restaurant

READ MORE >



Zoey



Daisy

MOTHER & DAUGHTER OVERCOME BARRIERS!

Daisy was born with fluid trapped behind her ear drums, causing monthly infections. At 16 months old, she had tubes put in her ears but by then, scar tissue had built up causing her to have hearing loss. After surgery, she started to learn and talk. From being delayed in hearing, she got connected with our *Children's Service Coordination program* and needed to see a Speech Language Pathologist which improve her communication skills.

Daisy's mother, Zoey explains, "Due to the fact she couldn't hear properly, school has been difficult. Sometimes, she gets upset in class and shows signs of not paying attention. Fortunately, she goes to an amazing school that offers an FM system so she can hear, does one-on-one teaching, and has teachers willing to try anything and everything so she can focus and understand. Additionally, SMD has helped our family with travel fees, food, and hotel costs for Daisy's appointments." She adds, "SMD helped with paying for those much needed medical trips so the stress of money wasn't one I had to think about, and I could be there for my daughter."

Zoey also received services through SMD as she has sensory neural hearing loss in her right ear. This required some accommodations throughout her studies. "With a curious fascination for understanding the body and its various systems, a career as a Licensed Practical Nurse is a perfect fit for Zoey," says Kim Parks, a Rehabilitation Counsellor who works out of our

Dauphin office that worked closely with Zoey. "She is wrapping up her final year at the Assiniboine Community College and is on route to achieve her employment goal. It has been an absolute pleasure working alongside Zoey, as she radiates with passion when talking about her studies and various practicum placements."

Zoey explained that she cried with joy when she first experienced the FM amplification system that she used in the classroom, allowing her to hear lectures and participate in small group activities. "It opened up new opportunities for me and allowed me to excel in my studies," says Zoey.

It was recommended that a specialized stethoscope was required for Zoey's practicum placements. The stethoscope had a volume adjuster which allowed her to participate fully in the monitoring and assessment of her patients. She was able to purchase this stethoscope through funding from the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities program.

Kim adds, "Zoey's passion, kindness, enthusiasm, and strong-knowledge base will make her an exceptional nurse. This is just the start of her success story and as a case manager I can't wait to see where the next steps take her!"

When asked what message Zoey would like to share, she proudly states, "Having a disability should never stop you from becoming and doing something you love. There is always supports where needed, and it's okay to get help and receive supports when offered. I am very thankful for SMD. They helped me work towards my dream of becoming a nurse by taking away some stresses in life like income, helping me with my hearing disability, and giving me the resources to help me learn."

In Loving Memory - Virginia Miller



Virginia Miller

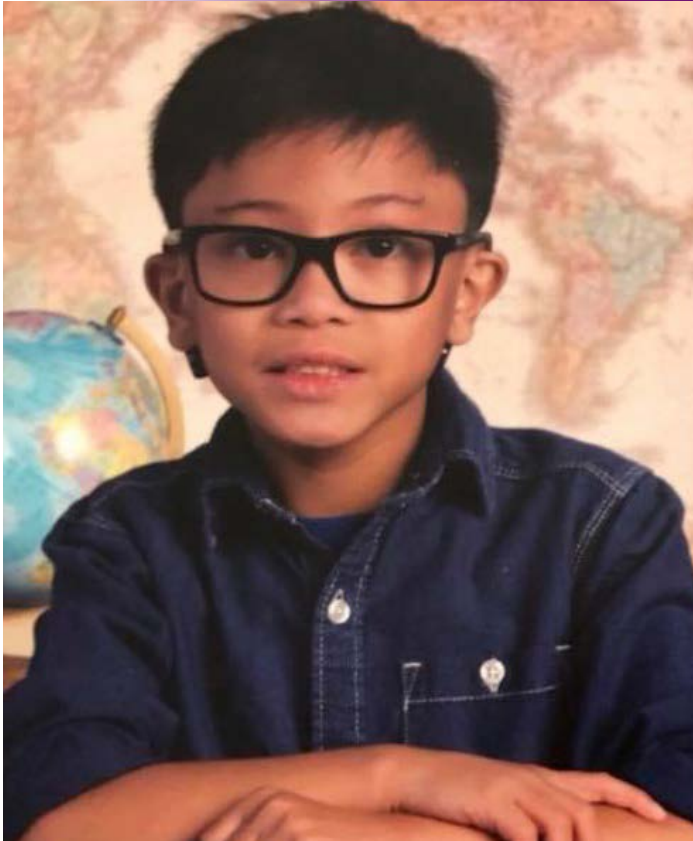
Virginia Miller was born in Winnipeg, in January, 1930. Her father worked for Great West Life, which meant, through her childhood, the family was often transferred to other cities in the country. Ultimately the family settled in Vancouver, BC, where Virginia was able to complete her Bachelor of Arts degree at UBC in 1951. After graduation she began working as a legal secretary in Vancouver. While at UBC, she met her future husband, Clive Miller, who was studying law. Virginia and Clive married in 1954 in Vancouver and over the next several years had four beautiful children. In 1962 the decision was made to move to Clive's hometown of Portage la Prairie, in order that he might join the family law firm.

It was in Portage la Prairie that Virginia began to get really involved in the community and its volunteer work. Her daughter, Leigh, adds, "Mom was a very bright lady and did

a lot of volunteering. She fundraised for cancer research, was active on many of her church committees, was very involved in Arts Festivals in the area and did so much more." She also served on the Board of Directors for what was then called, the Crippled Children's Society of Manitoba (CCSM).

"Mom wasn't a confident driver and never drove outside of Portage, so she would get on the Greyhound Bus to go to and from Portage la Prairie for board meetings. Her commitment and determination to serving those less fortunate and in need was very strong."

[READ MORE >](#)



Jhairio Corsino (aka JJ)

DID YOU KNOW

Cochlear Implants cost approximately \$11,000 per ear. 80% is covered through Manitoba Health. Families can apply for assistance to cover the remaining 20% through programs such as our Assistive Technology Program.

NEVER GIVE UP!

Jhairio Corsino, who goes by JJ, was born prematurely at 29 weeks in the Philippines and weighed only 2 pounds. He was diagnosed with profound hearing loss and had a right cochlear implant *mastoidectomy* performed in November 2013 as well as the left cochlear implant in March 2014. One month later, JJ was diagnosed with *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*. JJ's mom, Jo-Ann describes, "At first, it was tough for us to understand and accept all of these diagnoses for our son, knowing since birth that he was already fighting for his life. But, amidst all of this we became strong for him as we can see he is a happy boy full of hopes and inspiration."

JJ attended the Central Speech and Hearing clinic for auditory verbal therapy. Jo-Ann adds, "During that time, JJ was nonverbal and we were battling for the communication that he needed. He did it for years but no improvements, not a single word." He was still not acquiring any speech so the family decided to incorporate American Sign Language (ASL) to his learning. The family received in-house ASL training through our Communication Centre for Children (CCC) who are Deaf or hard of hearing program and the progression began. "He 'picked' up sign language and began to use it in his daily life to communicate," says Theresa Blaine, a Children's Service Coordinator. "Additionally, he has a signing Educational Assistant (EA) at school and continues to make gains in his daily communication. The family is continuing to learn ASL and teach JJ."

Over the past 6 years since JJ has been involved with SMD, he received services and supports in many ways such as; Travel assistance, Services that were under Children Services Coordination (CSC), *Communication Centre for Children (CCC) who are Deaf or Hard of hearing*, Assistive Technology, and more.

"Since day 1, when my son was diagnosed with ASD, SMD was there for us. They helped us navigate everything that we needed for our son. From transportation, respite, children's leisure and recreation activities, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, etc. we are happy that we can now communicate with our son. Thanks for the ASL and all the supports SMD."

When asked what message Jo-Ann wanted to get across to people who read about JJ, she states, "Don't lose hope. Everything has a reason and there is always a way to find solutions to every problem and people that will support and help you like SMD."

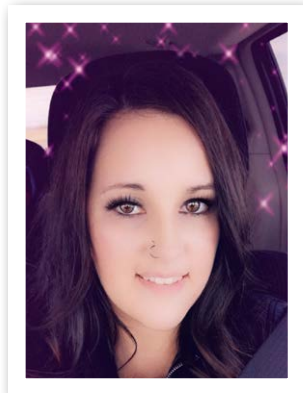
GAINING EMPLOYMENT & INDEPENDENCE

Breanne has been involved with SMD for 17 years, since the age of 9 when she and her family began receiving support. She was born with a rare form of *muscular dystrophy*.

When asked how SMD has supported her over the years she says, "They have aided me in receiving special equipment for everyday life, such as power and manual wheelchairs, walkers, a bike, and funding for a ramp into my house. Additionally, with their support I have been able to get a college education which has allowed me to live a fully independent life."

Breanne's parents were asked if there was a particular point they would like to get across when it came to the support they received from SMD, they replied, "Without SMD we would not have known what to do or where to go. They had all the avenues, and knew how to help."

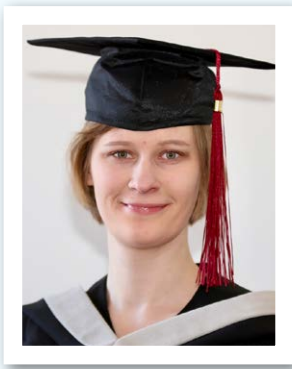
Krista Carlson, a Rehabilitation Counsellor based out of our Brandon location who has worked with Breanne adds, "I met Breanne for the first time as a part of the transition process from high school to adulthood. She successfully completed the Health Unit Clerk training from Robertson College here in Brandon. Initially upon graduating with her diploma she worked for a year or so as a Pharmacy Assistant but recently reported that she had reached her goal and was working as a



Breanne Cloet

Health Unit Clerk at the Brandon Regional Health Centre. Employment was our primary goal. However, in the process we were able to support her to be living independently by modifying her van so she can have the freedom to come and go as she pleases and go to work independently. This was a very personal goal for Breanne which I am so happy that we could help her to attain."

Breanne has faced and overcome many barriers over the years and encourages others by adding, "Never give up. Life is going to be hard but it's all about how you take control. There is always going to be someone out there who is struggling. However, it's how you deal with life that makes the difference. Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something."



Shauna Penner



Evan Hesom with his Sledge Hockey coach

Evan getting ready to play baseball

BANKING ON A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

For Shauna Penner, this past April is not just about another academic year coming to an end with the flurry of final exams and papers. Rather, it is the excitement of accomplishment and achievement as Shauna graduates with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and a minor in Psychology. Having *Hereditary Multiple Exostoses* (a rare bone disorder) and *Chronic Fatigue Syndrome*, the road to getting her degree has not been without complications. Shauna has had seven surgeries in the span of six years, but is happy to be surgery-free in the last three years.

Shauna manages her symptoms with the help of medication and a positive outlook on life. “Aside from medication and surgeries, it is a matter of being positive, not giving up on life, and constantly reminding myself that ‘when there is a will, there is a way,’” this recent Providence University College graduate wisely states. “Having dealt with these challenges for a long time, you also develop ways to do things differently or to avoid certain activities. Counselling has also been beneficial, as dealing with these problems and other life challenges can be depressing, especially when you are tired all the time and have no energy to be an active part of society.”

Shauna’s positivity and determination led her to not give up, and motivated her to attend university. With the financial support of our *Vocational Rehabilitation Program*, Shauna was able to pursue her interest in Business Administration (BA). Growing up on a family farm, Shauna has long appreciated the value of hard work and learned such skills as sales, marketing, and customer service as being crucial for business success. Shauna explains she was interested in BA because it could accommodate her physical health conditions. Shauna says she was “innately good at business” and felt that this field “was one where all doors were open to me.”

Special Thanks: This story was written by *Christina Waldner* who was featured on the cover of *last year’s Annual Report*. She recently completed a work placement coop program at our *Morden office* and recently graduated from Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) where she was recently featured as a *guest blogger* on their website. Congrats Christina on all your successes and thanks for writing this amazing story.

ONE TOUGH KID!

Evan is almost 12 years old who has *Spina Bifida*, *Hydrocephalous*, *22q deletion* and *Epilepsy*. To say that he is resilient, strong and has overcome barriers since birth is an understatement. Evan wears *AFO braces* to walk and a wheelchair when he experiences fatigue, is catheterized and often deals with urinary tract infections, has made multiple trips to the ER as a result of constipation, and has had multiple surgeries. He’s one tough kid!

Due to the time and extra care that has been required to raise Evan, his mother Connie hasn’t worked full-time since he was born. Evan has had to miss school many times because of appointments, surgeries, etc. so it was a relief for Connie and the family when they got connected with SMD. Jeannie Nickel is a Children’s Service Coordinator who works out of our Morden office and has worked closely with the family for years. “It’s such a pleasure to work with this resilient family,” she says. “I’ve been able to connect the family with SMD supports and resources as well as inform them on relevant information other charities have to offer so they can explore multiple funding options.”

Evan is a huge fan of hockey and was overjoyed when he received a Sledge from *Variety the Children’s Charity of Manitoba*. He now plays Sledge Hockey through our *Recreation & Leisure program* each year. This winter was the first ever Christmas Sledge Hockey tournament and Evan’s team, ‘The Manitoba Sledge Hammers’ ended up winning silver. “Sledge hockey has helped build so many friendships and relationships for Evan,” Connie states. “We can’t thank Bill, Jaylene and Jeannie enough for introducing Evan to the sport.” Evan also received a new iPad a few years back through the *Katie Cares Foundation* and was also recently gifted a bath chair from the *Elks Association*.

Connie adds, “Jeannie and SMD are amazing. We are able to communicate regularly and she’s able to connect/educate us on the many services available. We’ve been able to receive funding to assist with travel/ transportation costs for extended care when surgeries come up, respite, and so much more.” To learn more about respite funds, etc. that SMD clients can access checkout the Government of Manitoba’s *Children’s disABILITY Services* website.

When asked what message she would like to get out to others, she says, “Don’t Give Up! If you don’t know the answer to a question, talk about whatever disability you want to know more about. Communication is so important.”





Maylia & Ryan Bodman with their daughter Braelynn and Stephanie Semotok

TWO CHARITIES, ONE PURPOSE

In case you missed it, on Apr 14, 2018 the Bodman Family attended Variety’s 40th Anniversary Gold Heart Gala. One of our Rehab Counsellors (Stephanie Semotok) had the honour to work closely with the Bodman’s and Variety, the Children’s Charity of Manitoba to plan a very special surprise gift for them. Before we jump to the surprise, we’d like to take a moment to thank Variety for the incredible work they do. In the spirit of cherishing and promoting our collaborative working relationship in support of children, youth, and their families across the province we would like to share this beautiful story with you ... trust us, it’s worth reading.

Enter Stephanie:

Braelynn Bodman is a beautiful and delightful two year old girl who was diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) shortly after her first birthday. It is considered a rare genetic neuromuscular disease that affect missing genes in the spinal cord that provide proteins vital for keeping cells alive for voluntary movement. In SMA, these cells die, making those affected unable to use their muscles. Braelynn has an amazingly strong

and courageous family, willing to do anything they can to support her to live her life to the fullest. I began working with the family in Jan of 2018. Vehicle and home modifications have been a focus of our planning, and they were so grateful to have support to plan for meeting these needs for Braelynn, as they were experiencing significant stress in considering how this could all be possible.

I supported the family to submit an application to Variety’s Special Needs Committee for grant funding in the amount of \$5,000 in support of the purchase of an accessible vehicle (without them knowing that it was actually for the full vehicle). This committee unanimously chose the Bodman Family, and so the work began to determine the plan to be able to get them to the Gala event without knowing about the surprise gift!

[READ MORE >](#)



Ileah Sanderson with her two boys

SMD’S FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM HAS POSITIVE IMPACT ON MOTHER OF TWO

Ileah Sanderson is a single mother of two boys who has lived in Manitoba her whole life. She relocated from her hometown of Mafeking Manitoba (65 kilometers north of Swan River) to Winnipeg with the goal of further advancing her education and seeking career opportunities.

After completing the Saving Circle program through *SEED Winnipeg* in 2017, she was referred to SMD and encouraged to go through the *Individual Development Account (IDA)* program. Ileah also has her taxes done through the Free Tax Clinic at SMD.

When asked what her favourite memory of SMD is she answers, “Getting the needed knowledge, resources, and encouragement from Angel on how to save for my future. She truly has been an amazing support every step of the way.”

When asked what SMD means to Ileah she says, “Even though I came from an extremely poverty stricken part of the province, SMD provided the tools I needed for financial support. It is far more than anyone who doesn’t know about their services could imagine,” She adds. “The staff and other clients who went through the program were very friendly and knowledgeable.”

“SMD PROVIDED ME WITH MUCH NEEDED GUIDANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO TAKE CONTROL OVER MY FINANCES”

[READ MORE >](#)



Cameron Adams snowshoeing on Lake Winnipeg



Macedonia Habitat for Humanity
Global Village Build May-June 2019

“AFTER MY ABI I EXPERIENCED BOUTS OF ANXIETY. TO ME, SMD MEANS HAVING ONE LESS THING TO HAVE ANXIETY ABOUT.”

ASPIRING CREE TEACHER

Develops Swampy Cree Language App

Cameron Adams (formerly known as Cameron Lozinski) is currently working towards his Indigenous Studies degree from the University of Winnipeg (UWinnipeg) and is in the process of developing a Swampy Cree Language App which will be released in the fall of 2019. He received support from a few organizations within UWinnipeg and a Computer Science instructor based out of Saskatoon. He is passionate about revitalizing Indigenous languages across Manitoba and in 2018, was recognized as one of *CBC’s Future 40 under 40* along with several other notable recognitions. He also volunteers yearly for Habitat for Humanity and recently returned from Macedonia where he helped build a house.

Cameron’s achievements however, did not come easy. In 2010, he was in Grade 5 and moved from Saskatchewan to Gimli, Manitoba after having surgery for *hydrocephalus* where he was then diagnosed with an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). “This was a difficult time for me,” he says. “I was trying to

discover who I was. My disability played a role in making it difficult to make friends and I was being bullied.” He adds, “My disability is not one that can be seen from the outside which makes it difficult for people to understand. You would have to spend time with me to see it.” His mom tried to communicate with the school but was not getting the results she expected so his SMD Service Coordinator/ Rehabilitation Counsellor acted as a liaison and advocate. “SMD was able to speak on our behalf to the school staff as well as came to present to my peers.” He remembers how much of a difference that one meeting made. “They helped educate my school and the school division on my specific case. Even in the school atmosphere a hidden disability was something that they needed to be educated on.”

READ MORE >

VOLUNTEERING IS A GAMECHANGER!

Scott McMillan started volunteering with SMD in 1995 and has contributed over 2,100 hours. He has gained a tremendous understanding of the various programs/services we offer along with the multiple fundraisers he’s participated in over the years.

He has supported our *Children and Adult Recreation & Leisure* programming as a Summer Access worker, attended special events such as Drop Zone, and much more. “He is very reliable!” says Jenny Rodriguez, SMD’s Volunteer and HR Coordinator.

Scott’s first fundraiser was the 24 hour relay which took place at the old Winnipeg Blue Bomber stadium. A group of 10-15 people would take turns walking around the track 1 hour at a time for 24 hours. He reminisces about the joys of having a bonfire and playing volleyball while waiting for his time to walk. “At first, I helped out with the setup/takedown of the event, then assisted with registration, and also cheered people on during volley-ball,” he says with a grin.

Next, he was involved in our *summer kid’s camps* which took place at Camp Manitou and Assiniboia. “We used to get a full week of training ahead of time,” he says. “I got a chance to meet a lot of wonderful kids,” he adds. The camps offered a wide-range of adaptive activities such as swimming, arts



Scott McMillan

and crafts, archery, zip-lining, fishing, field games, etc. Scott said it was a ton of fun and was involved for 10 years before moving into the Adult Recreation and Leisure program.

At birth, Scott was diagnosed with a learning disability. “I grew up around people with learning or physical disabilities,” he says. Having an invisible disability made school challenging. “I found it very hard not only due to my disability but I was bullied as well.” Over time the hardships he experienced morphed into compassion and kindness for others who had a disability as he began volunteering in high-school. “I can relate to the people I volunteer with,” he says. Scott also joined the Special Olympics track team and was passionate about running for many years “It was my most favourite thing to do.”

When asked why people should volunteer he answers confidently, “To give back is so important, and it feels good.

READ MORE >

To Volunteer
CLICK HERE



Leo Yates



Leo using his iPad to communicate

PLAYING BEYOND PHYSICAL LIMITS

Leo Yates is 29 years old and was born with *Spastic Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy* affecting all four of his limbs. His muscles have a life of their own. Leo is challenged every day with coordinating swallowing, talking, breathing and thinking simultaneously.

When Leo was 8 years old, he received a power wheelchair through the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD) *Wheelchair Services*. Being a curious kid with a sense of adventure, he found himself sometimes traveling too far from home while growing up in Gimli, Manitoba. Norma, Leo’s personal care house manager adds, “He used to get in trouble at times as he was very mobile and would drive around exploring until his power wheelchair ran out of batteries and then someone would find him on the side of the road, load him and his wheelchair up and bring him back home.”

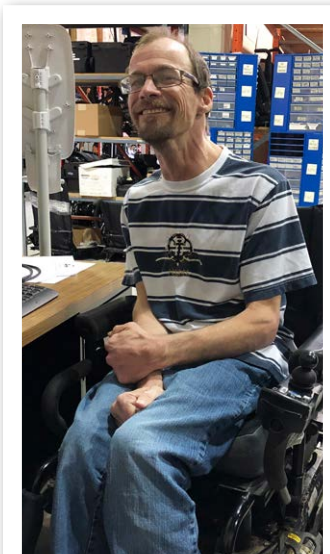
Leo’s mom and brother encouraged him to get involved with the SMD *Recreation and Leisure Program*. He has played Power Wheelchair Hockey for

over a decade and recently got into Power Wheelchair Soccer. When asked what his favourite parts of playing sports are he responded by using his iPad to type out, “being able to be a team player.”

SMD’s Power Wheelchair Hockey league consists of four teams playing 17 games each season plus playoffs and a windup at the end of the year. Leo has also travelled with the team and played in tournaments around North America including; Toronto, Minneapolis, Ottawa, Calgary and London.

READ MORE >

VOLUNTEER AMASSES 10,000+ HOURS



Carey Hacault working away at our Wheelchair Services building

“Carey Hacault started volunteering with us in August of 2007 and has amassed a whopping 10,450+ volunteer hours at SMD,” says Jenny Rodriguez, SMD’s Coordinator for Volunteers and Human Resources. “He has the most volunteer hours in SMD’s history. Carey is unstoppable! He never misses a day, not even a blizzard can stop him,” she jokes.

Over the years, Carey has supported SMD in many capacities; from selling tickets for past lotteries to volunteering at special events and rappelling twice at Drop Zone (2010 & 2013). “I would do it every year,” he says with a smile.

Nowadays, Carey spends his time volunteering at our *Wheelchair Services* location where he assists

with filing, organizing work orders and does data entry. Weather pending, Carey volunteers 5 days a week and takes the bus every day. He is also a Red River College graduate ('98) that majored in Business Administration.

Carey also has *Cerebral Palsy* and has been an SMD client for years. When he was younger, he went to camp through our *Recreation & Leisure program* and also received his power wheelchair from our Wheelchair Services program.

“SMD is a good organization to volunteer for,” says Carey. “There are lots of good people who are friendly and willing to help you out...plus, there is always work to be done,” he laughs. “They keep me busy!”

When asked what skills he’s learned over his years from volunteering he replies, “Dealing with people ... I am a shy person,” he says. “However, through coming every day, I’m interacting with people and it’s helped me to open up.”

READ MORE >

To Volunteer

CLICK HERE

SURVIVING AND THRIVING THROUGH HARDSHIPS



Ashley Voth

“KNOW THAT YOU CAN AND YOU ARE ABLE! CONNECT TO YOUR INNER CALMNESS, YOUR OWN INNER STRENGTH, AND YOUR OWN INNER WARRIOR – THIS IS ALWAYS WITHIN REACH.”

Ashley Voth is a yoga instructor, entrepreneur, and cancer and stroke survivor. “In 2013, I suffered a stroke while undergoing surgery to remove a brain tumor. I woke up with right side paralysis as well as many cognitive effects,” exclaimed Ashley.

Three years after her stroke she connected with Stephanie Semotok, one of our Rehabilitation Counsellors, who worked with Ashley through our **Vocational Rehabilitation program**. She helped Ashley identify her career goal of becoming a yoga teacher. She reflects back on that moment, “I once responded to what was next for me with a voice filled with doubt...I would love if I could be a yoga teacher. ‘Of course you can!’ was Stephanie’s simple and motivating response”.

Stephanie was able to support Ashley by connecting her to a variety of grants she could apply for that would assist in developing her business. “I wanted to offer yoga classes in different areas,” says Ashley. “I was so fortunate to receive a grant that allowed me to travel to India for four weeks so I could attend yoga teacher training as well as a Community Futures and MarketAbilities grant.”

When asked how Yoga helped her through recovery she adds, “It connected me to my physical body, built mindfulness, and fostered patience. Eventually, I was able to regain mobility in my right side and make many new brain connections.”

To Ashley, SMD is a powerful network of people that are driven to support and empower all individuals.

“They are willing & able to provide personalized support and guidance.”

Her favourite memories include house visits from Stephanie where she would come with a big smile and offer wonderful news, encouragement and support. “I always felt heard because she would listen to my hopes & dreams.”

Her journey has had its fair share of challenges and successes, tough days and excellent days, and gains as well as losses. She says she got through the tough times by being surrounded by supportive people who filled her life with laughter and adds, “It takes valleys to create peaks.”

She summarized her involvement with SMD as a wonderful experience on many levels. “Not only have I built some amazing friendships, but it has created opportunities for me that have allowed my dreams to come true!”

Ashley now runs her own business and is a certified Yoga Teacher Trainer, Reiki Practitioner, and Accessible Health and Wellness Coach, specializing in stroke recovery. Check out her website www.ashleyvoth.ca.

Her final words of encouragement to others going through difficult times were, “Know that you can and you are able! Connect to your inner calmness, your own inner strength, and your own inner warrior – this is always within reach.”

ONE CLIENT’S ‘JOURNEY’ TO FULL & EQUAL PARTICIPATION

Journey is a 5 year old girl who has severe-to-profound hearing loss and a little over a year ago, received a diagnosis of **autism spectrum disorder**.

After being diagnosed, staff within our **Communication Centre for Children (CCC)** who are **Deaf or Hard of Hearing** and **Children’s Service Coordination (CSC)** programs worked closely with Journey and her family by offering various supports as well as connecting them to appropriate resources.

Natasha Tuck, a SMD Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, was able to connect the family to apply for funding for her Hearing Aids. Journey’s mother, Nava, will never forget the moment her daughter received them. “It was my favourite memory,” she says with joy.

Due to some of Journey’s behaviour and communication challenges, her family was not aware whether or not she would be able to attend the same community school as her older sister. However, Natasha was able to inform the family about a nursery school option and coordinated the intake as well as registration into her home school nursery program. “She was enrolled seamlessly along with the help of Winnipeg 1 School Division,” she adds.

Joanna Hawkins, one of our ASL Early Learning Consultants, also played an integral role in supporting the family. Not only did she teach Journey



Journey Gonzales

and her family ASL through in-person meetings but she also provided ASL posters and videos. “Journey learned her ABC’s quickly and has even been correcting her parent’s incorrect handshapes by manipulating their hand into the correct handshape,” jokes Joanna. “They are all happy with their progress,” she adds. In addition, Joanna raised awareness by educating Journey’s classroom peers on various ASL signs such as the ABC’s, numbers and counting, etc.

Furthermore, Journey also received support from Sandra Veal, our CCC Occupational Therapist. “I have been working on getting her settled into school by setting up play and concept skills,” she clarifies. “We have been expanding her play skills and introducing various foods into play. Recently, Journey met a goal related to increasing her social skills around eating.”

She describes that for Journey, being around different foods, smells, colours of food, etc. can be challenging.

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Jennifer with her son, Matthew



Jennifer playing Sledge Hockey

“IT’S REALLY HARD NOT TO BE A CRITIC ON YOUR OWN ABILITIES. HOWEVER, DON’T WORRY ABOUT EMBARRASSING YOURSELF. EVERYBODY STRUGGLES SO RUN WITH IT AND TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY YOU CAN. IF IT’S NOT FOR YOU THEN CARRY ON BUT AT LEAST GIVE IT A SHOT BECAUSE EVERYONE IS A SHINING STAR.”

SAYING ‘YES’ OPENS DOORS

Imagine opening the door to opportunities that you never knew existed. That’s exactly what Jennifer Balcaen experienced with the support from the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD).

Since birth, SMD has been there for Jennifer and her family. She was born with **Hereditary Spastic Paraparesis (HSP)** and lives with the challenges of her legs being susceptible to muscle spasms, progressively weakening over time. Being originally misdiagnosed with Cerebral Palsy (CP), it wasn’t until having her second son that genetic testing revealed it was HSP. Two differences are that HSP is hereditary as well as progressive. Although her

son has the same affects, Jennifer highlights the fact that SMD now offers more services and opportunities that weren’t available when she was growing up.

Through SMD’s Recreation and Leisure Program, Jennifer picked up sledge hockey in 2015 with her husband and two kids.

READ MORE >



Our Ethno Team: (L to R) Tracy Robertson, Hevin Ahmad, Arek Manyang, Rajee Sharma, Muhiadin Sheikh Omar, Shakila Atayee, Karwan Kahil, Flaviano Agpalza, Tiffany Pau. (Missing from picture is Ghebrehewot Tewolde)

ETHNO-CULTURAL PROGRAM SUPPORTS NEWCOMERS TO WINNIPEG

Imagine growing up in a city with a population of over 2.5 million people, with different languages, religions and cultural traditions. For Rajee Sharma, this was her childhood. She was born in Punjab Province, but the family moved to Delhi, India, when she was very small. As a child she was surrounded by children speaking many languages from other parts of the country. As a result, over time, Rajee became fluent in seven languages; Hindi, English, Punjabi, Urdu, Sanskrit, Gujarati, and Nepali. When asked what important qualities she learned from her parents she says, “Empathy, sympathy, tolerance and kindness.” No doubt, these traits would have a tremendous impact in her life.

Prior to immigrating to Canada, Rajee completed her education, earning a Masters of Arts degree. After arriving in Winnipeg with her family in 1990 she soon found a job at a factory sewing garments. Her passion though,

was working with children, so she started volunteering at a daycare. “After 5 days, I was hired part-time,” she laughs.

During her work at the daycare Rajee met a member of staff from SMD. Rajee learned about the work of the organization and later successfully applied for a position with SMD, to work part-time as a Cultural Resource Facilitator within our **Ethno-Cultural program**. Initially she worked with adults making a lot of connections to the **Parking Permit program** and **Wheelchair Services**.

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Mayor Brian Bowman receiving a gift from Rajee and her husband Dinesh during Diwali



Wendy Onslow outside our head office at 825 Sherbrook St.



Allie Onslow, 19' Highschool Grad



Allie Onslow rappelling 272 ft down the MB Hydro building during Drop Zone 2017

THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING BACK

Since 2005, Wendy Onslow has been an active member on SMD's Board of Directors. Her involvement with the organization began much earlier though when her daughter Allie began receiving services from us back when she was two years old.

Allie was born prematurely at 2lbs 5 ounces, with Spastic Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy which affects all four limbs with high muscle tone. She went through our *Children's Services Coordination (CSC)* program which supports families like Wendy's by identifying what the child's strengths, needs, and goals are and work closely with them to find the best ways to meet their specific needs. Additionally, CSC provides families with information regarding what services and resources are available as well as consult with professionals in schools, daycares, and other agencies to develop a family-centered plan that will make a positive difference in the child's life.

As a child, Allie's case manager helped secure funding for respite and other needs. "They were always very helpful and present when the going got tough," says Wendy.

Allie also received a power wheelchair through SMD's *Wheelchair Services* as well as two grants from our *Assistive Technology* program. "One of the grants aided in purchasing an iPad when she was 14," says Wendy. "Allie has a developmental delay and this device actually improved her reading and developmental skills incredibly. The other grant helped with some of the cost of our wheelchair van," Wendy adds.

Over the years, Allie has got involved in our *Recreation and Leisure program*, having played *Power Wheelchair Hockey* and participated in our *Summer Day Camps* until she was 18. "I never worried about her when she went to the day camps because I knew she was well taken care of," says Wendy. "Transportation was included as well which really helped."

One of the main reasons Wendy joined the Board was because of Allie, "Being a mother of a daughter with a disability gives me a chance to give back to a very important organization," she states. "It gives me the chance to help oversee the heart of SMD. I have seen many changes and helped be a part of the big picture. Lastly, the organization is continuously evolving to better the services that SMD provides."

When asked what one of Wendy's favourite memories are she beams with joy and says, "When Allie was 18 she rappelled down the exterior of the Manitoba Hydro Building for Drop Zone. It proved to me again and I'm sure to others watching that people with disabilities are no different than anyone else and they can achieve great things."

Wendy is humbled by the amount of support SMD provided her family over the years.

[READ MORE >](#)

"WHEN ALLIE WAS 18 SHE RAPPELLED DOWN THE EXTERIOR OF THE MANITOBA HYDRO BUILDING FOR DROP ZONE. IT PROVED TO ME AGAIN AND I'M SURE TO OTHERS WATCHING THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE NO DIFFERENT THAN ANYONE ELSE AND THEY CAN ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS."

15

SMD Self-Help Clearinghouse participating organizations:

- Asperger Manitoba Inc.
- Autism Society of Manitoba
- Canadian Celiac Association - MB Chapter
- Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
- Council of Women of Winnipeg
- Fibromyalgia Support Group of Winnipeg, Inc.
- Friends of Dyslexia Inc.
- Manitoba Brain Injury Association
- Manitoba Down Syndrome Society
- Huntington Society of Canada
- Muscular Dystrophy Canada
- Post-Polio Network (Manitoba) Inc.
- Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba Inc.
- Winnipeg Ostomy Association
- Level It Up

FROM RECEIVER TO PROVIDER

Crystal Peters has *Cerebral Palsy* and has been involved with SMD in multiple capacities for over 14 years. As a kid, she was in our *Recreation and Leisure program*, where she spent time at our summer camps. She remembers enjoying a one week program for young adults called Independent Living for Youth where they worked on growing independence by helping them with daily living life skills such as; Laundry, cooking, cleaning, etc. This program is no longer available however, during our current *youth camps*, SMD implements various opportunities to work on life skills such as; Cooking collectively, transportation safety, and independent decisions regarding activities throughout the community.

Additionally, Crystal received her power wheelchair through our *Wheelchair Services program* as well as a head band wand through our *Assistive Technology program*. The 'head mouse' wand acts as a computer mouse that enables her to use a computer. "Basically, anything you would use your hands to do on a computer I can use my head mouse for," she says. For example, browsing the internet, sending emails, etc. all can be done through this innovative device. The end of the wand has an infrared mouse sensor that she uses to navigate what is on her monitor (similar to how a mouse works) and then she taps the keyboard buttons one at a time with the end of the wand allowing her to type.

When asked what has been some of her favourite experiences over the years with SMD, she beams with excitement when she mentions the various daily outings she did through both the Children and Adult Recreation and Leisure programs. "One time, the group went to Celebrations Dinner theatre which I really enjoyed and I also like playing Bocce as well," she says with a smile.

Crystal is impressed with how many services SMD provides for families who are in need. "When I was young and in school, I didn't know what was available for me. Nowadays, I think we're more informed and involved with schools so we can help families."



Crystal Peters

In Manitoba, due to funding limitations, the numbers of services that are available to children that transition into adulthood, meaning once they turn 18 diminish. Crystal's mom, like most parents who have children with a disability, was not aware what services were available once she became an adult.

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RAISING DISABILITY AWARENESS TO NEXT GEN RRC STUDENTS



Joanne Kelly, RRC Instructor

Joanne Kelly is a Journalism Instructor at *Red River College's Exchange District Campus* within the Creative Communications department. For almost a decade she has taught first year students 'Journalism', second years 'Broadcast Journalism', as well as 'Understanding Canadian Society' that will soon turn into 'Professional Development' and cover soft skills outside of Journalism.

Recently, the program underwent a big renewal where they heard from industry professionals and the feedback was to tighten their focus on video and writing skills. To accommodate industry demands and streamline the program, they added more writing courses, dropped some electives and increased more emphasis on digital.

This year, she had a second year class of 54 students who were specializing in various fields; Advertising, Public Relations, Journalism, and Media Production. "They will be working in all areas of Communications," she says.

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Gwen Buccini holding a picture of her son, Anthony



Holy Cross Gymnasium's 'wall of tabs' before wheelchair presentation



Stephanie Semotok and Gwen Buccini

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

In 1998, Gwen Buccini, a librarian at *Holy Cross School*, attended her daughter's basketball game at St. Mary's Academy. She noticed that one of the parents was going around collecting pop can tabs for Girl Guides which were going to be turned in for money to purchase a wheelchair. Gwen thought this was an innovative idea and followed up with the parent three months later to see if it were possible to get a picture of the recipient. As it turned out, the fundraiser fell apart and no wheelchair was purchased.

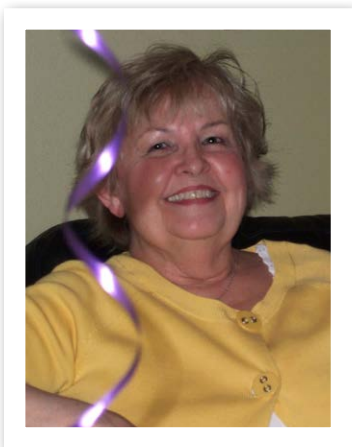
Gwen decided to have her school continue collecting tabs and take on this new venture. "No one explained the process to me on how it all worked," she laughs. "I did some research and found a similar program existing in Aurora, Ontario. I thought this was a great idea and that I should get my Holy Cross students involved. It seemed like a wonderful opportunity for them to learn that when we all work together we can make a positive difference in the world!"

Gwen discovered the reason for only collecting the tabs of cans as opposed to the whole can came down to cleanliness and storage space.

She realized there was strength in numbers so she started contacting schools to see if they would be interested in joining the cause. After two years, six schools were able to collect enough tabs to purchase the first wheelchair which cost \$5,000 - \$6,000.

To get involved, email: tabsforwheelchairs@hotmail.com

READ MORE >



Maggie Nishimura

COMPASSIONATE RETIREE

Maggie Nishimura has worked within SMD's *Wheelchair services* and *Parking Permit program* for the past eight years as an Administrative Assistant. Coming out of retirement was an easy choice for Maggie, "After I retired I thought to myself, I can't stay at home," she jokes. "I started looking for a part time job and this one caught my attention as it required that I speak French and I'm bilingual so it was a great fit," she says. "Plus, I came from a business and healthcare background so it was nice."

Before SMD, Maggie worked in a personal care home. "I was familiar with clients who required service, have health issues and are aging," she exclaims. Prior to that, she spent 25 year's working in retail.

When she started as a receptionist at 1111 Winnipeg Avenue, the previous Wheelchair service location, there was only one person answering the telephone for repair requests. Nowadays, thanks to improvement changes, there are three Intake Clerks plus a Scheduling Clerk

who plans our four external Wheelchair Technician's days that are on the road five days a week. These changes reflect the growing population of wheelchair users that require service. Funding is provided by the *Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)*.

For over thirty years, SMD has provided children and adults in Manitoba with essential mobility through the loan of manual and motorized wheelchairs. As mentioned, we have 4 external Wheelchair Technicians who visit client's homes assisting with repairs plus 3 in-house Wheelchair Technicians who work on wheelchair customizations and repairs. Additionally, we are able to handle some calls in the rural areas as well. In house repairs require an appointment.

READ MORE >



Hayden and Halley Cecchini

POTC PROGRAM ENGAGING FAMILIES IN UNIQUE AND SPECIAL WAYS

Hayden Cecchini was born three minutes after his twin sister Halley, and spent 2 weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) before being able to go home. Hayden's mom, Vanessa reflects on that moment, "When we left the hospital, we left with two wonderful children and a diagnosis of *cerebral palsy*."

It wasn't how the Cecchini family imagined taking home their twins, or how parenthood would go for them exclaimed Vanessa. "Hayden came out fighting and is still a fighter to this day. He pushed himself to walk by 18 months, desperately wanting to keep up with Halley who had been walking since 9 months, and he has continued to fight with everything else he has faced so far."

Vanessa adds that last summer Hayden tried climbing the rock wall in their backyard play structure and fell every day for over 3 months. "But, he eventually did it!" she says. "This year, he's climbing with confidence and speed."

For the past three years, the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD) has been part of the Cecchini's lives and they have received multiple services from our *Provincial Outreach Therapy for Children program (POTC)*. "We have received physiotherapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) from the POTC program as well services from many SSCY partners such as the Child Development Clinic, Family Support Coordinator, and the Orthotics department where Hayden had his *Ankle-Foot Orthosis (AFO)* made."

When asked what benefits Hayden and the family have experienced through SMD's services Vanessa replies, "The services we have had through SMD have given us as parents the confidence and reassurance that Hayden will continue to develop and succeed in life. Our in-home monthly Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy appointments were not only beneficial for Hayden but for myself as well." She adds, "Each month, Hayden got stronger, accomplished more, and was making progress in the areas he needed to."

"I AM NOT SURE I CAN SUM UP WHAT SMD TRULY MEANS TO US. A PLACE OF AMAZING RESOURCES, EXCEPTIONAL CARE, AND HOPE FOR HAYDEN'S FUTURE. WE AS A FAMILY WOULD NOT BE WHERE WE ARE TODAY WITHOUT ALL THE CARE AND SUPPORT WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM SMD."



"He never even knew he was doing therapy most of the time," she jokes. "He just knew that Becky and Heather, his POTC OT and PT, were coming to play with him and Halley. He couldn't wait for the days they came, and loved every minute with them. The games and activities that we were given to do each month made for new experiences and fun and included Halley as well, which is why I believe he never knew he was the one needing extra support in those areas."

"I felt a weight of stress lifted off my shoulders each month when we saw Becky and Heather," Vanessa says. "A breath of fresh air really. They weren't only there for Hayden little did they know, but for me as his mom as well. They comforted me on days I cried with fear for his future or a day when I felt I wasn't doing enough and needed to do more. For that, I will be forever grateful."

The Cecchini family has adapted to always making sure their home, surroundings, and outings are a safe place for Hayden, who falls often and needs support. "We will never be the family that watches our children on a play structure, rather we will always be within arm's reach, on the structure with him or avoiding a busy playground all together," Vanessa says. "Large crowds, most play structures, and places with uneven surfaces are not somewhere we can be relaxed and enjoy our time together as it very quickly can result in an accident for when he falls he doesn't have the reaction time to get his hands out to help break that fall." She adds, "Even though there are obstacles, it doesn't stop Hayden nor us as a family from enjoying life and making memories."

READ MORE >

SMD ALLIANCE INC. FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	Year ended March 31	
	2019	2018
Revenues:		
* Provincial Funding	8,145,871	8,049,009
United Way	1,055,258	1,057,958
Campaigns & Fundraising	708,496	667,820
Investment Income	530,372	325,192
Fee for Service & Other Income	3,145,218	2,961,393
	<u>13,585,215</u>	<u>13,061,372</u>
Expenditures:		
Adult Programs	2,654,799	2,610,371
Children Programs	3,327,457	3,236,007
Wheelchair & Other Assistive Technology	2,433,750	2,456,388
Deaf & Hard of Hearing	1,238,128	1,303,093
Leisure & Recreation	448,553	466,925
Ethno-Cultural Services	479,903	407,119
Other Programs & Services	3,542,846	2,793,577
	<u>14,125,436</u>	<u>13,273,480</u>
Difference between revenue and expenditures	<u>\$ (540,221)</u>	<u>\$ (212,108)</u>

* Provincial Funding

- Department of Families - **\$3,890,067**
- Department of Education and Training - **\$2,720,211**
- Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) - **\$1,535,593**

A Special thank you to the Province of Manitoba and United Way for their generous and ongoing support!

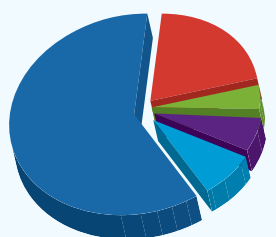
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	March 31	
	2019	2018
ASSETS		
Current Assets:		
Cash	\$ 2,111,764	\$ 2,050,640
Accounts receivable	441,598	325,895
Current portion of equipment loan	28,731	27,710
Inventory	389,623	437,409
Prepaid expenses	109,058	129,346
	<u>3,080,774</u>	<u>2,971,000</u>
Investments	10,740,548	11,049,897
Equipment Loan	10,918	39,419
Equity interest in Mobile Vision Care Clinic Inc.	268,389	309,847
Fixed Assets	<u>250,683</u>	<u>165,020</u>
	<u>\$14,351,312</u>	<u>\$14,535,183</u>

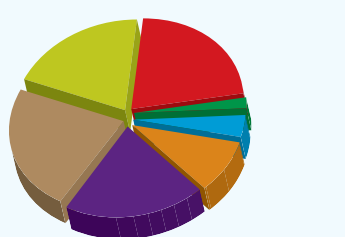
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

* Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 1,283,629	\$ 1,132,499
Deferred contribution - core funding	810,224	800,889
Current portion of obligation under capital lease	20,438	6,244
	<u>2,114,291</u>	<u>1,939,632</u>
** Obligation under capital lease	35,498	7,611
Deferred contributions	468,523	431,439
Specified commitments	846,878	739,702
	<u>3,465,190</u>	<u>3,118,384</u>
Net assets:		
Net assets invested in fixed assets	82,970	115,481
Net assets restricted for endowment purposes	3,893,754	3,893,754
Unrestricted net assets	6,909,398	7,407,564
	<u>10,886,122</u>	<u>11,416,799</u>
	<u>\$14,351,312</u>	<u>\$14,535,183</u>

REVENUES



EXPENDITURES



* Current liabilities:

Amounts due to be paid or spent within 12 months

** Obligation under capital lease/ Deferred contributions/ Specified commitments:

Amounts to be paid or spent in the future



Children & Youth Leisure & Recreation Program: Day Camps in Brandon, MB Receive \$10,000 Boost from TELUS. L to R: Jackie Wild (TELUS Community Investment Manager), Bill Muloin (SMD's Children's Leisure & Recreation Program Supervisor), Dana Erickson (SMD's CEO), Cindy Stumme (Manager of Rural Services at SMD's branch in Brandon, MB) Thank you TELUS for your generous support.



United Way of Brandon AGM announce that SMD is one of 4 new organizations joining the UW of Brandon & District family.

OUR DONORS

The Society for Manitobans with Disabilities extends its sincerest appreciation to the generous donors, partners and corporate supporters for their ongoing commitment and caring.

Each gift ensures there is an investment into the success and well-being of the children, youth and adults with disabilities who depend on our programs and services.

We look forward to strengthening our relationships and building new ones so that every individual in Manitoba is valued for their ability in the community.

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\$1,000 - \$4,999

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In Sept, 2018, Century 21 Canada held their national conference in Winnipeg where the Century 21 Manitoba Broker Council hosted a Fiesta21 fundraising event as part of the conference. Thanks to their hard work, \$18,000+ was raised for our Recreation and Leisure Programs.



Lawton Partners Team on top of the Manitoba Hydro building prior to rappelling 272 Ft for Drop Zone. The event raised \$136,400

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SMD Foundation/Easter Seals™ Manitoba recognizes that some donors do not wish to have their name published, and we adhere to provincial and federal privacy legislation.

We have carefully reviewed this information for accuracy and apologize for any errors or omissions in this listing. Please contact us at (204) 975-3108 if you note incorrect information.

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**Children's Service Coordination
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Winnipeg, MB R3E 3G1
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