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# Imagine!

## Project EveryBody Returns

On December 2nd, friends and family gathered to celebrate PEBCelebratesLive! in honour of the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. After two years away, Project EveryBody was thrilled to host the event and welcome over 600 attendees at the Roundhouse Community Centre. It was wonderful to be back in-person to celebrate the beauty and joy that art brings to our community.

The day started off by welcoming members of the City of Vancouver, Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung and Mike Klassen, to read and deliver the proclamation at the event. It was also an opportunity for them to meet folks and hear about accessibility challenges firsthand. The Art Show and Sale featured over 50 local artists and vendors, including our very own Richmond Social Network and Alternative Creations Studio! With over 1000 art pieces and products, guests perused the tables and found some amazing holiday gifts for themselves and loved ones! Artist, Justin Albay, shares with us: *"I've been participating in this show since 2016 and I'm so happy to be back*

*selling my art. I'm looking to expand my sales and have missed these events!".* Another local artist, Alex Lecce, also shares: *"This was my first time at this event and I enjoyed selling my art. I'm always looking for more shows like this to be a part of!"*

During the art show, guests were treated to live music from Jim & Dave, 77 Spokes, Jeff Standfield and Lamar Ally! While folks enjoyed some delicious food and drinks, they also had the opportunity to get creative with a fun holiday ornaments decoration workshop where you could decorate and take home some DIY ornaments. 5 Star Photo Booth also stopped by and created a memorable experience by capturing fun photos of guests!

An audience favourite and an annual sell-out event, the evening program featured short film, live music, stand-up comedy, and more! Guests were also treated to a short film "Doing the Impossible" presented by the Developmental Disabilities Association.

Led by Open Door Group, this event is a collaboration of community and non-profit organizations who embrace diversity and inclusion including the Disability Foundation, Developmental Disabilities Association, posAbilities, the City of Vancouver, Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, Back in Motion, and Vancity. The observance of International Day of Persons with Disabilities aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of the gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

We appreciate all of the hard work that goes into an event of this magnitude and want to say thank you to the entire Open Door Group team! To learn more about Project EveryBody, please visit: <https://www.projecteverybody.ca/>

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Artist, Mikaela Zitron, with her pieces at PEB! You can check out more of her work on Instagram @abstract\_survivor

Do you have a story for our quarterly newsletter or website?

Email: [communications@posAbilities.ca](mailto:communications@posAbilities.ca) or call 778-945-3344.



posAbilities.ca

# Project EveryBody Returns Continued from Page 1



## Bigger, Better, and Back in Person!

After three years away, we were overjoyed to be back in Heritage Hall for our 18th annual INCLUSION Art Show & Sale. Thank you to all our artists, volunteers, and guests for an AMAZING day! The show was a long-overdue celebration of community and creativity—you could feel the joy in the air. Thousands of artworks, livestreamed artist demos, and musical entertainment... it was a show to remember. This was our first year hosting a hybrid show, and the fun continued online for our online show!

At Heritage Hall, the show began with some opening remarks from Director of Community Engagement, Monique Nelson, followed by a traditional Indigenous welcome offered by Shane Pointe - [watch it here](#). We had four live artist demonstrations, taking place in-person and shared virtually by our friends at Curiko! Our thanks to Curiko's Lead Community Curator, Sarah, for her assistance. Margaux Wosk demonstrated how they use paint markers with acrylic to create their vibrant, retro-inspired paintings. Brianna Piccolo, from Artists Helping Artists, specializes in fibre arts and showed off her passion for knitting. Dan and Sheri Lynn from PotteryWorks teamed up for a pottery demo, showing us the process of handbuilding and glazing clay. And finally, painter Trevor Buddin demonstrated his whole creative process, starting with a blank canvas and creating a new abstract work from scratch.

Once the art demos wrapped up, we transitioned into the next part of our program. Guests continued to browse the show and chat with artists while our sales table stayed very busy! Lara Gunkel and Deepi Leihl joined us as co-emcees, helping to announce door prize winners and musical performances as we headed into a lively afternoon. Guests enjoyed Disney tunes, jazz classics, old standards, and pop hits from pianists Manuel Hii and Dixon House. Our final performance of the evening was from singer and impressionist Ben Simcoe.

Our show is made possible with the help of our sponsors and donors! Through generous corporate and community support, we're developing our dream of an inclusive arts community. Thanks to BCGEU Community Social Services, the City of Vancouver Cultural Services, Glacier Media Digital and our door prize contributors.



## Meet the Resilient – Special Olympics Team Canada 2022

The Special Olympics World Games are the world’s largest inclusive sports event. Of the more than 41,000 athletes with an intellectual disability across Canada, only a small group qualifies to represent Canada at the international competition level.

Fiona Hall, who is supported by Supported Living Network (SLN), started alpine skiing in 1993 and has been racing ever since. She credits her parents for helping her start skiing as a kid. Fiona shares: “They thought it would help my balance and figured that if I hold two

poles, it could help my balance even more. I love skiing – going around gates or downhill, anything that is high speed.”

Fiona heard about Special Olympics from her teacher in high school and began training. While she plays other sports, skiing is her absolute favourite. In 2019, she finally got that phone call that she made it onto Team Canada and she was ecstatic. But news of the pandemic quickly derailed her plans. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented Team Canada from representing their country for a global audience. But these athletes were determined and continued training virtually. Fiona trained at home and she and her husband even built a gym in their house! She shares, “It was hard to train at home, we were on Zoom a lot, I was in my home gym. It was a hard time, and I was very anxious. I had to walk around and talk to someone to help calm myself down.” While Fiona and her team remained optimistic, the games got postponed again. The athletes were disappointed but tried to see the positives that they had another year to train before going.

After two years of virtual training due to a global pandemic, the games that were scheduled to happen in Russia were ultimately cancelled due to geopolitical turmoil. For the first time in our history, despite qualifying and training for two years, this Special Olympics Team Canada will not get their chance to shine on the world stage. No team has seen more obstacles – each faced with determination, perseverance and resiliency.

At the end of their more than two-year journey, the Team attended Training Camp in Toronto. The weekend marked the first time that all 161 athletes, coaches and mission staff could gather as a team. Fiona shares “it was so good to see familiar faces after being in lockdown for over two years.”

Fiona remains hopeful and will continue her training and has her sights set for the 2025 Special Olympics International World Winter Games in Turin, Italy!

While Team Canada didn’t have their moment on the world stage, they showed that resiliency is a muscle they’ve been training their whole lives. Watch their story here:

<https://www.specialolympics.ca/premier-virtual-screening>



## Crawl Returns to ‘Classic,’ In-Person Event

*Contributed by Christina Jackson, Alternative Creations Studio*

This year’s 2022 Eastside Culture Crawl was a roaring success with lots of interested locals and art admirers coming through our doors. We had a busy four days, with lots of sales, mostly in cards and small paintings. There was great conversation overall with people excited to learn of our services. We feel honoured to have so many people interested in the work that we do here and equally feel excited to keep creating because the feedback was incredibly positive. We also had the pleasure of having a few people come by after the crawl to buy paintings which has inspired us to consider an open house concept. We would have finished/priced art works on the walls, along with cards/prints/mugs ready, so people can come in off the street and purchase our goods during our program hours. Stay tuned!



## Spread Awareness, Spark Hope, Share Creativity

*Contributed by Amy Chang, Team Leader*

Empower through art! This is a fundamental basis from the A.WARE Foundation, who has been sharing the power of art with their free, weekly online zoom workshop series.

Founded and run by volunteer high school students in Vancouver, they recognize the importance of creativity to others and how it can impact their emotional, behavioural and social needs.

The A.WARE Foundation has been providing free online art workshops, starting in 2020, to persons across all of posAbilities’ services – outreach, residential, and community inclusion. This young group of art facilitators make the workshops fun and social, and support artists of all abilities.

posAbilities and A.WARE just completed their Fall Workshop series with many happy faces attending online each week. And this year, A.WARE art facilitators came in-person to conduct a workshop at Camp Sasamat for the first time! It was great to see everyone all together.

Stay tuned for future A.WARE art workshops!



## The Sky is the Limit

**Contributed by Parthesh Patel,  
Randall House**

Graham has had a life-long passion for planes. He's enjoyed visits to local airports, the Canadian Museum of Flight

and the Abbotsford Air Show. He loves watching planes take off and fly and learning every detail about them – guessing the type of plane, their height and speed...

Given's Graham's love of planes, we recently went for a sightseeing plane ride at the Pitt Meadows Airport. Before we took off, we had a chance to check out the plane and Graham educated me all about it. We then hopped into the plane and away we went! During takeoff, I was nervous but Graham was cool, calm and most of all, excited. We flew around Burnaby mountain, into downtown, around Stanley Park and North Vancouver. Graham asked the pilot lots of questions along the way – how fast the plane was going, their altitude... At 2,000 feet, Graham even had a chance to fly the plane. He steered us around for a couple minutes and had an absolute blast. Graham certainly enjoyed his day as a pilot!



## Having a Ghoulish Time

Ghostly greetings from our programs! We had a blast celebrating Halloween this year dressing up in our best costumes. New Britton even decked out their house and hosted a Haunted House Experience for our programs to check out.



**Contributed by Anne Bennett, New Britton House**

New Britton geared up for the spooky season by turning our everyday house into a spectacular, seasonal haunted house. We turned one section of the house into a dungeon, Howard played "Jason the mad hockey player" and Johnson played "the devil in Hells Kitchen". The haunted theme came from Howard's love of sports and Johnson's love for cooking (he cooks most of the meals!). Both Howard and Johnson were gracious hosts directing guests to treats (homemade goodies and eye ball drinks) and socializing with everyone. It was a pleasure to see them so engaged in their roles and how welcoming they were to all the guests.



## Inspirational Messages from Temple Grandin

Hollis and her mom Toni, had the opportunity to meet Dr. Temple Grandin, internationally acclaimed public speaker and

author. Grandin was one of the first people to publicly share her insights into autism from an insider's perspective and is known for her expertise in livestock handling equipment design and animal welfare.

Years ago, she delivered a talk on 'Developing Individuals who have Different Minds' at the PNE Agrodome. She motivated the room with her inspiring stories about overcoming her personal hurdles. She also discussed the benefits of being able to see things differently and thriving on being "unique". She talked about her experience with autism and was truly inspiring. Hollis shares, "She makes you feel like you're not alone in the world. Other people feel comfortable around her and I really appreciated that. I also didn't realize how many people (including famous people) were on the spectrum!"

After her talk, Hollis got an opportunity to personally meet Temple and have a chat with her. They sat down and got to know each other and talked about what it's like living with autism. "It was such an honour to meet her – she's a fascinating, wonderful person and she's done so much for people with autism. She really has a great understanding of people who are on spectrum."

Hollis was grateful for the opportunity to meet Dr. Grandin!



# PES Trainings



## Digital Literacy

**Contributed by Raman Manhas, posAbilities Employment Service**

We had the opportunity to provide Digital Literacy training for the first time in our service to 11 individuals from our programs. The sessions covered how to use the internet, online safety, email basics, online search techniques and online banking.

The training was offered at our Vancouver and New West offices. As the group sizes were small, there was plenty of opportunity to ask questions and practice the skills that were taught in each session. Individuals shared that they benefitted from learning different skills and also enjoyed the opportunity to connect with others. Pre-assessments are done with each participant prior to the start of the training, helping the trainer to teach the course at a level that benefits everyone in the group.

CLBC kindly provided those who successfully completed the course with laptops to keep. The laptops will be helpful in a variety of areas including job searching, learning new skills and connecting with employers.

By looking at the positive response from this past year, we're excited to share that we will be continuing to offer Digital Literacy training next year. The plan is to offer it every month!

[Check out the poster here](#) – classes start in January 2023. Feel free to email [employment@posabilities.ca](mailto:employment@posabilities.ca) if you are interested in finding out more.



## First Aid **Contributed by posAbilities Employment Service**

We're happy to share that we are now certified to provide in-house training for First Aid! This past September, four youth participating in our Impact Initiative were provided the opportunity to become certified through the Canadian Red Cross for Emergency First Aid CPR & AED-Level C.

The small participant to instructor ratio provided the opportunity for the youth to ask questions, get feedback and demonstrate their newly

acquired skills. Catering to all learning types, the instructor used a combination of videos, interactive activities and role play scenarios to better cement their learning.

We're excited to share that we'll be providing First Aid Training every month starting in January 2023. Check out the poster here! If you have any questions, please email us at [employment@posabilities.ca](mailto:employment@posabilities.ca)



## Drive on the Line

**Contributed by Rosemary Schwarz, Limitless**

Limitless and Roots participated in the Canada Line blanket drive on Friday, November 18th at the Broadway - City Hall SkyTrain Station. The folks enjoyed volunteering even though it was chilly outside!

The blanket drive was founded by Gregory Ould and his son Benjamin, after a homeless man asked for a blanket to survive the night in 2005. Over the past 17 years, the "Drive on the Line" blanket drive has raised awareness about homelessness, poverty and socio-economic needs, all while collecting and distributing blankets and warm clothing to shelter programs and families in need.

It felt good to help out those less fortunate and everyone enjoyed handing out informational pamphlets, and collecting monetary donations and items of warmth.





The B.C. government will stick with its current model of autism funding after facing major backlash from parents and advocacy groups for over a year. (CTV)

## Premier Presses Pause: Government to Address Concerns About New Service Delivery Model for Children and Youth with Support Needs

In the Summer issue of [Imagine](#), we reported on the systemic shift underway to reshape how supports to children and youth with additional needs would soon be delivered across this province. The Ministry of Children and Family Development's [announcement](#) of a new service delivery framework, one that would expand access to services for all children with additional support needs, including those who have not received a diagnosis, was aimed at reallocating resources more equitably. However, the framework was quickly criticized for its lack of detail, and the [process to design it](#) began in consultation with impacted communities. Questions arose about eligibility, access/wait times, choice of service provider, inclusion of specialized supports, and more. One of the key issues raised was the end to individualized funding for children with autism.

Since October 2021, non-profit leaders in the autism community have been leading advocacy campaigns, connecting with families and conducting their own research to make the case for support to continue with individualized funding. They also asked the government to go back to the table and co-design a framework with Indigenous communities and family engagement at the core.

On November 25, 2022, one week after Premier David Eby was sworn in, he reversed the earlier decision to phase out individualized autism funding by 2025. Along with Minister Mitzi Dean, Representative for Children and Youth Jennifer Charlesworth, [AutismBC](#), and the First Nations Leadership Council, the Premier committed to discussing a new direction and a more collaborative way forward. Read the official announcement [here](#). On behalf of the provincial government,

Premier Eby and Minister Dean have committed to:

- The maintenance of individualized funding for those with an autism diagnosis even after 2025, including those who are diagnosed in the future.
- An engagement process co-designed by First Nations leadership, the Representative for Children and Youth, and leaders from the disability community, in partnership with government.
- A pause on the roll-out of BC's plan to establish a network of family connection centres, with the exception of the four pilots already launched. The four pilots will be evaluated during the co-development process of a new system.
- New investments in the interim as the new system is being developed to support children with disabilities and support needs that are currently underserved.

While we await more details on these changing plans, we are encouraged by the government's collaborative approach to addressing the concerns of first peoples, families and service providers.

Please note that there are currently no changes to the services delivered through *posAbilities'* Laurel Behaviour Support Services. For that, we are thankful and wish all of our individuals and families served, a very merry holiday season.



# Buy Social! Your Gift Giving and Celebration Guide

The items in this guide have been selected to help you deliver gifts and experiences that will benefit artists with diverse abilities, disability advocates and the organizations operating in the social care sector. There are no fees collected by *posAbilities* for this service. If you would like to list an item in this directory, please contact [info@posAbilities.ca](mailto:info@posAbilities.ca) to learn more! We wish you a very happy holiday season.

Check out some of the items below and view the full list here: <https://posabilities.ca/gift-giving-guide/>

## Entertainment



### Ben Simcoe Live!

Live comedy and impression performances throughout the Lower Mainland.

Website: [www.BenSimcoe.ca](http://www.BenSimcoe.ca)

Email: [bensimcoe@hotmail.com](mailto:bensimcoe@hotmail.com)

Call: 604-746-8478



### Experienced Hotel Pianist at your Service

Manuel has memorized 100s of songs, and his range includes Disney, pop, and classics. He also loves playing Richard Klayderman tunes.

Email: [ManuelHiiPianist@gmail.com](mailto:ManuelHiiPianist@gmail.com)

Call: 778-320-7488 (Mary)

## Holiday Cards



### Assorted Cards (Boxed Set: 10 cards for \$35)

Brought to you with love by the artists from Alternatives Gallery and Studio.

Website: [www.alternativesart.ca](http://www.alternativesart.ca)

Instagram: [alternativecreationsstudio](https://www.instagram.com/alternativecreationsstudio)

Email: [alternatives@posabilities.ca](mailto:alternatives@posabilities.ca)

Call: 604-322-0585

## Treats and Snacks



### The Granola Kid

Every crunch creates change! West Vancouver's Zamaan Jivraj or 'Granola Kid' uses the power of oats to achieve his dreams. Their granola is pure without additives and preservatives. Eat it as part of your breakfast meal or take along with you as a snack.

Website: [www.thegranolakid.com](http://www.thegranolakid.com)



### Johnson's Dog Treats

Johnson's dog treats come in three different sizes, so you can choose the best fit for your dog. Ingredients include pumpkin, peanut butter, whole wheat flour, and eggs. The pricing is \$5 for 20 large treats, 40 medium treats, or 60 small treats. Delivery is free for Burnaby and surrounding communities.

Call: 778-865-9964 (Karl)

Email [karl.johnston@posabilities.ca](mailto:karl.johnston@posabilities.ca)

## Books



### Don't Forget You're Beautiful by Roshni Kashyap

Coquitlam author Roshni Kashyap launches her book of poems, expressing her deepest feelings through poetry and art.

Website:

[www.amazon.ca/Forget-Youre-Beautiful-Roshni-Kashyab/dp/9382337393](https://www.amazon.ca/Forget-Youre-Beautiful-Roshni-Kashyab/dp/9382337393)



## Tradition and Resilience

As December begins and the holiday season approaches, I am reminded of the many traditions that have been postponed or altered since the outbreak of the epidemic. The observance of traditions and rituals provide a sense of comfort. We are reminded of the image of ourselves that we cherish the most when we are surrounded by things like compassion, warmth, and kindness. To put it another way, this is all part of a magnificent process that involves the people, places, and things in our life that we can depend on.

We all have a common bond in that we contribute to the intangible "web" of our communities, workplaces, and families. We have built trusting relationships and work side by side because of this. I appreciate everyone's dedication to the people we serve and, more than that, your ability to remain resilient throughout these challenging pandemic years. I remain forever thankful for all the efforts that everyone has put into remaining steadfast in the support you provide to the individuals we support, their families and your fellow team members. Your professionalism, enthusiasm and generosity are what makes *posAbilities* what is.

May the holiday season bring you and your family peace and joy.

Sincerely,

Fernando Coelho, CEO