

Inside this issue

Page 2

Passionate Self Advocate Seeds
Inclusive Scholarship Fund

Page 3

A.Ware Workshop Series
Meet the Canucks Tickets Winner
Richmond Artists Shine

Page 4

BC - ABA Panel Embraces Diversity
Symmetric Allure at Alternatives
Victory on the Slope

Page 5

Burnaby Connect Fest Presents
Taking Care

Page 6

Join our Buddy Club
INCLUSION BC's Annual Learning
Event: Everyone Belongs!
Vancouver's Annual Leisure Fair

Page 7

A Rally for Accessibility
In Memorium
SOBC Athletes Do Us Proud at
Nationals!

Page 8

Families Matter

Imagine!

Expressive Art Therapy Series Offers Care to the Caregiver

Contributed by Tatiana Rasco, Communications and Event Planning Intern

Step into the world of therapeutic arts! Led by expressive arts therapist Greta Hedley, this four-week workshop series became a beacon of self-care and growth for caregivers in our community, providing them with a mental and physical space away from everyday concerns and responsibilities. Each session used different forms of art, such as painting, sculpture, movement, fabric, and poetry as a therapeutic tool. The beautiful thing about expressive arts therapy is that it's not about creating a masterpiece – it's about the journey of creation.

As a mom to two wonderful boys, one of whom has Cerebral Palsy, Greta understands firsthand the

challenges that parents caring for loved ones with disabilities might face. Through her personal and professional experiences, she's seen how the expressive arts can help people work through difficult emotions. Greta has supported refugee students in Surrey Schools by fostering a safe space for them to process trauma through the arts. She co-facilitates "The Resistance Clubhouse," a monthly get-together where young adults with disabilities socialize and learn practical life skills. Greta also runs a private practice, HeART, in East Vancouver, where her client-centered therapeutic work supports healing and growth. Now, she wants to help other parents and caregivers by sharing her knowledge of the transformative power of the arts.

Over the course of one month, participants explored stress-reducing, grounding and reflecting techniques using a variety of artistic media and journaling. Recognizing that fun is an important factor that not everyone makes time for due to their busy schedules, Greta curated each session to be therapeutic, enjoyable and accessible. She created a warm and supportive community where caregivers could gather and enjoy the process of creating art while working through various emotions.

The first class explored different grounding techniques using paper and poetry, while the second focused on movement, music, and paint. In their third class, participants created dynamic works of art using scraps of fabric to bring about meaningful memories. To conclude, caregivers worked with clay and were encouraged to let the medium reveal what it could become in their hands. Both during sessions and at home, participants were encouraged to journal

Continued on Page 2



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

Email: communications@posAbilities.ca or call 778-945-3344.



posAbilities.ca

Expressive Art Therapy Series Offers Care to the Caregiver

Continued from Page 1

their thoughts, and to reflect on the thoughts that were surfacing for them.

Greta expressed her joy in witnessing the positive transformations that occurred throughout the workshops. When asked about the importance of expressive arts Greta responded, "Using the senses and the imagination allows for the exploration of our responses, reactions, and insight as we experience different art forms. The results are often unexpected, [yet] provide clarity and meaning [that] inform our path forward."

Monique Nelson, posAbilities' long-time family resource coordinator and community engagement director was delighted to participate in the sessions – "I am a caregiver too – and really enjoyed putting my heart into Greta's hands, taking on this high sensitivity, low skill work that is expressive arts therapy. Greta and I met many years ago on the sidelines of a soccer field, and I knew intuitively that she was the right fit for what I had hoped to deliver to our community. Personally, I met some new friends, and learned new grounding techniques that I am sure will be helpful moving forward in my caregiving journey!"

The workshops have become more than just a creative outlet – they've become a source of support and community for everyone involved. Throughout the classes, participants not only learned more about themselves but also developed meaningful connections along the way. It's clear that Greta's passion for helping others shines through in every aspect of her work, making these classes a truly special experience. With each stroke of paint and each beat of music, participants carved out space for their own wellness.

Special thanks to Christ Church Cathedral (a posAbilities community partner) and Aegis Community Inclusion Centre in New Westminster for hosting the classes and helping us make these workshops a reality! If you're interested in learning more about expressive art therapy make sure to check out the HeART website where Greta, along with Heba Khalid, provides a safe and secure space for healing through the therapeutic use of art.



Passionate Advocate for Inclusive Education Seeds Student Scholarships

Contributed by Monique Nelson, Director of Community Engagement

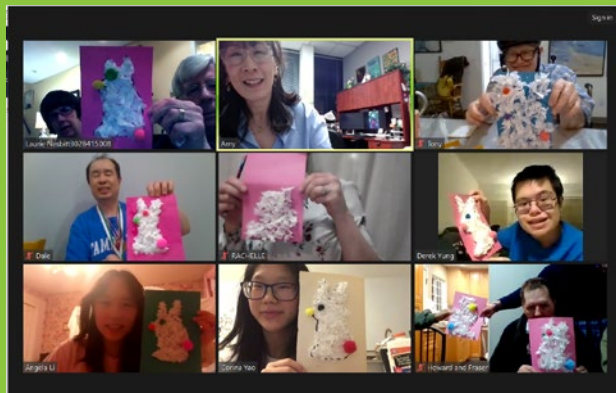
It's not every day that you get to participate in a 75th birthday scholarship fundraiser alongside a powerful self-advocate like Clint Morrison, a leader who draws dozens of friends, civic leaders and elected officials into his passion for inclusive education. Why a fundraiser you ask? Why in North Vancouver? Well, this Burnaby resident is very persuasive. He voraciously picks up the phone, knocks on doors and follows up to ensure his fundraisers stay on track. Many of the guests crossed one or even two bridges in rush hour to join in the festivities organized by Principal Rupī Samra-Gynane and her team at Carson Graham Secondary (CGS) school on February 23rd, ultimately raising \$2,000 for the cause.

CGS is one of three North Shore secondary schools Clint attended while living at St. Christopher's Home for Boys during his youth. He also spent a year of learning at Cloverdale secondary, then completed his studies and graduated from Burnaby North. Burnaby is the community where he served for 20 years on the board of the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion and with Special Olympics in various roles. Although retired for 13 years now, Clint continues to be generous with his time, working hard to influence systems and to support causes he cares about. The idea for a scholarship fund to support other students in the five high schools he had attended came up during the pandemic, in 2021 – and the idea keeps growing!

Clint openly shares personal stories about the experiences that made his childhood particularly challenging. He grew up during a time when large-scale institutions like Woodlands and Tranquille were home to persons with disabilities, and families were torn apart. "You couldn't have a girlfriend, go out or play sports," he says. But most importantly, he wants the community to know that he is thankful for the skills he gained at school, and the opportunity to work in a hospital for a decent wage, a job he took on in the last year of high school – the graveyard shift.

In a room filled with refreshments, two birthday cakes (one from Burnaby MLA Terry Beech), flowers and the overall joyful buzz of Clint's fan club, we celebrated inclusion and belonging. It was a wonderful birthday party fundraiser! Clint has started the scholarships with his own funds and encourages others to contribute what they can. Donations of over \$20 are tax receiptable. Contact the school board office in North Vancouver, Vancouver, Burnaby or New Westminster and ask for the person who administers the Clint Morrison Scholarship Fund – then donate. It's that simple. Donations in any amount are greatly appreciated!

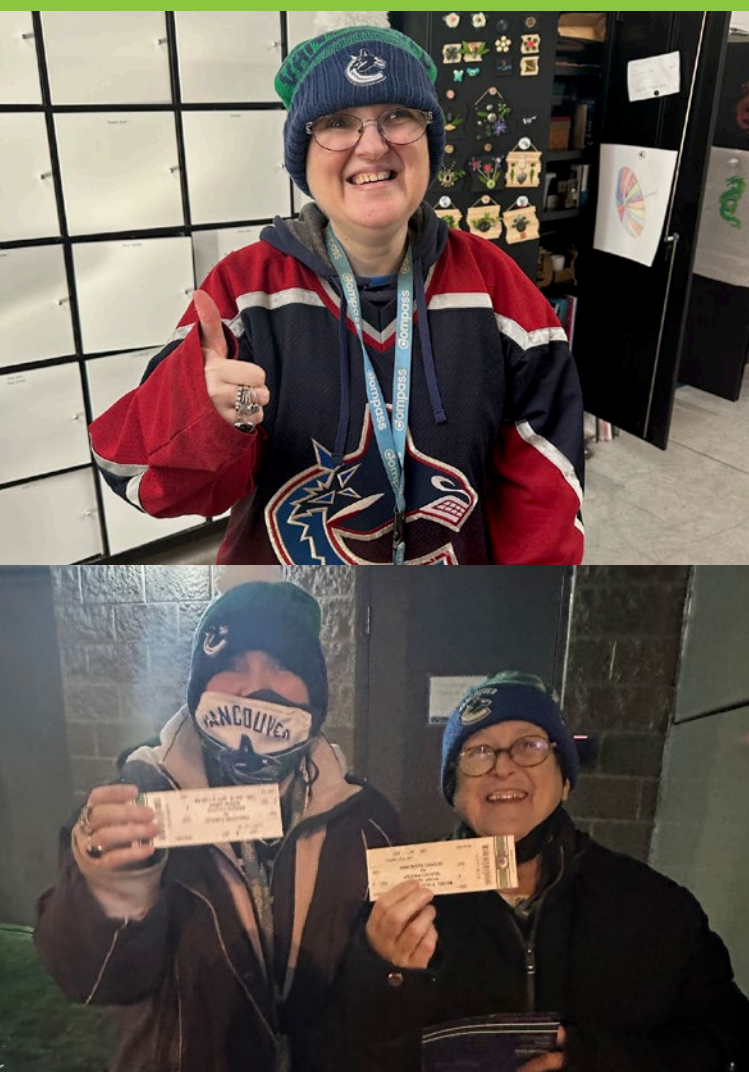




A.Ware Workshop Series

Contributed by Amy Chang, Team Leader, Supported Living Network

We are wrapping up the Spring A.Ware online art workshop series, and we are happy to report that we received great feedback from both new and returning participants! A.Ware workshops are immersive experiences designed to explore creativity and foster artistic growth. Held every Thursday evening via Zoom, these sessions have been a source of joy and inspiration for all involved. Keep an eye out for more A.Ware art workshop series in the future!



Meet the Canucks Tickets Winner

Last December, we held a giveaway for two Canucks Game tickets, and the lucky winner was Sharon Bessey. Congratulations, Sharon! It was Cherie, one of our staff at Alternatives, who nominated Sharon, describing her as the most dedicated Canucks fan she's ever known. In a delightful twist of fate, Sharron was decked out in Canucks gear from head to toe when she heard the news!

When game day finally came, Sharon and her mom couldn't be more excited, enjoying the game to its fullest. None of this would have been possible without the generous donation of the tickets by Craig Regier. A big thank you to Craig for making Sharon's dream game day a reality!



Artists Shine at Community, Longing and Belonging Art Expo

Contributed by Irena Flego, CI Coordinator, Richmond Social Network

Two amazing artists and RSN members, Cullen Yee and Paco Liu, are among fifty artists whose work was chosen to be showcased as a part of the "Community, Longing and Belonging" art exhibition at the Jewish Community Centre's Zack Gallery in Vancouver. This is the 6th Annual Celebration of Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month. Both artists honed and fine-tuned their skills over the years and are regularly participating in and selling their art at various exhibitions throughout Greater Vancouver. The Opening Reception was on February 22nd, and a big crowd showed up to enjoy a great evening of art and community inclusion celebration.

Congratulations to Paco and Cullen on their artistic passion and creative achievements! The exhibition is on until April 2nd, so come by and enjoy!



Embracing Diversity: BC-ABA's Queer-Inclusive and Rights-Affirming Support Panel

**Contributed by Sofiya Lim,
A/Senior Communications Specialist**

At the recent British Columbia Association for Behavior Analysis (BC-ABA) conference, a lively discussion took center stage, shedding light on the vital need for queer-inclusive support. The panel, titled "Queer Inclusive and Rights Affirming Support - Advocate and Analyst Perspectives," featured a diverse mix of voices, including Landa Fox from Positive Connections, Alison Klein, Colin Darge from Real Talk, and our very own LINK! Safety, Relationships, and Sexuality team members Sherry Nassrin and Darren Frisk.

Bringing together self-advocates, certified sexual health educators, and behavior analysts, the panel offered a fresh perspective on the historical journey and present challenges of supporting queer individuals. The discussion encouraged everyone to reflect on their own practices and to improve the support they offer to queer individuals. A key theme was the role of behavior analysts in fostering cultural awareness and inclusivity. Panelists shared actionable steps for creating safe and supportive environments for queer individuals, such as respecting pronouns, avoiding assumptions based on identity, understanding Canadian laws regarding equality, and familiarizing oneself with the history of how queer individuals have been treated in Canada.

The panel also explored the history of the association's support for queer individuals and emphasized the ongoing need for cultural awareness efforts. It was the first time the self-advocates had been on a panel or presentation for BC-ABA. With an audience of 30 people, the panel became a lively exchange of ideas and resources, leaving everyone inspired. It was a valuable experience for all involved, highlighting the significance of inclusive support and cultural awareness in behavior analysis.



Symmetric Allure: Alternative Creations' Latest Exhibition

Explore the enchanting world of "Symmetric Allure" at the Alternative Creations Studio! From March 21-31, immerse yourself in the captivating beauty of symmetrical artworks created by a talented ensemble of artists.

Join us for the opening reception on March 21 at 6:00 PM to witness the

unveiling of these stunning pieces. Delve deeper into the artists' inspirations and techniques during a guided gallery tour on March 30 at 2:00 PM.

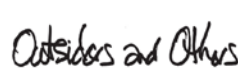
Featuring the unique perspectives of Daniella Halperin, Joel Klassen, Taehee Kim, Mark Li, Tanya Steinhausen, and Mark Wolak, this free exhibition offers a glimpse into their creative minds.

For those who can't make it in person, the exhibition will also be available online at www.outsidersandothers.com

Dates: March 21 – 31

Daily Gallery Hours: 12:00 PM- 4:00 PM

Location: Alternative Creations Studio - 1659 Venables St, East Vancouver



Victory on the Slope - Fiona Hall at Special Olympics Winter Games

**Contributed by Amy Chang, Team
Leader, Supported Living Network**

Meet Fiona Hall, a member of the SLN program and a remarkable athlete whose dedication and passion for skiing have propelled her to new heights! As a Special Olympics athlete, Fiona has consistently showcased her outstanding talent and determination. In a recent triumph at the Nationals, she not only participated but emerged victorious, winning several medals and solidifying her status as a top-tier competitor. Now, she is eagerly awaiting news about her qualifications for the World Games in Italy next year. Way to go Fiona!

Taking Care

Contributed by Josiane Spyker, Community Engagement Advisor

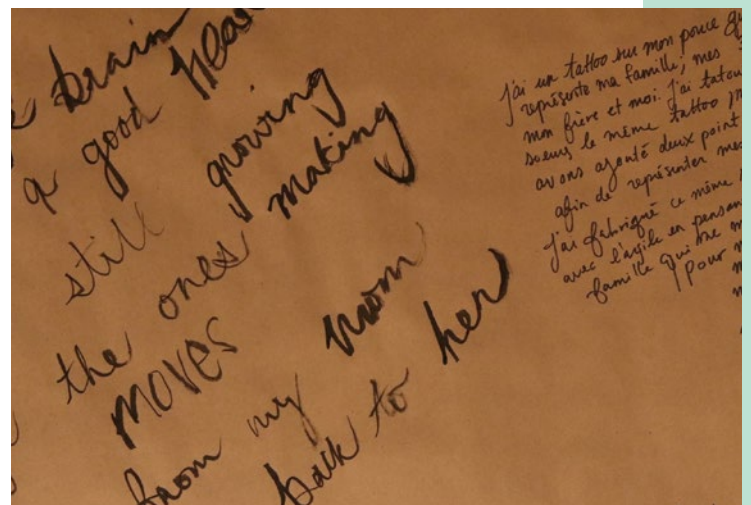
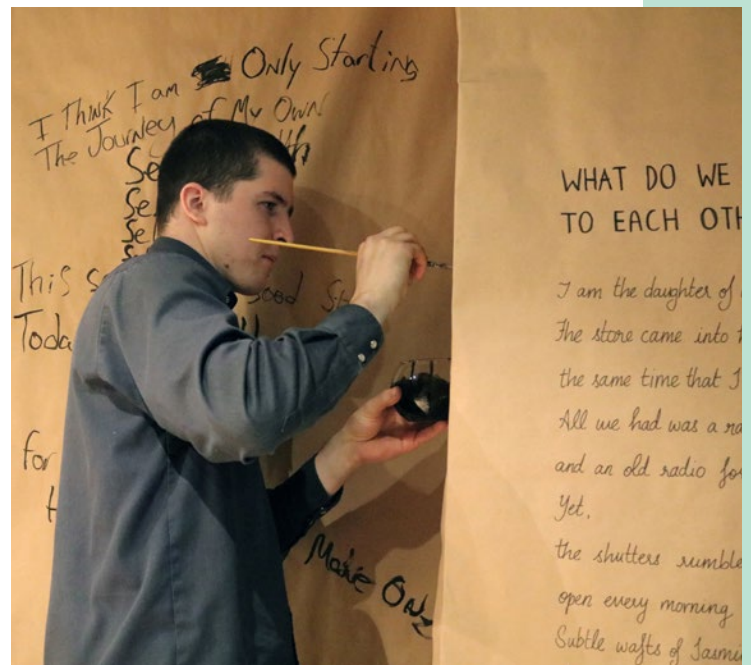
In partnership with posAbilities and Burnaby Connect Fest 2024 - we invite you to join community-based artist Aaniya Asrani and storyteller, community organizer and poet Josiane Spyker for facilitated art-making, drop-in sessions from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm on April 28th, 2024 at Shadbolt Studio 102. Graphic recorder, Adriana Contreras will also be present to document the stories that unfold.

Stories matter, but all too often in our lives, we operate from the perspective of hearing and knowing a single story — about a person, a group of people, a situation, or perhaps a conflict. Author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie believes that we [often] operate from the perspective of the single story sub-consciously. This is why stereotypical and reductive stories are harmful. She argues that such stories rob people of dignity and make it harder for people to connect with and understand each other. Thus — 'The Danger of the Single Story'.

Taking Care is a drop-in event providing us the opportunity to consciously avoid that danger of the 'single story' by bearing witness to the perspective of others in relation to care.

This event invites members of the public to reflect on the role that care plays in their everyday lives. Through a collaborative art-making process, they will contribute drawings, writings, or stories about what giving and/or receiving care means to them and add them to a growing artwork emerging on the walls. Their creations will join an already existing collage of stories of caregivers and receivers from the posAbilities community.

In an attempt to be consciously accessible and include those who have historically been denied access to these kinds of conversations, this event will center the voices of persons with disabilities; it is a platform for persons with disabilities to tell and shape their own stories using different artistic mediums with no restrictions on how these stories are told. Through this project, we also want to recognize the efforts and voices of those in our community who work hard every day in their role as formal or informal caregivers.



Date: Sunday, April 28

Time: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Shadbolt Centre for the Arts - Studio 102

Connect Fest is co-presented by Simon Fraser University and the City of Burnaby in participation with many local Burnaby organizations. The festival is a week-long series of free events, featuring performances, lectures, discussions, tours, and more - all designed to inform, engage, and spark creative conversations among Burnaby's vibrant and diverse audiences! Formerly called the Festival of Learning, this year's events will take place throughout the City from April 26-30, 2024. For more information, visit: <https://ConnectFest.ca>



Buddy Club - Where Friendships Flourish

Discover our inclusive social club – where adults find joy, camaraderie, and meaningful connections. Because life is better when shared with friends! Our events are physically accessible, and we travel by public transit to check out new places and activities across the Lower Mainland. We meet about once a month, usually in the evening, and most events cost \$15 or less per person, covering admission and dinner/snacks. We welcome everyone and host family-friendly outings. Meet a buddy, bring a buddy, or be a buddy!

Past Adventures:

- Activities like Bowling, Movie & Pub Nights
- Events including Dances, Art Shows & Film Festivals
- Visit favourite hangouts like the Old Spaghetti Factory, Grouse Mountain & PNE/Playland!

For more information, and to become a member, call David at 778-945-1430.



posAbilities proudly sponsors INCLUSION BC's Annual Learning Event: Everyone Belongs!

From May 29 - June 1, 2024, Team posAbilities will be on Vancouver Island participating in our annual sector-wide learning event hosted by Inclusion BC called Everyone Belongs! We are delighted to be sponsors and presenters this year. Look for presentations by our Social Media Fellowship, sexual health educators, spirituality guides, community engagement team, and more! We are excited to share information about our research projects, new services, and platforms that foster inclusion!

Early bird pricing for the conference ends on April 15, 2024, and we sure hope that you'll be able to join us!

To learn more about the opportunity, please check out this website, where you will also find registration details: [What's in Store: Everybody Belongs 2024 - Blog - Inclusion BC](#).

LEISURE FAIR

Leisure Fair

Discover and connect with Lower Mainland leisure opportunities for children and youth with disabilities! Sports, camps, music, and so much more.

Date: Tuesday, April 2

Time: 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Location: Sunset Community Centre

For more information, contact Shixin Gao at sgao@develop.bc.ca or 604 301 2831 or visit them on Facebook: www.facebook.com/leisurefair



A Rally for Accessibility Celebration and Awareness

Join a vibrant accessibility rally in the heart of Vancouver, celebrating diversity and fostering connections among individuals with disabilities and organizations that serve them. With engaging guest speakers and inclusive entertainment, this event aims to create a supportive community and raise awareness about the importance of accessibility in all its forms.

Members of organizations within the human rights sector from across BC will be speaking to share about the successes and challenges of accessibility within our communities and why accessibility is so important. All community members are welcome to attend the rally to learn more about accessibility or show support as an ally.

Date: Saturday, March 16

Time: 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Where: Vancouver Art Gallery South Plaza - 800 Robson St.

REMEMBERING

Catherine Lauridsen

Catherine passed away on December 18th, 2023, and is remembered fondly as having a great sense of humour and making those around her laugh. Her lovely and sweet personality will be dearly missed.

"The person we lost will not be forgotten. They will continue to live in our hearts and memories, reminding us of the love and joy they brought into our lives." - Unknown



Elizabeth Pyke

Liz was known for her warm and friendly demeanor, always greeting everyone with a smile and showing gratitude for the good things in her life. Her great spirit and cheerful personality brought joy to the people around her. She will be remembered with fondness and missed greatly.

"Those who touch our lives, stay in our hearts forever." - Unknown



Special Olympics BC Athletes Do Us Proud!

Content courtesy of public Facebook post, SOBC24

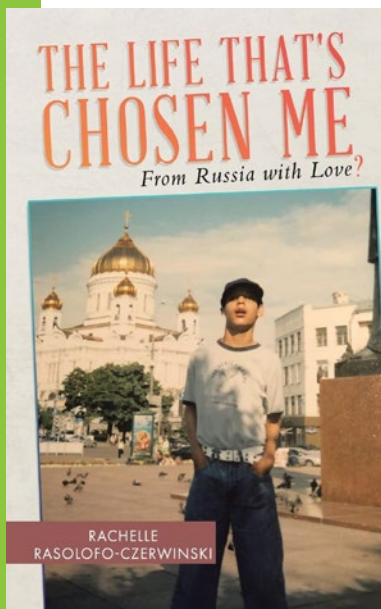
Special Olympics Team BC 2024 members showed hard work, dedication, and team spirit – and it has been so inspiring to see all they have accomplished at the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games Calgary 2024! The team brought in a stunning total of 135 medals! We are so incredibly proud of SOBC team members for representing our province with pride. Know that all of B.C. has been cheering you on and is so proud of your achievements!

"From the bottom of my heart, this is my first National Games, and I want to dedicate it to each and every single one of you, those who have helped me and been there for me. And I am also dedicating this to my family back home, because I know they're proud of me," says SOBC – Quesnel Snowshoer, Scott Jonasson.

Find photos, check out results, rewatch live streams, and so much more at www.soteambc2024.ca

posAbilities is proud of you too – and we hope that this article puts a smile on the faces of the many athletes in our own community, and family leaders like the Colvins – Athlete Bridget, and parent coaches Debra and Paul, who have been part of our journeys for a good, long time! Well done.





Sharing Our Stories

This Spring, why not treat yourself to a good book, a cup of tea, and a virtual trip to Russia? Local author, parent, and long-time volunteer with the Family Support Institute of BC - Rachelle Rasolofo-Czerwinski, recently published her first book, *The Life That's Chosen Me*:



From Russia with Love? Between its covers, you will find an astonishing tale that describes the journey of an extraordinary family in Russia from 2003 to 2005. It is a vivid account, at times poignant, at times hilarious, of life in post-Perestroika Russia, narrated by a mother, originally from Madagascar, with an international civil-servant Canadian husband and their two sons, one of them with severe disabilities. The book is [available for purchase here](#) or for loan at the Vancouver Public Library. You can also listen to Rachelle on the **Encouraging Abilities Podcast**, produced by our friends at the Developmental Disabilities Association [here](#).

Fondue and Forms: Making Your Health Care Visits a Little Smoother

Forms can be daunting, and so can a visit to the doctor! Our friends at Curiko made filling out forms a fun event, where friends gathered over a pot of fondue to learn about a new community resource aimed at improving medical visits for persons with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. The event sparked conversations about health care, and showcased a set of three medical forms developed by the Shared Care Project team: [About My Health](#), [My Health Care Visit](#), and [My Health Care Visit Tracker](#). This project team works with other health care and allied professionals as part of the Burnaby Primary Care Network.

The forms that were created can also be helpful tools for older adults, people with complex conditions, or those who experience language barriers. Being prepared ahead of a medical visit and documenting what happened during and after a visit, can make communication clearer, and directions or actions toward improving one's health so much easier to follow. Click [Support for People with Developmental Disabilities - Burnaby Primary Care Networks \(burnabypcn.ca\)](#) to review and download these three new forms and to learn more about the services offered by the Burnaby Primary Care Network. Oh, and don't forget to contact me if you'd like to have some fondue!



 Download Form	 Download Form	 Download Form
About My Health Complete this form to record information about your overall health. You can indicate how health care providers can make your visit more comfortable for you. Fill out this form annually, or when major changes in your health occur.	My Health Care Visit Complete this form for each medical visit. Fill out the first section before you go to see the medical provider. Fill out the second section with the health care provider during the visit. Fill out the last section when you are back home.	My Health Care Visit Tracker Complete this form to help you keep a record of your medical visits with different health care providers. Fill it out after each health care visit. You can print or download a new copy when you have completed the sheet.

