



Connections Counselling & Consulting Foundation

Message from Connections

As the days become longer, the sunshine brighter and the breeze warmer, our thoughts turn to welcome the spring ahead. Spring has always been known as a time of renewal, and for those of us at Connections, this sentiment seems to be especially true this year.

Over the past months, Connections has faced a winter of its own. With government funding cuts, a lagging economy and a decrease in overall charitable giving for the first time in Canadian history, our agency has weathered its share of storms. Our staff, clients and supporters are resilient however, and confident that our spring has come.

April marks the 20th Anniversary of Connections, and as such we want to honour where we have been and all we have done, while ensuring we can continue the work that we do as long as we are needed. Just like many of you will be planting seeds to bring the beauty of spring to your gardens and window boxes after a long gray winter, we too are planting seeds to ensure that Connections can continue to grow and flourish.

“ April Marks the 20th Anniversary of Connections, and as such we want to cherish where we have been and all we have done, while ensuring we can continue the work that we do for many years to come. “

We have cultivated many connections with new supporters and nurtured our relationships with those who have long given of their time and resources; We have focused on nourishing our staff, promoting wellness and collaboration so that we are at our best to serve our client families; We have trimmed our budgets where possible so our roots grow strong and sustainable; and we have brought sunshine to the lives of our client families who have faced many of the same challenges we are.

Board of Directors

Daryl Pamplin—Past President

Peter Cheung- President

Gavin Preston - Treasurer

Gurbeer Singh Gill - Secretary

Susan Plesuk- Director

Michelle Wolfe - Director

Directorial Staff

Pat Morris -Agency Director

Lauren Raymore - Program Director

Our generous supporters who have given of their time, money and resources have always been the rain that keeps our organization healthy and strong. We are truly thankful to the many Friends of Connections – individuals, corporations, funders and businesses who continue to make it possible for us to help individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families to realize their full potential. We would particularly like to acknowledge the support of Field Restaurant Concepts who will be sponsoring our 20th Anniversary Connections Carnival Fundraising Dinner (more details inside).

As we move into spring we will celebrate all that we have cultivated, nurtured and grown over the past 20 years but will also ask for your help in continuing to make sure that Connections, and the client families we serve, are able to blossom and bloom.

Jessilyn Yuhas, Fund Development Coordinator

Special thanks for these donors 2009

Connections would once again like to extend our sincere thanks to all those who supported us in 2009. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the following donors:

- Bentall Real Estate
- BMO Employee Charitable Foundation
- Burns Memorial Fund
- N.Murray Edwards Charitable Foundation
- ConocoPhillips
- Harry and Martha Cohen Foundation
- Nickle Family Foundation
- Hidden Resources— T. Brazzoni
- Phil Morris
- A&K Walsh
- Peter Cheung
- Megahn Greenwich
- Olay Ivanenko-ighani
- Ronald & Sharon Hewer
- Valerie Diane Wallace
- Ian Cameron
- S Ashley
- Water Works Department— City of Calgary
- Mount Royal University-Financial Services Students
- Mahaliti Family
- Dave & Kathy Leroux
- Silver Springs and Langevin Schools
- The Yardhouse, Molly Malone's, The Keg, Catalaya, Vintage Chophouse



Casino Fundraiser - Call for Volunteers



On Thursday September 2 and Friday September 3 Connections will be hosting a casino fundraiser at the Elbow River Casino. This is a major fundraising opportunity for Connections and we rely on the support of volunteers to make the event a success. We are currently looking for about 40 volunteers to assist with the casino in the roles of casino manager, banker, cashiers, chip runners and count room helpers. Shifts are approximately 10:30 am– 7pm or 6pm– 2am as well as 10pm-3am shifts for cash room helpers. **Please contact Lisa or Lauren at 403-209-1100 to volunteer your time for this important and worthwhile fundraising initiative. We thank you in advance for your support.**

Client Spotlight

Connections would like to take this opportunity to congratulate one of our long term clients on his recent achievements. Heinz and his family have been involved with Connections since 2004, and now at the age of 17, Heinz has been given the opportunity to visit Ottawa to spend a week at Canada's Parliament Building. Heinz who is a student at Van Horne Vocational High School is one of just 100 students from across the country who received this honour. He was nominated by his teachers based on excellent schoolwork, participation and attitude and won a unanimous vote among staff to participate in this once in a lifetime trip. Congratulations Heinz !

Connections 20th Anniversary Fundraising Dinner

Connections is 20 and ready to have some fun! On Sunday May 16th, 2010, Connections will be holding a 20th Anniversary celebration and fundraising dinner at The Yardhouse in Kensington beginning at 6:30pm.

Tickets are \$45 per person and will include a complimentary beverage, tapas style dinner and entertainment. There will be games, raffles and a silent auction and plenty of great stories about the past 20 years of Connections.

We would love to see all supporters of Connections at this event to share in our celebration and encourage you to invite friends that may be interested in becoming Friends of Connections as well. But hurry tickets are limited to 85. Please contact Lauren or Lisa at 403-209-1100 or Jessilyn at 403-971-5077 to purchase tickets. Those who purchase before April 9th will be entered into a draw to win their ticket!



We are also asking for donations for raffle prizes and silent auction items so if you or someone you know would like to become involved in that capacity please let any of the ladies listed above know.

In addition to this fundraising dinner, Connections will also be hosting a carnival celebration for our client families and supporters on Saturday May 15th at the Hillhurst/Sunnyside Community Center from 1-4pm. There will be carnival games for the families, activities, popcorn and hotdog lunch, and bouncy castles for the kids. All supporters of connections and interested friends are welcome to attend though we ask that you please RSVP to Lisa by May 7th if you plan on joining us for this great afternoon of fun and family.

Community Spirit and You: Using social networking to build charitable gifts

Social media is everywhere. With Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, YouTube, Linked In, Foursquare and others making social networking the most popular activity on the net, it has become possible to make a large charitable impact by utilizing social media to bring people together in support of a common cause.

One way to raise money using social networking is to organize a Tweet-up or in other words a real-life meeting organized on the social networking site Twitter. For those who are uninitiated into the world of tweets and hashtags, Twitter is a free service that allows users to post 140 character or less updates or notes that other users can view. Users can follow other users and can quickly build large networks that they can call upon, in some cases, to attend fundraising events large or small. A Tweet-up can be as simple as inviting 20 people to meet for a coffee and donate their pocket change to a cause or as complex as a large gala and silent auction. To learn more about Twitter visit twitter.com

With social networking it has become possible to easily bring people from around the globe together in support of a cause.

-Jessilyn Yuhas,
Fund Development Coordinator



Another way to support a cause you believe in by using social networking is to visit Canada Helps and create a giving page

<http://www.canadahelps.org/GivingPages/GivingPages.aspx>

You can then post a link to this page on social networking sites that you utilize like Facebook or Myspace and can encourage all of your contacts, and in turn their contacts, to donate. You can make fundraising fun by making a pledge that if donations on your Canada Helps page reach a certain level you will fulfill a task, be it shaving your head, or cooking everyone who donates a barbeque dinner. More and more, social networking is a great way to showcase the causes you believe in and help to support them one tweet or post or note at a time.

In appreciation

To realize our vision we rely on the generous support of our funders, community groups, schools, service clubs, foundations, and individuals who give of their time, money and talents. We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all of our Individual Donors, Donors Choice supporters & Volunteers without whom Connections could not continue the work we do.

A special thanks to
The Burns Foundation,
Nickle Foundation &
ConocoPhillips for their
recent
generosity .

Our Vision

People with intellectual disabilities and their families
are valued and reach their potential.

Partnering Agencies



Our Funders



United Way
of Calgary and Area



social venture partners
CALGARY



As well as Region 3 Calgary and Area, Child and Family Services, United Way Donor's choice .

Our Mission

We exist to empower, strengthen and support:

1. Parents with intellectual disabilities;
2. Children who have a family member with a disability;
3. And Families and caregivers

By providing long term programs, counseling and education

Show Your Support - Donate Now

Donate online now by:

1. Going to our website at www.connections counselling.ab.ca
2. Clicking the Donate with Canada Helps icon on the right hand side
3. Entering a donation amount and choosing a one time or ongoing donation