

ISSUE 1, JANUARY 2022

Heart to Heart

A NEWSLETTER BY ISLAND CRISIS CARE SOCIETY

NEWCASTLE PLACE ART SHOW

DONOR RECOGNITION

CNOY 2022

PROJECT RISE



FROM THE HEART

As the new year begins, there is a desire in many of us to seek new beginnings, to find solace in a good year completed and new adventures ahead. Yet our good resolutions seem more grey this year. Cold weather and on-going uncertainties make winter seem bleak. More and more we see people around us in need....

And yet – as we will see in these pages, hope does exist –

- in the expression of art born out of a life of adversity
- In steps towards hope and learning through programs like Project Rise
- In the generosity of so many who pause and care for others during holiday times
- In the coming together of people in events like Coldest Night of the Year, when people across our communities set aside differences and dignity and walk together for a great cause – and to make a difference.

It is in these and so many other things that we find positive beginnings for a new year – and hope.



NEWCASTLE ART SHOW

As the start of the holiday season touched ICCS Newcastle place program, a very special celebration of art was held – the second annual Newcastle Place Art Show. Clients across the program expressed themselves in a dazzling array of visual and written art, showing clearly that beauty takes many forms, and can be refined by adversity into things of wonder.



NEWCASTLE PLACE STAFF MEMBER, BRENDA MIDDLEMISS (1st place winner with her art work below), VIOLET HAYES



Island Crisis Care Society
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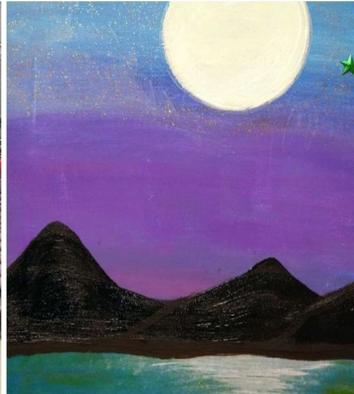
Phone: 778-441-4227
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www.islandcrisiscaresociety.ca



NEWCASTLE PLACE STAFF MEMBER, SUSAN KLAWNS (2nd place) AND VIOLET HAYES (from left to right)



CHELSIE CONNORS (3rd place)



LINDA CHOY (4th place)



A SELECTION OF ART WORK

CHRISTOS GLAROS (5th place)

THANKS TO OUR DONORS

Christmas can be a difficult time for clients in ICCS programs. While celebrations go on around them, life can be very dismal with no family to celebrate with and little to mark the day. This year, Christmas was different. Thanks to the efforts of many donors and volunteers, 250 Christmas presents were delivered to ICCS clients, marking the season and reminding them that they are special and cared for. Many, many people helped to make this possible, including:

- Members of CFUW Nanaimo, the Zonta Club and Altrusa
- The Shoebox project
- Everyone Deserves a Smile – Fairview Community Schools
- Joanne Iormetti and Friends
- Brenda Rennie and members of the Nanaimo Newcomers' Group who helped put all of the packages together!
- And many, many more!

Thank you all for your care!



EVERYONE DESERVES A SMILE AND FAIRVIEW COMMUNITY SCHOOL CARE PACKAGES BEING DELIVERED



BACKPACKS WITH CARE PACKAGES READY FOR DELIVERY TO OUR PROGRAMS



DONATIONS FROM JOANNE IORMETTI AND FRIENDS ARE BEING DROPPED OFF



ELSPETH AND VIOLET SORTING THROUGH THE MANY DONATIONS TO GET THEM READY FOR DELIVERY TO OUR PROGRAMS



STAFF AT THE CITY OF NANAIMO CAME TOGETHER TO OFFER WELCOME GIFTS FOR CLIENTS AT THE SOON TO BE OPENED SAMARITAN PLACE!



EDDIE BAUER AND THE ONE WARM COAT INITIATIVE GAVE A GENEROUS DONATION OF WINTER COATS



STAFF AT THE QUEEN'S AND NANAIMO MUSICIANS ROCKED THE HOUSE IN SUPPORT OF ICCS PROGRAMS AND CLIENTS

CNOY 2022

coldest night
OF THE YEAR

cnoy.org/nanaimo
cnoy.org/oceanside

Come join us on February 26th – or any time during February – for the 2022 version of the Coldest Night of the Year! Coldest Night of the Year is a Canada wide walk and fundraiser, aimed to help people come together in community and think about issues of homelessness and precarious housing. Held every year in February (usually the coldest month in most parts of Canada) it is intended to allow participants to experience a very small sliver of what it is like to be in the cold and the elements (and on Vancouver Island, the rain!)

This year, while we are hoping to have an in person event once again, we are also offering the additional option for people who feel more comfortable not being part of a group to walk on their own or in small teams any time in the month of February. They will still sign up and/or join a team, and fundraise as per usual, but have the chance to be flexible in how they do their walk.

Those who prefer to participate on the actual day can join the collective event and walk on the afternoon of Saturday, February 26th, 2022, where a 2 km and a 5 km route will be laid out – in Nanaimo starting and ending in Maffeo Sutton Park, and in Parksville starting and ending in Parksville Community Park.

Coldest Night of the Year is a community event, but it is also a fundraiser. Participants and supporters must register in advance at: cnoy.org/nanaimo OR cnoy.org/oceanside to set a fundraising goal, decide if they will walk in person or virtually, and be set up to receive more information about the event and the good works that it will support in Nanaimo.

ISLAND CRISIS CARE SOCIETY

Walk with us to support our community.

FEBRUARY 26th, 2022
walk / donate / volunteer

coldest night
OF THE YEAR

cnoy.org/oceanside
cnoy.org/nanaimo

PROJECT RISE UPDATE



PROJECT RISE



STEPHEN COCHRANE
Project Rise Coordinator



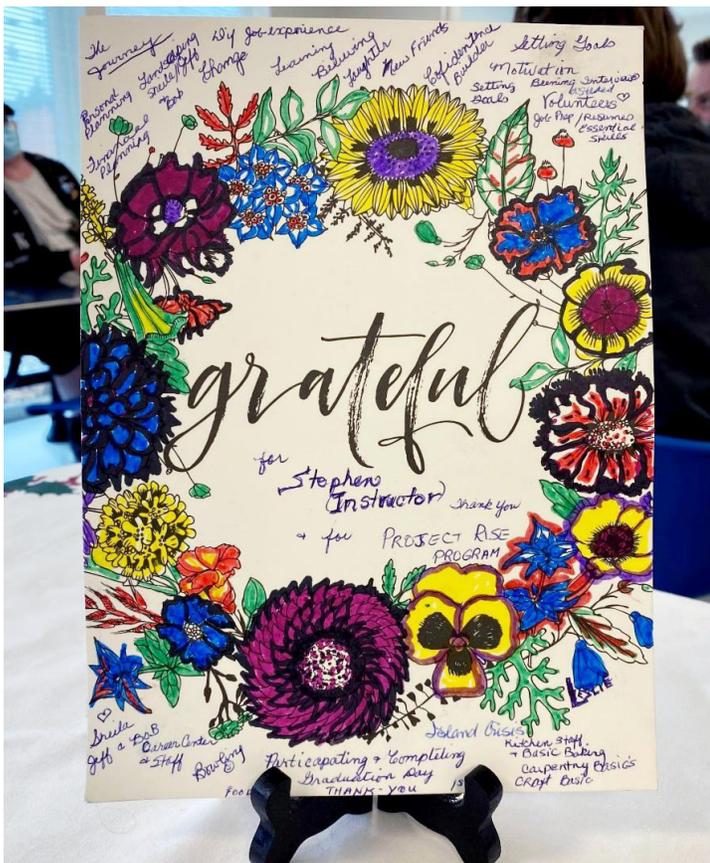
PROJECT RISE GRADUATES WITH VIOLET AND STEPHEN

Project Rise is a new program of Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS) aimed to deliver pre-employment and employment skills training and work placement opportunities to people who have experienced homelessness, but are now ready to reintegrate fully into independence and community life.

Many ICCS clients face barriers to employment and re-connection to the community, based on adversity in their past, and stigma in their present. This new program aims to fill that gap, supporting clients who have moved towards independence in housing but are unable to access the employment market take the next steps forward to regain the rhythm of community life.

Project Rise will commence officially in 2022, with the first home grown cycle of students passing through 4 weeks of pre-employment training followed by 8 week work placements to gain the experience that can launch them forward into life-changing independence. We had a sneak peek of Project Rise in 2021, though, with a first round pilot that allowed us to learn – and a first group of clients to take a step forward into hope.

The first session, held at Orca Place in Parksville, was made possible thanks to funding from Work BC Work Experience Opportunity grants. This pilot session allowed us to test the waters for Project Rise, more effectively plan for program roll out, and allowed 6 participants the chance to get training and work experience opportunities! Read on to learn about two of the pilot cohort participants!



PROJECT RISE GRADUATES EXCITED ABOUT THE FUTURE

BY ASTRID FESCHUK, *Communications Assistant*



TYRA AND KEVIN

On a winter day in December last year, I drive out to Orca Place in Parksville to meet up with two participants of Project Rise. The new ICCS program aims to deliver pre-employment and employment skills training as well as work placement opportunities to people who have experienced homelessness, but are now ready to re-integrate fully into community life. The pilot program started in August 2021 and the first six program participants are ready to graduate in one week's time.

I meet two of the soon to be graduates, Tyra and Kevin, in the multi purpose room after their workshop wrapped up for the morning. Having gone through group-based learning and workshops and learning practical skills I am curious to check in with Kevin and Tyra and see what their hopes are for their future.

Asked how they liked the program Kevin replied "It's been a fun course. Gives you a purpose to do stuff." Tyra adds "...making resumes. All the things that you need to get a job. Managing your time wisely."

Many ICCS clients face barriers to employment and re-connection to the community. This is where Project Rise steps in supporting participants such as Kevin and Tyra on their path towards recovery and independence.

Asked what inspired them to take part in Project Rise, Kevin explains: "They posted it on the board and yeah, we're always looking for something to do, something different."

Tyra adds: "We read the outline and we asked what it entailed, what it was about. We learned that it was set up to learn how to go back to work, cover letters and resumes, the things that you would have to do. What you were good at, things that would involve yourself, searching out things that you were good at, other things you can find out about yourself, you know, be more looking inside yourself and then just kind of sitting back and doing that."

Kevin points out: "Even though I have done that stuff before it was good to do it again. You know, to upgrade the food safe. First aid. All that stuff."

I am curious to find out what Kevin and Tyra enjoyed most about the program and Tyra points out: "Crafts. Being creative. Have something to show for, dryer balls. That's another nice part of it. It's something that you actually have to put yourself out there to do. You definitely have to be there to do it. You have to get up, you have to go out and do what you are supposed to do. You're actually learning more about yourself." "Who you are at this point in life." Kevin notes. "Yeah, I was really curious about myself cause I have been just really sick for the last five or six years. I am just getting back, to see what I can do, what I am capable of. It's been really good." he adds.

While our current programs strive to support clients where they are, the leap from homelessness to supported housing to independent community life is great. Unless we equip clients with real skills they can use to find a way back to community, to navigate through the job market and to fill gaps in knowledge and experience from how to balance a cheque book to how to communicate effectively with others, the leap is often too great.

With these essential skills, however, possibility is born. This is very much the case with Kevin and Tyra. They have both lived at Orca Place since it opened about two years ago. They like it there and are looking forward to what the future might bring after having completed the Project Rise training.

Tyra hopes to keep crafting handmade goods and to have a small business on the side.

Kevin is not sure what he wants to do. He worked as a care aid until he got too sick. After a bout with lung cancer, and then brain cancer, he is back to normal now. He is thinking of getting a job as an activity facilitator as there is a need for that. He doesn't have a certificate for it yet, but wants to work towards it. Kevin is currently helping with the renovation of the new Project Rise office space above the Nanaimo Bakery.

Tyra's background is in the medical field. "I started as an LPN and worked up to surgical nurse." She says. "I wanted to be a doctor at one time. I worked as an intern. And then I had an accident and was in a coma for a while. When I woke up things were all messed up." she adds. That was 13 years ago. Tyra explains that she doesn't remember a lot of things.

"Things happen. You can either close yourself off or keep going" she says.

Mentioning the upcoming graduation from Project Rise, Kevin remarks: "I can't believe it's almost over. It went by quick. Time passes pretty fast." Tyra adds: "It keeps you so busy, it breaks down days. You learn to keep a schedule, go to meetings, go here, go there... She emphasizes: "You learn a lot, especially if you have never done a resume. There are so many jobs." Kevin points out that the skills learned from Project Rise have helped him get job ready."

Both Tyra and Kevin are looking forward to graduating from Project Rise and they are excited to see what the future will bring.