



**Annual Report
2017/18**





CHRISTINA THOMAS
Presidents Report

2018 has been a year of transformation and moving forward. We experienced changes with the Board of Directors and Vela's staff.

The Staff at Vela has worked diligently to update our constitution and bylaws along with all their already busy schedules. At the same time the board of directors established a comprehensive 'handbook' to have available for directors, new and old. We can all be proud of what we accomplished over the year.

Although Microboards are not the answer for all, it is certainly becoming a choice for many throughout Canada and all over the world thanks to our Executive Director, Linda Perry who has spent time this year educating people looking to create a person-centered situation to support their relative with a disability. We are very proud of Linda and Vela's hardworking staff for providing such information and examples of how we can

make a life for our relative with a disability that brings the opportunity for them to contribute to their community, feel valued and empowered in directing their life decisions.

This past year has been very rewarding for me as I see the commitment the staff and board members have to support this incredible concept. If there



were anything I would change, it would be to have those who have a Microboard to support Vela by telling others how

they created theirs, pros and cons. I personally enjoy and appreciate learning about how others manage their Microboards, as they are as individual as the people they support.

Respectfully Submitted
Christina Thomas



LINDA PERRY
Executive Director's Report

Vela's volunteers, board, and staff have been inspiring, working with amazing commitment, coming up with ways to improve our support and services.

We have seen an increase in Microboards by approximately 40 new boards this year. Our staff assisted approximately 40 people to establish I.F. supports. We have also spent 3 hours or less answering over 1,000 calls and offering basic information over the phone.

Vela's continued support to existing individuals with Microboards and I.F. increased significantly this year. Currently a number of government changes and initiatives are under way these have meant our staff is very busy supporting existing I.F. and Microboards to understand and respond. This has been a substantial amount of work for all

of us. The biggest challenge has been the changes to the *Societies Act*. These changes require every non-profit in British Columbia to re-submit their articles of incorporation to be in compliance with those changes. Our staff has been assisting Vela Microboards in completing this transition. We have also presented workshops around the province to explain the process. The second important challenge has been the potential removal of "24 Hour Live In Support Worker" as a option for employment of workers. Vela has been involved with a lobby group spearheaded by CSSEA and the Executive Directors' Network to have that decision reversed.

We continue to assist a substantial group of people experiencing very complex situations that, while they are not new Microboards or IF recipients, their support needs have been significant.

We continue to provide mentoring support to two projects further afield. One is a group

in Ontario looking to set up a 'Vela like' entity to support the development of Microboards in their province. The spirit of collaboration and enthusiasm has been terrific. And their welcome always warm. We are also continuing our work in Western Australia. The group there is inspiring in the advancements and it has been a pleasure to work with such a creative collective of people.

In February 2018 Caitlin and I attended the Zero Project Conference at the United Nations in Vienna. The focus was on Technology and education. and we had a very productive week learning from many innovators creating cutting edge supports for people with disabilities.

This year to was one with a sad goodbye for our team. Jeanette Holder, our tireless process based person worked for many years on Vancouver Island. We miss Jeanette. There is definitely a hole where Jeanette once worked. But we all wish her the very best in her retirement.

Kim Thomas, our Fund Development Officer and Office Manager, is the glue for our team. Her ability to multi-task and respond with warmth and knowledge has been a great asset to the team. She has successfully raised additional funds and increased our membership. She has expanded her contacts in the fundraising world and even taken on many of our social media responsibilities.

Beat Joehl our dedicated accountant, continues to provide Vela with fiscal support. By working closely together with Beat and Kim, I am able to ensure we are staying on top of projects and directed funding in a timely fashion. This is critical when funds are stretched.

Lori Emanuels continues to split her time between the lower mainland and the Okanagan. We are at the point that we could probably hire a full-time facilitator for the interior region. It would be wonderful to create the funds to make that possible. Lori's time is very stretched working in both regions. Lori continues to take on complex situations and come up with creative solutions, always focusing on the needs of the person at the centre of the planning and thinking process.

Caitlin Goodsell has been very helpful with creating forms and processes for us as we work

through our new challenges this year. She also attended a week-long course for future leaders that has clearly been a positive experience for her. She has married the new information with her already valued skills and continues to offer us all new ideas and processes.

Terry Robertson's work in the north has expanded geographically and certainly in numbers. She has been very busy this year traveling around the North. She has provided many of the workshops we have presented this year and has begun to work with some northern indigenous bands in her region.

Lori Cochrane joined our team this year. She has many years' experience in our field and has worked consulting with CLBC to help resolve extremely challenging situations. Her experience and enthusiasm have added so much to our team. She is currently working on Vancouver Island and on the Lower Mainland.

As in previous years, each facilitator has submitted their reports and I encourage you to read them. Each has their unique area of focus, and I'm sure you will find all of them very interesting.

Thank you to all of Vela's staff team for your commitment, creativity and good humor. You work hard, care deeply for the people we support and support one another. I am so fortunate to work with such an amazing group of people.

As noted, Vela provided many workshops reaching out for, and into, every region of the province. This is in keeping with our plans to reorganize our time to best support the growing numbers of individuals using I.F. and Microboards. Group sessions continue to be a very effective way to share information.

Our staff completed over 45 workshops and presentations this year. Estimated attendance was about 700 people. We are finding this to be an effective way to get things moving and great way to disseminate basic information.

Our Board of Directors have had a very busy year. They have completed a guide book for board

members and are updating our policies and practice. This is much needed work and they are taking it on like gang-busters. Thank you to the Vela Board of Directors. This year has been a year of change and new progress. Without your steady hand this would not have been possible.

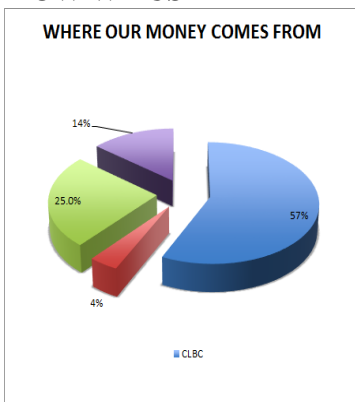
A special thank you to Vela's volunteers! You generously provide us with your time, skills and expertise. This year many have helped to improve our communications, written materials, assisting at events, and so much more.

Maria Glaze, Glyn Townson and Kathy Lane continue to put countless hours into improving our communications and technology. Thank you so much for your time and effort, we are very grateful for your support. Gabriel Miller also continues to lend her time and skills to sharing our message, often sharing our information during interviews and through social media. We are very fortunate to have your support, thank you so much from all of us at Vela.

We greatly appreciate the support of Joe Emanuels and John Holder. Both have generously shared their particular expertise with our organization helping us improve our services and support.

Thank you to Catrina Thomas, Danica Perry and Colby Perry, for your support at our office. We are very grateful for your enthusiasm and support. And to the many volunteers that help us with and at our workshops, events, and conferences, thank you for all do. Our volunteers are such a critical part of our success.

SUMMARY OF VELA'S RESOURCES AND HOW WE USE THEM



This year's report, in keeping with the previous years, includes three pie graphs summarizing our funds received and how they have been used. We also include a summary of all the volunteer's hours

Bree Robertson has been an amazing spokesperson for Vela and Microboards. She provides real life experience having a Microboard from the individual's point of view. She is great with an audience and tells her story clearly and with pride. We are so fortunate to have her speak up and out for herself and for our organization. Thank you so much!

Gord Robertson rounds out the trio of amazing Robertsons that contribute to Vela. Gord often accompanies Terry on her road trips and offers his perspective as a parent, board member, and the administrator for his daughter Bree's Microboard. He also provides technical assistance and advice to parents at workshops. We are lucky to have such commitment. Thank you Gord!

With so many great people offering support to the work at Vela, I know we are heading into a year of new ideas and celebration of unique skills and talents with our team and wider community.



Thank you to all of you for your ongoing support and care. We can all be proud of the contributions we make.

*Respectfully submitted,
Linda Perry*

provided by our generous and skilled volunteers. The first graph titled "WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM" shows the funds received and from what source. These are fairly self-explanatory. I'm pleased to report that our donation funds, along with other sources of independent revenue, continue to increase year to year.

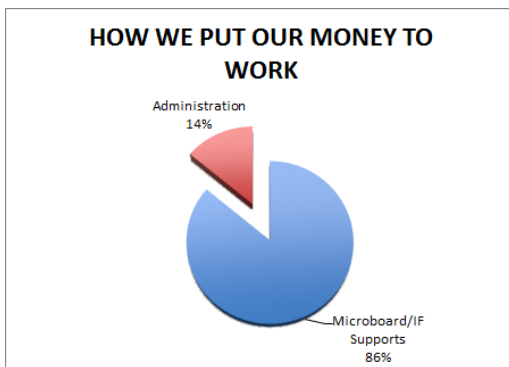
You will also see more funding was taken from our Condo Reserves. We intentionally planned for this increase to cover off shortfalls in our Gaming Funds and to cover some of our work building our international consulting services as well as new

explorations to generate additional revenue sources.

While our Gaming Funds have remained the same, they are not covering the true costs for the work done under that project file. As a result, funds were needed from the Condo Fund and independent revenue sources to offset the short fall.

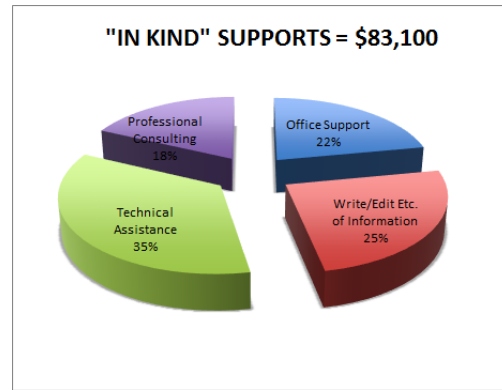
We are pleased to note our Donations and Membership percentages have once again increased this year. Thank you Kim Thomas for all your hard work, and a special thank you to our members and contributors for helping to make that happen!

The second graph titled "HOW WE PUT OUR MONEY TO WORK" shows little change from last year. Tenant support was still a small amount of our overall expenditures. This primarily reflects the assistance we provided to our last



tenant, supporting him with his move. Our Administration went up 1% and our overall direct support to Microboards and IF Supports down 1%. This reflects our efforts to improve our communications through the website, Facebook page and updating of our materials and contacts.

The third and final graph titled "IN KIND SUPPORTS = \$83,100.00" shows an increase of \$14,100.00 from our last report of In Kind assistance from Volunteers.



Vela is very grateful to those of you that have volunteered your valuable time and expertise to us. Your in Kind assistance has been very much appreciated. We also thank those that have provided donations and grants. You have been a significant part of our progress this past year.

Respectfully Submitted.

*Linda Perry
Executive Director*



**CAITLIN
GOODSELL –
Facilitator’s Report
Lower
Mainland/Fraser
Valley Region**

It has been another busy year in the Lower Mainland! With the deadline drawing near for all societies in BC to transition to the new Societies Act there has definitely been an upswing in the number of calls and emails I have received specific to this issue. In the past year I’ve worked with 12 families that I would not typically work with, as well as a number of families I work with regularly, specifically on assistance with transition. This is both helping with preparing the documents and actually completing the transition depending on the request.

This year I assisted 55 families that I have worked with in the past – 18 Microboards or individuals that do not receive CLBC funding, 23 Microboards funded by CLBC, and 12 individuals accessing IF.

This year I also had contact with 66 new individuals and families – 19 people who wanted information on both IF and Microboards so they could learn about the two options to see whether or not one of them would be a fit, 11 families looking at Microboards from a purely support network perspective (rather than hoping to use it for funding), 14 families interested in starting Microboards who were also hoping to access CLBC and/or Health funding through their Microboards, and 20 individuals who were hoping to, or were already, accessing IF. Even though I connected with a number of these individuals and family’s multiple times and to varying degrees, I only know of 7 new Microboards that formed and reported back that they had officially started their boards. Often, I will not hear back from new families that do incorporate until an issue arises, or they will not be ready to incorporate until months or years after our initial contact.

This year was also a busy one for presentations and conferences for me. Over the year I did 9 presentations with about 165 people in attendance between them – 7 that were an introduction to Microboards and IF and 2 transition fairs. I was fortunate enough to attend some wonderful conferences this year – from our local training workshops with a group from Ontario, to the Ontario Community Living Conference, and of course the Zero Project Conference in Vienna which was definitely a highlight of the year for me!

Last summer I also completed my first home study since going through the CLBC training. It was done for a local family who was hoping to contract with a new homeshare provider through their Microboard – after a thorough and successful home study they were able to get the contract up and running and have had a wonderful outcome with their new provider!

I also spent time last year working on my first out of province contract with a lovely gentleman from Missouri who was hoping to see if Microboards could be a fit for his son and in his State. At the time we were working together he did not move forward with a Microboard but did take away a number of valuable resources and ideas that he has incorporated into his son’s life to help expand and solidify his network.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Caitlin Goodsell*



**LORI COCHRANE –
Facilitator’s Report**

**Lower
Mainland/Vancouver
Island**

Introduction

I began this journey with Vela on May 29, 2017. I have a long history of promoting Microboards (MB’s) in all my various roles over the years. I was thrilled to take this new position with Vela and I had always believed I knew a fair bit of what there was to know about MB development.

Body of Work

Once I started training, however, I was amazed at the amount of knowledge that is required to do the job well. I was so fortunate to be supported and trained, mostly, by Caitlin, Kim and Jeanette through the month of June.

I spent time with Kim learning about our internal processes and duties related to administration.

With Caitlin and Jeanette, I was able to observe many different aspects to the facilitator role. I spent time with Caitlin, in both the Fraser Valley and the Lower Mainland. I spent time with Jeanette on the Island in Courtenay, Nanaimo, Campbell River and Parksville.

We met with families and individuals regarding a whole array of activities; some pertaining to microboard (MB) development and maintenance and some pertaining to Individualized (IF) development and maintenance.

I was able to observe my colleagues providing support for funding, MB employment issues, documentation development, i.e. care planning, transfers to the new Societies Act, “What is MB and IF” workshops, our Vela training retreat, at the SpringBrook Conference center, with groups from Ontario, meetings with CLBC and the Navigator team, as well as a deep analysis of Vela’s documents with Jeanette.

Since my training period, I have been involved with families and individuals who have existing MB's and many new families and individuals who are looking into creating an MB. In total, I have had contact with 54 people/families and have supported 4 new MB's development from beginning to end. Only one family chose to go the IF route, the others are transitioning towards MB's.

I have travelled to many communities in the last 11 months. I have been involved with families and individuals from, Courtenay, Comox, Nanaimo, Parksville, Campbell River, Buckley Bay, Lancrest, Victoria & Port McNeil. In total 9 communities on the Island. In the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley, I have been involved with families and individuals in Abbotsford, Coquitlam, Delta, Surrey, White Rock, Richmond, Burnaby, Mission and Abbotsford; 9 in total. So, at this time, I have done work in 18 different communities.

Since June, I have attended 22 meetings at CLBC with families and individuals. These meetings were for various reasons; funding support, BC housing & other housing support, an abuse allegation, new MB introduction, changes to MB situations, youth fair discussion, guide to support allocation advocacy, return of savings to CLBC, to name a few.

In the last couple of months, I have developed a workshop with Caitlin and Terry for "The Governance & Maintenance of Microboards". This workshop was developed, as a result of Facilitators findings; that many MB's have been requesting support to go back to basics and reassure themselves that they have "all their ducks in a row". Terry's husband, Gord, was kind enough to go through the workshop and provide us with invaluable feedback. Our next step is to ask a few MB families to meet with us and provide more feedback to ensure we are capturing the kinds of information MB's really need and want.

The following information is a list of activities I have engaged in the last 11 months:

- Formal and informal planning- 1 two-day PATH with 6 participants
- Budgeting support

- Financial and banking support
- Team building for MB's involved with service providers
- Employment for MB's support
- Incorporation support
- New Societies Act support
- AGM/meeting preparation support
- MB vs. IF presentations to individual families
- Documentation support
- Preparing for meetings with CLBC and other agencies when contentious
- Referral and consultation support
- Researching support
- Problem solving and MB strengthening through self-advocacy
- Info Fair planning

Summary-Trends & Conclusions

I have been able to recognize a few trends over the last 11 months. These include:

- MB's are asking for documentation and direct support for employment issues
- MB's struggling to find employees (mostly on the Island)
- MB's who have kids transitioning from High School finding that CLBC funding levels are not enough for a full Day Service so, there is a massive change from the support they received in school vs. adult Community Inclusion funding
- MB's concerned with succession of board members due to aging parents
- MB's struggling with the CLBC Guide to Support Allocation/Funding amounts
- MB's with savings and the requirement for returning unused funds

In conclusion, I have truly enjoyed working as a Facilitator for Vela. The environment at Vela is extremely encouraging and inspiring and each Facilitator has their own "style" and unique areas of knowledge. The sharing of ideas and supporting one another is encouraged and embraced and we are able to follow our principles and values every day with respect to many interesting, sometimes intense and often unique situations.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lori Cochrane

**LORI EMANUELS -
Facilitator's Report**

Lower Mainland/
Thompson/Okanagan
Region



This year has been something of an anomaly. Throughout the Thompson/Okanagan/Kootenay/Lower Mainland there have been a total of thirteen adults and one child who have received additional funding. The additional funding requests varied and in some situations, were quite significant. These stats don't include Standard Respite.

When reading the data in this document it's difficult to reflect the advocacy, planning and number of conversations to form relationships. Should the individual require funding, there are Plans, budget preparations and negotiations that each Microboard and I.F. funding request requires. As Facilitators, we are paid. Individuals, family members and friends dedicate endless hours and at times, miss work to attend meetings. There have been situations that in the end did not result in the formation of a Microboard or I.F. contract. Sometimes people aren't quite ready, and may require numerous meetings. There are people who decide that they want to receive services through an agency, but that process usually resolves itself in one or more meetings. At times people want to change up their model of support, or seek out support/advice for a wide variety of reasons. In any circumstance, what we hope for is that people get their needs met in a way that works best for them.

I'd like to thank CLBC, MCFD, and Health for their ongoing support, financial and otherwise that they provide to families in the regions I have the privilege of working in.

Lori Emanuels

Thompson/Okanagan/Kootenays

There are **fifteen** people all of whom have either formed Microboards or are in process. Please note that these individuals will require either new Plans or addendums to their existing Children's Plans. All require new budgets. **Five** of these individuals have secured CLBC Funding to date. Of the **Fifteen** youth, two have previously received funding through their Microboards' as children.

Children:

Two Children are in the process of forming Microboards.

Adults: Two Adults have formed Microboards and both have received funding. One person had existing C.I. funding through an agency and then received Homeshare funding via their new Microboard. The other person has new funding via their Microboard.

Other: Five Microboards' have received additional CLBC funding. They have each required an addendum to their Plan and new budgets.

The Lower Mainland

Other: Seven Microboards' and **one** person receiving I.F. have received additional funding from CLBC. They each required an addendum to their Plans and new budgets.

One child has received additional funding via their Microboard.

Respectfully Submitted.

Lori Emanuels



**TERRY
ROBERTSON
Facilitator's Report
Northern Region**

Hello from Northern BC.

It has been another busy year here in the north. It was a LONG Cold winter but it did not slow the number of calls from families around the region. Like previous years, as word of the work Vela does and how it supports family's spreads, the more calls I get.

The work for the past year has not slowed at all as we typically experience here at Vela. Certain times of the year families are concentrating on themselves but not this year. I'm not sure why that is, maybe their level of personal need or maybe more information is being shared by MCFD or CLBC. For whatever the reason I feel like I'm on roller blades all the time 😊

In the past year I have been getting calls to more remote communities, communities who don't have Agencies and have virtually no awareness of CLBC or how their son or daughter might get supports and services. My travel has lead me to

several First Nations communities too who are interested in the support that Vela can provide to some of their band members. All of these new connections take time to develop but it is so wonderful to provide help in communities that have a thirst to learn about options for their loved ones.

I recently travelled to Ft Nelson for the first time at the request of CLBC staff to meet with families and community members there. They have a few resources but it is a struggle for families there to plan and know what their options are, not unlike so many other families in the province. Ft Nelson will be one of my regular stops in the coming years. Interestingly, I was explaining a bit of my personal story to families one evening and a woman shouted – STOP, STOP, I know this story. I said I have never been to Ft Nelson before so I'm not sure how you would hear it. It turns out that her mom's best friend is a woman who was my boss in the Chemotherapy Unit at our local PG hospital for 25 yrs! She has been telling this mom since her son was born to call me lol. Truly, it is a small world! We have finally been connected 😊

Summary of work: *Northern BC Stat's for April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018*

- New Microboards – 7 New IF – 1
- New contacts this year – families not yet chosen IF or MB – 47
- Old families from years past who have not chosen MB or IF who have made contract this year – 22
- Existing IF families requesting supports this year – 11
- Existing MB's requesting help – 41
- Existing MB's who were transitioned this year – 13
- Requests from CLBC staff to contact families who need help that either have a PCS or IF or just need someone else to talk to the family – 25



- Requests for assistance/support for individuals for example – Kim Lyster,
- Could I connect with a family re aging, Hazelton Elders etc – 4 different groups
- Presentations – 10+ Numbers in attendance – 200+

I don't know what the coming year will bring but it's sure to be an adventure and I'm looking forward to it. I love my work at Vela!

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Robertson



KIM THOMAS
Fund Development
Officer's Report

It has been a very fulfilling and rewarding year for me as Vela's Development

Officer. With some changes in staffing, I took on the task of managing our Social Media and have thoroughly enjoyed engaging with people on our Facebook page.

In June of 2017 Vela hosted a delegation from Ontario for a full week of workshops and one-on-one sessions. I was proud to be able to present to other small nonprofits on the importance of the administrative process and development of members and donors.

In November of 2017 I was extremely fortunate to attend the Ruderman Inclusion Conference in Boston, MA. A large part of this conference was networking with philanthropic organizations. This was a great opportunity to share Vela's good work and success stories. This conference occurs every two years and I look forward to attending again on behalf of Vela to further develop important relationships.

One of my goals in 2017 came to fruition when I had the pleasure of meeting Rick Hansen, whom I have been wanting to establish contact with for some time. Mr. Hansen was very interested in the work Vela does. I will continue to build on this relationship with the Rick Hansen Foundation.

Membership and Donations

I am delighted to report that membership has increased by ~25% this fiscal. I am also extremely happy to report that Vela was selected to receive a substantial donation from Mott Electric, a local business who supports small non-profits. I am grateful to a valued Vela Member that recommended us for this donation and look forward to building a lasting relationship with them.

Goals/Objectives (2018-19)

My goals for the upcoming year are to continue to grow our Donor base and focusing on community awareness, getting the word out to the community on the amazing work of Vela.

Should you have any questions about how to donate, whether you currently are an annual donor, would like to become a monthly donor, or are thinking about a legacy donation, please feel free to contact me at any time.

“As you grow older you will discover that you have two hands. One for helping yourself, the other for helping others.” – Audrey Hepburn

*Respectfully submitted,
Kim Thomas*



A heartfelt thank you to our funders and donors



R. Thiessen
C. Thomas
T. Ferworn
S. Willoughby
M. Glaze
D. Mansell
Mike's Family Support Society
B. Ott
P. Richardson
V. Gee
G. Townson
B. Van Egelen
Arren's Charisma Society
D. Conder
J. Lee
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S. Hearle
Angies's Kare Society
E. Loughery
Family Ties Support Services Society
Team Geordy Society
Craig's Friendship Society
Bree's Courageous Spirit Society
Bryce's Best Life Society
S. Minchin
JD's Home Run Support Society
V. Nosella
Rob's Support Society
N. Tejani
All About Leah Society
Bert's Buddies Society
M. Wareham
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Alice's "My Way" Society

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Kokom's Nosism Society
T. McCrory
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