

# **GATEWAY SOCIETY**

## **Report of The President**

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**June 2009**

The 2008/2009 year has been an eventful one for Gateway Society. Throughout the fall and winter months members of the Board and management team spent countless hours protecting and furthering the Society's interests in challenging negotiations with Community Living BC regarding the wrap up of the children's residential treatment model. Although it was sad to see the end of a program which has provided exemplary service to autistic adolescents for more than 30 years, we are very excited about the new programs and service opportunities we are now developing.

The Ministry of Child and Family Development and CLBC have contracted with Gateway Society to develop a new "Provincial Outreach Prevention and Intervention Program for Children with ASD and Related Severe Complex Needs". An initial draft of the program was submitted in May and we await feedback from MCFD and CLBC. This is a very exciting initiative for Gateway and for children and families throughout the province.

The other new initiative, the Primrose Community Living Centre, addresses the needs of young adults with ASD who are transitioning to adult services. Primrose is housed in the former children's treatment centre and provides residential accommodation in small suites and day programs for young adults. Supported employment, evening programs and community outreach are all possible components of this exciting new endeavour.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to thank and congratulate all the managers and staff of Gateway for the incredible work they have done in meeting the challenges of this very turbulent year. It has not been easy to manage this level of change and uncertainty and to come out of it with renewed opportunities and enthusiasm. All of this has been accomplished while maintaining Gateway's other exemplary services and achieving the highest ever satisfaction ratings on client and family surveys. Again, congratulations and heartfelt thanks to all.

In addition to supporting the work of the staff, the Board has undertaken a complete rewrite of the Society's Bylaws which were out of date and deficient in a number of areas. The new bylaws will be presented at the AGM for ratification by the members. The Board has also reviewed its recruitment and succession planning practices and has implemented a modest advertising campaign in local newspapers and on-line to recruit directors from a broader cross section of the community. The Board also completed a self assessment and looked at recommendations arising from it. The Board and management staff held a strategic planning session in November to follow up on the work begun last year.

The Board worked with the Gateway Foundation to coordinate our recruitment efforts and members of the Board and staff assisted the Foundation in putting on a very successful 30 year celebration and fundraising event in November as part of ongoing efforts to maximize the shared resources of the two organizations.

Once again it has been a privilege to work with all the people associated with Gateway Society. This will be my last AGM as President and I would like to thank the Board, the staff and the people we serve and their families for their enthusiasm and support for the society and the work it does. It has been a pleasure to work with and for all of you.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Baydala.