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AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE Q&A: WHY NOMINATE?

We caught up with Brenda Alexander, Director at Chilliwack Society for Community Living (CSCL), who shared why it meant so much to nominate her colleague, Nancy Gauvin, for CSSEA's 2016 Awards of Excellence.



Nancy Gauvin (holding certificate) was honoured as CSSEA's 2016 Awards of Excellence Hero recipient and was surrounded by colleagues and her husband, who came to support her on her big day.

What moved you to submit a nomination for Nancy?

As a Leadership Team we made a commitment to acknowledge staff for the good work they do. Within CSCL we have two award systems, a STAR award for staff and an EXCEL award for managers. The STAR award is given out four times a year and the EXCEL award is given out annually and the nominations are peer-to-peer.

As part of our new strategic plan we set a goal to look for external (to CSCL) recognition opportunities. The Leadership Team felt that the CSSEA Awards of Excellence was a great place to start. These awards would allow us the opportunity to access provincial recognition.

Tell us about the nomination completion process. How easy or difficult it was, given the outcome and impact on your organization?

Time is precious and fleeting. There is always something that needs to be done immediately. You have to find value in the time spent working through the nomination process and have a commitment to staff recognition. Time needs to be set aside to concentrate on the questions, to allow you to hone in on the character of your nominee, what they bring to work, and to the

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STAY IN TOUCH

We welcome all suggestions and comments. Feel free to send your feedback to Doris Sun, Manager of Communications, at: dsun@cssea.bc.ca.



community at large and then to put all that in words. The process requires concentration and commitment. You have to have the vision that a nomination of this kind brings your agency closer to being a centre of excellence in your field.

How much has the award meant organizationally?

We felt our attendance at the awards presentation was important; both for support for our nominees and of course the winner. All those involved in our internal selection process were invited to the luncheon. In the end, the event was attended by most of the CSCL Leadership Team. We have posted the nomination video to all of our social media sites and on our website. In addition, we added an article to our CSCL newsletter. Being a nominee and a winner of an award is a great honor. We feel a sense of organizational pride and see this recognition very much in line with our current goal to be a recognized employer in our community. Awards such as this motivate us to look for and promote skills within our staff teams.

What would you say to someone who is sort of thinking about nominating but isn't sure and is also juggling a busy schedule?

I have to admit, the process did take some time to complete. There were two of us working on this together, so matching our schedules was not easy; however, working with a partner was a plus. We both come from different perspectives as to the contributions of the nominee so were able to give a well-rounded perspective on the good work that we felt should be recognized. There is a sense of pride that surfaces when putting things in writing. You get a picture - an idea of the scope - of the work that gets done and a sense of how lucky you are to be working with such a passionate 'ideas' person.

Give us your impressions about the Awards of Excellence Luncheon. How did it make you feel to be part of the sector on that special day?

I loved seeing people from different aspects of community and hearing the inspiring speeches by the winners. I thought the videos of each recipient were a highlight, and a good 'take away' from the event for those involved. The video was nice show piece. I would recommend a bit more time to network and for tables of people to talk amongst themselves. Overall, a good event!

BC COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
**AWARDS OF
 EXCELLENCE**



SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATIONS BY APRIL 19!
[HTTPS://AWARDS.BCCSS.CA/](https://awards.bccss.ca/)



THE SECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Stories of impact and innovation in the social services sector

EDITOR'S NOTE: We are excited to introduce a new regular column that aims to shine a spotlight on members and associates who are conducting operations in innovative ways. It is hoped that these shared ideas will allow community social services agencies to function at their best. If you have a story to submit about a program or practice that has improved the workings of your agency, email Doris Sun at dsun@cssea.bc.ca for a chance to be featured.

The Mindful Leader

By Doris Sun

It's Wednesday afternoon and you walk into Clements Centre Society in Duncan. Immediately, you notice a buzz of activity, as some individuals are engaged in a yoga class, while others have just returned from a local community musical jam session. As you linger a while longer, you notice something else - an inviting and irresistible aroma: it's the scent of fresh baked cookies wafting from the kitchen.

You will soon find out that this is not just any little kitchen. It's a state-of-the-art commercial facility and its pastry chefs are individuals with developmental disabilities who use the programs offered and also contribute as employees. It's all part of an innovative



new venture conceived by Dominic Rockall, Executive Director, which offers practical life skills and a paycheck.

“People with developmental disabilities want the opportunity to contribute to society and the community just like everyone else,” says Dominic. “It goes to their self-esteem and sense of self-worth, which is huge.”

The bakery, The Mindful Mouthful, is a fully functioning catering business that offers work to 22 adults (for a maximum of

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We are offering members the opportunity to take part in cost-effective training led by CSSEA and HEABC.

The initiative provides a guaranteed (but limited!) number of seats for two sessions at a rate of \$175 per session:

May 9, 9am-4pm, Performance Management in a Unionized Workplace:

- Participants will learn the six factors that contribute to effective performance management;
- Practice having effective conversations with employees about their performance;
- Gain awareness of best practices for conducting effective formal performance evaluations;
- Gain awareness of applicable legislation, case law, jurisprudence and labour relations principles that impact performance management

May 10, 9am to 4pm Managing the Discipline Process:

- Participants will gain an awareness of the discipline process within the context of employer policies, procedures and the collective agreement(s);
- Become familiar with an effective discipline process;
- Apply discipline processes, tools and techniques;
- Gain awareness of applicable legislation, case law, jurisprudence and labour relations principles that impact disciplinary investigations and decisions

For registration details, email Bela Barros at: bbarros@cssea.bc.ca

We want to hear your thoughts on whether these training partnerships are valuable for your organizations. Send us your feedback at: communications@cssea.bc.ca

ASK AN HRLR CONSULTANT: ANNE CAMPBELL



experience, training and education."

The Collective Agreements provide for internal wage equity within organizations. This means that if a new employee is hired at a rate that exceeds the rate of existing employees in the same classification and with similar work experience, training and education as the new hire then an arbitrator may move the existing employees in the same classification up to the rate that you offered to the new hire. This can be a very expensive route to take if you don't have documented proof that the new hire has demonstrably greater education, training and experience. It could also negatively affect morale as current qualified employees may feel you do not value the contribution they made through the years. If these same employees are orienting the new employee, it may also make for an uncomfortable situation.

Q: *Can I hire new staff at a rate higher than step one?*

Article 26.12 of the Collective Agreements offer specific direction on this question.

"The hiring rate of pay for a new employee will not be higher than the rate of pay for an existing employee in the same classification with similar work

Do you have a question for our HRLR team?

Email us at: dsun@cssea.bc.ca and we may feature your question.

GET OUR NEW EMPLOYEE TEMPLATE

Those who attended the Employment Contracts session at CSSEA's 2016 AGM and Conference will recall that the presenter, Lindsie Thomson, agreed to create a contract template for use by employers hiring new staff. The template has now been finalized and can be found on CSSEA's website by logging in, clicking on **Member Home** (under the Resources tab) and then **HRLR/HRLR - Templates and Forms** and scrolling down to **Other HRLR**.

As the template contains macros, or automated features, you may have to save the file in a trusted location so those features remain active. To do so:

- 1) Click File > Options.
- 2) Click Trust Center > Trust Center Settings > Trusted Locations.
- 3) Click Add new location.
- 4) Click Browse to find the folder, select a folder and then click OK.

If you have any questions, please contact your HRLR Consultant.

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four hours a day) and produces a range of treats like chocolate coconut crisp cookies, Nanaimo bars, date squares and beef pies. It evolved from a sheltered workshop concept called Lunch on Clements, where individuals were paid a small stipend for their work but which closed in the midst of a national conversation that questioned the employment model.

However, closing the program entirely was unacceptable for the participants, their families and the community. The people loved working in the kitchen and the community loved the cookies and pies. So it was re-opened as a volunteer ‘training kitchen.’ The stipend was ended and the work was scaled back. Participation was voluntary and recreational options were increased. Despite the changes, and with no marketing or advertising, the program still managed to sell approximately \$30,000 of product a year.

Transforming the training kitchen into a commercial bakery required assistance from the Vancouver Foundation in the form of a wage subsidy. Though the bakery is undoubtedly a success story, it still faced a deficit due to the cost of ingredients, packaging, wages and branding, so the subsidy played an important role in bridging the gap. By last August, everyone working at The Mindful Mouthful received a paycheque with an hourly rate higher than the minimum wage — a proud accomplishment after two years of trying to bring the idea to fruition.

There have undoubtedly been a few hiccups along the way, from finding appropriate packaging to accommodate the size of cookies to working through the legal ramifications of operating a charity alongside a commercial enterprise. Despite the inevitable challenges that come with any new venture, Dominic sees the future of The Mindful Mouthful as a bright one. He is now working with a local restaurateur, Andrew Moyer of Ottavio Bakery in Victoria, to scale up production in order to keep pace with demand. Dominic’s hope is to eventually triple the output. Once production is refined, The Mindful Mouthful will also start engaging social media and other marketing channels.

Despite the bakery’s obvious early successes, Dominic contends he is just happy to empower the individuals that Clements Centre Society serves. “Giving them income brings in other benefits, like a sense of freedom,” he says. “They get a huge sense of pride in being a part of this operation, like ‘Wow, we are part of this successful business!’”



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MINDFUL MOUTHFUL

Check out their YouTube page and recent CTV news coverage!

WELCOME TO CSSEA SARA GRUJIN!

The newest member of CSSEA’s HRLR Services team is Sara Grujin. Sara joined us earlier this year as an HRLR Consultant and has been spending her first few months immersed in our collective agreements and getting to know her members.

Prior to joining CSSEA, Sara practiced in the areas of family law, criminal law and insurance defence. She is a member of the bar in Virginia, District of Columbia and BC.

When not working, Sara can be found snowboarding, volunteering at the Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation, walking everywhere around the city, bike riding, making ceramics and supporting the arts.

One of Sara’s career highlights was working at the Hague, where she was fortunate enough to see international law in action. In addition to observing the court process, Sara worked with colleagues who spoke a myriad of different languages, including French, Italian, Danish and Serbian. It was a memorable experience to see justice was served...with the help of modern real time translation!

Sara can be reached at sgrujin@cssea.bc.ca.

