



## WARM HEARTS ON THE COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

WINTER 2022

On February 26, 2022, Our Place Society will be hosting the 6th annual Coldest Night of the Year 2K and 5K walkathons in Greater Victoria.

Walkers can choose two walk locations – Victoria (Pandora) and on the Westshore (Pacific Centre Family Services Association).

Your support will ensure we can continue to be a beacon for our friends and neighbors who are experiencing tough times.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO DONATE, PLEASE VISIT:

Victoria Walk: <https://cnoy.org/location/victoria/Pandora>

Westshore Walk: <https://cnoy.org/locationvictoriawestshore>

## OUR WORKPLACE STAFFING UPDATE

"The evolution of Our WorkPlace in the last 4 years has been nothing less than extraordinary." So says Ashley, the Manager of Our WorkPlace. "We've always been proud of the endless success of our clients over the years but the support we are now getting from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction allows us to expand our support abilities." New funding has also meant that two additional staff members have been added to the program – an Employment Job Coach and an Employment Facilitator. Here, the staff reflect on their roles at Our WorkPlace.

*"The evolution of Our WorkPlace  
in the last 4 years has been  
nothing less than extraordinary."*

- Ashley, Manager of Our WorkPlace

"The people we work with at Our WorkPlace face unique barriers which are often not visible, such as mental health and addictions," says Paula, the Job Developer at Our WorkPlace. "Pre-employment training and work is an important part of healing and recovery, and work or volunteering can provide people with purpose, meaning and value."

Our Employment Job Coach states, "As an adult learner myself, it's truly an honor to support people in the community with their journey of personal growth through education and employment. Participants in our programs have expressed an increased sense of confidence, self-esteem, and purpose."

"As a nurse I had experience teaching post secondary students which I knew would translate well into my new role with the People in Progress program," our new Employment Facilitator said.

On a final note, Ashley says, "Personally, I have big goals for Our WorkPlace, and getting to see them come to fruition is enormously exciting."

## PEOPLE IN PROGRESS (PIP) PROGRAM UPDATE

As we reported in our last newsletter, Our WorkPlace was set to start a one-year project funded by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. As of now, the first of 4 intakes of the new 12-week PIP program are complete. Since November 2021, a cohort of 5 people has successfully participated in 20 hours of workshops and training and work experience.

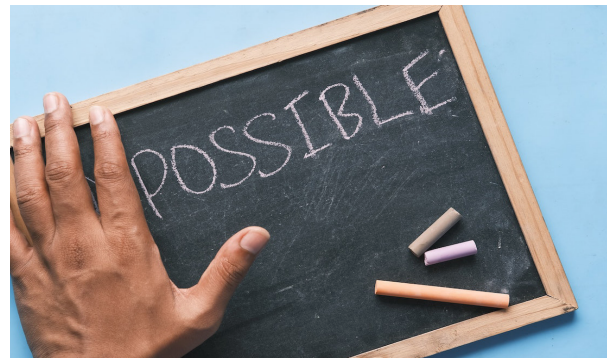
To deliver the expanded PIP, Our WorkPlace hired a dedicated employment facilitator to oversee all aspects of the employability skills portion of the program. While unprepared for the incredible rewards she's received from instructing the courses, she was honored to be part of the growth and insight the participants developed

through the weeks. "It was a gift for me to see the walls of self-protection surrender and watch the bloom of confidence and value evolve," she said.

As for the participants themselves, here are some of their thoughts on the PIP program:

*"I understand the importance of being authentic both personally and professionally. I also learned about how to be assertive and less passive in my communication which has really assisted me professionally."* - Margaret

*"I would highly recommend this amazing program to others. Our WorkPlace*



*has created such a supporting and safe environment to learn and grow".*  
- Theresa

It should be noted that three of the program's participants successfully completed their work placements and are continuing to volunteer, with one of them volunteering at Our WorkPlace!

## VEE'S CORNER

I can't think of a better way to start off the new year than by sharing a poem specially written by one of our own at Our WorkPlace at the beginning of the new People in Progress program. Wishing you all "hopeful tomorrows".

*Vee*



### The Ultimate Resolution

By TR

A gift was given to me just the other day

A peculiar present in the form of a tidal wave

Perhaps a mystery to yourself and unknown to me

A soul maybe alone floundering at sea

Crushing waves engulfing you as a whole

Peace is what this situation from you has stole

Within you a story drawing in a curious sleuth

A tale told in your own words accepted as truth

Beside your struggle you will soon learn to swim

A voyage of discovery that will help you exist again

What is it you wish... what is it you need?

I am the apprentice your desires I do heed

For me an archetype, a model for practice

To foster in you the beginnings of independence

...A Recovery on your terms

With water washing the despair away

Promising only hopeful tomorrows - after your today.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### PEOPLE IN PROGRESS (PIP)

May 2nd - July 22nd, 2022,

July 25th - October 14th, 2022

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday  
(10 am - 3 pm)

### DIGITAL JOB HUNTERS

will be returning, so stay tuned!

### DROP-IN MONDAYS

(10 am - 3 pm)

To register for groups, please contact: Leighann  
at [ourworkplace@ourplacesociety.com](mailto:ourworkplace@ourplacesociety.com)

Leighann will make an initial 'intake' appointment with you and tell you more about the groups and what to expect from them.



**Note:** Our WorkPlace recently started offering the SMART Recovery® program – a non-12-step and trained facilitator-led, substance misuse recovery group based on Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT).

It operates on an empowerment and change model that views substance use not as a disease but as a symptom and behavior that can be changed and lead to a more manageable and healthier lifestyle (physically and mentally). Every Tuesday 3:30 – 4:30 pm.

For more information visit:

<https://www.smartrecoverytest.org/local/meeting/victoria-british-columbia-tuesday-330-pm-to-430-pm-2/Smart-Recovery>

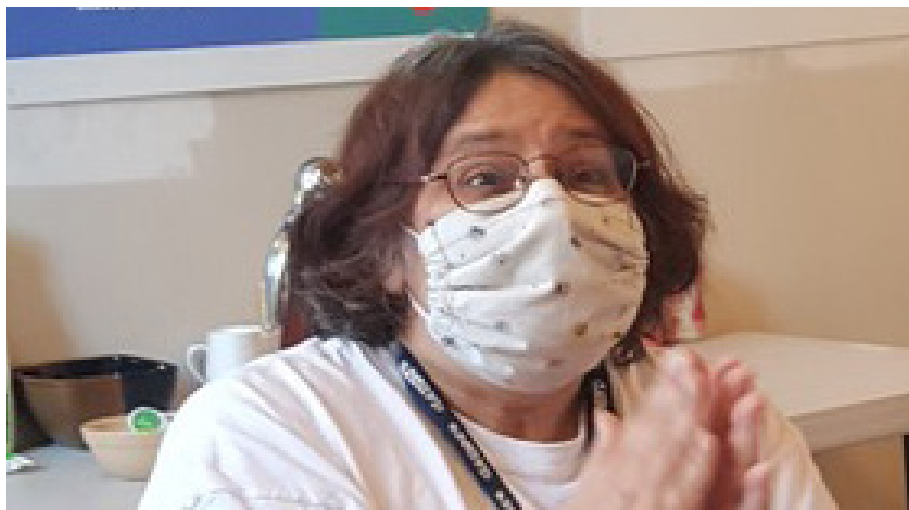
## PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS: RIVER

**R**iver came to Our WorkPlace in 2019 on the recommendation of the cooking program manager at Souper Meals, and successfully completed the People in Progress workshop series.

At the time, he was working construction part-time as a demolition worker. “My life has changed a lot since I took the workshop,” says River. He’s now working 4 days a week as a cart pusher in the Store Standards Department at Walmart.

As for the future, River says he wants to save enough money to pay for a gaming PC and get some professional recording software and equipment, so he can pursue a career in Rap on his days off. “I’d also like to get my driver’s licence this year and eventually save up for a car and buy my own home.”

Congratulations, River, on all you’ve accomplished! We hope all your hopes and dreams come true.



### IN MEMORIAM DARSHEN

Sadly, we are noting the sudden passing of Darshen, a past participant in the Women in Progress program. We are so grateful to have known her and will remember the enthusiasm and good humor she brought into the classroom.

#### NOTE TO READERS:

This newsletter is produced by Our WorkPlace volunteers, with input from staff, clients, and supporters.