

Harvesting a New
Path Forward

enVision a Great
Career with Us!

ENVISION NEWSLETTER • FALL 2021



enVision
community living

Community Connection



enVision Community Living is a non-profit community-based organization committed to delivering supports and services that provide people who live with an intellectual disability opportunities for personal growth and development, and opportunities to live the life of their choosing in the community.

The Director's Message



Jeannette DeLong
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On any given day we can feel like we are caught up in the storyline of “Groundhog Day”. Do you remember the 1993 movie starring Bill Murray as a weather man, where he wakes up each morning to the same song on the radio, and has to re-live the same day over and over? I’m sure many of you can understand this feeling as we keep going through wave after wave, after wave of COVID, wondering when it will ever end.

In this newsletter you will see numerous examples of how enVision continues to advance our mission despite the dragging on of COVID. It’s important to remind ourselves of this progress so that we can hold onto the hope that a better future is on the horizon. Sure enVision is facing some unprecedented challenges with securing enough staffing, helping people manage the toll on their mental health, and trying to find the balance between being alert to the risk of COVID while living lives with purpose. But our support staff and leadership teams continue to be driven by a dedication for people we serve to have a rich and meaningful life.

Carl’s story is a real encouragement because we see how Carl’s personality comes out in his passion for gardening, and because we see this as a shining example of what our staff are called to do for each person we serve. It’s very cool to see Carl’s passion for growing something from the land, providing food to share with others, and to see how gardening enhances his quality of life just like gardening does for so many of us. To hear how his support staff have discovered this interest of Carl’s and taken initiative to help his dream become reality, is truly inspiring. Our staff are living this out each day when they come to work. Throughout enVision we see examples of how staff have listened to people we serve, and have helped them find and realize their passion. So much good work is being done!

“Throughout enVision we see examples of how staff have listened to people we serve, and have helped them find and realize their passion.”

We are excited about the advancements made in the development of our new staff training model and in the re-vamping of our Day Services. Providing new staff with clarity on how we expect them to support the people we serve is critical to achieving our purposes. While the closure of Day Services during the pandemic was and continues to be hard

on everyone, the opportunity that it has given us to revisit and reimagine how we provide day time supports is welcomed. Our new name for day services, “enVision Possibilities” reflects our optimism about what we can help people to achieve with the delivery of the right supports. I’m confident we will have lots of stories to share with you as this person centered model of services gets implemented.

In this newsletter you also get introduced to Alisha our Recruiter. She gets new staff in the door, finding people with the right character and heart to support people we serve. Her own personal experience in supporting people who are vulnerable helps her to know which applicants will be a good fit, and helps her to convey how important and how rewarding this work is. Like many other businesses, we are in need of more staff to fill all of our roles. If you or someone you know feels a calling to do this work, then by all means apply! Alisha will be happy to screen you.

enVision is incredibly fortunate to have staff teams that show a dedication to be here for the people we serve no matter what. Due to the nature of the work we do at enVision, and that we are spread out to almost 50 locations throughout our communities, our staff are often forgotten by the community at large. They are unsung heroes in our communities, working alongside vulnerable people in their homes, and in small groups in Day Services, seemingly invisible as they show up for work each day, walking alongside some of Manitoba’s most vulnerable citizens. I strongly encourage you to give positive feedback and a big thank you to any of our staff for the incredible work they are doing in very difficult times. Their adaptability and willingness to change on a dime, their creativity and intuitiveness in meeting needs of people we serve is a shining example of the goodness in humanity. Our staff teams are amazing and we are so very blessed to have them working at enVision. Please help us in giving them all the accolades they deserve!

Although it may seem like each day starts with the same old song, we are optimistic that with each step we take towards a positive future, we will get out of this seemingly endless cycle. We will benefit from strengthened connections with people that matter most, knowing that time is precious, and that each day matters. The same old song will eventually stop to make room for new opportunities to inspire equality, inclusion, and the value of all people.

Harvesting a New Path Forward

During the summer, you can find Carl in his garden watering his abundance of delicious vegetables, growing under his watchful eye and detailed care. At harvest time, Carl shares his bounty with his family and friends, as well as his roommates. Carl is a gentle and caring man who takes comfort in his garden. For Carl, his garden is a place of happiness where he can keep his hands busy while the sun shines down on his face.

“For Carl, his garden is a place of happiness where he can keep his hands busy while the sun shines down on his face.”

enVision knows from experience that when people move into a home staffed by enVision, they may have difficulty with the uncertainty of the unknown. For Carl, a man who has 5 sisters and 2 brothers who he cares for deeply, this move was a big change. It is not an easy thing to move from a family home into a new home, with new routines and new people. For that reason, enVision staff focus on getting to know the people they support and understand their wants and needs. The goal is to ensure that people feel at home, and know that they have a place to belong. For Carl, much of that sense of belonging was found in his new garden, built for him specifically, when he came to live in an enVision home.

Carl has a strong work ethic, evidenced while working at enVision's Kindale Industries for many years. At the age of 74, the only thing that has stopped Carl from going to work every day, to sort screws which are used by the construction industry, was the pandemic. Carl has not officially retired yet and doesn't see it happening in the near future. In fact, he looks forward to the end of the pandemic so that he can return back to work.

Lynette Penner, Coordinator with enVision, reflects on her time shared with Carl at Kindale Industries saying, “Carl

is the most dedicated, reliable and hard-working person. He loves his work and takes pride in anything he works on. He cares deeply for his family and for anyone that he works alongside. His work ethic is inspiring!”

Bowling has also become a passion for Carl. He has joined a bowling league in Steinbach and really enjoys the competition and comradery he shares with the other bowlers. When asked if he thought himself a good bowler and about his experience he replied, “I am a good bowler! I enjoy it because I get to see my friends and we are having fun together and we always go to A & W after the game!”. Since the pandemic, activities such as bowling have been cancelled for Carl and his friends, however one day soon they are sure to open up again and Carl and his bowling buddies will return for another game and an A & W dinner.

“Comfort and hope are what's pulled us through this pandemic and in Carl's garden, he harvests that in abundance.”

Carl's garden over the spring, summer and fall has allowed him that bit of peace needed to get through the pandemic when his other favourite activities were unavailable. Asked to describe what he grows and what he hopes to grow in the future, he said, “I planted tomatoes, cucumber, onions, lettuce, spinach, zucchini and beans. Maybe next year I will plant corn and potatoes”. Comfort and hope are what's pulled us through this pandemic and in Carl's garden, he harvests that in abundance.

Written with content from Cathy Acio, Manager





Accessibility and Beyond

The enVision Foundation kicked off its annual fall campaign launch on October 1, 2021 with an Accessibility and Beyond Drive-Through Dinner, hosted at enVision's Kindale Industries. Vehicles lined up to collect a delicious meal in support of enVision's annual project, the construction of a second accessible home. The enVision Foundation is excited to share that \$20,000 was raised through this event! We can't thank everyone enough who was able to attend, your support



Lindsay Unrau
 FUNDRAISING &
 PROMOTIONS COORDINATOR

will go a long way to building a new accessible home.

Merv's Pitchfork Fondue of Manitoba cooked onsite and delivered an incredible dinner featuring a steak sandwich, coleslaw, baked beans and baby round potatoes. The portions were large and the flavours were incredible. Dessert was provided by local Prairie Picker's Cafe who baked up their famous and delicious apple crisp. It wasn't long after meals had been picked up that we were receiving texts from people already served, telling us just how wonderful their meal was!



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Merv's Pitchfork Fondue
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This year's event required several volunteers to ensure the smooth delivery of meals from kitchen to vehicle. The Foundation was very fortunate to have the AA Eastman Flames Ringette team, several staff from enVision, including Directors, Coordinators and Managers and Paul Reimer and his family from Rivr Financial come out to volunteer. Everyone did such a fabulous job and we can't thank them enough.

Of course, this event could not have been made possible

without our sponsors. A big thanks goes out to Rivr Financial, Fairway Specialty Vehicles, Merv's Pitchfork Fondue of Manitoba, Prairie Picker's Cafe, Hub International/ Northbridge Insurance, Sobeys and Golden West.

The Accessibility and Beyond Drive-Through Dinner was a great success and the Foundation is well on its way to raising the required funding needed to construct a new accessible home. Thank- you to our community for helping enVision inspire equality, inclusion and the value of all people.

enVision the Possibilities!



Janice Munro
DIRECTOR OF SERVICES

As with all organizations impacted by this pandemic, there was a question that began to be asked with increased frequency: If we have a chance to go back to the way it was in our Day Services before COVID-19, would we? In talking to the people who choose enVision's services, and in conjunction with their families over the past few years, it became clear it is time for our approach to change to enable each person to have more choice, community involvement, and opportunities to grow.



As 2021 draws to a close, many are already starting to think about the New Year. The hope that a fresh start brings, the faith that guides the plan and the resolve for this year to be the one when we stick to those resolutions! Here at enVision, we have been getting a jumpstart on our resolutions and we want to share more on what we have planned for 2022. We invite you to enVision the Possibilities!

enVision has traditionally offered day time services at the following Steinbach locations: Martha P. Rempel Center, Edith's Place, and 395B Main Street, traditionally known as the Retirement building. While each location may have unique ways in which they support people, the common thread has always been the ability to laugh, learn, and connect with others.

With our community continuing to grapple with the effects of COVID-19, the services at these locations have gone through a tremendous amount of change. Since March 2020, in some cases supports have not been offered in person very often. While some locations are open to a few individuals with critical need, at this time efforts to remain connected are often occurring virtually through the use of technology.

We are now in the foundational phase of this change in our Day Services, putting the infrastructure in place to allow

for a new approach. We wanted to have a consistent way in which we refer to these new services and have tagged them with "enVision Possibilities". The ability to make changes in any organization begins with people. People who choose our services want to be more involved in decisions which address their unique capacities and potential. For many years all individuals have attended the same day service location each day. Now we are moving towards a model where people are provided choices in any of our day service locations and within the community that best suits their needs. Their individual interests will be explored through our newly created role of Community Connector. These new staff members will work to find the right options for each person and make plans to provide new opportunities based on the feedback received.

enVision's new Community Connectors along side our team of dynamic Direct Support Professionals, are being led by Amanda Liska, Community Supports Manager; Staci Harder, Life Skills Manager; and Mike Hiebert, enVision Possibilities Coordinator. In order to utilize enVision's properties to their fullest potential, Martha P. Rempel, Edith's Place and 395B Main St. buildings are currently being assessed for the variety of activities that could be offered and in turn, making improvements to meet those growing demands.

We are committed to delivering quality supports and services that provide the most amount of opportunity to live the life of one's choosing in their community. The team at enVision will be listening closely to the ideas and interests of those who choose our services to create a breadth of options based on that feedback. We continue to appreciate our engaged staff who are committed to walking this path of change side by side with the people we support and their families. We are strong in our ability to sustain this resolution for change as enVision exists to inspire equality, inclusion, and the value of all people.

"We are strong in our ability to sustain this resolution for change as enVision exists to inspire equality, inclusion, and the value of all people."

New Employee Training Model at enVision Community Living

enVision Community Living is creating a progressive path forward in how its Direct Support Professionals are trained to support people with intellectual disabilities. For many years enVision's leadership teams created and facilitated in-house classroom style training to teach new and existing staff, over the course of a year or more, how to achieve outcomes in their work. The new model takes advantage of existing technology for ease of delivery, and first-person storytelling to demonstrate the character and spirit that is required of staff to be effective in their work.

enVision's Professional Development Committee began the redevelopment process with conversations with Coordinators, Managers, Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and most importantly, people served by enVision. The goal was to find out what they saw as most important for staff to know in order to effectively meet the needs of people served. Then enVision Coordinator, Mike Hiebert, was seconded from his regular Coordinator duties for three months to develop the content and mode of delivery for this new training.

A sub-committee of Managers and DSPs helped guide the development of this updated training format, researching content and delivery options. This group made the decision to move to an online format, which would allow for more consistency, timeliness, and efficiency of training. They also indicated a desire to have our new staff hear from a variety of people, all of whom would tell their own stories as a way to clarify what kind of expectations they have of a Direct Support Professional.

Over several years, enVision had been using the Open Future Learning (OFL) platform to provide online training for staff. The topics through OFL training are directly related to our work, and when we learned that they had an option for organizations to develop their own modules, with their own content, we decided to take advantage of this great option! Creating our own content was a large piece of the redevelopment. Once we had established this content, we sought out a variety of people who were willing to tell their stories in front of a camera—and they did not disappoint! The module contains video messages from people we support, DSP's, family, and leaders from within enVision. The progression of thinking in this new training defines enVision's core mission to inspire equality, inclusion and the value of all people.

Our past process for training staff was usually spread out over the first year of employment. The new module of training, in addition to the one-day orientation developed by our Human Resources department, will result in most of the basic



training being completed prior to any staff working a shift anywhere in the organization. This entry-level training could take up to 3 days for staff to complete. This is designed to ensure that a new staff member feels confident in their new role and has an idea of what to expect on their first day. A confident and supported staff member is much better prepared to do a great job and provide exceptional services to the people we support.

The next component of enVision's training to be developed is the hands on, practical element of a DSPs role, specific to the people they support. We will develop a consistent format with location specific content to ensure staff understand a person's needs and how they want their supports to look. This will ensure that our staff are better able to provide opportunities for personal growth and development, and provide what is needed for people we serve to live a life of their choosing in the community.

By using a combination of storytelling and theory, we hope staff are better able to catch the vision of what we do at enVision, and be in a better position to help us achieve our mission. Everyone wants to know that their work makes a difference in someone's life, and this training redevelopment is one more way to impact our staff to see this as a meaningful career for the long term.



Mike Hiebert
COORDINATOR

enVision a Great Career with Us!

Have you ever considered a career in the disability sector? Are you passionate about making a difference in the lives of others and promoting equality, inclusion and the value of all people? Meet Alisha Nickel, enVision's new Recruiter. She will be one of the first people you meet when applying for a job at enVision. We wanted you to get to know her a little better so we asked Alisha to share information about herself:



1 How long have you worked with enVision?

I started with enVision six years ago as the Employment & Transition Supervisor for Eastman Employment Services. My title was changed to Manager, and I remained in that role until May 2021 when I assumed the position of Recruiter.

2 How did you get to know about this work?

I came to know about the work because I have a family member who lives with a disability. My Aunty Pat has always been actively involved in my family's life and my great-grandparents were involved in ACL-Swan River. In 2008 I had heard that ACL-Swan River was hiring so I applied to be a Residential Direct Support Worker – and fell in love with the work!

3 What is your educational background?

I have a Diploma in the Disability and Community Support Program through Red River College. I was one of three selected work-place students in my year that was awarded with funding from the Province of Manitoba to cover my tuition, books, and expenses associated with completing the 2-year program.

Through completion of the diploma, I had the opportunity to be nominated for the Lieutenant Governor's Medals for Proficiency award, and I was awarded the Red River College Gold Medal, which recognizes students in a diploma or degree program who attain the highest cumulative grade point average.

4 What are the various jobs that you have held in this career?

Oh, I have dipped my toes in nearly every avenue of support and in multiple organizations! I have worked in direct support residentially and in day services with 2 years being specific

to job coaching and employment development. I've worked direct support in independent living, provided respite services to a child with a disability, and have worked over 5 years in management specific to supporting a team focused on supported employment, as well as being interim Manager for both a day service and a residence.

5 What's been the best part, in all of your experience?

The best part of the job would have to be witnessing, and being an active part in, growth and development of people served. I truly revel in the joy that a person experiences when they complete a goal they've been working so hard towards, when they receive their first paycheque from their first job, when they finally do not need support in a certain area in their life, and can do it independently. That joy is unmatched and I have felt so honoured to be a part of that journey.

6 How has the sector changed over the course of your career?

The sector has changed significantly – when I first came into this line of work, it was very focused on the “do for, not with” mentality. Independence and autonomy were discussed, but not necessarily put into practice. The language has of course changed for the better, and the training that is available to staff is much improved. I have worked in environments that were very clinical, where choices were restricted, and I am happy to say that those kinds of environments are not ones that I have encountered recently. Dignity of risk is emphasized more so now, and informed choices are encouraged and supported. “Group homes” with 4+ people were quite common when I started in this field, and now people may have a room-mate or two, or perhaps live on their

own. This is extremely exciting to witness as it just further pursues true inclusion in community.

7 Why do you think this is a great career to have?

I think that being in human services can be so impactful, not only for the people you may support – but the family members of that person receiving supports, and for yourself. Some of the best people I know are folks who live with a disability. Some of my most life-changing moments have happened while supporting someone! I have garnered friendships that have lasted over a decade with people that used to be my coworkers, and I am proud to be the godmother

for the child that I used to support when I did respite services. People are impactful, regardless of ability– people have a way of making their mark on your life and changing you. And – you have this great honour and responsibility because your actions impact others. You have the privilege to contribute to and be immersed in another person's life, and that makes this line of work more than a job, to me.

We are always looking for great people with the right character and heart to support the people we serve. Here are some of the opportunities available at enVision!

Direct Support Professionals Roles at enVision

Direct Support Professionals make a difference in the lives of others and promote inclusive societies by providing a range of supports and services for people living with an intellectual disability in southeastern Manitoba.

Direct Support Professionals assist people to achieve their personal goals, provide opportunities to learn new skills, promote continuous learning, foster the development of relationships with others, and increase inclusion in community.

Residential Services

DSPs in Residential settings provide supports for day to day living in enVision staffed homes and in the community, also facilitating social connections and relationships.

Supported Independent Living (SIL)

DSPs in SIL provide supports for day to day independent living in people's homes and in the community.

enVision Possibilities

DSPs in enVision Possibilities provide supports in Day Service settings and in the community, assisting people supported to achieve their goals.

Job Coach

Job Coaches provide supports to people to achieve their goals at their workplaces, and in the community with an employment focus.

Employment Facilitator

Employment Facilitators find employment opportunities with local businesses that meet the goals and dreams of people served.

Community Connector

Community Connectors find meaningful opportunities and experiences for people in the community that meet the goals and dreams of people served.

Day Services DSP (Kindale and Eastman Recycling Services)

DSPs at Kindale and Eastman Recycling Services provide supports in these settings and in the community, assisting people supported to achieve their goals.

Come enVision a great career with us! Alisha looks forward to meeting with you.

For a list a current available career with enVision and to learn more about the careers listed above, visit:
<https://envisioncl.com/careers/>

New Office

We are eager to make some noise about enVision's new satellite office located at 390 Main St. in Steinbach! Increasing visibility and giving people easier access to our services is exactly what we had hoped this space would do for enVision, and it has not disappointed.

An exciting part of this new space is the attention enVision and our services are getting in the community. With greater visibility and a bright sign, the office is attracting attention and members of the public are walking in to learn more about the supports we provide, to ask about job vacancies, and to explore how they can provide the best possible supports for a family member.

This office is home to Supported Independent Living and Home Share services, and serves as an additional office space for our leaders to work from.

The office space is easy to get to, has ample parking and is fully accessible to meet mobility needs.



#MLA2WorkDay

On October 27, 2021 Honourable Kelvin Goertzen came out to Steinbach to work alongside William, an individual supported by enVision's Eastman Employment Services for *Bring your MLA to Work Day*. #MLA2WorkDay is an online campaign created to encourage more inclusive hiring practices, celebrate inclusive employers and highlight the contributions of Manitobans with disabilities to the workforce. This event takes place during *Disability Employment Awareness Month*. During this visit, William gave Honourable Kelvin Goertzen a tour of his workplace to highlight some of the awesome things he contributes during his work day.

A great BIG thank-you to Honourable Kelvin Goertzen for helping us celebrate Disability Employment Awareness Month and #MLA2WorkDay!

Pictured (Left to Right) Honourable Kelvin Goertzen, Reyn Kroeker (General Manager), William, Hannu Nurkkala (Associate Dealer)





Membership Matters

Embracing our differences because everyone belongs!



Your membership expresses your support of enVision Community Living's mission to inspire equality, inclusion and the value of all people.

Each member of enVision Community Living brings with them a personal connection to our mission. They contribute talent, time and insight into helping guide enVision's services. We value all members and the contribution they make to providing quality services to people who live with a disability.

Membership gives you the privilege of voting in regards to matters raised at the annual general meeting (AGM), held each June. A single membership gives an individual one vote, and a family membership gets two votes. Members will receive notice of the AGM in the mail, and also have the option to receive newsletters by mail or email.

Individual Membership \$10 • 1 Vote | **Family Membership \$15 • 2 Votes**

Sign-up to Become a Member!

You can sign-up to become a member by visiting us at envisioncl.com/become-a-member

enVision Your

Legacy

Make the enVision Foundation an important part of your life story.

Arrange your legacy gift today to inspire equality, inclusion and the value of all people for future generations.

www.envisioncl.com

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Make A Difference. Make Your Donation.

In 2021-22 we're raising funds to support the construction of a new accessible home!

An accessible home offers one-level living, a no-step entrance, wider doorways and hallways, and wheelchair accessible bathrooms for people living with a disability. We invite you to support the construction of this new home by making a donation.

Your donation will help break down barriers and empower people in our community to live more independently.



OUR GOAL

\$100,000

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SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Accessibility at home is essential for increased independence for people living with a disability. Your donation will help create a more inclusive community.



Yes! I want to support people in our community!

Name: _____

City: _____

Prov: _____ Postal: _____

Signature: _____

My enclosed donation:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other: \$ _____

Or, I would like to help enVision with my monthly contribution (void cheque enclosed):

\$20 \$30 \$50 Other: \$ _____

Monthly donations will be processed on the 15th of each month.

Fill out this form and return to the enVision Foundation, 84 Brandt Street, Steinbach MB R5G 0E1
You can also make your donation online by visiting www.envisioncl.com