

Holiday Grocery 2007



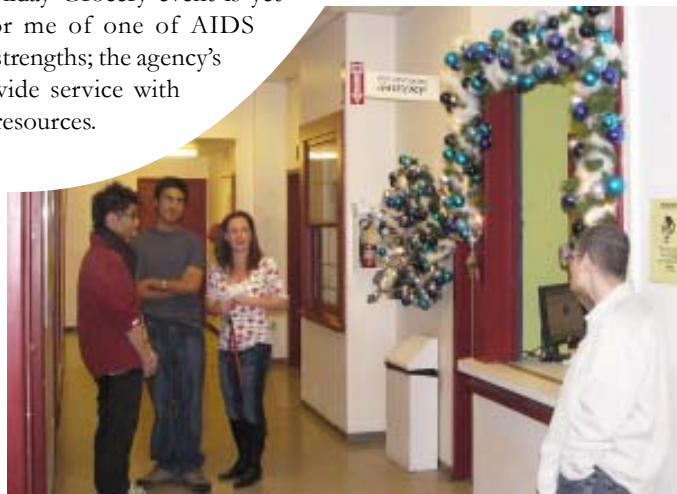
Each December, AIDS Vancouver strives to provide a special Holiday Grocery distribution of staple and festive foods to help our clients through the holiday season. Over the years, pulling off this event has become increasingly difficult. Over the Grocery's 15 plus years of operation, the demands on the program have continued to grow, along with the rising cost of food. In recent years, the Holiday Grocery has been accessed by over 900 individuals and families.

This year we faced the challenge of creating a festive Holiday Grocery with half the budget of previous years. I really feel that the success of this event is a perfect example of AIDS Vancouver's strength, creativity and resiliency.

We began with a Grocery Program meeting in which volunteers brainstormed ideas of how we could create a different Holiday Grocery event, while still meeting the needs of our clients. Many volunteers and staff brought ideas to the table of how it could be done differently. We included ideas from all sides, incorporated needs and input from our community partners, and came up with a vision that would work. We made adjustments to respond to the logistical bumps along the way. In the end, the event was very successful - appreciated by clients, right on budget, and used our resources in a far more efficient way than in previous years.

Special thanks to the awesome group of volunteers and staff who spent two long days packing hundreds of bags of food and distributing them, as well as Choices Food Markets Ltd. for their incredibly generous donation of festive green cloth bags. In addition, gratitude to Richard O'Donnell; our holiday decorator extraordinaire, who ensured that our surroundings were sparkly and bright.

The success of the Holiday Grocery event is yet another example for me of one of AIDS Vancouver's core strengths; the agency's ability to provide service with limited resources.



Project Stitch celebrates another successful year!

In May of 2007, over twenty young people from across the Lower Mainland came together to form the Project Stitch Youth Leadership Team. This team of enthusiastic and talented young people participated in a series of educational workshops to gain the skills and information needed to educate themselves and their peers about HIV/AIDS. During the summer months, this team worked with local artists in the area of film, photography, spoken word and podcasting to explore ways to integrate the arts as a method of expression and as a tool to share HIV information.

The Digital AIDS Quilt continued to grow with over one hundred new local and international submissions. Our new website emphasizes these artistic contributions and welcomes your submission too! Check out www.projectstitch.com for more information.



A small exhibition of the Digital AIDS Quilt was held at the Scotia Bank Dance Centre in collaboration with New Music Festival. Launching on World AIDS Day, this exhibition highlighted the important role the arts play in the HIV/AIDS movement and the role young people play in shaping its future.

The many months of work in the community and the growth of the Quilt culminated on December 1st at an interactive World AIDS Day event. December 1st brought together our project stitch leadership team to share their films, pod casts and slam poetry with performances by the Drum Cafe, singer song writer Lisa Pham and the band Freeflow. It was evening of creativity and warmth on a snowy World AIDS Day evening.

Thank you to all who dedicated their time, energy and talent to help make Project Stitch 2007 a huge success!

Miranda Compton, Director of Client Services – Farewell

As many of you know, I have recently accepted a new position at Vancouver Coastal Health. I am overcome with emotion when I think about leaving my work here at AIDS Vancouver. What I have appreciated most about my work at AIDS Vancouver, is that each day has provided me with an opportunity to learn something new, and to be inspired. There are no dull days, because there is always an opportunity at AIDS Vancouver to be a part of change or to make a difference.

The first thing I learned when I started at AIDS Vancouver is that volunteers are at the very centre of HIV/AIDS work. Back in 1993, what was immediately remarkable to me about AIDS Vancouver is that volunteers were everywhere; greeting people at reception; working one-on-one with individuals who were newly diagnosed to critically ill; staffing the helpline to answer a myriad of questions from the community, or raising money and awareness in the community.

Since that first day 14 years ago, whenever I have started to feel weighed down by the challenges of HIV/AIDS work, I have needed only to walk around the building to draw inspiration

from the amazing volunteers working to make a difference in the lives of those affected by HIV/AIDS. It might be a reception volunteer ensuring that every individual who phones or walks in is greeted with warmth, dignity and respect; a library volunteer helping a caregiver gather information and resources to better support their loved one; the team of grocery volunteers working together to unload trucks, stock shelves, prepare deliveries and distribute food to our hundreds of clients; or sometimes, it's the sight of a care team volunteer, waiting quietly to accompany her client home - providing vital, life-affirming companionship and assistance. These are the scenes that have sustained me and it is this dynamic of staff and volunteers working together to make a difference that I will miss most.

I am grateful that I am not going far – My work at Vancouver Coastal Health keeps me in the HIV/AIDS field and I will maintain a connection to AIDS Vancouver.

Therefore, instead of saying good-bye, I'll just say, see you soon... and thank you for continuing to inspire me and others with your amazing work.

Key Priority Areas for AIDS Vancouver:



Our main areas of focus follow our mission tagline - Prevent/Act/Support

To increase AIDS Vancouver's capacities for effective HIV/AIDS prevention.

- Enhance engagement with HIV infected and affected populations
- Promote opportunities for education development, learning and dissemination of information and resources
- Sustain and improve the effectiveness of programs and interventions



To advance AIDS Vancouver's leadership position in the HIV/AIDS field.

- Build productive relationships
- Influence the HIV/AIDS policy agenda
- Evolve AIDS Vancouver's leadership capacities



To reduce HIV stigma and discrimination.

- Address the experience of stigma and discrimination
- Extend awareness and promote human rights



To meet the health needs of AIDS Vancouver's HIV affected clients

- Advocate for optimal health care, housing, income security and psychosocial support
- Improve access to health information

To create a supportive environment for clients that promotes health and well-being.

- Ensure physical safety
 - Promote conditions that support emotional safety
 - Improve accessibility to all programs and services
- Parm Poonia, Manager Volunteer Resources



Louis-Marie Bournival, co-chair of Theatre Cares Vancouver is presenting this year's cheque for \$10,000 to AIDS Vancouver (Parm accepting the cheque, with Tasha, a community outreach volunteer and William watching on). The cheque was presented to them at the Carnegie Centre on World AIDS Day, 2007.



A photo of Mel Hennan, an artist and grocery patron, with his art display in front of the AV Grocery, in honour of St Valentine's Day, 2008.

Need information? Visit the library!

Whether you volunteer with the care team, helpline or the community outreach team, you need up to date and reliable information on HIV.

The PARC library offers you a few ways to stay current:

Use our online catalogue (<http://aidsvan.andornot.com/>) and click on "New acquisitions!"

Check the library blog for daily HIV news: <http://aidsvanlib.blogspot.org>

Sign up for the new library E-newsletter. Complementary to the library blog, this new publication presents a selection of the best resources newly acquired at PARC and available in

the library or online. For those of you who work directly with persons living with HIV and their families, a special section presents useful resources on a specific topic relating to HIV/AIDS.

There's a sign-up form for the e-newsletter on the library blog. You can also contact the library by phone or email if you want to be added to the list of recipients.

Very soon, AIDS Vancouver's new website will offer you hundreds of selected resources on HIV-related issues. Stay tuned!

You are welcome to call or email us with your questions at: 604-983-2294 or library@aidsvancouver.org



National Volunteer Week 2008 is April 27th - May 3rd.

Aids Vancouver would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for volunteering your time with us



Why National Volunteer Week is important:

National Volunteer Week is significant because the work of volunteers impacts virtually every aspect of society, including health, education, social services, youth, culture, sports and recreation, the arts, and the environment.

BC – Our Year to Celebrate! How you can help...

This is your opportunity to showcase volunteer activities and/or celebrations in your community. Enjoyed a great personal volunteer experience? SHARE your volunteer stories. Drop us an e-mail at volbc@vcn.bc.ca. Your story will be read by others to help spread awareness of the value and impact that volunteers make in the community.

National Volunteer Week Photo Contest

In celebration, Volunteer BC is looking for submissions from individuals or organizations for its annual NVW Photo Contest. This year's theme is "Volunteering: From Compassion to Action". Find out how to enter by going to: <http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/events/documents/NVW-PhotoContest-VolunteerBC-2008.pdf> for further information.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you or anyone you know are interested in volunteering with AIDS Vancouver, please visit our website www.aidsvancouver.org for a list of current volunteering opportunities, as well as our application process. If you don't have web access you can call our Information line at: 604-893-2266

Submission Deadline: April 11, 2008

AIDS Vancouver Volunteer Resources Program Philosophy:

Volunteer Resources strives to build organizational commitment and competency by providing meaningful and relevant volunteer opportunities that support and enhance the mission of AIDS Vancouver. Paid and unpaid staff work together to alleviate vulnerabilities to HIV/AIDS.

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