



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter



## **CHHA-BC Annual General Meeting**

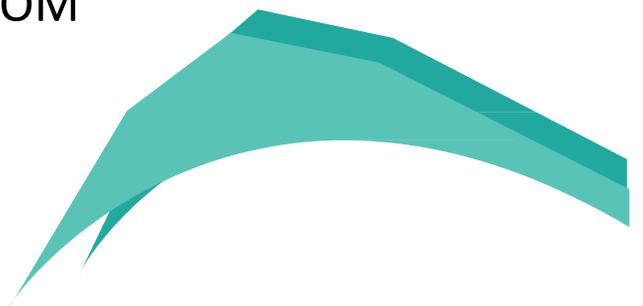
[www.chha-bc.org](http://www.chha-bc.org)

### **Information Package**

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. PDT

On line by ZOOM





# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

CHHA-BC

Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. PDT

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## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) AGENDA:**

- 1. Call to order: Dr. Ruth Warick, President**
- 2. Presentation by Hon. Nicholas Simons, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction**
- 3. Presentation by Lee Pigeau, National Executive Director**
- 4. AGM quorum count and approval of agenda.**
- 5. Approval of minutes of the 2020 AGM**
- 6. Annual Report**
- 7. Financial report**
- 8. Branch reports**
- 9. Report of the CHHA-BC Youth Peer Support Program**
- 10. Appointment of auditor (peer review)**
  - a. Waive the requirement for a CPA audit.**
  - b. Appoint peer auditor**
- 11. Appointment of accounting firm**
- 12. Report of Nominating Committee**
  - Election of CHHA-BC President and CHHA-BC Board Members**
- 13. New business:**

## 14. Adjournment



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

**2020 Annual General Meeting CHHA-BC  
MINUTES  
September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Held Virtually through Zoom  
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

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1. Call to Order:

President Ruth Warick called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum had been achieved with 13 voting members present.

2. Approval of Agenda:

**RESOLUTION: That the agenda for the 2020 CHHA-BC Annual General Meeting be approved.**

MOVED BY: Charles Laszlo  
SECONDED BY: Bowen  
CARRIED: Carried

3. Approval of Minutes of the 2019 CHHA-BC AGM:

**RESOLUTION: That the minutes of the 2019 CHHA-BC AGM be approved.**

MOVED BY: Gael Hannan  
SECONDED BY: Marilyn Dahl  
CARRIED: Carried

4. Joint President and Operations Manager Report: Ruth Warick, Henry Kutarna

A written report was submitted and a PowerPoint presentation was given that provided highlights for the last year.  
There were no questions, comments or concerns.

**RESOLUTION: That the 2019-2020 joint President and Operations Manager report be accepted.**

MOVED BY: Ruth Warick  
SECONDED BY: Jessica Niemela  
CARRIED: Carried

5. Financial Report: Mike Phelan

There were no questions, comments or concerns.

**RESOLUTION: That the 2019-2020 Financial report be accepted.**

MOVED BY: Mike Phelan  
SECONDED BY: Charles Laszlo  
CARRIED: Carried

6. Branch Reports:

Abbotsford: Jerry Gosling

- Submitted written report
- Branch has not been meeting because of Covid
- Jerry delivered speechreading classes in the spring

Vancouver: Rosalind

- Submitted written report
- 10<sup>th</sup> annual Walk2Hear being held virtually on September 27, with special videos and Virtual Video Challenges.
- Marilyn asked for clarification on start times.

North Shore: Hugh Hetherington

- Submitted written report
- A normal year for CHHA North Shore branch, with many meetings, speakers, and donations to CHHA, including scholarships
- Have added Ron Chapman to the Board

Comox: Jean Shepherd attending on behalf of Comox branch.

- Written report submitted. No verbal comments.  
There were no other questions or concerns.

**RESOLUTION: That the 2019-2020 CHHA-BC branch reports be accepted.**

MOVED BY: Elwood Major  
SECONDED BY: Jerry Gosling  
CARRIED: Carried

7. Report from the Youth Peer Support  
Written report submitted by Bowen Tang

**RESOLUTION: That the annual report of the Youth Peer Support Program be accepted.**

MOVED BY: Bowen Tang  
SECONDED BY: No seconder  
CARRIED: Carried

8. Appointment of Auditor (Peer Review):

**RESOLUTION: That Miron Gazda be appointed to conduct a peer review of the 2020-2021 annual financial statements of CHHA-BC.**

MOVED BY: Mike Phelan  
SECONDED BY: Jerry Gosling  
CARRIED: Carried

9. Appointment of External Accountant:

**RESOLUTION: That the accounting firm of Michael Waldkirch & Company, Vancouver be appointed to prepare the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 year-end accounting statements, annual report, and filings as required by the CRA and BC Societies Act.**

MOVED BY: Mike Phelan  
SECONDED BY: Elwood Major  
CARRIED: Carried

10. New Business

Ruth Warick presented on Future Plans for CHHA BC, based on its four pillars:

**a. Advocacy:**

- Accessibility Committee to define recommendations provided to the Ministry in November 2019
- Continued COVID-19 Advocacy work regarding covered face masks and promoting a range of accessible approaches
- Hearing Aid Committee to explore options for affordable hearing instrument devices for BC residents

**b. Communications, Awareness and Education**

- Update the Hospital Kit
- Celebrate World Hearing Day of March 3, 2021,

- Work with CHHA National on nationwide mentoring program
  - Update our website and social media
- c. **Representation:** ensure CHHA BC representation on various committees, with CHHA National and BC government, Seniors Advocate
- d. **Membership, Administration and Finance**
- Develop fundraising sources
  - Work with CHHA branches in BC
  - Grow members

Ruth thanked Mike Phelan for his wonderful work as Treasurer and welcomed Elwood Major as the new Treasurer.

11. Motion to adjourn:

**RESOLUTION: That the 2019-2020 Annual General Meeting of CHHA-BC be adjourned.**

MOVED BY: Jerry Gosling  
SECONDED BY: Charles Laszlo  
CARRIED: Carried

A successful Town Hall followed the AGM, lasting approximately an hour.



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020

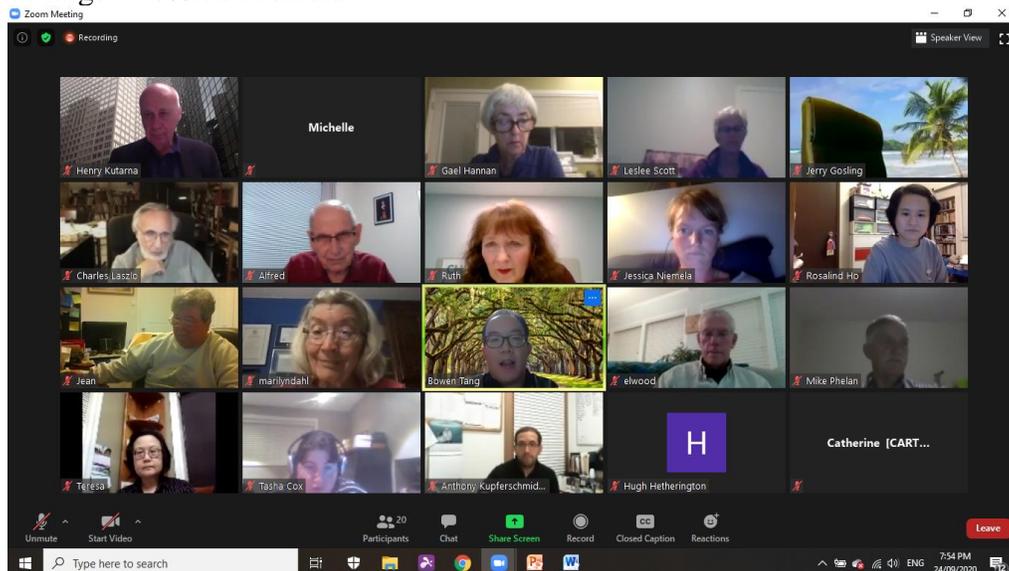
### INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus pandemic impacted significantly on CHHA BC in the last year as it did on all of society. All meetings shifted to be held online and major advocacy work focused on the impact of measures to deal with the virus affecting communications and access for hard of hearing persons. Initial concerns that fundraising would be affected were not realized as members of the public continued their support—thankfully. Our main forms of contact with members continued to be through the phone and electronic means rather than walk-in in-person visits. Our office continued to be open throughout the pandemic except for periods of entire lockdown. Thus, CHHA-BC fared as well as could be expected during a tumultuous year.

### GOVERNANCE

CHHA-BC held an online 2020 Annual General Meeting on September 24. The officers continued in the second year of their two-year terms with the exception of Michael Phelan. Elwood was introduced as the new board appointee to take on the role of Treasurer. The board commenced monthly online meetings in the Fall 2020. The officers and board members are as follows:

President – Ruth Warick  
Vice-President – Jerry Gosling  
Secretary – Gael Hannan  
Treasurer – Elwood Major  
Member-at-large – Jessica Niemela



## ADVOCACY

Advocacy related to the COVID-19 pandemic was added to CHHA-BC's strategic plan which already identified accessibility and access to hearing aids as priority areas for attention.

### COVID-19

The measures required to deal with COVID-19, namely masks and social distancing, impacted on the communication access of persons with hearing loss. Letters were written to government officials pointing out the challenges. Information was shared on our website about sources for clear masks, a recommended alternative to opaque masks. A project centred around Hearing Access to Health was developed for which additional funding was obtained; as a result, two publications were produced, one for consumers and one for healthcare professionals, in cooperation with the Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility. Additionally, materials in the former hospital kit, now called the Hearing Access Health Kit, were updated.

### Accessibility

Key advocacy around accessibility focused on promoting the provision of captioning through the Provincial Languages Service which funds sign language interpreting for medical and hospital appointments. Our position is that such funding should extend to the provision of captioning services. We are pleased to report that a positive response has been received to our intervention and plans for rollout this summer are in the works.

### Hearing Instrument Devices

A revision to the manual about funding options for hearing aids in British Columbia was undertaken and posted on our website as well as provided to CHHA National to update their resources. We continued to explore advocacy around hearing screening for adults, reaching out to the office of the Seniors' Advocate Isobel Mackenzie who has expressed an interest in this issue.



Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie flanked by Ruth Warick and Henry Kutarna on World Hearing Day 2020.

## COMMUNICATIONS, AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

### World Hearing Day

We held an in-person meeting focusing on World Hearing Day of March 3, 2020 with guest speaker Isobel Mackenzie, Seniors Advocate for the Province of British Columbia, followed by a tour of our new facilities and a light supper. Little did we know at the time that this would be our last in-person event for more than a year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

### Educational Sessions

We collaborated with CHHA Vancouver in hosting online educational sessions, beginning in January 2021. The first event, on Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, focused on the employment of hard of hearing persons with Joy Borgonia and Rytch Newmiller, Employment Placement Specialists at the Wavefront Centre. The second event on Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 was on *Addressing COVID-19 Challenges: Tools and Technologies* with speakers Tim Archer, Bowen Tang and Ruth Warick. Speakers discussed assistive listening technologies, internet platforms and captioning apps, as well as non-technical strategies, for increasing communication access



Screen shot from the February educational session offered by CHHA-BC and CHHA-Vancouver.

### Communications

The Loop newsletter was published electronically every two months and the number of pages per issue was expanded. Important notices were sent regularly to our distribution list.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

### **Council of Service Providers**

The Council of Services Providers shifted to online meetings in the last year, meeting on November 6, 2020. Established in 2003, the Council shares information and determines mutual advocacy activities among organizations and agencies providing services for deaf, hard of hearing, deafened and Deaf-blind persons in British Columbia.

### **CHHA National**

Ruth Warick represented the Chapter at Network meetings of CHHA National, held every two months. She and Henry Kutarna participated in meetings related to National's social enterprise goals. Close cooperation continued to deliver a national Online Mentoring program with seed money from a New Horizons grant obtained for 2020-21 by CHHA National. A special issue of Listen magazine featured the program, originally developed by Dr. Marilyn Dahl and Dr. Ruth Warick. CHHA-BC also participated in the National Smile campaign to promote clear masks.

## **MEMBERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE**

### **Membership**

Membership in the Chapter is automatic for individuals who sign up with CHHA National and with branches in British Columbia. As of the close of our fiscal year, Feb. 28, we had 131 members; in 2019 we had 137 members for the same time period.

### **Fundraising**

Initial projections from our telemarketing partners was that a drop was to be expected; however, fortunately, donations continued almost on par with previous years.

We instituted our first direct mail approach to members in December, which promises to become an annual drive. We were successful in grant applications to the Canada Emergency Community Support Fund and CHHA Foundation for our Hearing Access Health Project. We continued to provide oversight for the CHHA-BC Youth Peer Support Program and realigned their finances to correspond to our fiscal year.

### **Administration**

We consolidated the move of our office from Chilliwack to Vancouver, which was made in December 2019. Our two new staff, hired in late 2019, adapted well to their roles, Henry Kutarna as Operations Manager and Michelle Santiago, as Information and Finance Coordinator.

A review of our IT support and services was completed with the purchase of new hardware and software, especially required for our fundraising work. We initiated a call for proposal process to revise and update our website.

Two volunteers were recruited to assist with our work: Ian Yuen who is assisting with social media and our newsletter, and Vivian Zhang who assists regularly in the office. We thank both for their contribution. As well, thanks to Miron Gazda for continuing to do our Peer Audit and for chairing the Nominations Committee this year, and to Charles Laszlo for serving on the Committee.



Office at the Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility in Vancouver; shown left to right, Michelle Santiago, Marco Chiaramonte, and Henry Kutarna at our March 3, 2020 event.

### Conclusion

Our organization has weathered a geographical move, a change in staff, a change in board leadership, and an unexpected major societal catastrophe, the COVID-19 virus. We are well-positioned to make further advances in our work to serve the interests of persons with hearing loss in British Columbia. We thank you for your support and commitment to our mutual cause: our members of the CHHA BC branches, individual members of the Chapter, and the general public. We also thank our board members and staff for their exceptional commitment to hearing accessibility and inclusion for hard of hearing persons.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the CHHA BC Board and Staff

Ruth Warwick, President

Henry Kutarna, Operations Manager  
May 11, 2021



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

**Annual General Meeting (AGM)  
CHHA-BC  
Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

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## **Treasurer's Report:**

- 1. [See summary slides]**
- 2. Successful financial year despite earlier concerns about COVID impact on donations.**
- 3. Revenues \$371,374**
- 4. Expenditures \$286,936**
- 5. Surplus \$84,438 mainly due to strong cost control + a large bequest**
- 6. Cash available and investments \$259,840**



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association  
British Columbia Chapter

# Financial Statement

— 2020 - 2021 —

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Canadian Hard of Hearing Association  
British Columbia Chapter

**Financial Statement 2020-2021**

**Balance Sheet**

<b>Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>
Current Assets	264,485
Capital Assets	6,635
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>271,120</b>
Liability	5,910
Equity	265,210
<b>Total Liability &amp; Equity</b>	<b>271,120</b>



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

## Income Statement 2020-2021

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
	\$	\$
Revenue	286,050	371,374
Expense	299,990	286,936
Surplus (Deficit)	(13,940)	84,438

**THE CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION  
British Columbia Chapter**

**Financial Statements  
(Unaudited – See Notice to Reader)**

**February 28, 2021**

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## NOTICE TO READER

On the basis of information provided by management, we have compiled the statement of financial position of The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association – British Columbia Chapter as at February 28, 2021 and the statement of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended.

We have not performed an audit or a review engagement in respect of these financial statements and, accordingly, we express no assurance thereon.

Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes.

*Michael Waldkirch & Company Inc.*

**Chartered Professional Accountants**

Vancouver, British Columbia

April 20, 2021

**THE CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION - BRITISH COLUMBIA CHAPTER**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)

As at February 28, 2021

	2021	2020
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash	\$ 99,265	\$ 163,960
Term deposits	160,574	10,378
Accrued interest	2,569	2,309
GST receivable	920	755
Prepaid expenses	<u>1,157</u>	<u>2,854</u>
	264,485	180,256
Property and equipment	<u>6,635</u>	<u>2,432</u>
	<b>\$ 271,120</b>	<b>\$ 182,688</b>

**LIABILITIES**

**Current liabilities**

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 5,910	\$ 1,916
	<u>5,910</u>	<u>1,916</u>

**NET ASSETS**

Unrestricted	265,210	180,772
	<u>265,210</u>	<u>180,772</u>
	<b>\$ 271,120</b>	<b>\$ 182,688</b>

Approved on behalf of the Board:



**THE CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION - BRITISH COLUMBIA CHAPTER**  
**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)

For the year ended February 28, 2021

	2021	2021 Budget	2020
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Fundraising	\$ 251,001	\$ 250,000	\$ 262,324
Endowment fund interest	5,773	5,500	5,605
Donations	75,909	2,000	1,564
Interest income	530	500	582
Grants revenue	20,000	-	-
Miscellaneous	540	100	1,370
BC Gaming revenue	11,000	10,000	11,200
Peer support program revenue	6,620	8,000	15,880
Online mentoring program	-	9,950	-
	<b>371,373</b>	<b>286,050</b>	<b>298,525</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Administration			
Advertising	-	200	95
Accounting fees	2,013	2,400	2,048
Bank charges	4,220	4,200	4,457
Contract fees	44,825	43,200	38,649
Cleaning contract fees	-	-	720
Computer support and software	4,078	6,660	-
Fees and administration	528	1,000	-
Insurance	2,152	2,500	1,953
Moving expenses	-	-	2,865
Office supplies and postage	5,524	3,500	3,811
Printing	-	500	-
Rent	15,863	18,780	13,346
Telephone	376	2,600	1,769
Utilities	-	-	400
Travel - Board meetings	192	2,000	1,790
Travel - National conference	-	3,000	1,785
	<b>79,771</b>	<b>90,540</b>	<b>73,688</b>
Conferences and AGM	2,841	3,000	2,345
National conference on youth leadership	-	-	-
Amortization	1,600	-	1,215
Fundraising costs	198,121	187,500	185,124
Newsletter	-	-	841
Outreach program	-	500	1,272
Hospital Kits	16	500	223
Peer support program	4,586	8,000	19,778
Ear bank	-	-	-
EAP expense	-	-	-
Online mentoring	-	9,950	1,516
	<b>286,935</b>	<b>299,990</b>	<b>286,002</b>
<b>EXCESS (SHORTFALL) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 84,438</b>	<b>\$ (13,940)</b>	<b>\$ 12,523</b>

**THE CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION - BRITISH COLUMBIA CHAPTER**  
**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)

For the year ended February 28, 2021

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Excess of revenues over expenses	\$ 84,438	\$ 12,523
Add (deduct): Items not requiring an outlay of cash:		
Amortization	1,600	1,215
Changes in non-cash working capital		
Accrued interest	(260)	(64)
GST receivable	(165)	(431)
Other receivables	-	263
Prepaid expenses	1,697	(580)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	3,994	(1,125)
	<b>91,304</b>	<b>11,801</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Acquisition of property and equipment	(5,803)	-
	<b>(5,803)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>85,501</b>	<b>11,801</b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, beginning of year</b>	<b>174,338</b>	<b>162,537</b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, end of year</b>	<b>259,839</b>	<b>174,338</b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, end of year</b>		
Cash	99,265	163,960
Term deposits	160,574	10,378
	<b>\$ 259,839</b>	<b>\$ 174,338</b>

## Annual Report 2019-2020 of the CHHA Vancouver Branch

CHHA Vancouver is a self-help, consumer group which provides advocacy, support and educational activities for successful living with a hearing loss. While the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our in-person activities, we remained actively engaged in hearing loss issues at national and local levels and continued to reach out to our membership.

### Walk2Hear

CHHA Vancouver had an entirely virtual 10th annual Walk2Hear campaign this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This is the fourth year that we have used the CanadaHelps fundraising platform. The fundraising campaign closed on October 31, 2020 with \$2,745.00 raised.

Marilyn Dahl, Rosalind Ho, and Ruth Warick were top individual fundraisers, and top teams were the Wavefront Centre Team and the UBC SASS Team.

This year, our Walk2Hear fundraising campaign also included a Virtual Walk2Hear Video Challenge, encouraging all Walk2Hear participants and supporters to take a short video of themselves walking to show support for the CHHA Vancouver Walk2Hear, and share the video on the CHHA Vancouver Facebook page.

The fundraising campaign culminated in a virtual gathering of 18 participants over Zoom on Sunday,



September 27, 2020 in the afternoon. After a vigorous warm-up video led by Naghmeh Samenirad and her niece Roxana, participants walked in their own neighbourhoods under the bright sunshine.

The closing ceremony featured a slideshow of photos from the past 10 years of CHHA Vancouver Walk2Hear gatherings. We also had a live drawing of names for gift cards: Lisa Dillon Edgett and Mark Johnston for White Spot gift cards, and Gillian Sin for an Amazon gift card.

The Virtual Walk2Hear event was made accessible with CART and ASL interpreting. Thanks also go to Mark Johnston who took many of the photos in the slideshow.

## Educational Programs

CHHA Vancouver and CHHA-BC jointly hosted a series of monthly virtual workshops from January to April 2021. Our workshops covered the topics of: employment services, addressing COVID-19 communication challenges, WHO's World Report on Hearing, and the BC Adult CI Program.

## Health Care for the Hard of Hearing Community during COVID-19

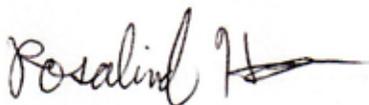
In August 2020, the CHHA Vancouver Board had a virtual session with Jennifer Ham, a UBC medical student, to discuss challenges and barriers for hard of hearing people when accessing health care services during the pandemic, and identify resources and potential solutions. The long-term goal is to reach out to the larger hard of hearing, Deaf, and Deaf-blind community to work on this issue.

## Governance

Membership is at 16 persons. Members of the CHHA Vancouver Branch Executive are:

Rosalind Ho, President  
Marco Chiaramonte, Vice-President  
Naghmeh Samenirad, Secretary  
Miron Gazda, Treasurer  
Mary-Ann Livesey, Member-at-Large  
Ruth Warick, Immediate Past President

Thanks goes to my colleagues on the CHHA Vancouver Board for their commitment and awesome work. A special thanks to Accurate Realtime Inc. for continued excellent captioning for us.



Rosalind Ho, President, CHHA Vancouver Branch  
Report respectfully submitted on May 11, 2021



*Gillian Sin,  
Gift Card Winner*



*Lisa Dillon Edgett,  
Gift Card Winner*

## **CHHA – North Shore Branch Branch Report 2020-2021**

Our Branch currently has 32 paid up members.

This past years' activities included:

The CHHA North Shore Branch is continuing with our annual \$1000 scholarship with CHHA National called the Carrell Hearn Memorial Scholarship. We have also contributed funding to the National Peer Support Group Program and the Children's Speech and Hearing Centre in Vancouver for help with Covid-19 related changes to their programs.

Our Monthly Sound Advice workshops at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre and Silver Harbour Seniors' Centre in North Vancouver are continuing on the first Friday and Last Monday of the month respectively although now on Zoom. The average attendance is about 15 to 20 participants for each meeting. Because of word of mouth advertising we are now getting attendance beyond our membership area in other cities of the Province and indeed Alberta, as well.

Following the outbreak of Covid-19 in 2020, in-person meetings were suspended starting in April 2020 and began again on Zoom in September 2020 with our AGM on September 21<sup>st</sup>. There were 15 members in attendance. The following Board Members agreed to stay on for another year and were elected unanimously:

Alan Dion, President  
Ruth Lapointe, Secretary  
Hugh Hetherington, Treasurer  
Susan Gelinias, Member-at-large  
Deborah Maloon, Member-at-large  
Doug Muir, Member-at-large

The AGM was followed with an online session of our Sound Advice workshop hosted by Hugh Hetherington and Flo Spratt.

**February 15, 2021**, Our guest speaker was Kenneth Jones, Director, Tinnitus Association of Canada, President of the B.C. Tinnitus Association and Facilitator of the Greater Vancouver Tinnitus Self-Help Group. His topic was "Tinnitus—Nothing You Can Do About it—FALSE"

**April 19, 2021**, Our guest speaker was Lisa Dillon Edgett, Ph.D., RAUD, Aud(C), Instructor of the "Living Successfully with your Hearing Loss" course at Vancouver Community College. Lisa spoke on the topic "Filling Your Communication Toolbox' Tips, Tools and Strategies for Communicating Effectively."

Other activities involved visiting hearing aid clients for a local audiologist in helping with the connecting of TV streaming devices for their hearing aids.

Our telephone service is also available to answer hearing aid and hearing loss questions. The phone number is 604-926-5222. We were able to speak to and help a number of callers regarding their hearing loss issues.

We have also developed and put online a new Website during the year.

Our website is located at: <https://chha-nsb.com>

Our email is: [chha\\_nsb@telus.net](mailto:chha_nsb@telus.net)

CHHA-Abbotsford

Annual Report

2020/2021.

The Abbotsford branch has not met since 2019 due to the covid crisis. Members of the branch have been connecting through email on an individual basis.

CHHA-Abbotsford has always held their meetings at Chances Abbotsford as we can get their hospitality room free of charge and there is plenty of free parking.

It was generally felt to not pay for meeting rooms when covid started and save the added expense and a lot of members would be reluctant to attend due to the virus.

Jerry Gosling

Past President



## Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Comox Valley Branch

**Annual Report: March 01, 2020 to February 28, 2021**

**Our March group presentation of The Importance of Balance led by Joyce Leong needed to be cancelled due to the arrival of COVID 19. Consequently our year has been one trying to keep our members connected, informed and supported in being able to maintain good spirits. BC Health directives have been forwarded at regular intervals along with mask information including those offered through the National Hard of Hearing E-shop.**

**Our Board stayed closely connected and decided there would be no membership dues until group activities could resume, though a few outstanding dues were later received. The group participated on September 17<sup>th</sup> to a Zoom AGM held in compliance with our constitution. Also, further Zoom information was shared so that members could register for closed caption on Zoom prior to it being generally available in the fall of 2021**

**Our membership has received through e-mail entertaining cartoons and short musical videos to remind that we were all together through this difficult time. At Christmas along with our electronic card we posted a Christmas special Canadian Messiah site that could be viewed where there was a celebration of our country and its diversity. A fun hard of hearing facts quiz was created with answers available the following week.**

**Also, the newsletters from BC and National Associations have been forwarded as well as reminders to check out our Face book page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/397416760699912> and our Website that had been updated and renamed for superior access [www.hardofhearing.ca](http://www.hardofhearing.ca). Local news items relating to hard of hearing situations were passed along such as an improved sound system at the North Island College theatre and information from the Elders Take Action group.**

**Being unable to offer in-class speech reading classes members and their friends were encouraged to maintain their skills using an on-line class through <https://www.chha-nl.ca/readourlips/> where we had negotiated a 20% course discount.**

**Respectfully submitted by Nina Goodman (President)  
cvhardofhearing@gmail.com**



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association BC Youth Peer Support Program

## Seventh Annual Report – June 2020 to May 2021

**Mission:** To create a platform where DHH youth can be empowered to foster active leadership, provide peer support, advocate, and promote hearing awareness in their communities

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### Family Weekend Camp – September 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (CANCELLED)

Due to COVID-19, the camp was cancelled in consideration of participants' safety. After much deliberation with the campsite, we are slated to host the camp the coming Fall 2021. The camp is expected to receive 80 participants, a 33% increase from 60 participants in 2019 given the popular demand. The camp is free for all DHH participants, \$40 for siblings and \$80 for adults.

### BC Buddies

Due to COVID-19, we hosted virtual BC Buddies in Oct 2020, Feb & May 2021 which offered the opportunity to open up our activities to participants across B.C. from the comfort of their own homes! There were a total of 37 participants attending the virtual events.



Following all safety protocols under the provincial health guidelines, we were able to host a physically distant in-person meet up at Vernon in November 2020, where participants spent the day being scientists. There were 8 altogether.

Click [here](#) for a reflection from Jessica, BC Buddies Coordinator in the Okanagan Region.



## Personal Wellness 101

We hosted a free session “Personal Wellness 101” in May 2021, facilitated by volunteer Shahnaz Khan.

13 participants came together virtually on Zoom to attend. The session included deep breathing exercise, laughter therapy and many more.



One participant emphasized it as *“I found the best possible self exercise really helpful. It helped me to see what I want to achieve and to make my dreams a reality. It also showed me to think from a positive perspective.”*

Below are some gratitude statements created by participants.

I am grateful for...  
*a roof over my head and my family that support me  
get to go to school and that I have a supporting family  
education  
being alive  
a place to live, food, friends, my family & Community :)*

## Outreach Activities

Due to COVID, all in-person outreach activities are suspended, severely limiting our ability to reach out to the DHH population in the rural regions. On several occasions we are invited to speak about the services offered at the PSP:

- June 2020 – Community Partners Webinar, hosted by Provincial Outreach Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (POPDHH)
- Jan 2021 – CART sponsor for Listening Fatigue Workshop, in partnership with Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (PDHHS) and Family Network of Deaf Children (FNDC)
- April 2021 – Technology Webinar, hosted by Northern BC Children and Family Hearing Society

We also continued to provide consultation to the development of Transition Into Post-Secondary (T.I.P.S.) course, working on collaboration with Academic Communication Equity (ACE-BC). The link to the course can be found here: <https://www.bcit.ca/study/courses/mooc0100>

**Online Resources** – <https://www.chha-bc.org/youthpsp/resources/>

We published the following blog posts in the past year:

- [COVID-19: The Ultimate Game of Trust](#)
- [Communication Tips for Businesses/Public Services](#)

We also developed infographics and guides related to digital accessibility and accessibility at camps:

- [Automatic Captioning Apps](#)
- [Zoom Captions with Microsoft Translator](#)
- Accessibility at Camps

**Social Media**

We currently have 350 followers on our Facebook page and 110+ followers on Instagram. We recently launched Wellness Wednesdays where we featured posts with tips to maintain personal wellness. We had 746 page visits on our website between March and May 2021.

**Volunteers**

We continued to see an increase in university students expressing interest in joining the program. Majority are pursuing the field of audiology, speech language pathology, or general health care.

- Heather Cathcart
- Shahnaz Khan
- Cora Nelson
- Tyler Proctor
- Rishika Selvakumar
- Lisa Yu
- Ian Yuen
- Vivian Zhang

**Leadership**

- **Director:** Bowen Tang  
(Joy Gong – leave of absence)
- **BC Buddies Coordinator, Lower Mainland:** Renee Fong
- **BC Buddies Coordinator, Okanagan Region:** Jessica Niemela
- **Workshop Coordinator:** Nicole Leung
- **Webmaster:** Andrew Tjia

All together there are 13 people involved in running the Peer Support Program

**SUMMARY OF SERVICES**

Activity	# of DHH population served (2020/21)	# of DHH population served (2019/20)
BC Buddies	45	43
Family Weekend Camp	N/A (80 intended)	58
Workshops	18	26
Outreach Events	N/A	45
Referrals & Requests	20	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83 (163)</b>	<b>186</b>

**Note:** Due to program disruption caused by COVID19, we were not able to exceed the target from the previous year.

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to acknowledge the donors whose contribution have made all the activities possible:

- BC Gaming Grant
- Caldor Foundation
- CHHA Foundation
- CHHA North Shore Branch

We would also like to thank Henry Kutarna and Michelle Santiago at CHHA-BC office in handling administrative and financial matters, as well as the continual guidance of Dr. Ruth Warick, President of CHHA-BC Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Bowen Tang  
Founder & Director  
CHHA-BC Youth Peer Support Program  
[chhbcypsp@gmail.com](mailto:chhbcypsp@gmail.com)  
May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021

The Nominations Committee recommends that the following candidates be acclaimed as the new Board of Directors of the CHHA-BC Chapter:

President: Ruth Warick

Directors:

Gael Hannan  
Nicole Leung  
Elwood Major  
Jessica Niemela

Candidate bios:

**Dr. Ruth Warick**

Dr. Ruth Warick is a founding member of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, a former national president and a former President of the CHHA Vancouver Branch. She currently serves as President for the BC Chapter of CHHA. She is also president of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing Persons and First Vice-President of the International Disability Alliance, a network of international disability organizations and interfaces with the United Nations in Geneva, New York and around the world. Ruth is a past president of the formerly named Western Institute of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the BC Family Hearing Resource Society.

Ruth was born hard of hearing and received her first hearing aid at age 11 although her significant hearing loss warranted earlier intervention. She is passionate about accessibility, awareness, education, and inclusion for persons with hearing loss.

Ruth was employed for over 25 years at The University of British Columbia, working as an Advisor on accessibility for students, faculty and staff of all types of disabilities. She is a prolific presenter and has edited the IFHOH publication on *Realities Facing Hard of Hearing Learners in Nepal and Uganda* (2020) and the CHHA publication, *Hearing the Learning, A Postsecondary Handbook for Students who are Hard of*

*Hearing*. She completed her doctoral degree at UBC in 2003; her Dissertation was titled *Voices Unheard: The Academic and Social Experiences of University Students who are Hard of Hearing*.

Along with Marilyn Dahl, she was instrumental in developing the CHHA-BC On-Line Mentoring Program for hard of hearing persons. She was also the lead author for the CHHA BC Hearing Healthcare Kit and organized numerous educational sessions including for the World Health Organization's first World Report on Hearing. She is a founding and steering committee member of the WHO World Hearing Forum.

### Statement of reason for Nomination

I am committed to providing my personal and professional expertise to the continued success and growth of the BC Chapter of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association. I am committed, reliable and trustworthy, practical and visionary. I have years of experience in the disability and hard of hearing movement, resulting in a familiarity with the issues facing hard of hearing persons. I also have experience in different employment sectors, including the media, government and the post-secondary environment. As a result, I have management, financial and volunteer experience which helps me to be effective in working with other people and in steering a non-profit organization. I like to get things done! It would be an honor to continue to be the President of CHHA-BC.

### **Gael Hannan**

Reason for Running: I have dedicated the past 25 years of my life to hearing loss advocacy. Being on the Board of Directors of CHHA-BC allows me to continue to help people live their best possible lives with hearing loss, by advocating on their behalf for accessibility and to educate them about the strategies they need for better communication.

### Bio

Gael Hannan is a renowned advocate, writer, and speaker on hearing loss issues. Over the past 25 years, Gael has created awareness campaigns, school programs and award-winning presentations that help people better understand the life with hearing loss. Gael has a passionate international following for her presentations and her writing that includes a regular

column for *Canadian Audiologist*, weekly, insightful articles on [HearingHealthMatters.org](http://HearingHealthMatters.org) and her book *The Way I Hear It: A Life with Hearing Loss*. Since 1996, she has been a dedicated volunteer, supporting many hearing loss projects and organizations. She has served on the Board of Directors for Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, both nationally and provincially. Gael lives on Vancouver Island with her husband Doug.

## **Nicole Leung**

### *Biography*

Nicole Leung is an active individual in the hard of hearing community. She has turned her challenges into opportunities for change and remains passionate to help others on and off duty from nursing.

Just before her first birthday, Nicole fell ill to meningitis and left the hospital with a profound hearing loss. She grew up in the Hearing world, attending mainstream school until she found a second home within the hard of hearing community.

Nicole spreads awareness and fosters change through numerous roles in the community. As a radio-broadcaster, she braves the microphone to chat about disability challenges on the *All Access Pass* at the UBC 101.9 FM radio show. As a mentor, she cultivates and exchanges ideas for better healthcare with students of various healthcare professions in the *UBC Interprofessional Health Mentors Program*. In addition, Nicole continues to empower hard of hearing youth and young adults through the *CHHA BC Youth Peer Support Program* as a workshop coordinator. In a series of career panels, hard of hearing youth, parents and educators learned about workplace rights in Canada, career paths of fellow hard of hearing adults, and discussed overcoming workplace challenges. This series became accessible to those who could not attend; reaching those in rural areas ([\*Navigate your way to success\*](#)). In addition, an [empowerment workshop](#) for hard of hearing girls endorsed resiliency like self-care, and education on rights in abusive relationships. Currently, she is working with *the International Federation for Hard of Hearing Young People* in creating a study session for young hard of hearing leaders across the globe. Nicole also works as a registered nurse in acute care, and finds it rewarding to give back to the community in any way she can.

### *Statement of reason for nomination*

As my interests lay in increasing accessibility in education, healthcare, and empowering hard of hearing individuals, I have no doubt that both BC Chapter of CHHA and the community will benefit from my creativity, hard-work and experience. My background in healthcare and community education can contribute to the current projects of the society, such as the Hearing Health Kit, advocating for seniors hearing screening practices, advocating for better accessibility in healthcare and public spaces, and contributing to research that guides better practices, to name a few. I believe my understanding from listening to individuals with

hearing loss in all ages, concerned family members, healthcare students, and teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing can help convey and advocate some of the challenges and needs of the hard of hearing community. It also inspires ideas and drives my desire to make changes. I look forward to utilising my skills and knowledge to assist the BC Chapter of CHHA in their current and future projects.

### **Elwood Major:**

I have been involved most of my working life in professions that require a level of responsibility, authority and self-discipline. I earned a college diploma in Commerce and Business Administration in the early 70's to qualify for a position as an Accountant Office Manager for a business involving two separate automotive franchises and a manufactured home company.

Since 1980, I have primarily been self-employed in real estate sales, rental and strata management, developing my own successful company in the 90's to the present. I sold the company some 5 years ago but stayed on in a consulting capacity.

My volunteer history includes: twenty years as a Rotarian in the Okanagan, completing terms of director and as President twice; as a volunteer with the Penticton Chamber of Commerce for 3 years as director/chair of mid-winter promotion; a Director of CHHA-BC for 4 years; a past Director and Chair of PAMA (Professional Association of Managing Agents).

I am hard of hearing since birth and spent my childhood years in the Dawson Creek area and not obtaining any hearing assistance until I was approximately 9 years old. I wear a bi-cross aid and use closed caption and Bluetooth in my home.

I moved to Abbotsford in the 90's joining the Abbotsford Branch of CHHA-BC and later on becoming a Director of the Abbotsford Chapter and the BC Branch. I was overwhelmed with the fact that I was not alone in the Hard-of-Hearing world and strived to work through the Chapter and Branch to let others know. Because I realized I needed to focus and improve my business in order to have an investment for retirement purposes, I resigned from CHHA. I am now at a point in my life when I can offer assistance and experience to further the goals of CHHA-BC.

### **Jessica Niemela:**

Jessica Niemela is a pediatric audiologist in Vernon, British Columbia. Jessica's previous career was as a registered nurse, most of which she spent in the emergency department. At the age of four, she was diagnosed with bilateral, moderate-severe sensorineural hearing loss, however she did not start wearing hearing aids until she was 20 years of age. She quotes "My experiences accepting my own deafness, coping with communication challenges, and ultimately wearing bilateral hearing aids shapes a big part of who I am today".

As a person living with hearing loss, Jessica is a proud member of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA). She volunteers currently as one of the CHHA-BC board directors and she is the Okanagan event coordinator for CHHA-BC's Youth Peer Support Program. Jessica enjoys spending quality time with her young child and partner.

### Jessica Niemela Candidate Statement

“I have been an active board member for the last two years and I must say it has been a thoroughly rewarding experience. In this time, I have written full proposals for and with the CHHA-BC board; I have spoken internationally for the Lancet Commission on Hearing loss as a CHHA-BC representative, audiologist and person with hearing loss; I have become a mentor in the newly developed CHHA National Online Mentor Program; and I have been a guest speaker at CHHA-Vancouver's AGM and provided an opportunity to discuss communication barriers and solutions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I enjoy working closely with the board on critical issues for people with hearing loss and the process of involving key stakeholders in order to make political change or at the very least, ensure that our voices are heard. I also appreciate the immense work that CHHA-BC is currently doing in order to update and revamp its own programs and website design and I would love to continue to be a part of this change.

My number one goal as an audiologist and person living with hearing loss is to gain a strong sense of a hard of hearing community, and have the confidence to share this community with others. I have developed a great understanding of the critical importance of a sense of belonging for people with hearing loss, through research and my own personal experience. Being a board member of CHHA-BC gives me the opportunity to continue to share our hard of hearing community in a way that is active and current. Thank you for considering my nomination.”