



## NEWS RELEASE

June 24, 2015

### **Local charity hands out \$6500 in student awards; elects prominent residents to Board**

SIDNEY, BC – Beacon Community Services today welcomed three new members to its volunteer Board of Directors and celebrated volunteerism and community service with a total of \$6500 in awards to five local students.

At the local charity's 41<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting, members elected:

**Jim Brookes** – A resident of Oak Bay, Brookes is executive director of Neurodevnet, a national research network dealing with children's brain disorders. His professional background includes a Masters degree in economics and seven years as the Chief Operating Officer of MITACS (a national research network dealing with innovative training programs) -- as well as senior positions in business development, marketing and general management in the telecommunications sector, including as Vice-President of Local Services at BC Tel/TELUS.

**Dr. Howard Brunt** – A North Saanich resident, Brunt is an award winning researcher who has worked with multi-disciplinary teams drawn from medicine, genetics, nutritional science and nursing. Currently a professor of public health at the University of Victoria, Brunt previously served as UVic's Vice President of Research. He holds graduate degrees from Yale University (Cardiovascular Nursing Specialist) and the University of Calgary (Epidemiology and Community Health Science).

**Penny Donaldson** - recently retired as Director of Resident Services for the Kiwanis Pavilion, a complex care facility and home for people with dementia in Victoria, Penny holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and a certificate in quality management from the Canadian Healthcare Association. A North Saanich resident, she's lectured on gerontological nursing topics such as behaviour management and coaching staff and is a certified surveyor for Accreditation Canada.

"We're thrilled to have these three offer their talent and experience to help Beacon further its mission of helping people and improving lives," said Board Chair Chuck Rowe. "They definitely have the skills to help Beacon deliver quality programs and services and help build on our successes."

Beacon also acknowledged community service and volunteerism with \$1500 Beacon Community Services scholarships to: Dhanisi Modi (SD 61, Mt. Douglas Secondary School); Maryna Eil (SD 62, Edward Milne Community School); Kelly Dinh (SD 63, Parkland Secondary School); and Noal Balint (SD 64, Gulf Islands Secondary). A Beacon Community Services' \$500 Donna Godwin Humanitarian Award was directed to Parkland student, Jacqueline Gaby.

"These students excel academically. But we're most impressed by their achievements in the area of community service, by their standing as volunteers," said CEO Bob Boulter. "Through volunteerism, great things can happen. Beacon's proof of that, and we offer these scholarships as a way to recognize and support youth who exemplify those values."

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Established by a small group of volunteers on the Saanich Peninsula in 1974, Beacon Community Services has evolved to become one of BC's largest non-profit social services organizations.

About 1100 staff and 550 volunteers serve more than 6,000 clients in the Greater Victoria and outer Gulf Islands areas, including through programs and services in: Child, Youth and Family Services; Counselling and Mental Health Services; Employment and Training Programs; Housing, Assisted Living and Licenced Dementia Care Housing; Adult/Senior's Recreation Services; Volunteer Services; and Home Support Care.

More information about Beacon Community Services can be found at [www.beaconcs.ca](http://www.beaconcs.ca)

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