

Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating Five Years of Success



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babe@bipolarbabes.com



The Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia (BDSBC)

Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our Mission

The Society is committed to stomping out the stigma of mental illness through awareness, education, and support.

Our Vision

Creating a world of understanding, empathy, and acceptance, where people with mental illness are included as equal contributing members in all spheres of society.

Our Values

- Inclusion of lived experiences
- Knowledge, understanding, education, and support
- Respect, honesty, and integrity
- Grass roots leadership
- Open dialogue
- Resiliency
- Community – partnerships and collaboration
- Facilitating self-empowerment, self- esteem, self-worth, and self-determination
- Transparency, accountability, authenticity, and honesty

After seeing your presentation in my classroom, I feel less nervous about meeting my biological father who has bipolar disorder.

- *Student after seeing a Bipolar Babe Presentation*



The President's Report

While walking into our 2015 Annual General Meeting, I read a Margaret Mead quote that said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

It is my pleasure to report on behalf of the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia Board of Directors we have accomplished just that in our 5th year. We continue to mature as an organization and have maintained our focus on transparency, program quality, and the sustainability of our Society. Highlights of 2015 include an increase in attendance of our presentations and support groups. We have successfully completed the Bipolar Youth Action Project that was delivered in partnership with CREST.BD and the Vancouver Foundation.

Planning and initial funding for two new programs has also taken place for Kids Connect, an education project launching in 2016 for young children, and the Stigma-Free Zone Superheroes Project in Vancouver. A proud moment for all of us occurred when our Executive Director, Andrea Paquette, received the 2015 Courage To Come Back Award. This award is presented to outstanding individuals who have overcome major obstacles to give back to their communities. A big thank you to our donors, my fellow Board Members, our Advisory Council, and the staff and volunteers for your continued support. Together we are changing the world and making it a better place. We are improving our communities and changing attitudes about mental health.

Sincerely,



Warren Keane



The Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report that the Society had another successful financial year. We have fundraised a record amount of revenue reaching a total of \$143,733. The Society continues to show growth and solid financial management.

This year, the Society expanded its fundraising efforts to bring in new revenue from foundations, grants, and community support. We are forecasting further growth for next year as the Society continues to expand.

I would like to thank everyone at Cheques and Balances and Grant Thornton who helped the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia with its bookkeeping and accounting services.

Sincerely,



Taylor Norman



Executive Director's Report

In January 2010, the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia (BDSBC) came to fruition, with many welcomed successes and growth over the years. The concept of the Bipolar Babe Project began as a t-shirt and a catchy logo of a super hero “stomping out stigma.” I am now Executive Director of the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia. I conceptualized the project because I had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder in my mid-20s and wanted to share my story so others did not suffer as I did. The launch of bipolarbabe.com ignited the popularity of the cause and inspired support from local and national media igniting awareness into numerous communities. With the valuable support of many talented and amazing individuals, the Board of Directors successfully obtained charitable status very quickly, demonstrating the need for mental health education and support in the community.



In 2010, I continued with community and classroom presentations under the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia banner and became its very first employee, administering all of the program delivery. Over time, we have grown significantly and we now have a staff of six, amazing people. The Teens2Twenties Support Group ran out of my basement in the early stages and soon became a funded program. The Society, a grassroots organization, has stayed true to its humble beginnings.

The Society now hosts five programs: Stigma Stomp Classroom Presentations, Mental Health Awareness Community Presentations, the Teens2Twenties Support Group, the Women's Support Group, and, the newest addition, the West Shore Support Group, which began in January 2014. Currently, the Society is developing a Kids Connect: Mental Health Presentations pilot and a new program called Stigma-Free Zone Superheroes, which will be launched in Vancouver in 2016. In December 2013, the Society partnered in a successful research grant of \$159,520.00 from the Vancouver Foundation to work with CREST.BD, a research network located at the University of British Columbia, to engage youth as peer researchers in the local Victoria community, while focusing on self-management strategies and youth with bipolar disorder. The two-year project has been a great success with the completion of two impacting Youth Research Forums and will be finished in December 2015.

As Executive Director of the BDSBC, I am very excited for the year ahead. The Society continues to grow and we are changing negative perceptions and attitudes with an authentic and honest approach from people who truly care about the lives of those who live with mental health challenges. This past year has been truly inspiring for us and we look forward to continuing to make this a world free of stigma, while instilling the values of understanding, empathy, and acceptance.



The Program Report

The Stigma Stomp Classroom Presentations Program for youth grades 7-12 has a presenter with lived experience speak to students in a classroom setting. Students learn about myth-busting, stigma, and societal attitudes toward mental illness. Presenters share personal stories of living with bipolar disorder and highlights both the challenges and successes of their lives. The presentation also includes a focus on mental wellness and the importance of reaching out. The Society presented to 1917 students in the school year 2014/2015.



Mental Health Awareness Community Presentations have been a great success for the Society as the presentations mirror a similar approach to the classroom program by educating community members about mental health and stigma. The Society has presented to groups of teachers at various schools, non-profits, post-secondary institutions, and a number of Rotary Clubs. The Society has also reached out to many workplaces and have given presentations to Ledger House, Island Health, TELUS, the Royal Bank, and the British Columbia Government, among many others. The Society presented to over 1062 community members for the year 2014/2015.

The Teen2Twenties Peer Support Group is a unique program that provides peer support for those living with a mental illness aged 15-25 years. The group naturally creates friendships and ensures that nobody suffers in isolation. We have reached over 122 youth since inception of the program, averaging 30 youth per year, and the Society will continue this important work in the youth community.

The Bipolar Babe Women's Support Group began in 2012 as there was a need for adult support in the community for those with a mental illness. The participants have flourished and they arrange events, dinners, and social outings with each other creating friendships and support. We have reached over 85 women with the numbers increasing weekly, and, specifically, 25 women this past year alone.

The West Shore Peer Support Group, launched in 2014, is in Victoria's western communities and is a much needed service in this area. The group is all ages and genders and our group hosts an average of 8-10 people weekly with these numbers remaining strong since the program's beginnings. The Society reaches approximately 35 people per year with 76 people served to date.

The Bipolar Youth Action Project will be at its completion as of December 2015, and the Society and CREST.BD have conducted two Youth Research Forums to produce impactful research about self-management strategies in youth living with bipolar disorder. This project is a huge milestone and success for the Society.



Highlights and Achievements – Five Years of Success



Society Fundraising Events in the Beginning

The Bipolar Babe Benefit
Three Successful Years 2010-2012

Society Awareness Events

Stigma Stomp Day 2012 and 2013

Jamie Van Gessell, former youth Teens2Twenties Support Group co-facilitator, and Andrea Paquette



CLARA HUGHES IS CALLING ON YOU TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Clara Hughes



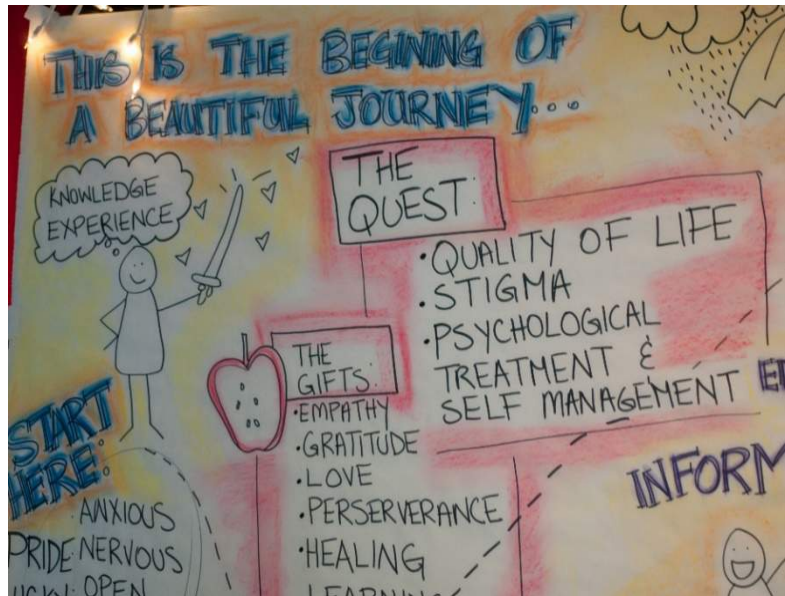
Clara's Big Ride

The Society Hosted Canadian Olympian Clara Hughes in Victoria, British Columbia, for a fundraiser and welcoming event at the British Columbia Legislature.



The Bipolar Youth Action Project (BYAP)

A successful two-year youth research project conducted from 2014-2015 in partnership with The Collaborative REsearch Team to study psychosocial issues in Bipolar Disorder (CREST.BD) located at the University of British Columbia. This project received a generous grant from the Vancouver Foundation.



Andrea Paquette, Executive Director, BDSBC

Winner of the Courage to Come Back Award, Coast Mental Health, 2015

Natasha Tracy, BDSBC Director

Winner of the Beatrice Stern Media Award, 2014



Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia Board of Directors



Warren Keane – Board President

Warren joined the Board of Directors in February 2013 and was appointed President later that same year. Prior to coming to the Society, Warren was President of the Victoria-based Vancouver Island Entrepreneurs' Toastmasters Club and Chairman of the Christmas Spirit Community Dinner Society. Warren brings both managerial and operational expertise to the Board. He has more than 25 years of experience with information technology including project management, software development, sales, and marketing.



Taylor Norman – Board Treasurer

Taylor has been the Treasurer for the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia since April 2014. He has a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from the University of Victoria and is currently pursuing a Chartered Professional Accountant designation. Taylor is currently working at KPMG as a Staff Accountant. "I look forward to continue working with this great organization. The Society continues to show strong growth and I am excited for its future."



Gurpreet Randhawa – Board Secretary

Gurpreet joined the Board of Directors back in September of 2009, even before the Society obtained charitable status. She had to resign in 2011 as she decided to make a move to Ontario in order to begin her legal studies; however, she has returned to Victoria and has been re-appointed to the board as of August 2014. Today, she is a lawyer with McConnan, Bion O'Connor, and Peterson Law Corporation. She is looking forward to contributing her knowledge and experience to the Board with the hopes of making a positive impact in the community and of stomping out the stigma that is associated with mental illness even today.





Jackie Powell – Board Director

Jackie is passionate about mental health and making a difference in her community. She is the founder of Moms Like Us, a grass roots parents' advocacy group in Victoria, B.C., started in March of 2014. The group received the Dr. Nancy Hall Public Policy Leadership Award from the Canadian Mental Health Association of British Columbia. Through Jackie's continued efforts of connecting with the community, she believes her dream of a Clubhouse International will become a reality. Jackie has found great support and encouragement from the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia, especially from Andrea Paquette. Jackie believes the Society hosts many valuable and necessary programs – not only to help stomp out the stigma, but to provide much needed support for those in the community.



Lori Elder – Communications Director

Lori is a collaborator, connector, and community builder who is passionate about making a difference. She is especially passionate about supporting youth, and the work the Society is doing to help stomp out the stigma around mental health. A communications professional with over 25 years of experience in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, Lori is the Principal of PR4Good. She works with non-profits and small businesses to provide strategic communications planning and advice. Since the first time she met our Executive Director, Andrea (in 2009), through Lori's work at Volunteer Victoria, she has been inspired by the impact Andrea and the organization has had in such a short period of time. Lori is proud to be part of the Board. She provides important connections and advice, and helps to increase awareness and compassion for everyone living with mental illness.



Natasha Tracy – Board Director

Natasha Tracy is an award-winning writer and speaker for the Society. She possesses extensive mental health expertise and she has been a speaker at the National Council Mental Health and Addictions conference. Natasha has written the award-winning blog, the [Bipolar Burble](#), detailing life with bipolar disorder, for more than a decade. She was named the fourth most influential social HealthMaker in mental health by Sharecare.com. Natasha is a social media consultant and is the recent winner of a very prestigious mental health award called the Beatrice Stern Media Award presented by Didi Hirsch.





Andrea Paquette – Ex-officio

Andrea is also known as “Bipolar Babe” in the community and is the Executive Director of the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia. She plays a significant role in service delivery as a classroom and community presenter for mental health and as a support group facilitator for the Teens2Twenties Support Group. Andrea holds extensive experience in the provincial government in policy, communications, and research in the areas of education, mental health, and social development. Andrea has also been named the Provincial 2015 Courage To Come Back award winner given by Coast Mental Health, the 2013 Mel Cooper Citizen of the Year Award in Victoria, British Columbia, and given the 2013 Award for Mentorship from the National Council for Behavioral Health, Washington, D.C.

Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia Team



Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia employees from back to front, left to right:

Drella Simpson, Teens2Twenties Co-Facilitator; **Laura Lapadat**, Stigma Stomp Classroom Presenter; **Natasha Tracy**, Stigma Stomp Classroom Presenter; **Jacquie Gonzales**, Women’s Support Group Co-Facilitator; **Andrea Paquette**, Executive Director; **Andrea Bennington**, West Shore Support Group Co-Facilitator; **Julia Wilkes**, Women’s Support Group Lead Facilitator (missing from photo)



Advisory Council for the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia

Philip Bisset-Covaneiro, Financial Consultant

Robin Holden, Charity Advisor, Source Group

Sheldon Kitzul, Social Worker and Life Coach

Dr. Mary Kay Nixon, Youth Psychiatrist, Island Health

Cindy Player, Director, Equity and Human Rights, University of Victoria

Dave Richardson, President, Octaform Systems Inc.

Dr. Wei Song, Psychiatrist and Director for the Mood Disorders Clinic, Island Health

Future Developments for the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia

Our goal is to prepare a three year strategic plan for 2016-2019 that will provide a sustainable platform to operate and flourish. The Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia believes in the value of planning to ensure demonstration of program success over time.

The Stigma-Free Zone Superheroes Project is a Greater Vancouver educational initiative that is designed to ignite meaningful conversations among youth in grades 7-12 focusing on the impact of stigma through interactive and thought-provoking presentations. There are numerous stigmas in society that affect the way youth perceive the world and the Stigma-Free Zone Superheroes Project aims to provide youth with the tools necessary to not only recognize stigma, but to stop stigma from negatively affecting their lives.

The Society also plans to run Kids Connect: Mental Health Presentations' Program, which is a new pilot in the upcoming school year 2015/2016. This pilot proposes a unique approach for children as mental health programs have generally been offered only for older youth in schools. The Society believes one is never too young to learn about mental health. When children are equipped to take care of their needs, they naturally become increasingly confident and are able to reach out for help if they need it.

I'm a 15-year-old with bipolar disorder. Hearing your story made me think, for the first time, that I have a future. Now I know not to give up.

- *Student after seeing a Bipolar Babe Presentation*

This year we are also releasing a new version of our website in November of 2015: bipolarbabes.com.



Featured Student Testimonial

From a grade 10 student participating in the Stigma Stomp Classroom Presentation:

I really enjoyed this presentation. It took me to a whole other level of understanding mental illness. Everything Natasha said was so inspiring and her story was amazing. Her story really inspires me and I love the analogy she used about "no matter how steep the mountain you can make it to the top" I love this because no matter what your going through there will ^{always} be a light at the end of the tunnel.



Teacher Testimonials

“Andrea and Natasha are the most engaging and charismatic speakers I have had into my classroom in the past 10 years. Mental health is such an important topic to discuss with youth because a great number of disorders start in the late teens. There is great worth having a first-person account of someone living with a mental illness as it has a lasting impact on the students, and I have no doubt that my class will remember this experience for years to come.” – *Scott Gordon, Planning and Psychology Teacher, Stelly’s Secondary School*

“We’ve had the privilege of hosting Andrea at our school three times now. The purpose was to not only inform, but to develop a sense of awareness and compassion for those who struggle with mental illness in its various forms. Andrea’s ability to engage the students and staff was impressive and her presentation surpassed my expectations. Her willingness to vulnerably and charismatically share her story was both disarming and inspiring.” – *Lyn Suderman, Counsellor, Pacific Christian Secondary School*

Support Group Participants’ Testimonials

“Every week I am blessed with the opportunity to go and have a chance to share my ups and downs, my confusion and frustrations, and my joy and happiness. It is a place for laughter and tears, a place where you never have to edit your feelings or hide who you truly are or what you are struggling with. It is a place of pure empowerment and respect.” – *Bridget, Women’s Support Group*

“For the first time since my diagnosis at 19 (I am now 35,) I have had regular discussions with people who had suffered through bouts of depression and mania like I did, and for a great deal of my life, I viewed bipolar as my greatest weakness, but this has truly changed. It has been within the last few years that I have started to view my illness as my greatest strength. This group has re-affirmed that for me. It was there that I learned to trust my unique experiences with depression and mania as an opportunity to provide hope and support for my peers. I learned that through shared discussion that there was compassion and understanding, where previously there had been a great deal of fear amongst friends and colleagues.” – *Lydia, West Shore, Co-ed Support Group*

Bipolar is a big deal, and putting the time aside every week to talk about it is extremely necessary. This group showed me that I wasn’t alone, and it continues to offer me support, encouragement, and advice. I am very grateful for its existence and the help I receive.

- *Kyle, Teens2Twenties Support Group*



Our Generous Funders

Platinum Funders



We are very grateful for the generosity of the Pamela and David Richardson Family Foundation.

We also acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.

Elite Funders



Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

Rotary



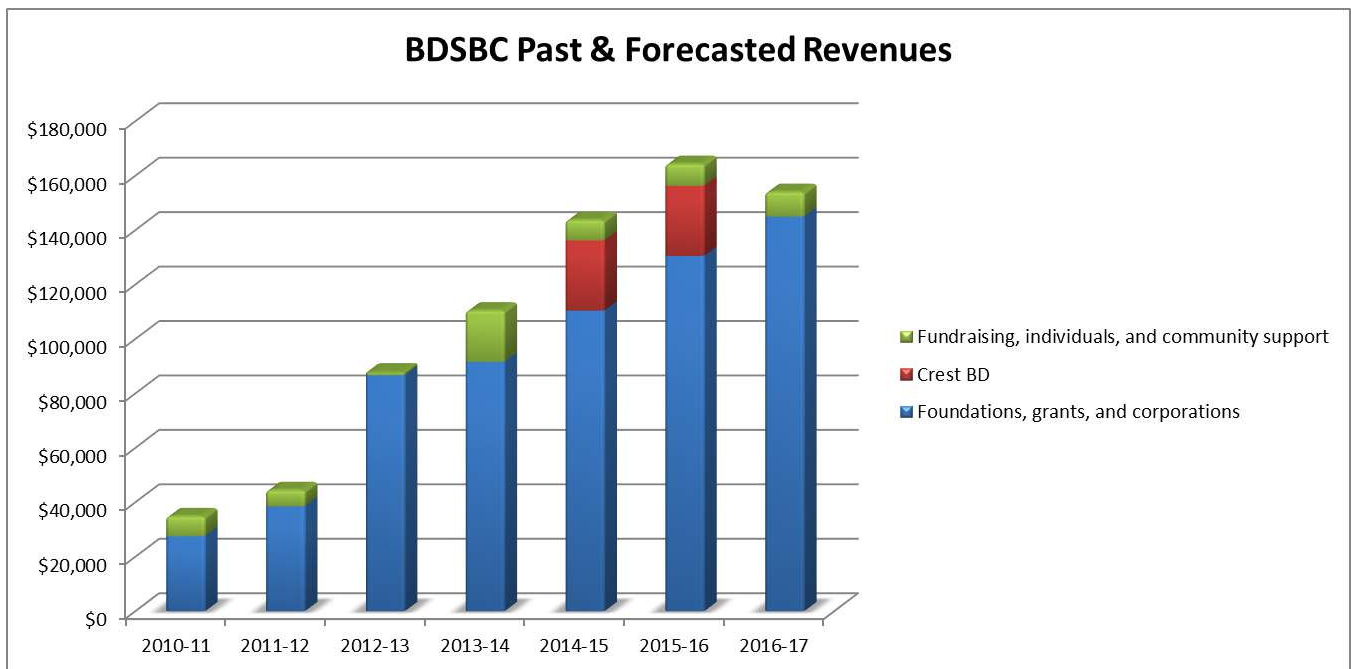
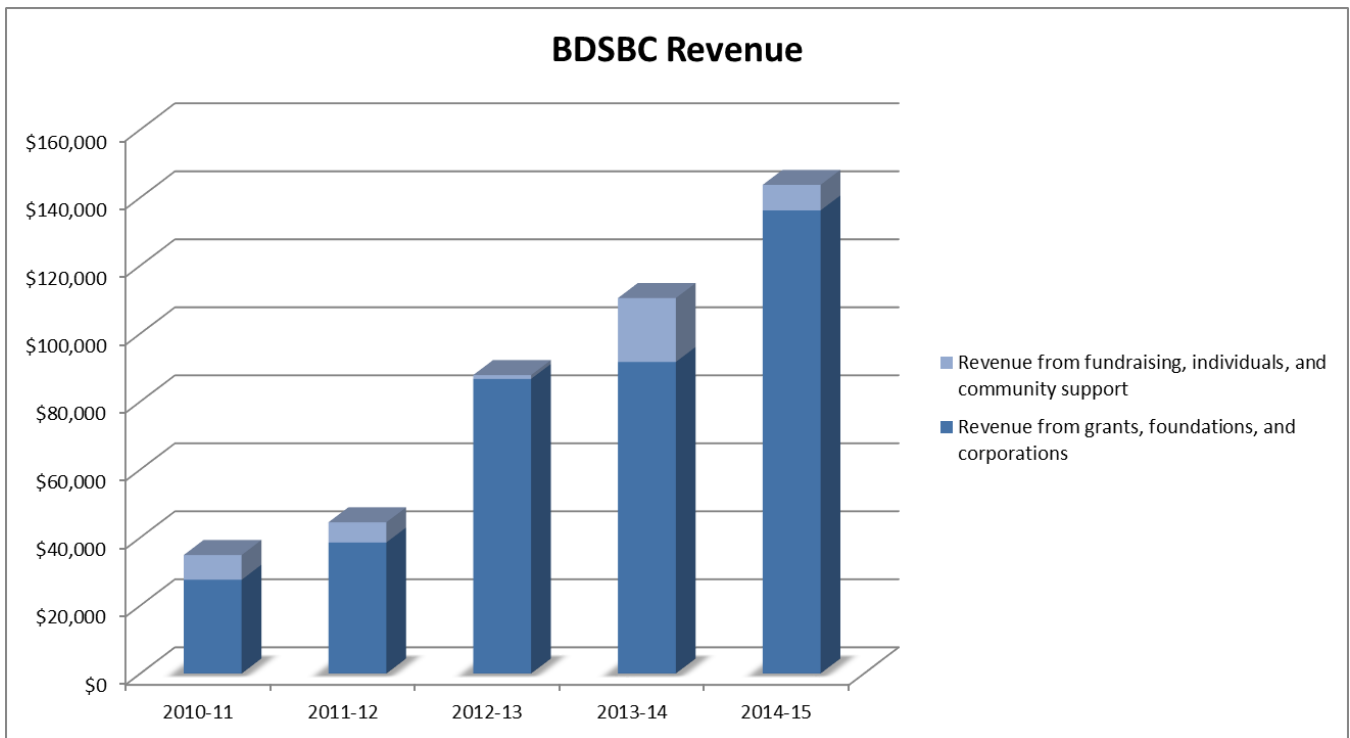
Major Funders



Edith Lando
Charitable Foundation



Financial Highlights – 2014/2015





Financial Statements

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia

March 31, 2015

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Notice to Reader

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On the basis of information provided by the organization, we have compiled the statement of financial position of Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia as at March 31, 2015 and the statements of operations and changes in net assets 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.

Victoria, Canada
August 11, 2015

Grant Thornton LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia

Statements of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)


Year ended March 31	2015	2014
Revenue		
Donations and grants	\$ 142,993	\$ 110,310
Interest	16	15
Community support	<u>724</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>143,733</u>	<u>110,325</u>
Expenses		
Program expenses (Schedule 1)	100,818	86,385
Operating expenses (Schedule 2)	<u>47,099</u>	<u>31,339</u>
	<u>147,917</u>	<u>117,724</u>
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ (4,184)</u>	<u>\$ (7,399)</u>
<hr/>		
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 3,975	\$ 11,374
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	<u>(4,184)</u>	<u>(7,399)</u>
(Deficiency) net assets, end of year	<u>\$ (209)</u>	<u>\$ 3,975</u>

Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia
Statement of Financial Position

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

March 31	2015	2014
Assets		
Current		
Cash	\$ 23,543	\$ 28,685
Liabilities		
Current		
Payables and accruals	\$ 5,752	\$ 6,710
Deferred revenue (Note 3)	18,000	18,000
	23,752	24,710
Net Assets	(209)	3,975
	\$ 23,543	\$ 28,685

On behalf of the Board

 Member  Member

Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia

Notes to the Financial Statements

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)
March 31, 2015

1. Purpose of the Society

The Society aims to increase awareness among the general population, local and provincial governments, educators, youth and others about bipolar disorder.

The Society is incorporated under the Society Act of British Columbia. As a Canadian Registered Charity, the Society is exempt from income tax and may issue receipts for charitable donations.

2. Significant accounting policy

Donations-in-kind

The Society records donated materials, services and facilities in those cases where:

- the Society controls the way they are used;
- there is a measurable basis for arriving at fair value; and
- the services are essential services, which would normally be purchased and paid for if not donated.

The Society would not be able to carry out its activities without the services of the many volunteers who donate a considerable number of hours. Because of the difficulty of compiling these hours, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

3. Deferred revenue

Included in deferred revenue is funding received in the amounts of \$18,000 (2014: \$18,000) from the British Columbia Gaming Commission towards programs for the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia Schedules to the Financial Statements

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Year ended March 31

2015

2014

Schedule of program expenses

Schedule 1

Delivery	\$ 82,149	\$ 70,641
Design and development	1,096	1,159
Handouts and education material	53	179
Office expense	478	1,674
Program insurance	1,061	1,030
Promotion	9,296	6,219
Refreshments	278	571
Room rental	3,720	3,338
Presenter development & training	2,030	-
Technology and website	657	1,574
	<u>657</u>	<u>1,574</u>
	<u>\$ 100,818</u>	<u>\$ 86,385</u>

Schedule of operating expenses

Schedule 2

Accounting and legal	\$ 4,516	\$ 4,427
Contract personnel	37,623	26,634
Interest and bank charges	399	78
Office	4,561	200
	<u>4,561</u>	<u>200</u>
	<u>\$ 47,099</u>	<u>\$ 31,339</u>
