

ANNUAL REPORT 2010 - 2011



Neil
SQUIRE
S O C I E T Y

We use Technology, Knowledge and Passion
to Empower Canadians with Physical Disabilities

www.neilsquire.ca

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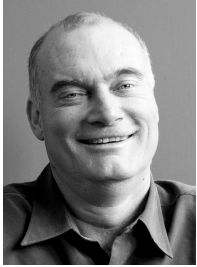
Message from the Chair and the Executive Director

Another year has passed and, as such it is time once again to reflect on the accomplishments of the Neil Squire Society. In 2010 we continued to strive for innovation in providing opportunities and community awareness for persons with disabilities. Many of the seeds we had planted in previous years towards these ends began to take root this year.



To begin with, Dr. Gary Birch was invested into the Order of Canada in a ceremony performed by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean on April 7th, 2010 in recognition of his contributions to the Neil Squire Society.

In 2010, the Neil Squire Society's longest running program, Computer Comfort, became available to persons with disabilities all over Canada via distance learning. People who wish to develop or hone their computer skills can now do so from even the most remote areas as long as they have access to an internet connection.



The year also saw the successful launch of our new accessible website. This website has been used in concert with the Neil Squire Society's Facebook and Twitter pages to share important news and inspiring stories with our clients and community partners.

Finally, the Neil Squire Society began its CRTC Awareness campaign in 2010. This campaign aims to educate people on the rights of Canadians with disabilities by making them aware that cell phone providers should be following the CRTC directive to provide at least one phone that meets the needs of disabled persons "who are blind and/or have moderate-to-severe mobility and/or cognitive disabilities."

As we look forward to 2011, we plan to continue our mission of Empowering Canadians with Disabilities Using Technology, Knowledge and Passion.

“As we look forward to 2011, we plan to continue our mission of Empowering Canadians with Disabilities Using Technology, Knowledge and Passion.”



Darlene Discovers Her Inner Child

“Killing time was killing me,” says Darlene of her life before deciding to take matters into her own hands. As a child, Darlene had been in and out of foster care where she suffered physical abuse. The abuse resulted in sciatica and pain in her lower back, which made working full time extremely challenging. The physical pain, and emotional turmoil that came with it, led Darlene down a dark path to substance abuse. Eventually she felt like she was no longer being a good mother, and ended up “running away from her children.”

It wasn’t long before Darlene realized she needed to get her life back in order. While volunteering at the Friendship Centre in Penticton, British Columbia, Darlene learned about the Neil Squire Society’s Employ-Ability Program, which operates in partnership with the Penticton Indian Band’s Footprints to Technology program.

When Darlene joined the Employ-Ability Program via Distance Learning, she found the staff “very approachable” and the way they did things was “with love and understanding.” It was exactly what Darlene needed. She began learning how to use a computer for job searches and resume writing, but she was particularly interested in the communication aspects, such as Facebook and email. These skills helped her with her goal of getting back in touch with her kids. Seeing recent pictures of her daughter on Facebook was a source of inspiration for Darlene—it was a sign she was getting back on the right track. Darlene is adamant when she says she “will never take the easy way out again.”

The Employ-Ability Program helped Darlene discover her inner child and has helped her to start a brand new career as a clown, something Darlene says was only natural for her. “All I needed was the nose. I’m cheeky, I maintain my funkiness, and I love kids.” It’s not only children who get to enjoy her new persona. When we interviewed Darlene, she was in the process of preparing for two birthday parties in one day: one for a 2 year old, and the other for an 80 year old.

“They saved my life in so many ways,” says Darlene, when asked of her experience in the Employ-Ability Program. “They gave me self-esteem and self-worth. They gave me the skills to find my children on the computer. They gave me this beautiful career. They truly do care!”

Stacey Receives a Boost in Confidence

Stacey, who has epilepsy, was referred to the Neil Squire Society and was quickly accepted into the Employ-Ability Program in Saskatchewan.

Stacey's favourite thing about the course was the comfort she felt with her instructors. "They are all so patient and kind, and the students were also great in this program. I have made some good friends."

Stacey was particularly interested in the career development module of the Program. "The subjects were so interesting and educational," says Stacey. She learned a number of things in the program that helped her to achieve her employment goal, one of the most crucial being how to create a professional resume and cover letter.

Just before the Program ended, Stacey secured a position as a Nurse's Aide. "I feel like everybody else out there who is going to work. Plus, my job requires me to wear scrubs so I feel really good about myself."

"When I started this program I didn't think much of myself because of my disability," says Stacey. "Now I have a job and it boosts my confidence. I have grown to be kind to myself."

Next, Stacey plans to take her General Education Development (GED) with the Neil Squire Society and get her high school diploma.

"Now I have a job and it boosts my confidence. I have grown to be kind to myself."



SASKATCHEWAN



Barry Faces a Challenge and Makes a Change

It is amazing to see a person realize that their goals can be achieved after a major life change. “It takes motivation, step-by-step work, and a ‘just doing it’ approach to make it happen,” says Joanne Ahern, Employ-Ability Program Facilitator. This is exactly what Barry did; he followed his plan to return to school and in addition to that, he also secured a job.

Barry had been working in furniture assembly, and after 12 years with the same employer, it was time for a change. Following a back injury, assembling furniture became too difficult to continue.

As part of his goal to secure work in customer service, Barry knew that he would need to get his high school diploma. Barry is upgrading his education with courses at St. Nicholas Adult High School, while he builds new skills at work.

Barry is also working at Hartman’s Your Independent Grocer, a landmark grocery store in downtown Ottawa. He works in the produce department, ensuring that produce is fresh, organized and ready for customers. Barry speaks with pride describing that, “at the end of the day, it feels good to be contributing and to be working.”

It can be challenging to find employers who will give you a chance following an injury. Joanne says, “Balancing school and work takes some organizing. Hartman’s has supported Barry in tweaking his work schedule so that he has time for home work and much needed sleep. I am so pleased that Hartman’s could see Barry’s potential and have given him this opportunity.”

“At the end of the day, it feels good to be contributing and to be working.”

Employ-Ability Participant Receives a Sheree Fitch Adult Learner Literacy Award

On June 24th, Tara Brice, a participant in the Neil Squire Society's literacy program in Fredericton, was the recipient of the Sheree Fitch Adult Learner Literacy Award. These awards recognize adult learners who have overcome significant obstacles in order to improve their literacy skills and continue their education. Tara is a superb example of hard work and dedication and is well deserving of this award.

Growing up, Tara had always struggled with reading, but when her own children were born, she knew she did not want them to suffer like she did. Tara read to her daughters night and day, but Tara herself was still not comfortable with her reading abilities. After being diagnosed with a learning disability in her early twenties, Tara enrolled in the literacy program at the Neil Squire Society. Before coming to the Society, Tara had never read a complete novel in her entire life. While at the Neil Squire Society, she has read nine and has become a voracious reader.

Tara has been accepted into St. Thomas University which she will attend in the fall to pursue her dream of becoming a social worker. Tara is preparing for university through an individualized learning plan in the Neil Squire Society's Employ-Ability Program. Stayed tuned for more on Tara's progress in the fall.

Tara is a superb example of hard work and dedication and is well deserving of this award.



NEW BRUNSWICK

Dr. Gary Birch, O.C. Invested into the Order Of Canada

Dr. Gary Birch, O.C., Executive Director of the Neil Squire Society, was invested into the Order of Canada, accepting his insignia on April 7th, 2011 in Ottawa during an Order of Canada investiture ceremony. Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, presided over the ceremony at Rideau Hall. The Order of Canada recognizes outstanding achievement and service in various fields of human endeavour. It is our country's highest civilian honour for lifetime achievement.

Computer Comfort Now Available Across Canada

On May 10th, 2010 the Neil Squire Society announced that its longest running program, Computer Comfort, would be growing.

In 2010, the Neil Squire Society received funding from the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, a branch of Human Resources Skills Development Canada. This funding helped us to grow the Computer Comfort Program to an online program. Through e-Learning and the internet, volunteers and people with disabilities can connect in real-time, from across Canada.

Neil Squire Society Unveils YouTube Nonprofit Channel

On July 14th, 2010 we unveiled our designated Nonprofit channel on YouTube, allowing us to deliver their message to the world's largest online video community.

"We are excited to be part of the YouTube Nonprofit Program and we are looking forward to reaching out to an even greater audience as well as our existing donors, partners and participants in this new way", says Executive Director Gary Birch.

Neil Squire Society Unveils Accessible Website

Persons with all types of disabilities, including those with visual impairments, will benefit from steps taken by the Neil Squire Society to ensure its new website, www.neilsquire.ca, is fully accessible. The Society strove to meet the highest WCAG 2.0 accessibility standards set out by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

www.neilsquire.ca was designed in-house by e-Learning Program Coordinator and Computer Programmer, Ryan Thomas. The site was designed with a range of visitors in mind, including those who use screen readers, magnification technology, high contrast settings, and those who rely on their keyboard to navigate instead of a mouse.

Friends for Abilities Circle Members

Gary Birch
Mary Frances Laughton
Greg Pyc
Mike Satterfield
Sig Stark

Lisa D. Lacamell
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Diana Hall



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Government of New Brunswick

Department of Post-Secondary Education,
Training and Labour, New Brunswick

Elections New Brunswick

Worksafe New Brunswick

Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced
Education, Employment and Labour

Statement of Financial Position As At March 31

Table 1: Assets comparison: 2011 to 2010

ASSETS (CURRENT)	2011 \$	2010 \$
Cash	2,1735	1,400
Restricted cash	75,016	60,000
Accounts receivable	409,906	464,271
Prepaid expenses and other assets	29,168	28,867
	535,825	554,538
Capital assets	44,938	44,398
	580,763	598,936

Table 2: Liabilities comparison: 2011 to 2010

LIABILITIES (CURRENT)	2011 \$	2010 \$
Cheques issued in excess of funds on deposit	-	99,750
Bank debt	-	90,000
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	231,773	152,478
Deferred revenue	143,474	109,876
	375,247	452,104
Deferred contributions related to capital assets	-	7,371
Total liabilities	375,247	459,475

Table 3: Net assets comparison: 2010 to 2011

NET ASSETS (CURRENT)	2011 \$	2010 \$
	205,516	139,461
	580,763	598,936

Statement of Operations Year Ended March 31

Table 4: Revenue comparison: 2011 to 2010

REVENUE	2011 \$	2010 \$
Grants	2,069,112	1,791,040
Services	1,102,642	943,917
Training fees	214,853	305,881
Gaming	60,000	90,000
Donations – cash	37,747	80,698
– in kind	6,526	6,139
Interest and other	530	9,298
	3,491,410	3,226,973

Table 5: Expenses comparison: 2011 to 2010

EXPENSES	2011 \$	2010 \$
Salaries and benefits	2,134,547	2,167,556
Consulting and contracts	286,764	304,648
Rent	369,088	351,299
Travel	140,598	146,500
Equipment lease and maintenance – expenditures	119,095	94,557
– in kind	6,526	6,139
Client tuition	81,443	99,067
Telecommunications	69,377	68,664
Material and supplies	59,369	70,569
Vocational assessments and medical reports	24,062	39,469
Marketing and program development	26,010	41,936
Professional development	9,957	17,101
Insurance	21,848	21,947
Legal and audit	29,565	6,573
Other	12,391	9,646
Postage and courier	8,970	5,984
Honorariums	7,234	1,335
	3,406,844	3,452,990
Revenue over (under) expenses before other items	84,566	(226,017)
Other item – Amortization of deferred contributions related to capital assets	7,371	15,563
Other item – Amortization of capital assets	(25,882)	(42,508)
Revenue over (under) expenses for the year	66,055	(252,962)

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We use Technology, Knowledge and Passion
to Empower Canadians with Physical Disabilities

www.neilsquire.ca

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