



Breton
Ability
Centre

People First, Always

2022 Annual Report

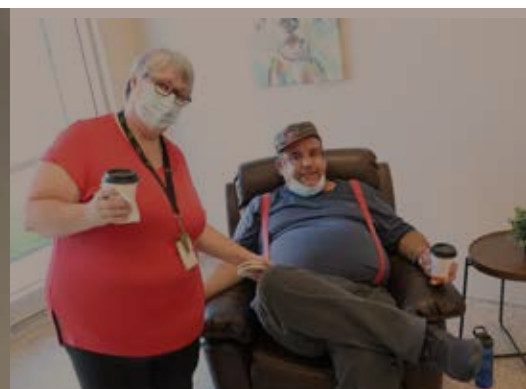


This report is dedicated to our staff who put People First, always.

It highlights the importance of our essential staff, who were on the frontlines in another year of the worldwide pandemic. While the province was asked to stay home, you were busy keeping our residents healthy, infrastructure running, store shelves stocked, spaces cleaned, and so much more. You quickly moved to online learning and meetings. You worked long hours away from loved ones. You adjusted to changing public health requirements.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to all staff. The work you do is so important! The smiles and stories in this report are a testament to your hard work. We are grateful for you, your service and sacrifice.

Thank you



Contents

Message from CEO, Harman Singh	4
Message from Board Chair, Murray Ryan	5
Building Confidence, Gaining Independence: Meet John Gillis	7
Officially Opening Budding Oaks	9
A Journey to Independence: Meet Charmaine Sabourin	11
The Importance of Inclusion: Meet Sherry B.	12
Donations in Action!	14

**“Alone we can do so little;
together, we can do so much.”**

– Helen Keller



Message from CEO, Harman Singh

Though the days were sometimes long, the year was short. When I look back at all that happened throughout 2021, I can't help but smile with pride and humility. I'm so grateful to our incredible team of more than 400 employees who, every day, show unwavering kindness and commitment to our residents. I'm also inspired by our residents who demonstrated great patience and positivity through all of the pandemic's challenges.

At Breton Ability Centre, we're trusted to care for people with the most complex cases of intellectual and mental disabilities in Nova Scotia. With this trust comes challenges. Our team works tirelessly every day to provide professional, compassionate and evidence-based care in often stressful situations. We acknowledge the patience and empathy required for this work and commend our team for rising to the occasion.

A few of my fondest memories of the past year include opening Budding Oaks and welcoming the two youth who call this custom-built, welcoming, beautiful building, home... watching 40 participants strive to achieve their dreams and reach their fullest potential through our Person Directed Planning Pilot Program... witnessing new found confidence through our Youth Day Program... seeing huge smiles and hearing such joyful belly laughs as residents enjoyed the creative programming our recreation therapy team planned... and seeing our community come together and support our charitable foundation's efforts because they know their dollars will have a lasting impact.

For a lot of the world, 2021 was a year of survival. At Breton Ability Centre, I'm proud of how we were able to keep our residents and each other safe, I'm thankful for our collaborative efforts to operate at a time when the world was always shifting under us, and I'm optimistic and ready to look forward.

We have an incredible community within Breton Ability Centre – our staff, our donors, our volunteers, our families, our partners at Community Services. Together, anything is possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harman Singh". The signature is stylized and includes a small flourish at the end.

Harman Singh
CEO
Breton Ability Centre



Message from Board Chair, Murray Ryan

As Chair of Breton Ability Centre's Board of Directors, I want to extend sincere thanks to their incredible team of more than 400 employees who, every day, do their best to improve the lives of people with varying abilities. This includes individuals that call Breton Ability Centre home, people who participate in our outreach programs and it also extends beyond Cape Breton Island through the advocacy work that is done to transform the sector.

2021-2022 proved to be another challenging year, dominated once again by the pandemic. Right now, we're focused on the return to normalcy for our staff and residents, but want to commend and acknowledge the time, energy and dedication you put in to keep everyone under our care safe. We understand it's been a stressful two years and extend heartfelt thanks.

I also want to acknowledge our senior leadership team for being a steady hand during uncertain times. Your ability to lead with grace and calmness is admired. I want to give special congratulations to CEO, Harman Singh, who was recognized for her achievements this year when she was announced as a finalist for the 2022 Canadian Immigrant Awards.

Lastly, I would like to recognize long-time Board Member and past Chairperson, Norman Connors, for his stewardship and volunteerism, especially during the onset of Covid.

Sincerely,

Murray Ryan
Chair, Board of Directors
Breton Ability Centre

Breton Ability Centre's Learning and Employment Centre Programs include:



The Abilitea's
Café



The
Print Shop



Youth
Program



Recycling
Woodworking



Janice's
Boutique



Fun Fact!

Danny and Ed stapled more than 1.5 million tickets last year for minor hockey 50/50 draws as part of their employment with our Print Shop.



Building Confidence, Gaining Independence: Meet John Gillis

Breton Ability Centre's Learning and Employment Centre provides opportunities for residents and program participants to learn new skills, gain employment, build confidence and increase independence. In 2021, we had 50 participants in the Learning and Employment Centre's programs, including John Gillis!

This year, John participated in our Youth Program. With a goal to secure meaningful employment in the community, John worked hard to build his resume, practice interviews and grow his skills. John had a great opportunity to interview with Travelodge and prepared himself with the support of his youth worker. Travelodge offered John employment and complimented his interview skills, saying "He was one of the best interviews of the day!" Now, John is in the union, has benefits and demonstrated how to reach your goals. We're so proud of you, John!



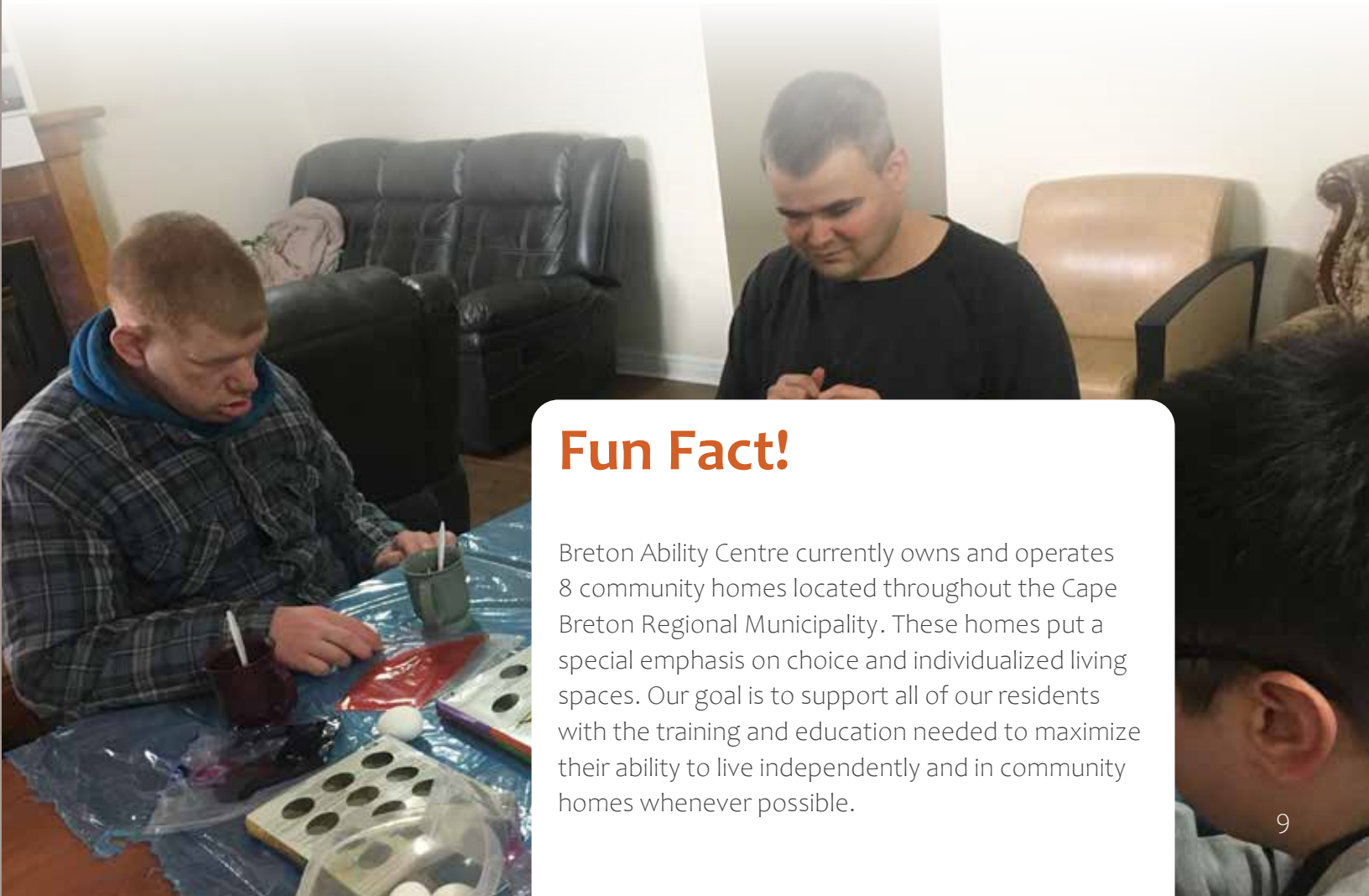
Officially Opening Budding Oaks



One of the most positive memories of 2021 was the opening of Budding Oaks, a Children's Home located on Breton Ability Centre's Inclusion Drive property. Budding Oaks is home for two individuals under the age of 21 with autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disabilities. A high level of complex care is required 24 hours a day.

Every aspect of this home was custom-designed to support the needs of these youth, including homey décor, safety features and accessibility, including sensory stimulation reduction.

The exterior of the home includes a private green space and recreation area. As with all of our residents, our team works hard to create memorable experiences within the community and recreation and leisure inside the home.



Fun Fact!

Breton Ability Centre currently owns and operates 8 community homes located throughout the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. These homes put a special emphasis on choice and individualized living spaces. Our goal is to support all of our residents with the training and education needed to maximize their ability to live independently and in community homes whenever possible.

A Journey to Independence: Meet Charmaine Sabourin

This past year, Charmaine Sabourin, a resident of our Birchdale neighborhood, reached her goal of securing a “real job.” Since June 2021, Charmaine has been employed with Value Village in Sydney. Our team helped her with resume-development, but maintaining her employment is 100% her own success! Charmaine requires zero support related to her schedule or any aspect of her employment.

Our next step for Charmaine will be supporting her in accessing public transportation and navigating around the city safely and independently.



“Building relationships, a positive approach and modeling best work practices provide a good foundation to direct and design programming that will be accepted by both staff and residents.

Getting to know residents, better prepares me to meet their wants and needs, while being careful to set them up for success. The time I spend interacting with residents and being available has allowed me to foster trust and better position to advocate for the complex needs of our residents.”

- Chris MacEachern



Fun Fact!

Did you know that Breton Ability Centre has four neighbourhoods within our central facility? Willow Lane, Birchdale, Pine Ridge and Mapleview are home to 85 residents. Each neighbourhood is designed to support residents based on their unique and complex needs. Despite the level of care required, skills development, fun and leisure, stress reduction and community inclusion are priorities for each neighbourhood.



The Importance of Inclusion: Meet Sherry B.

After living at Breton Ability Centre’s main facility for several years, Sherry settled into one of our eight community homes. We’re so inspired by Sherry’s growth. Sherry goes shopping for her own groceries, clothes and art supplies, often weekly. She participates in many programs through BAC, including the gardening program and the learning and employment centre’s work programs. Sherry and her co-resident also enjoy drives in the community and visiting local attractions. For fun, Sherry loves to craft. She even purchased a brand new desk for her room. She also enjoys baking sweets with her support team. In recent months, Sherry set a goal to learn how to use electronics. She purchased an iPad and now uses it to listen to music, play games and watch shows on Netflix.

Way to go, Sherry!

“When I first started working at Breton Ability Centre, a co-worker shared with me that “there is nothing more inclusive than heading out shopping at Walmart.” This stuck with me and really demonstrated the importance of creating opportunities for our residents to be visible in the community and to help them learn about finances, socialization, etiquette, time management and responsibility. These seemingly simple experiences empower our residents, build their confidence and create opportunities for some fun!”



Fun Fact!

The Person Directed Planning Program is a pilot partnership with the Department of Community Services. In 2021, 40 individuals were supported through this program to help them work towards their personal goals. A focus of the program is to support individuals in developing positive relationships in the community, including employment opportunities.

Donations in Action!

Donations are in action every day at Breton Ability Centre! This year, more than \$54,000 was raised through our community giving campaigns to fund the development of an accessible bon fire area, the purchase of Christmas and birthday gifts for residents, along with recreational programming.

A new event in 2021 was a golf tournament in collaboration with the Lingan Ladies Golf League, the Wine Down. More than \$6,000 was raised and a plan is already in place for 2022.

This year also marked the completion of our donor-funded Grillzebo project– a fully accessible barbecue space for residents to enjoy with the support of our staff.

Whether you shop at our social enterprises (Best of Cape Breton and the Print Shop), made a donation or volunteered your time, thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of individuals with varying abilities.



In October 2021, Breton Ability Centre was awarded the prestigious **“Social Enterprise of the Year”** award from the Cape Breton Regional Chamber of Commerce Excellence in Business Awards. This is Breton Ability Centre’s fourth time winning this award.

Did you know that we provide ongoing training and educational opportunities for our team to advance their skills to provide the best care and support for our residents? Some of this year’s educational highlights include Professional Certificates in Disability Supports, Positive Approaches to Behaviour, Mental Health First Aid, Wound Care, Low Arousal Approaches and much more.



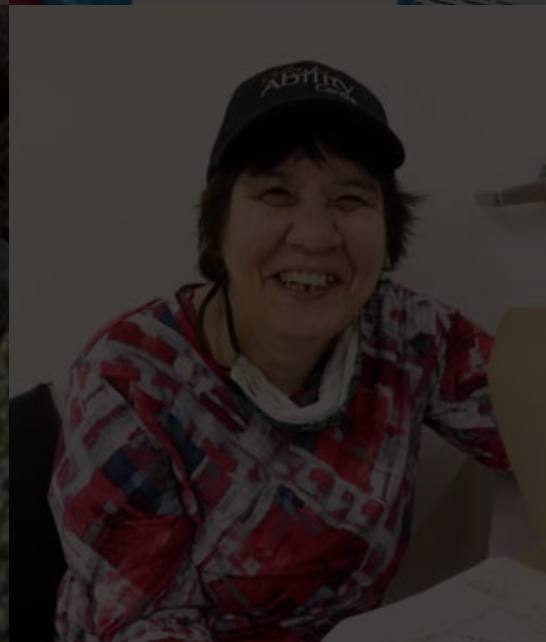
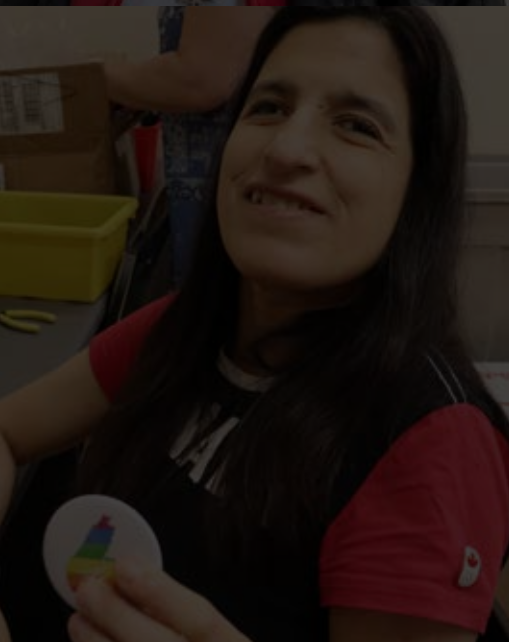
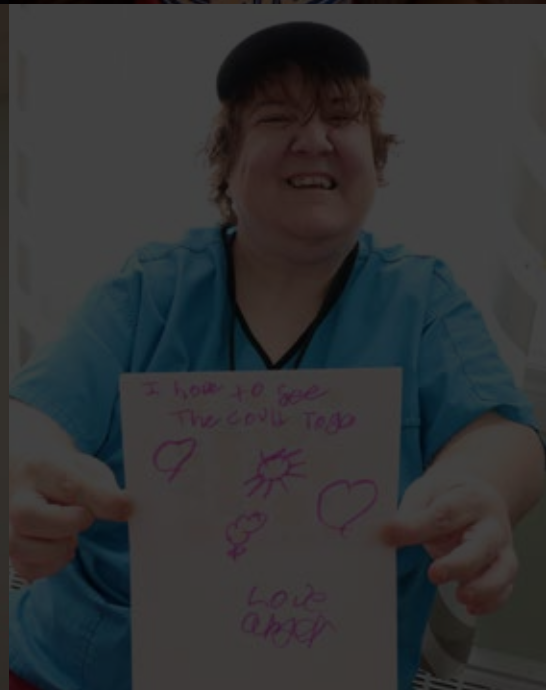
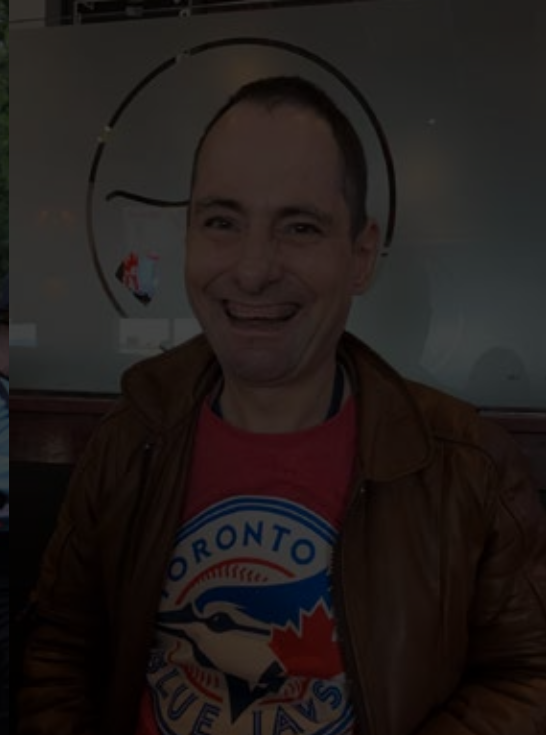
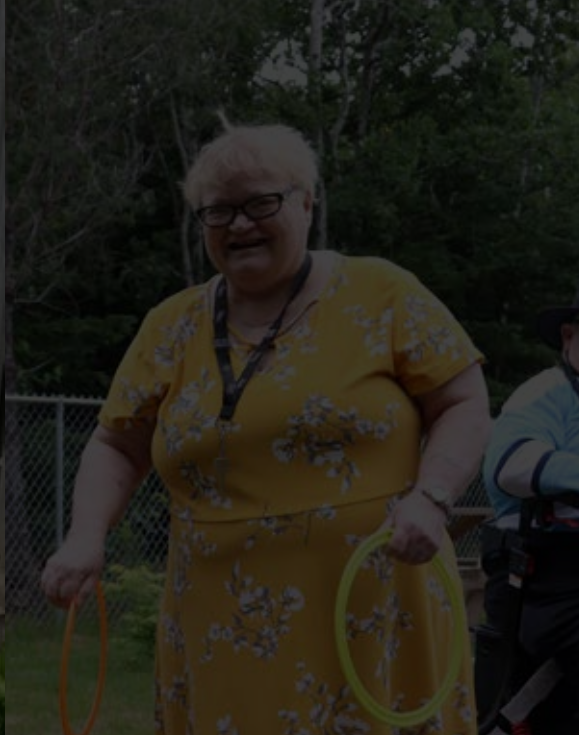
Fun Fact!

Donations to Breton Ability's Charitable Foundation support recreational programming for residents and the infrastructure development for recreational activities.

Every month, our recreation therapy team plan a combination of on-site and in-community programming for our residents, including:

- Bowling
- Gardening
- Pottery painting at Fired Creations
- Cape Breton Eagles games
- Visits to the Wildlife Park
- Visits to Hank's Farm
- Picnics at local parks
- And so much more





Breton
Ability
Centre

bretonability.ca