

# Our Community Story 2019



# Our Vision



Recreation and arts are vital to North Vancouver becoming the most vibrant, diverse, active, creative and connected community.

Our mission is to help individuals, families and communities lead healthy, inspired and connected lives through recreation and culture.

We do this by ensuring our programs and services are focused on improving health and wellness, inspiring creativity, connecting our community and creating inclusion.

This is our story ... told through the voices of our participants, staff and volunteers.

It is the story of how together we help community members discover new interests, pursue their passions and realize their personal health and creativity goals.

Read on to see how **Together, we're changing lives.**



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# Stuart's Story



## Building a healthier life

When Stuart Cameron retired at the age of 60 he was 300 pounds. When he ran out of breath walking a block to the bus, Stuart knew he needed to take action.

Stuart committed to doing something active every day and eating better, so he joined a weight loss group, started playing pickle ball and then added swimming and working out in the fitness centre.

Sixteen months and almost 150 pounds lighter, he's training for a triathlon and feeling better than ever.

"Delbrook Community Recreation Centre got me moving and I'll keep going. I feel so much better, stronger," Stuart said. "It's more than just being fit. It's about wellness. I feel content."

Stuart's advice for others is to find something you love and do it. "The key is to move," he said. "Just get started."

**Together, we're changing lives.**

Read the full story and watch the video: [nvrc.ca/stuart](http://nvrc.ca/stuart)



## A lifetime of participation

We support the community's health, wellness and creativity through every stage of life. From prenatal fitness to painting for seniors, our aim is to ensure everyone in the community has access to quality recreation and culture opportunities.

For young children, we provide opportunities to grow, learn, move and create, first with their families and then on their own.

Once they enter school, we teach and encourage our kids to improve their physical literacy and arts appreciation through many learn-to and play programs.

Our teens are welcome in our youth centres and youth programs to connect with others and be supported as they navigate their way to young adulthood.

For adults and families, we offer a wide range of programs, services and events to support their health and wellness and their creativity and connect them with their community.

And for older adults, we, together with our service partners North Shore Neighbourhood House and Parkgate Community Services Society, deliver programs and activities to support their active aging, arts and culture interests and social connections.

## Arta's Story

### Encouraged to learn & lead

When Arta was younger, she was scared of the water and ice but with the help of NVRC instructors, she overcame her fears and learned to swim and skate.

**Now at 12 years old she loves sports, "adores" swimming and can't wait to train to become a lifeguard.**

Drawing inspiration from her mother and NVRC staff, she understands it takes a positive mindset, hard work and perseverance to achieve her goals.

An excellent student, Arta also values community and giving back. Last summer she raised money for Lions Gate Hospital's capital campaign.

Arta is an inspiration to all those around her, including NVRC staff who are proud to be part of her journey.

#### **Together, we're changing lives.**

Read the full story and watch the video: [nvrc.ca/arta](http://nvrc.ca/arta)



# Our Community



North Vancouver is one of the healthiest communities in Canada.

And yet, many residents struggle with health issues, social isolation and financial disparity.

At NVRC, we challenge ourselves to deliver affordable, quality recreation and culture programs to address these issues and improve our community's health and well-being.

We don't do it alone. We work with our residents, partners and networks to provide inclusive spaces, programs, services and events that welcome everyone and result in positive social and health outcomes.

# Mark's Story



## Insights into a healthy community

As Vancouver Coastal Health's Medical Health Officer for the North Shore, Dr. Mark Lysyshyn believes that many residents are spending too much time tuned into screens and not enough time connecting with each other and the nature that surrounds us.

**"Everyone would benefit by getting out there and being active with people they enjoy and connect with."**

He knows that this supports good mental and physical health and contributes to healthier communities.

There are many options for being active on the North Shore, including trails for hiking and biking, urban pathways for walking and talking.

Dr. Lysyshyn believes North Vancouver Recreation & Culture also plays a big role in facilitating stronger community connections and improved population health by offering programs and services that are accessible to everyone.

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Read the full story and watch the video: [nvrc.ca/mark](http://nvrc.ca/mark)



## Our Partners

The NVRC is proud to work with North Shore Neighbourhood House (NSNH) and Parkgate Community Services Society and others to create a healthy, caring and connected community.

Together, we are stronger and better able to provide a wide range of social, recreation and culture programs and services at John Braithwaite Community Centre (NSNH) and Parkgate Community Centre (PCSS).

Serving the North Shore community since 1939, **North Shore Neighbourhood House (NSNH)** is celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019.

NSNH believes that working together to meet the grassroots needs of our neighbours, especially our most vulnerable residents, is essential to building a safe, healthy and strong community.

The House values and promotes cooperation, respect and empowerment through the provision of programs and services designed to meet the needs of individuals and the community as a whole. Visit [nsnh.bc.ca](http://nsnh.bc.ca) for more information.



## Gail's Story

### A passion for mind & body health

Meet Gail Roxburgh, a local leader and educator on brain health who is making a difference on the North Shore. At 77 years young, she is a busy fitness instructor with both North Vancouver Recreation & Culture and North Shore Neighbourhood House and a tireless advocate for active aging and brain fitness.

When her close friend developed dementia, Gail learned everything she could about Alzheimer's and dementia and the role exercise and activities play in helping to preserve and sharpen mental function.

Her journey led to her becoming a certified Cognitive Fitness Facilitator and to develop and lead special classes for brain health and exercise at a number of community centres across the North Shore including Mind & Body Fitness for North Shore Neighbourhood House at John Braithwaite Community Centre.

**Together, we're changing lives.**

Read the full story: [nvrc.ca/gail](http://nvrc.ca/gail)

# Celebrating 20 Years

In 2019 we are celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Parkgate Community Centre.

**Parkgate Community Services Society** is a registered charity that has been serving the community since 1983.

Parkgate Society currently provides a broad range of child, youth, family and seniors programs and services out of Parkgate Community Centre, the Seymour Youth Centre, and other community locations.

Visit [myparkgate.com](http://myparkgate.com) for more information.



## Ali's Story

### Growing up at Parkgate

With more than 15 years' experience as a participant and volunteer at Parkgate, 21 year-old Ali Vickers has unique insight into the important role a community centre plays in a young person's life. Ali was three years old when she first started in the daycare at Parkgate. From there she transitioned through childcare programs, enjoyed summer day camps and learned new skills through a variety of Parkgate programs and services.

"I remember what it meant to have older kids to play with and take an interest in you," Ali said. "Now I can be that volunteer. I feel like I've come full circle."

The skills she's acquired and volunteer experience she's gained during her time at Parkgate has helped Ali overcome shyness and provided new experiences and opportunities.

Today, this dedicated and dynamic university student remains an active Parkgate volunteer and fitness enthusiast who credits her confidence and future career as a speech pathologist to her time spent "growing-up" at Parkgate Community Centre.

**Together, we're changing lives.**  
Read the full story: [nvrc.ca/ali-v](http://nvrc.ca/ali-v)



## Our Networks

We work with a number of community and government agencies and non-profits on the North Shore to collaborate on specific initiatives and stay informed on community issues.

**These networks include:**  
Interagency Network, Middle Years Table, Seniors Coalition, Physical Literacy for You, Active North Shore and the Arts & Culture Network.



## Building Physical Literacy

### PL4U's story

In 2015, NVRC's Samantha Morrison (pictured 3rd from left) and her colleague Jo-Anne Burleigh (4th from right) from Vancouver Coastal Health were shocked to learn that only 17% of high school students are getting the recommended daily physical activity to achieve health benefits.

Inspired to improve the health of youth in our community, Samantha & Jo-Anne, together with other community leaders and a grant from the RBC Learn to Play Project, established Physical Literacy for You (PL4U) in 2017. Workshops were offered, conferences organized and other tools and resources made available to support teachers, recreation instructors, coaches, parents and caregivers.

PL4U's goal is to build awareness for physical literacy, why it's important and how teaching physical literacy supports improved community health.

**Together, we're changing lives.**  
Read the full story: [nvrc.ca/PL4U-story](http://nvrc.ca/PL4U-story)

COMMUNITY STORIES 2019



# Helen's Story



## Creating a dementia friendly community

**"Why are we here, if we don't try to make a difference?"**

This is the call to action from Helen Murphy, one of our community's finest champions for making the North Shore an inclusive and dementia-friendly place. Municipalities on the North Shore also recognize the importance of this goal and have begun implementing a Dementia-Friendly North Shore Action Plan.

Through awareness programs and education and training of front-line municipal staff including North Vancouver Recreation & Culture staff, the goal is to

keep community members with memory issues engaged, connected and active for as long as possible.

Helen works, teaches and volunteers tirelessly to make our communities more dementia-friendly. Helen has also started the "Dementia Friendly Neighbour" project and plans to start an Alzheimer's Café on the North Shore.

**Together, we're changing lives.**  
Read the full story: [nvrc.ca/helen](http://nvrc.ca/helen)



## Our People & Programs

NVRC staff are passionate about their work and inspired to make a difference in our community. Many grew up with NVRC and have great memories of learning new skills, meeting new people and having fun.

Today, with over 900 staff and instructors and over 180 volunteers, NVRC's team works together to provide positive learning, playing and connecting experiences at our facilities and in all our recreation and culture programs.

## Jordy's story

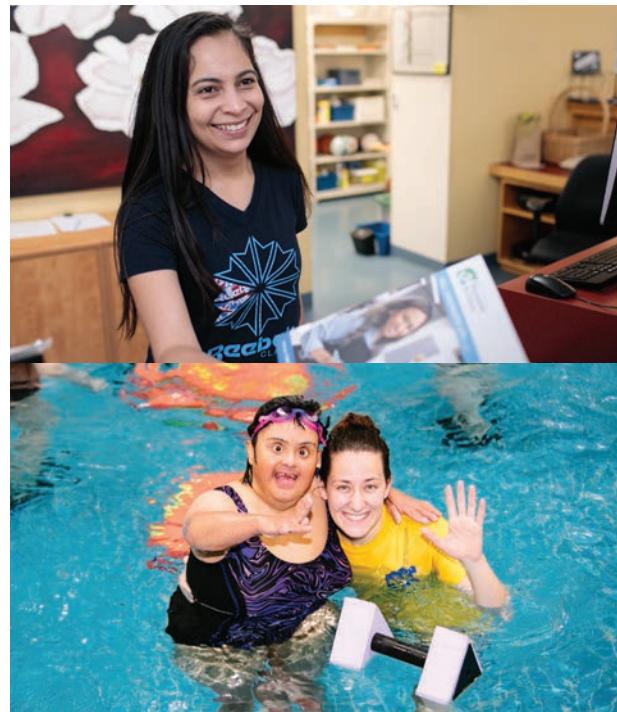
### Born to swim & save lives

Jordy McIntosh's future as a NVRC lifeguard and swim instructor began when he was six months old and took his first swim lesson in Ron Andrews pool. Approximately 16,000 swim sessions later, Jordy is inspiring other kids to learn to swim and stay safe in and out of the pool.

"Swimming has given me skills that I can apply in the rest of my life," Jordy said. "I've learned teamwork, leadership, communications, concentration and the ability to multi-task." Jordyn also emphasizes the more serious benefits of swimming lessons, not just to change lives but to save them. He helped save a person's life early in his teens when he provided CPR to a woman who was not breathing and kept her alive until the paramedics arrived. Jordy was grateful he had the skills and training to make a difference when needed. "It's very empowering to know how to save lives," he said.

Jordy currently teaches swimming and works as a lifeguard at Ron Andrews Pool while pursuing his dream to become a music teacher and professional drummer.

**Together, we're changing lives.**  
Read the full story: [nvrc.ca/jordy](http://nvrc.ca/jordy)



# Karen's Story



## Reaching the hard to reach

Karen Harmon's passion for fitness helped her overcome her own struggles and now she works to bring the transformative power of fitness to residents who need it most.

Karen is very proud of her work with NVRC teaching the Active Living Fitness Program for community members who are marginalized and not comfortable in a regular fitness class.

Karen does outreach in the community to connect with residents and invite them to participate. When they come to the class, Karen "meets them where they're at" and provides gentle support and instruction.

"I have witnessed healing, gratitude, increased self-esteem and confidence. Everyone who attends has seen changes in their mental, emotional, social and physical well-being," says Karen.

"My hope is that every community centre in Canada could have some fitness classes like the ones NVRC has. I think it would change the world."

### Together, we're changing lives.

Read the full story and watch the video:  
[nvrc.ca/karen](http://nvrc.ca/karen)



## Our Volunteers

The NVRC wouldn't be the same without our volunteers who bring boundless energy, talent, generosity and heart to our programs.

From helping with kids camps and providing one-on-one support in programs, to special events and play activities, our volunteers love giving back to their community while meeting new people and gaining new experiences and leadership skills.

### Our Citizen Commissioners

North Vancouver Recreation & Culture Citizen Commissioners are appointed by City and District Councils. Representing the best interests of North Vancouver residents, our Commissioners volunteer their time and energy to guide the Commission's policies and provide community oversight.

## Carolyne's Story

From a young age, Carolyne understood the power of role models who inspire and encourage. She remembers looking up to her instructors and the volunteers in her skating, swimming and ballet classes at North Vancouver Recreation & Culture (NVRC).

Today, she gives back to her community through her own volunteer work at NVRC providing one-on-one skating support to an eight-year old boy on the autism spectrum.

She helps him focus in class so he can pay attention to instruction while having fun. It's been a challenging role for Carolyne as she's developed the skills to work with children with special needs. "He's always excited and motivates me to bring the same energy."

She has now become a positive role model like the ones she once looked up to. Carolyne encourages everyone to volunteer in their community, saying, "Even the smallest contributions make the biggest differences."

### Together, we're changing lives.

Read the full story and watch the video: [nvrc.ca/carolyne](http://nvrc.ca/carolyne)



# Our Programs

NVRC offers a wide variety of indoor and outdoor recreation, arts and culture opportunities for all ages. These are provided at our community recreation centres, Centennial Theatre, North Vancouver Tennis Centre and various indoor and outdoor community spaces. From registered programs to drop-in classes and special events, we provide opportunities to participate in:

## Arts & Culture

We offer hundreds of exciting visual and performing arts programs designed to help you discover the artist and performer within.

## Camps

NVRC camps are a fun, safe and meaningful way to spend the summer, school breaks and professional days.

## Fitness

From boot camp to Zumba to weight training and pre- and post-natal fitness, our registered fitness programs, drop-in classes and fitness centres help residents achieve their fitness goals.

## General

NVRC offers great programs where community members can learn a new language, take a specialty cooking class, play bridge and develop their leadership skills.

## Health Management

Health management programs can help people get back in motion when dealing with a chronic condition or recovering from an injury, surgery or stroke.

## Outdoor Recreation

Our community loves the outdoors and NVRC offers outdoor play opportunities for kids and youth, hiking and walking programs and outdoor fitness classes so residents can stay active outside.

## Sports

From badminton and tennis, to pickle ball, basketball and floor hockey, there are many learn-to and recreational sport programs at our facilities.

## Swimming & Skating

NVRC supports many residents to learn to swim and skate. Our rinks and pools provide a wide range of aquatic and skating opportunities for families and individuals of all ages.



# Andrea's Story



## For the love of art

Andrea Bruhns is passionate about the power of the arts to nurture self awareness and personal healing.

Whether it is drawing, painting, photography, pottery, quilting or woodworking, Andrea believes all art forms provide a “playground for creativity”.

One of the talented art instructors at Parkgate Community Centre, Andrea teaches art exploration and mixed media to all age groups.

Andrea loves helping her students “let go” of their fear of judgement and discover their own voice and creative freedom.

### **Together, we're changing lives.**

Read the full story and watch the video: [nvrc.ca/andrea](http://nvrc.ca/andrea)

# Peter's & Hege's Story



## From tragedy to triumph

In 2015 Peter suffered a stroke and had little hope of ever walking again. Through perseverance, the loving devotion of his wife Hege and NVRC's life-changing Aquatic Stroke Rehab Program, Peter has gradually regained his mobility.

The couple is able to enjoy life outside the house once again. "I can't praise the Stroke Rehab staff and volunteer team enough."

Hege is convinced that Peter will walk by himself again someday, saying, "If it's impossible, it just takes a little bit longer."

### **Together, we're changing lives.**

Read the full story and watch the video:  
[nvrc.ca/peter-hege](http://nvrc.ca/peter-hege)

# Alix's Story



## Raising resilient kids

When Alix Dunham became aware of the growing rates of anxiety and depression among youth in our community, she knew something needed to be done.

Motivated by other parents and concerns for her own children, Alix developed Girls with Grit, a program that uses yoga, meditation (which Alix calls Brain Train), crafts and conversation to teach girls soul resilience and provide the tools they need to slow down their brains and deal with challenging life experiences.

"Our goal is to prevent mental health issues before they take hold," Alix explained.

Alix appreciates the support she's received from NVRC and said, "We approached NVRC about doing the program and they said yes right away and jumped in. Since it began in 2016, Girls with Grit has helped almost 1,000 girls grow and build resilience through programs offered at NVRC, in schools and privately in the community.

### **Together, we're changing lives.**

Read the full story and watch the video: [nvrc.ca/alix](http://nvrc.ca/alix)



## Our Services

From personal training to our financial assistance program, NVRC provides a wide range of services to support our residents in their recreation, culture and community pursuits.

### Access & Inclusion

We value diversity, inclusion and providing access for everyone in the community. We are committed to improving accessibility to our facilities, programs and services.

Our Access & Inclusion Team provides services and supports to ensure members of our community can participate in recreation and culture opportunities. These include our financial assistance program and programs and supports for people living with a disability.

### Cultural Services

Our Cultural Services Team is keeping culture alive in our community through visual and performing arts programs events and activities, arts and culture grants and North Vancouver's extensive public art program.

NVRC also supports cultural capacity building by offering opportunities for professional development, peer learning and community engagement.

### Rentals

Our staff manage thousands of facility rentals and bookings for the community each year, including park and school fields, pools, arenas, gyms and meeting rooms.

## Diane's & Janice's Story

Diane and Janice are two mothers behind Inclusion Works, a group of families with adult children with disabilities.

Together with community partners like NVRC, Inclusion Works supports their adult children by providing them with diverse programs and experiences such as life skills training, fitness, recreational and arts pursuits, volunteering and work experience.

"NVRC staff have been fantastic, accommodating and welcoming to our kids," Diane and Janice say. "They are also very supportive to us parents." The results over the past 5 years have been incredible, as these young adults grow their skills and flourish with self-confidence and social connections.

**Together we're changing lives.**  
Read the full story: [nvrc.ca/diane-janice](http://nvrc.ca/diane-janice)

# Our Events

We bring the community together through the many special events we present, host and facilitate throughout the year. Our Community Events Team facilitates, supports and produces over 130 community events every year.

## Live & Local Concerts & Culture Series

Live & Local includes the popular concert series (formerly the Friday Night Summer Concerts Series) and free cultural experiences at five locations for families, residents and visitors all summer long.

## North Van STRONG

North Van STRONG is an annual event for kids and youth in grades 3-10 that feature a two kilometer course with fun and challenging obstacles. The event supports young people getting active and having memorable experiences that will lead to a lifetime of active living.

## Centennial Theatre events and performances

For over 50 years, Centennial Theatre has been facilitating and presenting cultural and performing arts experiences that contribute to the cultural fabric of North Vancouver. As the largest performing arts venue on the North Shore, Centennial Theatre strives to empower the community to be creative, connected and entertained.

The theatre has also been the place where generations of residents have discovered their performer within, having taken their first steps on stage at Centennial Theatre.



# Our Facilities

On behalf of the City & District of North Vancouver, we operate 10 community recreation centres, the North Vancouver Tennis Centre and Centennial Theatre.

We manage places where everyone is welcome to gather, learn, play, create and connect.

We also support recreation and culture outdoors through walking and hiking programs, outdoor fitness classes, children's camps and play activities in parks, community events and public art installations.



# Ali's Story



## Building a vibrant cultural community

Ali loves his community and its cultural diversity. Originally from Iran, he has established a successful business here and says of the North Shore, "Here, I've experienced the best quality of life for me and my family."

Ali has helped to bring Persian culture to life on the North Shore. Through promoting musical acts and other cultural events at Centennial Theatre, Ali has enriched the whole community.

He believes the Centennial Theatre, operated by NVRC, has brought his community closer.

He has come to know the theatre's staff well, praising everyone who works there and says, "We are a team!"

Ali can't imagine his community without Centennial Theatre. He knows how much it means for people to be able to enjoy live music and cultural events at a reasonable cost.

He says, "Centennial will always be my home."

**Together, we're changing lives.**  
Read the full story: [nvrc.ca/ali](http://nvrc.ca/ali)

# Aaron's Story



## Pursuing a dream

Aaron has a dream: To play professional lacrosse in the National Lacrosse League.

It's a dream inspired by a long family legacy. From his maternal great grandfather to his father and cousins, lacrosse is a huge part of Aaron's heritage.

Aaron has dedicated himself to being the best player he can be, by training hard and taking his fitness seriously. He works out five times a week at the John Braithwaite Community Centre, something he finds really enjoyable because of the friendly environment and people: "It feels like home."

Fitness has greatly helped Aaron with his confidence and ambitions, and he encourages others to follow his lead. Aaron also coaches young players, continuing the lacrosse legacy for the next generation.

"I think young people should get into fitness, get active, see the progress and keep going."

**Together, we're changing lives.**

Read the full story and watch the video: [nvrc.ca/aaron](http://nvrc.ca/aaron)

# Our Participation

**2,172,000**

Visitors to our facilities

**53,202**

Hours of operation at facilities

**2,587**

Individuals assisted through our financial assistance program

**8,734**

Volunteer hours from 189 volunteers

**13,600+**

Recreation and culture programs offered

**576,558**

Recreation and culture program participants

**21,667**

Active members  
(fitness, access, pool & play, personal training)

**751,371**

Scans from members

**11,000+**

Audience/participants in the Live & Local Concerts & Culture Series

**100,000+**

Audience members at Centennial Theatre

**13**

New public art installations

**35**

Arts and culture grants awarded

**3,000+**

Room, pool, arena, gym, park and field bookings and rentals

**850+**

Park and school field bookings

All statistics are from 2018



# Our Future



Our NVRC team remains committed to our vision to help individuals, families and communities lead healthy, inspired and connected lives.

We will continue to conduct research with residents, keep informed of industry trends and work collaboratively with others to ensure we proactively and intentionally respond to our community's indoor and outdoor recreation and culture needs.

Our staff work closely with the City and District of North Vancouver and community service organizations on initiatives related to building healthy communities. The near future includes new facilities

in planning or development (Lions Gate Community Centre, Harry Jerome Community Recreation Centre and Lynn Creek Community Centre), more outdoor recreation services and a continued emphasis on reaching youth and those who are under-served and face barriers to participation.

North Vancouver Recreation & Culture will continue to be an innovative leader in municipal recreation and culture as we serve our community now and in the future.

# Connect with Us

We welcome you to get active and creative with us and to connect with the community. Here's how to get started:

## 1. Come see us at our Community Recreation Centres, Tennis Centre or Theatre

Did you know? We operate ten community recreation centres, one indoor tennis centre and Centennial Theatre. Our staff will welcome you and fill you in on all the happenings at our facilities.

## 2. Drop-in for a swim, skate, fitness class or sport session

See all our drop-in schedules at [nvrc.ca/schedules](http://nvrc.ca/schedules).

## 3. Speak to our staff on the phone at 604.987.7529

Our call centre staff know almost everything! They can help answer all your questions and give you suggestions for programs and activities you may want to try.

## 4. Register for one of our thousands of programs

Art, painting, music lessons, dance, martial arts, sports, swimming, skating, fitness, yoga, parent participation, early years, school age, adult and seniors programs – there's lots to choose from! View our leisure guide and see what sparks your interest [nvrc.ca/leisure-guide](http://nvrc.ca/leisure-guide).

## 5. Attend one of our community events

Don't miss our Live & Local Concerts & Culture Series in five neighbourhoods every summer (over 30 free events!) and check our website for other NVRC and community events. [nvrc.ca/events](http://nvrc.ca/events)

## 6. Apply to Volunteer with NVRC

We're always looking for more community members to join our volunteer team. Apply today at [nvrc.ca/volunteer](http://nvrc.ca/volunteer).

## 7. Explore our website

There's so much to discover. From our public art collection (over 150 artworks in North Vancouver) and what's on at Centennial Theatre to volunteering with NVRC and all our programs, services and facilities – you can start browsing now at [nvrc.ca](http://nvrc.ca).

## 8. Sign up for our email newsletters and stay informed about programs, events and activities

Get the inside scoop on what's going on with our RecNews, ArtsNews, TennisNews and our weekly Community Events News. Sign up at [nvrc.ca/newsletters](http://nvrc.ca/newsletters).

## 9. Follow us on social media

Join our over 8,000 followers on Facebook plus our Twitter, Instagram and YouTube channels for cool pics, video sand stories about what's going on here at NVRC.

## 10. Read our Active Living Blog

Our blog features weekly articles on health, wellness, arts and culture, as well as profiles on our staff and community members. [nvrc.ca/blog](http://nvrc.ca/blog)

## 11. Send us your ideas and feedback

We want to hear from you! Call, visit or contact us online with your ideas, program suggestions and feedback. 604.987.PLAY(7529) [nvrc.ca](http://nvrc.ca)



# Our Stories



Everyone has a story and we've been speaking with our participants, staff and volunteers to capture their stories of how together, we're changing lives.

Visit our website at [nvrc.ca/stories](http://nvrc.ca/stories) to read all the stories and watch the videos.