

Barbara Power
Victoria, BC

Dear Sir/Madam:

My son, Kris, is an engaging young man in his mid-thirties. He embraces experiential life-long learning, cares about his family, animals, people and world events, and he volunteers in his community. This may seem unremarkable.

Let me rephrase this; "At age 36, my son, Kris, continues to beat the odds of dying from complex medical conditions while he lives and loves to his full capacity. His physical and intellectual challenges do not deter him from learning new skills, contributing to a good cause, expressing his views, volunteering his time, being socially responsible, 'hanging' with like minds, and laughing at someone's not so funny joke."

I invite you to imagine all that might be needed to ensure Kris is adequately and appropriately supported to be the individual he wants and can be. Consider what his family would need to be his advocate, his constant. Extend your imaginings to include what would need to be in place for Kris to be safe, and to be a contributing citizen in his community. Now multiply all of this by 10. Enter Lifetime Networks!

Our introduction to Lifetime Networks in 2009, would come to be a connection of immeasurable impact for us. In fact, I refer to this amazing organization as, "LifeLine Networks". I cannot say enough about the staff and programs Kris has participated in, how he has benefited, and how important the connections and friendships have become for his health and wellbeing. It takes commitment, skill, creativity and unending energy to work with individuals living with physical and developmental disabilities. It takes all of this and more to work with individuals' family or close ones. When community is added you are now dealing with more facets than a jeweler's cut stone. And Lifetime Networks does this beautifully.

The 'less obvious to the public' action needs mention. When reduced financial means threatened Kris's ability to participate, extra hours were spent strategizing on how to make things work so that Kris wouldn't fall through the cracks. As Kris moved through various changes in his physical and emotional health, modifications were made to the program to enable flexibility while maintaining much needed structure and schedule. Open communication has been a hallmark between and among Kris, staff, us and now Kris' homeshare family. We continue to learn and grow together. Please understand, this was beyond the call of duty. It was often what kept us moving forward as individuals, as a family.

As I reflect upon the words on these two pages I am struck by the challenge of capturing the core essence of what makes Lifetime Networks *the* organization to receive the Business Leadership Award. I have witnessed Kris's expansion as the young man he is through his connections with Lifetime Networks. My family and I were provided gentle guidance when all others were seemingly at a loss as to what to do. And I have watched Lifetime Networks make a difference in the disability community and Greater Victoria community through engagement, partnership and leadership.

Sincerely,
Barbara Power