

Rebecca Ataya Lang
7255 Brentview Road
Victoria, BC V8M 1B9

Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
#100 – 852 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1H8

January 23, 2020

To Whom it May Concern;

RE: Lifetime Networks nomination for the Chamber of Commerce Community Builder Award

I am honoured to be writing a letter of support for Lifetime Networks nomination for the Community Builder Award. As both a professional in the social services sector, and as someone who has a loved one who benefits directly from their work, I am both proud and thankful that my community includes Lifetime Networks.

I believe that the entire Greater Victoria community benefits from the work, vision, and values of Lifetime Networks. It is an organization dedicated to a future where “all people enjoy safe, happy, fulfilling lives” and at the heart of the organization is a commitment to nurturing friendship so that people with diverse abilities can enhance community. For Lifetime Networks, working with people with diverse abilities is not simply about serving their needs, it is about valuing the contributions every single person makes in our community. What a beautiful commitment; one that breathes life into working so that our community is diverse, inclusive and balanced. Lifetime Networks looks beyond a desire for all people to be included and sees the impact of inclusion – that our communities are better for it, for everyone.

When I think of the way in which Lifetime Networks does their work I am struck by the many innovative, creative, and caring ways that it operates. Non-profits like Lifetime Networks share many of the challenges that their colleagues in the business community face, with the addition of many other issues unique to the non-profit sector. An example of this is that Lifetime Networks has a stated commitment that individuals will not face any eligibility requirements, and they also maintain a focus on organizational growth and financial sustainability. I have seen this play out first hand in the ways in which the staff at Lifetime Networks are empowered to get to know their clients and do what is right for them. This is an organization that is

able to be flexible and focused on the needs of the person accessing services, while also being accountable and diligent about how funds are utilized. I have seen staff at Lifetime Networks go out of their way to make something work for an individual, and to be willing to think outside the box to meet a client's needs. And they do this with limited resources, ever changing needs, and with a cheerful and optimistic attitude.

Lifetime Networks is committed to providing ways for individuals with diverse abilities to have real friendships and to have relationships with those other than family and paid staff. Even within the non-profit sector this is still a radical and innovative commitment, and it is this focus that will enable our communities to be truly inclusive.

I am excited about the possibility of Lifetime Networks receiving such an honour from the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce for two reasons: the first is that this hardworking group of people deserve all the thanks and recognition in the world for the good work they do every day; the second is that it will give Lifetime Networks more opportunities to tell the people of Greater Victoria about their work and to invite other community members to get involved in making Greater Victoria a more inclusive and diverse community.

I wish Lifetime Networks the very best in this process and in all their future work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Ataya Lang', written in a cursive style.

Rebecca Ataya Lang, MSW