



VIRRJA MEMBERSHIP

Payment ~ Benefits ~ Value

MEMBERSHIP: Payment and Renewal Process

Membership is based on payment of an annual fee due by January 30 of each calendar year. New members are encouraged and are welcome to join at any time in the year.

There are a number of ways to renew and pay membership fees:

- Visit the website at www.virrja.ca to sign up for 2022 membership
- Complete the attached **form**. Email secretary@virrja.ca
- Via **e-transfers**. Email treasurer@virrja.ca
- **Payment by cheque:** payable to VIRRJA: mail to Gail Jewsbury, VIRRJA treasurer,
 - PO Box 339, Cassidy, BC V0R 1H0

Cost of membership:

RJ Programs on Vancouver Island, Sunshine Coast and all Gulf Islands	\$25/year
Individual Practitioners	\$25/year
Students	\$10/year
Other affiliates	\$25/year

Our current paid Members programs are entitled to:

- Participation as a board director or committee member
- Reduced fee to attend the annual conference
- Reduced fee at any VIRRJA hosted training
- Participation in consensus based decision making
- Use of VIRRJA's on-line meeting system and resources
- listing on the VIRRJA website www.virrja.ca
- Benefits from the ongoing lobbying efforts

VIRRJA MEMBERSHIP: Benefits and Value

VIRRJA was created in 2009 , prompted by the BC government's provincial conferences held in the first decade of the 21st century which brought together volunteers and staff from RJ programs across the province. VIRRJA continues to work to advance Restorative Justice practices on Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast and all Gulf Islands.

VIRRJA's Mission, Vision and Purpose

The **mission** is to “bring together all restorative justice programs and practitioners in the Vancouver Island region; to guide, share and inspire best practices and processes.



VIRRJA MEMBERSHIP

Payment ~ Benefits ~ Value

Our **vision** is a future in which restorative justice and restorative practices are embedded throughout our communities.

The **purpose** of VIRRJA is to mentor, serve and support our diverse restorative justice communities while modelling restorative justice values and leadership.

1. To provide a collective voice for Restorative Justice programs and practitioners;
2. To liaise with other Restorative Justice organizations in BC, Canada and Internationally;
3. To promote an understanding of the principles of Restorative Justice;
4. To identify and support best practices within Restorative Justice Programs.

Board of Directors

VIRRJA has an active board of 7 directors comprising president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and 3 directors-at-large. It works with sub-committees as needed and currently they are: Communications, Education, Indigenous Values and Diverse Communities, Funding, By-laws and Membership. In 2020 a strategic planning committee worked diligently to create a plan for 2021-2025. The funding committee secured a grant from Civil Forfeitures for 2021/2022 to cover the costs of speakers and the annual conference. The communications committee developed and launched a new, informative website: www.virrja.ca

General meetings, Annual Conference and Education

We hold 5 general meetings open to anyone within our member programs, individual practitioners and partner organizations. We also hold a one or two day annual conference, usually in conjunction with our AGM. We bring interesting speakers to these meetings and the conference. (see list at the end of the document for the variety of topics and speakers we have engaged since 2014). In 2020 we made a commitment to provide the ability to attend meetings virtually as well as an in person option when possible. Attending meetings in person gives a greater opportunity to network and learn from other programs. The general meetings are held the 3rd Monday of February, April, June, August and December. The AGM is held in October together with the annual conference (unless unforeseen factors prevent this) with the date set by the Board of Directors.

Lobbying

VIRRJA has lobbied governments since inception but with the change in the provincial government in July 2017, the executive intensified its efforts in lobbying that government and ministers. This focus and effort has been repeated each year since.

3 key strategic points were presented:

1. Desire that government make RJ a priority directive to the ministries
2. That both ministries and programs need to be financed appropriately to take on this role
3. There needs to be a focus on public education across the ministries to ensure public understanding of the significance of RJ



VIRRJA MEMBERSHIP

Payment ~ Benefits ~ Value

A written brief was prepared and delivered to the Attorney General, Solicitor General, Ministers of Education, Health, Finance and Deputy Government Leader and the Premier. This was followed by meetings in person with most of these ministries.

Over the last 3 years, VIRRJA has presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance & Government Services (BC Legislature) providing a written brief and on two occasions invited to make an oral presentation to the committee. In 2019 the annual Community Accountability Program grant from the provincial government was increased from \$2500 to \$4000.



SELECTION OF VIRRJA GUEST SPEAKERS:

2021

Mitch Walker is the Director of Gladue Services with the BC First Nations Justice Council. Mitch provided background and future plans for Gladue services providing members with important insights into these services. Members can train to be Gladue writers and Mitch invites further questions to his email at mitch@bcfnjc.com

Mabel Peter is a Cowichan Tribes member and Native Court Worker in Duncan for the past 11 years. Mabel felt she could echo the voices of her community members in the criminal justice system and she has seen positive changes and decision making for her clients.

Dr. Moussa Magassa, PhD (Curriculum and Instruction), M.A. (Human Security and Peacebuilding), B.A. (Hons) Human Rights Educator at UVic, specialist in anti-oppression curriculum and program development, Consultant: Intercultural Capacity Building Inc. Presentation: Embedding Anti-racism In Restorative Practices. Developing strategies for meaningful social change

Nancy Denham, Restorative Justice Program of the Sunshine Coast. "Hosting a Community Dialogue". Nancy Denham has been involved with Restorative Justice Practices since the late 1980s when she trained in Conflict Resolution with the Justice Institute of B.C, which led to training with the Community Justice Forum in the early 1990s. Nancy worked for 24 years with the Sunshine Coast School District in the capacity of Special Education Teaching Assistant and Youth & Family Outreach Counsellor In 2010, after being at the first National Truth and Reconciliation Event, she committed to the Journey toward Reconciliation, facilitating Reconciliation Circles, the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, and The Anglican Church Mapping Exercise.



VIRRJA MEMBERSHIP

Payment ~ Benefits ~ Value

VIRRJA

Zofia Switkowski, Restorative Action Program coordinator with Community Justice Initiatives Association. Presentation on Restorative Action in Schools; Q & A

Zofia Switkowski's work focuses on fostering safe and relational school environments. After a personal encounter with restorative justice, Zofia began facilitating for the North Shore Restorative Justice Society's pre-charge diversion program, and went on to coordinate their Circles in Schools Initiative where she fell in love with schools-based restorative practices. She currently serves as the Restorative Action Program Coordinator with Fraser Region Community Justice Initiatives, on the unceded territory of the Matsqui, Semiahmoo, Katzie, and Kwantlen First Nations, colonially known as Langley, BC.

2020

Christianne Paras is of Filipino ancestry. She currently resides as an uninvited guest, an immigrant settler, on the unceded, ancestral and traditional lands of the Kwikwetlem peoples. She has over 20 years' experience in the restorative justice field and has been involved in a variety of research projects such as safety in seniors' living spaces, race and the criminal justice system and restorative justice. Presented "Colorizing Restorative Justice: Voicing our Realities" and update on RJABC of which she is the Executive Director.

Jordan Diplock the Criminal Intelligence / Research Analyst for "E" Division RCMP Crime Prevention Services (CPS). He has been in this position since 2010, providing research and related intelligence analysis support to study and improve the effectiveness of the RCMP's crime prevention and community safety activities in British Columbia. Update on E Division RCMP's views on use of Restorative Justice programs and what is needed from RJ programs to develop a strong relationship.

2019

Marcie Mezzarobba, Director, Policy for Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. Background on the provincial review of RJ

Most Reverend Gary Gordon, Bishop of Victoria, Bishop ponens (advocate) to the Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy of the Correctional Service of Canada for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as well as Co-Chairman of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Bishops' Dialogue for the CCCB the since 2012; also a strong advocate for First Nations reconciliation

Catherine Borgen from Just Outcomes, presenting Report on "Crime Victims' Experiences of Restorative Justice: A Listening Project" - Catherine Borgen, Aaron Lyons, Just Outcomes Consulting.



VIRRJA MEMBERSHIP

Payment ~ Benefits ~ Value

VIRRJA

Christine Jis - PHD student at SFU - "Indicators of Success in RJ Programming: How Do We Know What Works?"

Barry Stuart, retired Yukon Chief Judge who used peacemaking circles extensively in sentencing, co-author of "Peacemaking Circles, From Crime to Community" about his proposal to create a TRIAGE system for directing criminal cases to the justice system or to community justice at all points along the process from initial investigation to release from prison.

2018

Allison Geisbrecht, Project Research Assistant "Educating for Change: Honouring the Voices of Restorative Justice Participants in BC" – a progress report on the current research project directed by Alana Abransom, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

2017

Jessica Rouke, ED and Complex Cases Manager, RJ Victoria "Forgiveness and Restorative Justice"

Jane Osbourne Regional Mentor (Central Vancouver Island Region) for the BC Association of Community Response Networks "Elder Abuse and Restorative Justice"

2016

Catherine Borgen, Community Program Manager & Restorative Justice Coordinator, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General "Federal/Provincial Government Views of RJ"

Jessica Rouke Case Manager, Restorative Justice Victoria "Mentorships: The Victoria's Experience"

Darren Munroe Restorative Justice Program Director, RCMP "E" Division" Update on RCMP Community Justice Forum Program.

2015

Dave Gustafson, ED Community Justice Initiatives, Langley, BC "Building Trust, Building Relationships, Building RJ: A World Perspective"

Larry Moore Producer/Director Heartspeak Productions, Kaslo, BC "Videos and Conversations"



VIRRJA MEMBERSHIP

Payment ~ Benefits ~ Value

VIRRJA

Simon Amundson ED Victoria RJ Society "Evaluation: Where Do We Want To Go? What Do We Want To Do?"

2014

Wedlidi Speck on Working with First Nations, cultural competence and diversity awareness

Michael Ballard Dept of Fisheries and Oceans and RJ. Building referrals and RJ competencies

Larry Winter practitioner with Comox Valley CJC, on Rising Rate of Mental Health and Addictions in RJ referrals. What to do.