



## 2015-16 YOUTH INTERNSHIP (YI) PROGRAM WRAP UP

After 13 years VCN continues to be committed to delivering [high-impact programming](#) to offer youth in Vancouver meaningful tech-related internships. This cycle we received close to 600 applications for 27 placements with 23 host organizations.

As we assess the successes and challenges, we are thrilled with this year's outcomes. The greatest indicator we found was that over half of youth interns were offered extended contracts with their host organizations or found work immediately after their internships. Read more about their experiences below!

### TESTIMONIALS



*"[There is] satisfaction in knowing that I had created something that will be very useful for an important organization. Now I have an increased understanding of my trade and a great portfolio piece to add."* [Safe Amp Intern](#)

*"My coworkers at Geist were very supportive and encouraged me to delve deeper into better web practices. I came out of this internship with more web-related expertise, it was a wonderful learning experience."* [Geist Magazine Intern](#)

*"I was able to learn more digital skills and enhance my existing ones. In this role, I really felt like a member of staff and not a youth intern, and [I] was given a lot of responsibility to use my skills in the digital sphere."* [UBC LE Learning Exchange Intern](#)

*"If I can introduce similar methods to a future work environment then this will give me an edge in the work place. I feel ready to enter employment and apply my disciplines."* [BC Technology for Learning Society Intern](#)

*"We bonded over art, and learned about how technology can serve their art practices, as well as everyday computer skills that benefit their ability to connect with others and get access to information and resources."* [Gallery Gachet Intern](#)

*"I personally have seen growth in many of my skills including problem solving, written and oral communication, and teaching. I also improved in my technical skills through troubleshooting computers, performing maintenance and learning to develop a website using WordPress."* [RayCam Co-operative Centre Intern](#)

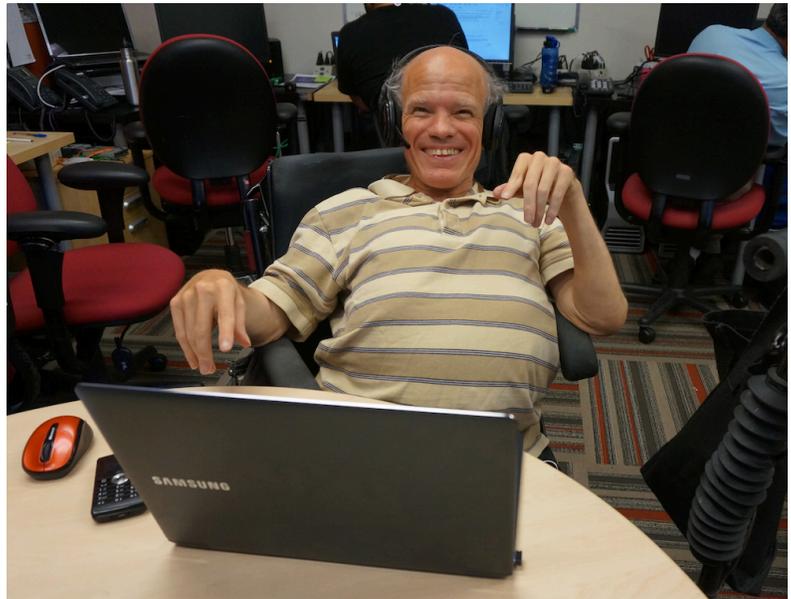
*"VCN's [youth internship] program provided me an excellent opportunity to gain real work experience in a technical related position. I was able to oversee the launch of the organization's new website, greatly improving my WordPress knowledge in the process, and see the result of my work adopted and implemented."* [New Forms Media Society Intern](#)

*"...people experiencing poverty and homelessness...it was very powerful to have [had the] opportunity to work with so many passionate and intelligent co-workers and community members. It was particularly helpful to gain new skills working with computers... I am very grateful that the youth internship was able to fund my participation in the project."* [Megaphone Magazine Intern](#)

## SUCCESS STORY: PATRICK CLARK

For close to 20 years, Patrick Clark has stayed connected to the VCN network and has generously given his time in different capacities – as a helpdesk volunteer, board member, and digital rights advocate to name a few.

Patrick's invaluable work and enthusiasm continues to inspire the VCN team to better serve our community. We interviewed Patrick and asked him to share what his involvement with VCN has meant to him.



### **How did you become involved with VCN?**

Originally, many years ago when the organization was only about four months old I was invited to an introductory get-together and was immediately drawn in by the sincere desire to provide an insurer Internet access and education to the whole community regardless of an individual's income or position in life. The founders of VCN had seen the writing on the wall in regards to commercial [high cost] Internet in Canada and wanted to make sure that the voices of modest or zero income people were not left out. I immediately then began a year-long term on the board of VCN.

### **What role(s) do you currently have with the organization?**

Two roles officially: volunteer and board member.

### **How has being a part of VCN's network impacted your professional work?**

In the year and a half I've been involved with the office crew and manning the help line I have learned, and been exposed to, more information and opportunities than I could ever hope to have achieved on my own. I learned a completely new content management system "WordPress" for quickly designing web pages. I have been able to explore various Linux operating systems, and work on a wide variety of computers both old and new. Most importantly, because everyone at VCN is so supportive the knowledge has been free-flowing. If you have a question, you get a collaborative answer. It really is the best way to work. Not only that, there is a real sense of community that encourages questions and discussion. In short this has been a massive boost to my knowledge base, which has resulted in several contract jobs.



### How has working at VCN influenced you personally?

I have been involved with a great number of nonprofit and advocacy organizations over the years. I was becoming a little jaded because, through no fault of their own, many groups succumb to "power positioning" and hierarchical structures, ultimately focused on maintaining the status quo. VCN has done the exact opposite. Collectively they have managed to inspire, not only the community at large, but everyone who works or is involved on regular basis. There is a real sense of sincerity in everything they undertake. It is the true cooperative adventure with a real community and spirit.

What makes VCN rock, and indeed makes them unique among many organizations is that there is a sincere cooperative spirit to everything that is undertaken. Ego does not live with this group. I think perhaps all the core people are "kindhearted radicals" who have each had to fight battles and that has given them a real understanding of community spirit in the truest sense. Truly inspiring--is it any wonder I love VCN!

## NEW CANADAHELPS TAX RECEIPT TOOL

The deadline for submitting 2015 tax returns is quickly approaching!

CanadaHelps has recently launched an online tool to help donors find and get a copy of all receipts for donations made in 2015 using CanadaHelps.

VCN donors and supporters can easily access tax receipts by using this Tax Receipt Tool:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/receiptdownload.aspx>

## VOLUNTEER, PAY DUES and/or DONATE TO VCN

Start the new 2016 tax season off with a donation to an impactful community organization working to bridge the digital divide!



VCN helps advance education and provides a public utility which helps relieve disadvantage by providing Internet access to those who would otherwise be denied it.

Remember VCN counts on you to either pay your yearly membership (\$25) and/or make a donation helps us to support the entire system. Please commit to keeping this valuable resource available into the future! <http://www2.vcn.bc.ca/get-involved/donate/>

We welcome volunteers who speak Aramaic, Farsi, Kurdish, or Arabic to help with the resettlement of new immigrants and refugees. To volunteer, please fill out our online form: <http://volunteer.vcn.bc.ca/apply/>