

Edited & Compiled by  
Gurraj Ahluwalia & Pratyush Dhawan



Vancouver  
**community  
network**

Newsletter | February 2017

VCN has ushered in 2017 with renewed energy to work towards making free and equal access to information a human right. Our office has seen an increase in people accessing our public computers and tech services thanks to our swanky new sandwich board in the Woodward's atrium, which makes us very happy!

We are excited to be moving forwards in the new year with your support – thank you for continuing to be a part of our social enterprise!



VCN was struck by sad news at the end of last year. One of our cofounders and lifelong advocate for free and equal access to information, Brian Campbell, passed away. Below is a message from former VCN President Penny Goldsmith on Brian's passing.

### ***In Memory of Brian Campbell***

By Penny Goldsmith

In 1992, Brian Campbell got together a group of librarians and other community activists in the lower mainland of British Columbia who started meeting to talk about the internet and the importance of it being accessible to everyone. Brian recognized early on that a lot of people were going to be left out of this new online world unless there was a concerted and organized effort to make sure that that didn't happen. In June of 1993, he chaired the founding meeting of the Vancouver Regional Freenet (now the Vancouver Community Network)



*Brian Campbell at his home in May 2015.*

*Credit: Jason Payne, Vancouver Sun*

Brian was a leader in promoting free and equal access to information both inside and outside the library. He found a home for the Vancouver Freenet server at VPL. He made sure that there were public access computers devoted to the Freenet in the library and fought for them to stay there, even when they were being less and less used as people were starting to access their emails via commercial sites. He was instrumental in convincing libraries to make free public internet accessible across Canada.

Brian officially resigned from the Freenet board in 1995, but he never really left – he never left anything that mattered to him and that he believed in. He never stopped talking about universal public access to the internet and the ongoing danger of the digital divide, even after he retired from the library. In 2015 he was the recipient of the intellectual freedom award given out annually by the Canadian Library Association.

Brian Campbell died in December, 2016 in Vancouver, BC.



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### **YI Program & Videography Project**

In collaboration with Industry, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), and other Youth Internship (YI) sites across the country, VCN is undertaking a videography project to profile the 2016-17 YI program, its impact on youth interns and its impact on their host organizations. Until March, we will be collaborating with interns and their host organizations across Canada in order to produce a number of video testimonials highlighting intern placements.

These testimonials will be paired with a new set of online surveys that the VCN YI coordinators, Gurraj and Pratyush, have taken a lead in producing and distributing across Canada. The purpose will be to gather more comprehensive statistical data on the impact of the program on interns and organizations, while also putting a face to the internship experience with the videos and highlighted projects.



*The VCN interns socializing over food & drinks in December.*

The YI program has an enormous positive impact on non-profits across Vancouver and the interns who are given an opportunity to work with them, and we want to ensure that the government continues to fund the initiative for many years to come. Once the videos are complete, we look forward to sharing our favorites with you all!



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### VCN Labs Launched

The VCN web|team and tech|team's websites have undergone a makeover.  
Introducing [VCNlabs.com](http://VCNlabs.com)!



The Vancouver Community Network offers affordable web development and tech services to non-profits, small businesses and individuals who are looking to refurbish their websites or create completely new ones. Our new online hub is [VCNlabs.com](http://VCNlabs.com), a centralized site to find out about our services in detail and get in touch with us if you have any questions, or want to connect to have us look at your website for you!

### Your Support Is Invaluable

None of our work for the community is possible without people like you. [Become a member](#) to help our social enterprise's charitable efforts: providing free access to the Internet, email, and computer access to youth, seniors and vulnerable people in our community. You can also donate [here](#). As usual, we accept Bitcoin donations as well (scan the QR code).



For all those who donated last year, we will be [emailing](#) tax receipts. If you would like us to [mail](#) them instead, please let us know at [operations@vcn.bc.ca](mailto:operations@vcn.bc.ca).

***And finally, remember to follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) for the latest VCN updates and news!***