

FOCUS ON EMPLOYMENT

Lynnetta is the eldest of 4 kids who were transplanted from a family farm in Saskatchewan to Edgewater, BC in order for her parents to find work to support their brood. Lynnetta is now in her early fifties and as you may know support for any special needs kid was nonexistent back when she was in school. To say that school was a frustration for Lynnetta would be a vast understatement. She feels she was just "passed along" in school because they didn't know what else to do with her up until Grade 8 when her parents were told not to send her anymore - there was nothing more they could do for her. Lynnetta's family did find a boarding home in Kamloops so she could attend- Overlander Secondary School for special needs kids.

Lynnetta moved back home with her parents after "graduating" but she was bored and all she wanted was a normal life meaning a job and friends. To that end she moved into Invermere into an apartment. She did manage to find some jobs with help there, but they were most often volunteer positions which she views as not real jobs. She moved to Cranbrook eight years ago and sees her friends and boyfriend, Norman, all the time.

As she lives on a PWD pension Lynnetta said she feels valued when she is earning real pay for real work and the extra money makes a huge difference in the quality of her life.

For Lynnetta a regular job means one where she can be challenged and accepted for her diverseAbilities. She has worked at REALM as a receptionist for the past seven years. She works Tuesdays thru Fridays from 9 AM – 12 pm answering phones, taking messages, supporting guests at REALM and other office tasks as assigned. For 4 years Lynnetta also served for and was a member of two CLBC committees Kootenay Community Council and the Provincial Advisory Committee working with the CLBC Board of Directors sharing information about her region and advice to assist with its governance and decision making. As a peer and self- advocate and she, gets to attend meetings and conferences as well as supporting younger individuals who may need help figuring out the system and/or asserting themselves. In the fall of 2018 hired as an employee of CLBC to work with the Welcoming Workshops in the East Kootenay

Lynette loves her jobs most days although as she says, "everyone has bad days but once in a while". She feels she has gained a lot of self- esteem thru working not to mention the extra income which allows her to finally have a savings account and make plans for her life. She sees her extended family often and is Aunt Lynnetta to lots of nieces and nephews.

