

NEWS

from the President



December 2014

It is hard to believe that another year is drawing to a close and that I will be completing the first 6 months of my tenure as president. I don't know if it is just me but time seems to be passing so quickly these days.

We formed several new committees this past year to examine our processes in areas such as finance and education, as well as a nominations committee for board positions. Effective committees can be one of the most important working forces at the heart of an organization, as well as an extremely rewarding experience for those involved. Committees provide the opportunity for individuals to provide their expertise, help to shape organizations, expand services, and develop new opportunities for members. Most of the VRA committees require a minimal time commitment and offer a rewarding experience in return. I encourage you to consider becoming a committee member at your society or national level. You won't be sorry!

In January we will commence with a new form of communication: instead of this newsletter, we will offer a series of Town Hall meetings conducted via the internet. This will allow myself, the board, or the occasional special guest, the opportunity to speak directly to you—but more importantly, it is a forum for all members to pose questions directly. This is your association and the board is your voice. We need to hear from you! The Town Hall format will provide a better method for an open dialogue. Dates and times will be forthcoming.

Change, as we all know, is inevitable. We have recently received the resignations of Events & Management Plus, Inc. and MCI Strategies. They have tendered long-term notices and we have already started the search process to replace them. Both organizations have served VRA Canada for many years and contributed greatly to its development and change. They will be missed. We have already set-up an ad-hoc Contracts Committee to review proposals and ensure the needs of our membership are met. I am confident that we will be able to secure the services of other companies who will make the transition easy and continue to provide the same high quality of services to which we have grown accustomed.

As I have said many times, education is one of the most important opportunities VRA Canada can offer its members. Each month you will be presented with an educational feature. These features showcase high quality, easy to access courses at highly affordable prices (or in some cases, free). I hope that all members are taking advantage of these online opportunities. If you have questions please contact the national office at 1-888-876-9992 or email info@VRACanada.com.

VRA Canada will be celebrating its 45th anniversary in 2015, which is quite an accomplishment. I believe that even though we are 45 years old, our work and our profession is in its infancy. There are millions of disabled persons in Canada with an unemployment rate significantly higher than the national average. It has been said before but this is our profession to own or to lose. We are working hard as a board to ensure we have a voice, but it takes each and every one of us to ensure that the volume is loud enough to be heard. I encourage each one of you to participate on behalf of your profession.

On behalf of you board of directors, I wish you all the very best for the holidays and hope that 2015 will be a year full of health and happiness for each of you and your families.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Addie Greco-Sanchez'.

Addie Greco-Sanchez
President, VRA Canada