



Date: December 10, 2018

Dear Valued Members of Vela:

My name is Gabrielle Miller and it was my great honour this year to take a seat on the Board of Directors for Vela Canada.

The Holidays have always been a time of reflection for me and I am writing to you today to tell you a bit about the immense gratitude I have for Vela and the members who support the remarkable work that this organization does.

My history with Vela goes back to 1989 when Linda Perry approached my mother about setting up a self-directed living situation for my beautiful sister, Shanti Miller. Shanti was born with numerous challenges that set her up for a difficult life. As a little girl, I watched as my mother struggled greatly to meet Shanti's needs with little support. My mother and siblings and I struggled to care for Shanti, while trying to carry on with our own lives in healthy and productive ways. I remember being scared and uncertain, constantly worried about my sister's well being and quality of life.

Through Linda's remarkable forward-thinking and with the support of Vela, Shanti became the first person in British Columbia to have a Microboard. She has since lived a self-directed life with a committed staff. Shanti has her own space, caring friendships and is able to contribute to her relationships in ways that nurture her and the people she loves. In turn, my family has been given the greatest gift of all: knowing that our sister is fulfilled and living her life in the ways she wants to live it, with autonomy, choice and happiness.

I am telling you this personal story because I want you to know that when you give to Vela, you are not just impacting the lives of people living with challenges that Vela assists but are also providing families across B.C. with the peace and security of knowing that they are not alone. You are telling them there is a community out there that will support them, answer questions for them and point them in the right direction. The community that Vela has created is truly priceless and touches many more lives than you might immediately realize.

As we head into 2019, I want you all to know how meaningful your support to Vela is and to the many people who's lives Vela's guidance impacts in deeply meaningful ways. So, today, I am reaching out to you to ask for your new or continued support in memberships and donations to Vela. This year, I will be gifting those close to me with memberships and asking my loved ones to consider including Vela in their yearly gifting and hope this will inspire you to do the same. (Form and envelope included for your convenience)

Please know in your hearts how much your support affects positive change all across the province and please accept my heart felt wishes for a terrific holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Here's to more great work next year!

Sincerely,


Gabrielle Miller