



## **Early Childhood Upcoming Events:**

- 1 Pinwheel  
Education Series:  
Mindfulness in  
Schools  
April 17, 2014
- 2 "Science with a  
Soul: From Data to  
Action for Healthy  
Child  
Development" on  
April 30, 2014
- 3 Dalai Lama  
Conference on  
May 8, 2014

## **Announcements:**

- 1 UBC Alumni  
Campaign Launched
- 2 RBS Official as of  
March 14, 2014!
- 3 Meet our New  
Members to the RBS!
- 4 Meet our New Student  
Ambassador,  
John Peel
- 5 Meet our New Chair,  
Julia Zazoulina

## **Website Updates:**

- Reading Bear  
Moments and Why  
We Started sections  
added

## **The Reading Monthly Newsletter**

**February - March 2014**

*From Joanne Roussy, RBS Chair, April 2014*

### **Report**

Great strides have been made in the past month as our RB family continues to grow. I am delighted to introduce you to our new Reading Bear Society latest advisory board members and DPAS SDPO students. Welcome.

Thank you to the first and second year medical students who collected 225 books from their book drive.

Thank you Andrew and ambassadors for organizing this book drive. These books will go to StrongStart at Queen Alexandra School.

I met individually with the directors/chairs to ensure communication lines and address individual roles and responsibilities. The agendas have been posted on the blog. One main goal for

communication is to post your meeting notes on the blog. This allows transparency of process and as well as keeping everyone informed. The ambassadors and DPAS SDPO use Google Doc. The purpose of the blog is to store minutes, weekly updates and post all documents.

Thank you.

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### ***Editor's Note***

*Please send articles before the last Thursday of the month.*

*Katrina Hsu  
katrinah@sfu.ca*



# THE READING BEAR

## Website

Santhe has three SGS boys who will be assisting with the website development/maintenance. Please see new sections Why We Started and Reading Bear Moments.

## UBC Alumni Campaign Launched

On March 24th the UBC Alumni Campaign officially launched to the entire Alumni. Please take a moment to cast your vote and share this website widely on your social media outlets! The Reading Bear is currently part of an online crowdsourcing campaign through UBC and we could win great prizes/resources to help develop the program.

<https://yourevolution.ubc.ca/projects/75/the-reading-bear#.UzRA2K1dV3w>

## Officially The Reading Bear Society!

We are pleased to report that THE READING BEAR SOCIETY was incorporated on March 14, 2014 under incorporation number S-0062398.

## Teacher Forum

Board members and kindergarten teachers came together on February 21st at Graham Bruce Elementary school to discuss The

Reading Bear Society and the importance of early literacy, educating the heart-mind, and mentorship.



## First Reading Bear Society School Committee

St. George's Reading Bear Society Student Advisory committee: Andrew Purssell (SGS alumni 2003) has started to work with his former high school in the creation of a Reading Bear student committee. Members include Ryan Karimi (school representative), Andrew Mo, Johnny Newell, Joey Miller, Zehan Zhou.



## Valentine's Day

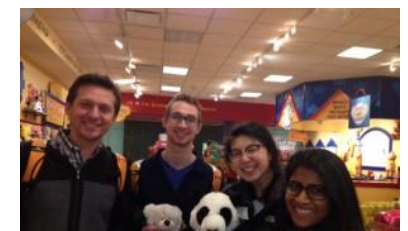
On Valentine's Day the ambassadors delivered friendship boxes to nine kindergarten classrooms. Naomi Roome, first year medical student, made the

deliveries on behalf of the ambassadors. She was greeted with songs and huge smiles from all of the children, principals, and teachers. Please view the video <https://vimeo.com/91936253>



## Ambassadors Make Customized Reading Bears

On March 16th the ambassadors met at Metrotown Build-A-Bear to make their own customized bears. They will create individual videos with their new bears to add to the website as well as bring their bears to public speaking events. Following Build-A-Bear, the ambassadors held their monthly meeting at Metrotown. Thank you for your exemplary dedication and for taking time off from your exceptionally busy academic as well as clinical rotations workload!





## Surrey Book Drive

The book drive held in Relevant High School and Diamond Elementary was organized by Hanisha Sran, Alisha Rana and Maneet Sanghera. These three girls went out into the community and engaged other students to be a part of The Reading Bear by donating books. Relevant High School and Diamond Elementary managed to donate over 150 books in a two week span. The three worked together and with the help of willing students they put up posters, set up bins, and gave

reminders to donate books for the program. In the end, all the help paid off and the book drive was a success, especially because the 8th graders from Relevant High School donated roughly 100 books on their own.



Medical student ambassador Christine Wang reading with her buddy.





## Upcoming Events

### Pinwheel Education Series: Mindfulness in Schools

Much of our stress, pain, and suffering comes from being pulled away from the present moment. We are distracted with regrets about the past, worries about the future, and judgments about the present. Mindfulness training can help to improve our health and ways of coping. In this Pinwheel you will learn

how to use Mindfulness in school and how it can benefit youth.

This will include:  
-Using mindfulness in counselling  
-Teaching mindfulness to teachers  
-Formal and informal ways to introduce mindfulness at a school

Date: April 17, 2014

Location:  
BC Children's Hospital  
4555 Heather Street,  
Vancouver, BC

<http://keltymentalhealth.ca/event/2014/04/pinwheel-education-series-mindfulness-schools>

### Dr. Fiona Stanley on Healthy Child Development

HELP Fiona Stanley REGISTER NOW: Professor Fiona Stanley presents “Science with a Soul: From Data to Action for Healthy Child

Development” on Wednesday, April 30, 2014 at 3pm in the Michael Smith Laboratories Lecture Theatre. This lecture is

part of the New Frontiers in Population Health toward Equity from the Start.

### Dalai Lama Conference

HEART-MIND 2014: THE SCIENCE OF KINDNESS  
In the Dalai Lama Center’s second annual Heart-Mind conference, learn the most up-to-date science and practice related to how adults can

cultivate kindness, empathy, compassion and altruism in children and in themselves – in families and schools, during recreation activities and throughout the community.

Date: May 8-10, 2014

Location:  
Old Auditorium, UBC,  
Vancouver, BC

<http://dalailamacenter.org/conference/heart-mind-2014-science-kindness>



## Meet our New Members to the RBS Team!

### New Administrative Assistant Member

#### **Ms. Brigitte Scholte**

We are very pleased to introduce Ms. Scholte, Development Coordinator at UBC Athletics and Recreation, to the RBS.

### New Advisory Board Members

(see website for more info

<http://thereadingbear.ca/board-of-advisors.php>)

#### **Dr. Janet Greenman**

A pediatrician at BCCH, and a part of RICHER, Dr. Greenman has accepted to be a member of the RB advisory committee. She has worked in the United States with The ROAR Initiative which promotes literacy via pediatricians.

#### **Ms. Julie Gelson**

As a kindergarten teacher at Queen Alexandra Elementary School, (Fine Arts Multicultural Integrated Learning for Youth), and the mother of two school aged daughters, Julie has seen the importance of early literacy firsthand in both her professional and personal life.

#### **Ms. Liz Hayes-Brown**

Vice principal at Collingwood Elementary school, Liz is our latest advisory committee member.

#### **Dr. Lynn Miller**

As a childhood anxiety expert, Dr. Miller has joined our advisory group as a Registered Psychologist and an

Associate Professor in the Education and Counseling Psychology and Special Education department at UBC.

#### **Dr. Trevor Newton**

Trevor has joined the Board of Directors; he will act as RB treasurer/secretary and assist with a part of administrative tasks.

#### **Dr. John Helliwell**

Dr. John F. Helliwell, of the Vancouver School of Economics at UBC, is Senior Fellow of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research and Co-Director of CIFAR's program on "Social Interactions, Identity and Well-Being".

#### **Ms. Lyana Patrick**

Lyana is a doctoral student at UBC and member of the Stellat'en First Nation in British Columbia's Northern Interior as well as Acadian/Scottish.

#### **Dr. Borris Milosevic**

Dr. Milosevic joins the RB team as a parent advisor; his daughter currently attends Strathcona Elementary School.

#### **Dr. Linda Siegel**

Dr. Siegel is a Professor in the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Siegel is steering along with Andrew Pursell, the research component of the RBS.

## Meet our New Student Ambassador – John Peel

John Peel is a medical student at the University of British Columbia, having graduated from McMaster's Bachelor of Health Sciences program in 2013. Having grown up reading to his teddy bear, John was immediately inspired by the Reading Bear initiative. Acting both as an Ambassador for the

program, as well as working on a research project to determine the efficacy of the reading buddy aspect of the program, John is keen to see the program become a self-sustaining and highly effective intervention. John's goal for the program is to empower children to become teachers of

social and literacy skills to their bears, and in doing so, solidify important concepts of early childhood education. Outside of his involvement in this project and his studies, John also contributes to research in art historical approaches to community health, clinical medicine, and

cancer biology, as well as cultivating interests in rowing, contemporary art, and cuisine.



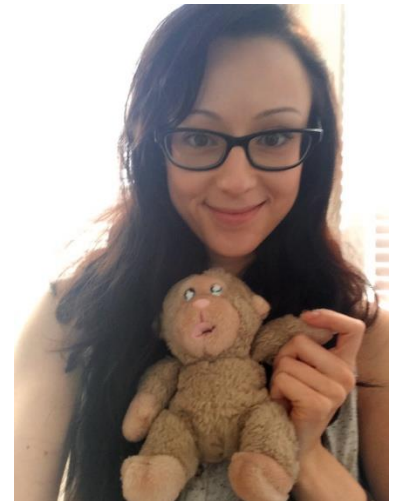


## Meet our new student ambassador DPAS SDPO chair – Julia Zazoulina

Julia Zazoulina is currently a medical student at the University of British Columbia. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in Pharmaceutical Science in 2011, Julia practiced as a community pharmacist in Northern Ontario. During this time she had an opportunity to become familiar with the various determinants of health in the community. This experience was an excellent example of the

complex interplay between health, early childhood education, community engagement and how an individual’s opportunities and outcomes are shaped. Julia sees the Reading Bear as a sustainable model that builds a foundation of literacy and encourages the joy and culture of learning. Additionally, she believes it goes above and beyond by facilitating the development of

meaningful connections between students throughout the city. Julia is primarily involved in content development for The Reading Bear, including a manual for teachers and workbooks for both little and big buddies. Some of her external interests include yoga, travelling, brunch and her cat, Mr. Flufferton.



Julia with her Reading Bear!

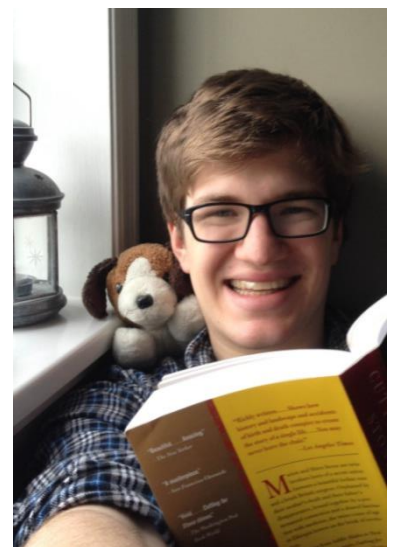
## Introducing the DPAS SDPO medical students (2014-2015)

*James Dueckman*

Currently a first year medical student, James Dueckman has spent many of his summers volunteering at children’s camps with children from age 4 to 16, working as a cabin leader, archery instructor and canoeing instructor, among other roles. Over the course of these summers James realized that although he was drawn to camp life by the promise of adventure

and friendships, he had come to love working with and mentoring children and adolescents. An avid reader himself, he was excited by the prospect of working with children and promoting literacy through the Reading Bear program. James loves to sing and play music and enjoys rainy days filled with reading and hot beverages. James and

his stuffed dog, Doggie, have been friends for 22 years and have been on many imaginative adventures together!





# THE READING BEAR



### *Cristian Vad*

It became evident that Cristian was passionate about working with and helping others early on, and in 2009, he had decided to pursue a degree in Physiology and Psychology at the University of British Columbia to prepare himself for a career in medicine. Since the early age of 14, Cristian has been working with

and mentoring children in the areas of citizenship, academics, aquatics, sports, and the outdoors. He is very inclined towards innovation and continues to involve himself in medical research. As a current first-year medical student, Cristian was introduced to the Reading Bear initiative

by peers in his program. Cristian is becoming actively involved in researching the efficacy of the Reading Bear program on different aspects of childhood development. Outside of the academic environment, Cristian is a health and fitness fanatic and is actively involved in music and the outdoors.



### *Rachel Liu*

Rachel completed her Master of Science degree in Neuroscience at UBC and worked in the Biotechnology industry before entering medical school to pursue her passion in medicine. Throughout her post-secondary years, Rachel has

involved herself in various community service agencies including the Vancouver Crisis Centre. Now, she is excited to bring her research and communication skills into the Reading Bear project in hopes of

gaining more understanding of the needs of the community as well as contribute to the collection of data to show the enormous value of such a program.



### *Victoria Baronas*

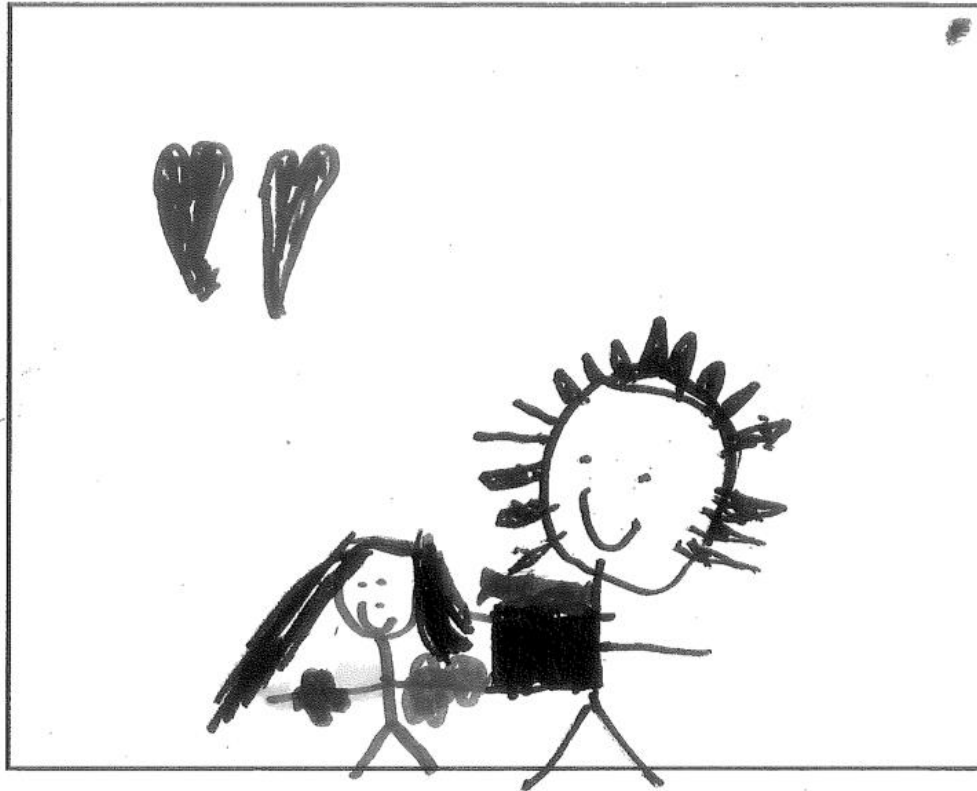
Victoria grew up in Colombia, but is no stranger to the UBC campus where she attended University Hill high school and graduated from UBC with a BSc (Honours) in Pharmacology. In 2013, she began her first year

of the MD/PhD program at UBC. Victoria is excited to join the Reading Bear as she is a strong believer in the importance of early education and the lifelong benefits it precipitates. Throughout her undergrad years she

has worked with children from volunteering at the BC Children's Hospital to leading science experiments for elementary school students.



# THE READING BEAR



Thank-you for... reading a book  
with me.