

Far from ordinary

Federal government employee discovers how big a difference an 'ordinary' person can make in the lives of others

By Donna Brown

Sept. 7, 2006 – Winnipeg, MB – The power of an 'ordinary' person to make a difference in the life of another and a desire to return a favour can be potent motivators. Just ask Michael Fisher.

"I never volunteered much as a young person, but that changed once I had a daughter with Down Syndrome."

After social agencies helped his family following daughter Samantha's arrival 16 years ago, Mr. Fisher discovered "how much ordinary people can—and do—help each other."

"I felt a need to give back. It's my way of saying thanks."

Mr. Fisher, a senior business officer with Western Economic Diversification Canada in Winnipeg, began by volunteering with a local cub scout troop and at Samantha's school, where he helped supervise the children's lunch hour and organized a range of student activities.

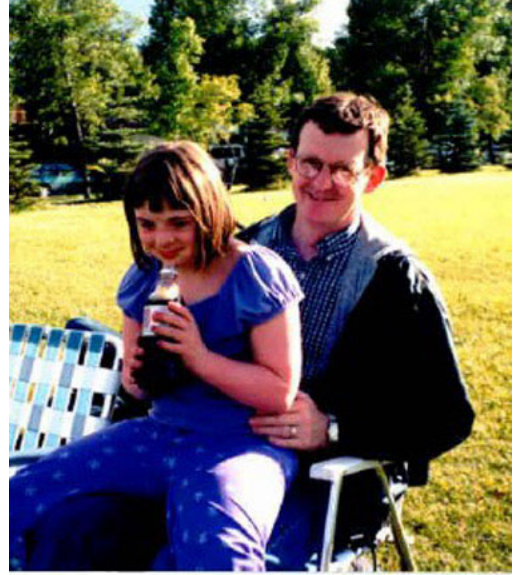
In May 2002, he led a team of 60 volunteers in organizing three days of activities at a national Down Syndrome conference in Winnipeg.

Mr. Fisher's generosity reaches beyond his family's interests. A Red Cross blood donor, he has nearly reached his 100th donation and has organized his co-workers into a donor group.

Helping others is what Mr. Fisher plans to do when he retires.

"I don't watch TV," he laughed. "I have a whole range of volunteer activities to look after. When you want to help, there's always a lot to do! I'm never bored."

Mr. Fisher is one example of Government of Canada employees making a difference in their community. Along with their regular volunteering, thousands of public servants participate in the annual Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC), the largest workplace charitable project in Canada. In 2005, federal public servants contributed more than \$29.5 million to GCWCC in 113 communities nation-wide. GCWCC 2006 kicks off on September 7 and will run until November 22.



Michael Fisher with daughter Samantha.

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