DSRF released the first in a two-part instructional video series on building communication skills, with over 3,500 views in the first three months.

Record Setting Run Up for DS
Run Up for Down Syndrome reached new heights with an all-time high of 825 runners and $114,000 raised for individuals with DS!

“From Good to Great” in Toronto
DSRF hosted its first major conference outside BC, bringing together over 160 professionals and parents for two days in Toronto.

A New Era
DSRF took some big steps into the future with the hiring of a new Chief Executive Officer, Wayne Leslie, and the development of a new strategic plan to guide us through our next five years of service to the Down syndrome community.
Chris Sayer: Empowered

Like many children with Down syndrome, Chris' life did not get off to the easiest start. "Chris' childhood was difficult to begin with," recalls his mom, Shawn, "because he had a major heart defect, and he had three major open heart surgeries. He was a sick little boy for a long time. But after the third surgery, life changed for him."

As a young man, Chris got plugged into the Down Syndrome Research Foundation, where he worked on his math and the social skills that would be crucial as he transitioned to adulthood.

Chris speaks glowingly of his time as a DSRF student, saying, "The teachers are very nice; it's like a home to me." In fact, he liked it so much that when he graduated from DSRF's adult education programs, he stayed on as a staff member.

"Chris loves to work," affirms Shawn. "He's always looking for something to do; he just likes to be busy and he likes to have a job. He's very social and he likes to be around people."

"The whole family has noticed since Chris has been going to DSRF how independent and how confident he is," she says. "He has a lot of confidence in himself to do whatever he wants to do" – even getting himself to and from work on the bus and SkyTrain.

"DSRF has given Chris great social skills because he's met so many people there," says Shawn. He's made a lot of relationships there – not just with the people he's gone to class with, who are his age, but the people who work there and the people who volunteer there.

Chris is an inspiration to everyone around him, including his sister Katlyn. "Chris inspires me by being so strong through everything he's been through in life," she says. "I live a fuller life because he is in it."

Looking ahead, the family's dreams for Chris are simple. "My hopes for Chris' future are that he's able to do whatever he wants to do, and he can find a way to do it," says Shawn.

Given all that he's accomplished already, there is little question that Chris will do exactly that.