

vancouver foundation

stories
of modern
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Fall 2016

PRISON RELEASE

Finding freedom through education

DIGNITY OF WORK

Making bigger change for bidders

OPERA FOR THE WOMEN

A painful but necessary story

BEHIND THE VEIL

Sharing the Muslim faith

THE NATURE OF
belonging

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CANADA 150

The First Word . . .



Kevin McCort
President and CEO
Vancouver Foundation



Jason McLean
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Building a sense of belonging

In 2012, Vancouver Foundation released the seminal Connections and Engagement Report, which found that residents of metro Vancouver were most concerned over the growing sense of isolation and disconnection. Vancouver Foundation responded with a renewed focus on Connections and Engagement, supporting projects and research that help people build relationships and participate in activities that make their communities better. To mark Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, the Foundation chose "belonging" as a theme for this magazine. Here, the editor talks with President and CEO Kevin McCort and Board Chair Jason McLean about how the Foundation helps people improve their lives through connections to community.

How does the theme of belonging play out in the work of Vancouver Foundation?

Kevin McCort: One example is our Neighbourhood Small Grants program, which we also call "grassroots granting." City residents can bring forward projects that they believe will help increase their sense of engagement and belonging in their community. In turn, they receive small grants from \$500 to \$1,000.

Jason McLean: Ironically, it was the Connections and Engagement initiative that caused me to get more actively involved with Vancouver Foundation. They interviewed me for a survey regarding this and I was immediately impressed that a charitable organization was taking a leadership role in helping define the needs of the communities it serves. Since I have been on the board and been directly involved with some granting committees, I have seen first hand how a proactive approach to our decision making affects a community. For example, tackling important issues, such as social isolation and focusing on belonging, is one way we may see these grants improving engagement within the community.

How has Vancouver Foundation adapted to meet community needs?

Kevin McCort: I can think of two ways. The first is our Donor Advised Fund offering. Individuals, families and corporations can set up a fund here—usually a simpler, cheaper alternative to a private foundation—and then advise us where they want the grants to go.

Often when we talk to donors, we find that they want to give back to the community, and that they want to give to causes they're personally connected with over a longer term. This offering allows them to do that.

The second is our Charitable Agency Endowment Funds. If you're one of 12,000 registered charities in B.C., you can create an endowment fund at Vancouver Foundation whereby the income from that fund will go to your charity to help support your mission. Charitable agencies understand the value of having a steady stream of income they can count on—year over year.

What role does your board play?

Jason McLean: In addition to the usual roles of ensuring effective governance and executive leadership, we rely on our board to build bridges within the community. As leaders in the community, the board brings social capital and credibility to our relationships with external partners, in both the business community and the public sector. We look to our board to provide strategic guidance to help us refine ideas and build the relationships needed to ensure the long-term success of the organization—and the sector. We also rely on our board members to chair committees—such as granting committees, finance, giving circles, and more. As our endowment has grown, the importance of managing our financial resources well has become a greater focus for us in recent years.

How do you see Vancouver Foundation fulfilling its purpose as a community foundation?

Kevin McCort: It's important that it's not us sitting around deciding what the community wants. We believe that we can only succeed when community members—whether partner organizations or private citizens—guide our work. For example, we have calls for proposals from charities for projects that they want to fund. We then have a panel of community volunteers who assess those proposals and then recommend them for approval. Finally, our board, which is also composed of volunteers, makes the ultimate decision. So every step of the process, from defining priorities to evaluating those projects to approving, is done by community. I think that deep commitment to grassroots direction is the most important way we can bring about positive change in the community. ∞

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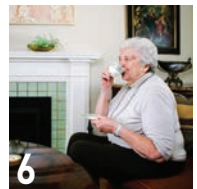
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Here are a few of the projects Vancouver Foundation and our donors recently supported

Chinese Canadian vignettes



After many compelling conversations with elderly Chinese Canadians in Nelson, Nicola Harwood, a curator at a local public gallery, wanted to find a way to weave their stories into a broader, poetic narrative. She discussed the

idea with poet Fred Wah and composer Jin Zhang, and together they envisioned a multimedia project accessible to an audience far beyond Nelson. “We initially thought of doing some type of contemporary dance piece, or performance art, but we felt we wanted to reach more people,” she says. So in 2012 with an \$8,000 grant from Vancouver Foundation, they created a website with a compilation of poems and stories of migration, and of the lives lived post-migration, from B.C.’s Chinese Canadian community. Through a series of vignettes, all richly illustrated in watercolour graphics by painter Tomoyo Ihaya, *High Muck A Muck: Playing Chinese* depicts the voices of a diverse community—including a third-generation Canadian restaurant owner in Nelson, a 19th-century laundry worker, and a recent immigrant to Vancouver. The project recently won the U.K.-based New Media Writing Prize, and was described by judges as “a beautiful and visually coherent work.” Experience the project at highmuckamuck.ca.

Empowering older women

In 2012, Krista James first met with a group of two dozen elderly Chinese women from Richmond, most of them immigrants and grandmothers, to ask them what sort of change they wanted to see in their community and in their lives. James, who is the Vancouver-based national director of the Canadian Centre for Elder Law, says the project was originally intended to lobby for better public transit service, but it morphed into a campaign for access to dental care. “A lot of them said that if they didn’t have their health, nothing else mattered,” says James, noting that the problem was not only medical, but social. “There’s a real shame that comes when you have to hide your mouth because the quality of your teeth is so poor that it affects your smile.” So the 12 women gathered their stories, developed a brochure and set about lobbying B.C.’s Ministry of Health for reform. (Their final consultations with ministry officials took place over the summer of 2016.) This project was one of four pilots in the Older Women’s Dialogue Project, (OWDP) which was developed with a \$122,000 grant from Vancouver Foundation. The OWDP is an effort to work with elderly



women, often from underprivileged communities, to identify the issues that matter to them. It aims to empower older women to influence law and social policy, and increase public awareness of issues facing older women. The grant from Vancouver Foundation, James says, allowed the group to turn words into action: “We didn’t feel good about asking about the problem unless there was some commitment to do something about it.” And besides reform, there’s a broader goal to empower these women. “What we really want to do is rethink the notion of expert—rethink who we listen to,” says James.



East Van stories

During regular walks around her neighbourhood, Christine Nguyen often takes the time to notice things that other people don't. Last year, she decided she wanted to share those stories and experiences. With a \$100 grant from Vancouver Foundation's Neighbourhood Small Grants program, Nguyen and her partner Amon Li set about planning a walk through her neighbourhood, from the corner of Kingsway and Victoria to the SkyTrain station at Broadway and Commercial.

Nguyen and Li began researching their neighbourhood, digging up stories both light (the ghost in the basement of a nearby elementary school) and serious (the fight to turn a polluted man-made ravine into a green space). After boiling down an almost five-hour proposal into a 90-minute walk, the pair started recruiting participants.

The walk was held in conjunction with the 100in1Day Festival, and they drew a diverse local crowd. "We had never met any of them before. Most were from the same neighbourhood and they wanted to learn more about the place where they live," says Nguyen. She believes that the two tours offered her neighbours a chance to get to know their home, but perhaps more importantly, each other.

Preparing for the Big One

Lourette Swanepoel works as an urban planner, and so she was very aware that her neighbourhood was lacking one key plan: earthquake preparedness. "I didn't have my act together," she says. "Everyone says they should but nobody does." So in the summer of 2015, with a \$500 grant from Vancouver Foundation's Neighbourhood Small Grants program, Swanepoel and a troupe of volunteers set about preparing for a neighbourhood-wide drill.

Around two dozen designated "champions" attended weekly training sessions as part of the City of Vancouver's Neighbourhood Emergency Assistance Team program. They learned basic radio skills, how to provide medical aid, and what potential hazards lay in their area—from gas lines to large, unstable trees—that could cause trouble in a worst-case scenario. Their training culminated in an earthquake drill one Sunday last October that drew around 100 people



over the course of the day. "Alarms went off, people had to duck and hold, we went to our muster stations," says Swanepoel. The drill was a first step towards what she hopes will be a wider recognition that emergency planning isn't solely the domain of the authorities—and that neighbourhoods like hers have an important social role to fill if disaster strikes. "I'd love to see a vision for Vancouver where we start to fill that gap between community-wide preparedness and individual preparedness and take care of that first-tier emergency response," she says. "It could be three days before help arrives—what happens in those three days matters." ∞

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Lives of Adventure

Ann Dyke has established three funds at Vancouver Foundation to honour the contributions of her industrious ancestors

By TYEE BRIDGE

Ann Dyke is the fourth generation in a long line of adventurous—and often seafaring—Lower Mainland women. Her great-grandmother Rosalia Pittendrigh, for example, arrived in New Westminster in 1874 after sailing around Cape Horn with her husband, British military officer Captain George Pittendrigh, and family. One of the good Captain's many claims to fame is an incident during the Crimean War in which his bathwater leaked into the apartment of the English founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale. "The good lady was not amused," says Dyke, "though they later became the best of friends."

Dyke, 83, has a trove of stories about her ancestors, and has created three successive funds at Vancouver Foundation in their memory. The most recent fund, launched this year, is in honour of Rosalia and Capt. George Pittendrigh. Prior to that she set up respective funds in honour of her parents, Lance and Nonie Bissett, and her maternal grandparents, Capt. Frank and Constance Yorke. "Each of these three generations did much to build and contribute to our community and the Lower Mainland over these 140 years," says Dyke. "I think this is the way they would have wished to be remembered."

Dyke has decided to allow Vancouver Foundation's community-based advisory committees to choose how to distribute the grants. "I was inspired by the story of Alice MacKay," says Dyke. "Almost 75 years ago she donated her \$1,000 in savings to a newly established Vancouver Foundation to help women in poverty." Dyke plans to mark either Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, or the 75th anniversary of the Vancouver Foundation in 2018, with a fourth fund named for her husband and herself.

Her husband Lorne was part of Ottawa's Trade Commissioner Service, and together they bounced around embassies, high commissions and consulates all over the world—from Greece

and Cyprus to Guyana and Surinam. They also lived for stretches in Manitoba and several New England states. In the places they lived, Dyke always looked for ways to give back to the community. Her volunteer work included helping start a preschool and several projects for people struggling with addiction and poverty in Winnipeg.

The Lance and Eleanor “Nonie” Bissett Fund

Born in London in 1899, Dyke’s father Lance Bissett became an Eagle Scout whose troop was charged with searching bombed areas of the city for unexploded ordnance after the First World War. Bissett’s father died when he was a baby, and after his step-father died in the Spanish Flu epidemic in 1918 he decided to move on. “In those days in England unless you had the right school tie you weren’t going to get very far in life,” Dyke says. “So young men like my dad had a way of getting out.”

He moved to Canada in 1925 to attend agriculture college in Vermilion, Alberta. During one particularly cold winter, the horse-drawn mail coach arrived on schedule, but only because the horses knew the way on their own, according to Dyke. “The driver had frozen to death some many miles back. That made it quite apparent to my father that Vermilion wasn’t where he wanted to settle.”

Bissett bought a car and drove to Vancouver, where he later founded Lance Bissett Ltd. Now called Bissett Fasteners, it’s the largest privately held distributor of construction fasteners in Canada, with 11 locations coast to coast. He married Eleanor Yorke the same year he launched the company, 1929. But despite toiling through the decade that followed the Great Crash, says Dyke, he kept his generous disposition. “He was a very honourable person, as was my mother,” she recalls. “Even in those extremely difficult times, I can’t recall my father ever firing anybody. And my mother was a marvel throughout those hard years. It was called ‘making do’ and she supported him in every way.”

In 2006 Dyke honoured her parents by establishing a fund at Vancouver Foundation in their name. “They were people that others really enjoyed working with and being with. I thank both of them for providing fulfilling employment and enjoyment for so many.”

The Capt. Frank and Constance Yorke Fund

Dyke’s maternal grandmother had a whopper of a name: Constance Pessie Pauline Pittendrigh. In 2013, Dyke established a fund in memory of Pittendrigh—whose full name made Dyke and her siblings howl with laughter as children—and her husband, Captain Frank Marie Yorke, also early residents of the Lower Mainland.

Pittendrigh might have fallen for Capt. Yorke because, like her father, he came from a respectably salty background. Born in Galway, Ireland in 1858, he joined his stepfather in living aboard a New Brunswick-built square-rigger called the Governor Tilley. “In those days,” Capt. Yorke once recalled for a Vancouver newspaper, “the master of a ship took along his wife and boys, while the girls were sent to school, often in Europe. My father was the very essence of a shipmaster, so I grew up at sea.”



(Top row) Rosalia and Capt. George Pittendrigh; (middle row) Nonie and Lance Bissett; (bottom row) Constance and Capt. Frank Yorke.



After they were married in 1894, the Yorkes lived variously in West Coast seaports—Victoria, San Francisco and Vancouver—which was typical in those pre-automobile days for those with the means to book travel by ship. Dyke’s mother, Mary Eleanor Rosalia Yorke, was born in the famously foggy city of San Francisco in 1903. “Her family had moved to Oakland after her birth,” recalls Dyke. “Her first memory was sitting upon her father’s shoulders as a three-year-old and looking across the bay at the great San Francisco fire of 1906.”

They eventually settled in Vancouver, where Capt. Yorke started F. M. Yorke and Son. It became a successful tug and barge company that was eventually purchased by Seaspan International Ltd. While Dyke’s grandmother respected her husband’s business, she “put her fist down” that there were to be no business conversations or disagreements between father and son at the dinner table. “She ruled the roost,” says Dyke with a laugh.

Capt. Yorke passed away in 1932, and his wife Constance lived another 20 years—two decades in which, says Dyke, “she thought nothing of jumping in her car and driving to California to visit relatives. She was not one to be held down.”

Remembering generations of strong women, Dyke again tips her hat to Alice MacKay and other founding donors of Vancouver Foundation. “I thank Alice for the looking glass,” she says, “and may many more women join us!” ☺

A Memorial Fund with Vancouver Foundation is an excellent way to honour a loved one and support your favourite charities at the same time. For more information, call Kristin in Donor Services at 604.629.5186 or visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give.





Ian Desrosier
and Kevin Wong

Beyond Bars

Students in the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program discover the transforming power of education

By SHANNON MONEO | PHOTOS NIK WEST

In January 2016, Kevin Wong was a 23-year-old criminology student who, inspired by cop movies, wanted to become a police officer. Ian Desrosier was a 41-year-old inmate at the Nanaimo Correctional Centre (NCC), nearing the end of his two-year sentence for breaking and entering. Both were nervous as they showed up for the first class of a unique course called Social Exclusion and Marginalization offered by Nanaimo's Vancouver Island University (VIU). Over four months of attending weekly classes, they both realized their lives had changed.

They were participants in the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, in which university students like Wong are Outside learners who study alongside imprisoned students, the Inside learners. The two groups met for three hours every Monday evening at the NCC, where everything from privilege and counter-culture to sexual orientation and masculinity were discussed in a setting where barriers disappeared and students became intellectual equals. "When you read about things like poverty, addiction and disabilities, you're desensitized. You don't care," Wong says. "After talking to guys like Ian, you learn about their struggles. You get more empathy, compassion. Ian has taught me a great deal about resilience over the short time that I've known him. He is someone who has been through a lot in life, yet he always seems to have a positive attitude, even in the darkest of times."

Their professor, Joanne Falvai, brought the innovative program to VIU. The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program was developed in Philadelphia in 1997 by Lori Pompa, a Temple University criminal justice professor who spent time with a man serving a life sentence. She wanted post-secondary students and incarcerated men and women to learn from one another and work together as peers, not as groups divided by race, educational backgrounds or economic circumstances. Now, Inside-Out is offered by more than 140 American colleges and universities. Falvai heard about Inside-Out at a conference in Winnipeg in 2014, and was intrigued.



“After talking to guys like Ian, you learn about their struggles. You get more empathy, compassion.”

—Kevin Wong

For several years, she'd been taking her criminology students to Guthrie House Therapeutic Community program at the NCC. There, 40 male inmates get strong support to help conquer their addictions. Sitting in a circle of interaction, students and residents shed tears, inhibitions and misconceptions as the students got raw insight into the causes of addiction and crime. “The students would be so moved by their time there. It was the highlight of their degree,” says Falvai, 41, who has been teaching criminology at VIU for 15 years. She saw Inside-Out as a way that she could expand the brief but impactful encounters her students experienced at Guthrie House.

Over three months, Falvai and fellow VIU criminal justice professor Elizabeth McLin developed curriculum that included group discussion, written reflections, activities and plenty of reading. By fall 2015, Falvai applied for a grant from Vancouver Foundation and was awarded \$30,000 over three years, to fund the program's operating costs. Now, VIU is one of seven Canadian universities to offer the program.

Vancouver Foundation's support meant much to Falvai. As a criminologist, she frequently feels as though she's fighting an uphill

battle because people can be quick to dismiss efforts to transform the lives of incarcerated men and women. She says the assistance from Vancouver Foundation sent the Inside students a new message: you are worthy, you can change your life. “The grant also made the Outside students feel validated because it meant that other people believed in what we were doing, that others also believed that transformation through education was possible.”

On the first day of the class, both groups—15 Guthrie House students, and 16 VIU students—sat down together with an air of anticipation. “It was like a middle-school dance. The energy, the volume, just skyrocketed,” Falvai recalls.

One of those Guthrie House students was Desrosier, who was born and raised in Ontario. From 1992 to 2002, he lived in the U.S. Then he moved to B.C., where he spent years in and out of jail for offenses including theft and breaking and entering, crimes that paid for his heroin and amphetamine use.

“I was in and out of addictions for a long time,” he says. “I made poor choices. When I was arrested in 2015, I thought, I'm getting too old for this. I was sick of the life, where it was taking me.” Also contributing to Desrosier's decision to overcome



VIU Professor
Joanne Falvai

addiction was his 16-year-old daughter Daylin, who lives in New York State. “I want to be around for her. That’s why I went to Guthrie and the course was just that extra push to change my life.”

Derosier was so committed to change that he opted to enroll in the course instead of applying for early parole. “I was nervous,” he recalls, “but I was ready for it.”

Derosier earned As, and the class was an empowering experience that revealed his potential, Falvai says. He devoured books, including *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts*, Gabor Mate’s wide-ranging look at addiction. On weekends, he and the Inside students organized study sessions.

Wong, a self-described introvert, attributes some of his reserve to a less-than-ideal childhood. “I can only recall a few occasions where we were all genuinely happy to be with each other. My parents fought a lot. Money came and went, but it was the latter I remember the most. When I was in high school, they divorced and my mom worked three jobs to put food on the table.”

Unaccustomed to sharing his feelings, Wong, who had previously studied criminal justice at Victoria’s Camosun College, was initially unsure about taking the Inside-Out course. “Applying for Inside-Out was the most terrifying decision I have ever made. I’m not a very outgoing person, and I was never particularly keen to participate in group work, so I just didn’t think I would be able to offer anything to the class. Ultimately, I made my decision based on the fact that it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I wanted to take a risk.”

He recalls that when the “super-loud, super-outgoing [Inside] guys” walked into the classroom, he decided there was no turning back. “The thing I enjoyed the most about the class was that half-way through we would always have a break and have an opportunity just to chat and get to know one another. It gave us the opportunity to chip away at the social barriers that separated us. It didn’t take long before I began to see the residents as people more similar to myself than different,” Wong says. He also realized that he wasn’t ready for policing. “I’d never had experience dealing with homelessness, addictions, mental health.”



Inspired by the class, Wong recently applied to be a corrections officer at the NCC. He intends to pursue his policing dream with the RCMP or Victoria Police Department after getting more real-life experience. “Being a police officer is such a huge responsibility,” he says.

Derosier was released from the NCC in June 2016 and celebrated one year of being drug-free later that summer. He says it was important for the Outside students to understand that “warehousing” people in jail doesn’t work. “They get out, only knowing what they learned before,” he says, adding that the counselling and support he got at Guthrie House and through the Inside-Out Program, and his lasting relationship with Falvai and McLin have been huge benefits. Now he wants to study social work at VIU, to help others get a second chance like he was given.

Vancouver Foundation’s \$30,000 has in effect laid a cornerstone of what could be a framework that turns neglected talent and abilities into success. “My great hope is that we can continue to build a bridge from the prison to the university. It took so little to create community for Ian,” says Falvai. “No matter what the exclusions—crime, addictions, poverty, disability, mental illness—we all want to belong.” ∞

To support innovative community projects like this, call Calvin in Donor Services at 604.629.5357, or visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give.



A Good Fit

With the help of an employment program for teenagers with disabilities, Marcel Duruisseau overcame his fear of applying for a job

By SUZANNE MORPHET | PHOTOS LEANNA RATHKELLY

Victoria's Red Barn Market, on the corner of Vanalman and Glanford Avenues, is a bustling place. Customers come and go, day in, day out, some grabbing a smoked-meat sandwich for lunch, others picking up a week's worth of meat and fresh produce.

Outside, where the fruit and veggies are neatly stacked along the storefront, is where Marcel Duruisseau spends some of his shift, refilling boxes and answering questions from shoppers. At other times, he'll be driving the forklift, unloading a truck that's arrived from up-island with freshly dug beets and potatoes.

You won't likely notice him, because Duruisseau is just one of the staff—working hard, doing his job, fitting in. And should you see him comfortably interacting with customers, or confidently driving the forklift, you certainly wouldn't guess that just 16 months earlier, he would have been too scared to even apply for a job here.

"I would have been afraid to admit to them that I'm on the autism spectrum," says Duruisseau. "Even though I'm really open about that in most situations, I do fear telling people when I apply for a job because I worry that they'll think I'm incapable."

When he was in Grade 10, Duruisseau's mother encouraged him to apply to a new program designed to help teenagers with disabilities find and keep part-time employment. TeenWork is a pilot project founded by a group of partners in Greater Victoria, administered by CanAssist at the University of Victoria, and funded by Vancouver Foundation through a generous grant of \$150,000 over three years.

TeenWork's manager, Brooke Parlby, became Duruisseau's job coach, helping him figure out where he should look for work. "He was lacking a little direction and not having much success," she recalls. "He was able to secure a few interviews but never really got beyond that stage. So we worked together, to look at his values, look at his strengths, explore that and then really target a business that was in line with that."

Red Barn Market seemed like a good fit. Parlby accompanied Duruisseau to his first few shifts, making sure he understood his duties. It didn't take long for the young man to impress his manager, Darcy Dahlin. "He did very well," says Dahlin. "Followed instructions, and did things exactly the way that we showed him."

Not only that, but Duruisseau was eager to take on more shifts and more responsibilities, eventually asking to be trained on the forklift. "He really followed that up," says Dahlin. "He must have asked about three times, and we finally brought an instructor in."

What started as a part-time position for Duruisseau has grown into almost full-time summer work. "I have absolutely no complaints and everyone here really thinks highly of him," sums up Dahlin. "It's been a very positive experience."



With the funding to grow the project provided by Vancouver Foundation, the TeenWork program will be able to help more teenagers find jobs and get started on satisfying careers. Since the program started in 2009, more than 60 youth with various physical, cognitive or mental health challenges have found employment including positions as animal care assistants, car lot attendants and commercial sandwich makers.

Parlby says the biggest hurdle is finding employers willing to take a chance, but when they do, the experience is so good they often want to repeat it. She recalls one employer who has retained a person hired through TeenWork for two years after previously struggling to keep anyone in the job for more than six months. "And he's looking to us again," she adds.

As for Duruisseau, he plans to continue working part-time at Red Barn Market while he completes his Community Support and Education Assistant Program at Camosun College. After that, he wants to work as a teacher's assistant, a job coach or a manager of a program for people with disabilities.

But his ultimate career goal? To run for political office. "I just think it would be really cool for the B.C. government to have a politician on the autism spectrum," he says confidently. "If I become the B.C. Disability Minister, I'd help to fund multiple programs like this." ☺

For more information about the TeenWork program visit canassist.ca/EN/main/teenwork.html. To support important projects like this, call Kristin in Donor Services at 604.629.5186 or visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give.



Long-Term Vision

Tom Bradley discusses how Vancouver Foundation manages its endowment in order to support community projects of today and tomorrow

BY JACOB PARRY | PHOTO TIFFANY BROWN COOPER

For almost 75 years, Vancouver Foundation has depended on the prudent management of its endowment—\$1.1 billion as of 2016—to help fund its work across the province. And few know the challenges of managing the funds—the unpredictability, uncertainty and lack of guarantees—better than board member Tom Bradley, the President and Co-founder of Vancouver-based Steadyhand Investment Funds. A 30-year veteran of investment management, Bradley started his career as an equity analyst at Richardson Greenshields in 1983, before going on to spend 14 years at Phillips, Hager & North, where he served as President and CEO from 1999 to 2005. The investment firm has long helped Vancouver Foundation manage its funds, and Bradley became very familiar with the Foundation's work. The experience drew him in. In 2009 he joined Vancouver Foundation's Investment Committee, where with his fellow committee members he sets the priorities on how the Foundation's endowment fund is invested. Now a board member and chair of the Investment Committee, Bradley offers a unique perspective on a side of the world of non-profits that is often overlooked.

Can you describe the role that the Investment Committee plays within Vancouver Foundation?

The investment side is critical because the Foundation has to generate income on the money that's been donated to the endowment funds that have been established. The money has to be managed so that it generates a return, not only to pay out money this year and next year, but in perpetuity. Our objective is to earn inflation plus 3.5 per cent. We're not going to do that every year, but we try to do that over periods of five years or longer such that the Foundation does not lose ground to inflation. We have to make sure that the money is earning something so that it's there for future grants.

When it comes to your day-to-day responsibilities as a committee member, do you actively look at how and where the Foundation's money is allocated, or do you take more of a backseat role and let that be the purview of the fund managers who you work with?

There's both an active and a passive role. The committee is very active in setting the asset mix—the stocks, bonds, real estate and other asset classes—and the proportions we think are going to

generate longer term returns. We're also the ones who pick the firms we want to work with and the people we want picking the stocks and bonds. However, once we've put a manager in place we let them do their thing. If they want to buy a stock, they do that on their own accord.

How does the committee select the money managers?

We focus on the four "Ps": their investment philosophy, how they're going to make money for the donors; their process of making decisions; the people—making money is all about the people you have doing it; and finally, performance—how have they done in the past and do we think it's sustainable. We focus on those criteria because we think they're better predictors of future returns rather than what the managers have done lately. We have long-term relationships with our managers and ultimately we hope these factors lead to superior returns, and for the most part, I'd say that's been our experience.

You have your own fund at Vancouver Foundation, WhytePine. Why did you choose to set it up in the way that you did, with funds going towards the more general granting programs, to be used at the Foundation's discretion, as opposed to towards a specific cause?

My wife Lori and I have been involved in other philanthropic endeavours, and in particular, organ transplant research. I was a liver transplant patient back in 2007—so that's obviously of interest to us, and we've spent a fair amount of time learning how and where we could give back in that community, and transplant research was one area. However, when it came to giving back to the community we live in, we wanted our impact to be very broad, and there's no organization in the province that can do that better than Vancouver Foundation. WhytePine allows us to do that. We let the Foundation's granting committees determine where the money is most needed—it's unrestricted. We rely on them to determine where the money will be granted every year. Moreover, they take care of everything; it's all set up, the money is well managed and the fee is reasonable. It's a very good combination.

I've been proud to lend my expertise to Vancouver Foundation over the past seven years and I feel confident that the organization is well positioned for the future. ∞

Cultivating Friendships



When residents of an Olympic Village condo decided to turn private plots into a community space, their gardening project turned into something more

BY TYEE BRIDGE | PHOTOS CLAUDETTE CARACEDO

Community can start with carrots—along with rosemary, squash, rhubarb and pumpkins. That’s been the experience of Carlson Hui, Matt Cooke and other residents at a 155-unit condo complex called James.

Located in Olympic Village, the 14-storey highrise has managed to transform the pervasive sense of loneliness and community retreat in Vancouver (see page 18). The solution? A rooftop garden that has been a catalyst for harvest dinners, taco parties, “Wing Wednesdays” and much more. Assisted by a series of \$200 to \$500 Neighbourhood Small Grants from Vancouver Foundation, the garden experiment in building community has proven to be a resounding success. It sparked media coverage in the *Vancouver Sun* and elsewhere, and has even started influencing the way local developers think about condo design.



“This was my first home purchase, and I felt like I really wanted to invest in the community to build my home,” says Hui, 33, a brand manager at Lululemon. “So I took that on. I wanted to run gatherings so that people would know each other by first name when they saw each other in the hall and that the conversations in the elevator would go beyond saying hi.”

Like Hui, Cooke purchased his unit at James in a presale before moving in in 2012. Both were attracted to the building when they saw the top floor was not a private penthouse but a shared amenity space—one with a massive exterior patio planted with ornamental grasses. After residents moved in, many expressed interest in using the patio to grow food.

Cooke, 28, is a recent graduate of UBC’s Food, Nutrition and Health program and a culinary instructor at The Dirty Apron.

He suggested the building adopt a shared-use model to maximize the benefits for everyone. “There were around 65 owners who wanted a garden plot,” recalls Cooke. “But there was only room for maybe 12 plots, and it would have had to be decided by a lottery. My vision was that we could all do it together, rather than a few people having their own little private space.”

The motion passed unanimously. Six volunteers formed a Garden Committee to organize the transformation of the James rooftop patio into a working garden—from pulling out ornamental plants and selling them on Craigslist to buying seeds and rebuilding the soil. “It was pretty much an immediate success, a hit with a lot of people,” recalls Cooke. “And it went beyond gardening to really growing the social aspect of the building. People got to know each other. Which was great to see, and we expanded from there.”

In the past four years, grant monies from Vancouver Foundation and the City of Vancouver have helped secure an irrigation system and an industrial composter that can turn plant matter into soil in two weeks. The garden has grown to take over more and more of the rooftop space. It now comprises 16 beds and hundreds of square feet. Along with herbs, vegetables and huge amounts of salad greens, the patio produces apples, figs, plums, tayberries and more.

“Pretty much everything you can think of grows here,” says Cooke. But the abundance of produce is only the most obvious payoff. Weekend garden gatherings of about 30 residents have been happening every two to three weeks from spring to fall for years now, and the community roots have grown beyond planting and weeding.

“As we’d hoped, people started to get to know each other,” says Hui. “The next thing you knew we were making plans outside of gardening. We were planning social gatherings together, going for beers, hanging out at the beach.”

A Social Committee organizes two annual long-table dinners in spring and fall, events enabled by a small Vancouver Foundation grant that allowed the purchase of some permanent dinnerware. “The formal social events tend to run in tandem with the gardening seasons,” says Hui. “The taco party kicks off garden season in April or May and then we’ll usually do a

ENDING URBAN ISOLATION

Vancouver Foundation's 2012 report, Connections and Engagement, surveyed over 3,800 metro Vancouver residents about their friendships, neighbourhood relationships and views about the larger community of metro Vancouver. The survey was designed to inform Vancouver Foundation's work as a community foundation. Since then, the survey has been often cited by the city and agencies that develop programs and policy.

Here is some of what the Foundation discovered:

- One-third of people said it's difficult to make new friends here. Those aged 25-34 are particularly affected by loneliness, especially if they live in a suite in a house or in a basement apartment.
- People who feel alone are twice as likely to report fair or poor health as people who do not feel alone. Research shows being lonely has as much impact on your health as being morbidly obese or smoking three packs of cigarettes a day.
- People who are socially engaged and visit with friends throughout the week are happier as they age.
- While most of us know the names of at least two of our neighbours, the connections typically stop there. Seventy-seven per cent of people in highrises have not done a favour for their neighbours in the past 12 months.
- Many of us in metro Vancouver are retreating from community life. Most of us have not participated in neighbourhood and community activities.
- The most-cited reason for not participating in neighbourhood and community life is not lack of time, but a feeling that we have little to offer.



harvest event in the fall." Last year 50 residents harvested and cooked together. Cooke taught people how to make their own fettuccine noodles and pesto (from the patio's abundance of basil), and everyone shared butternut squash and kale salad—along with a massive pot of homemade ratatouille.

"We just want to make sure that people are having fun," says Hui. "Our homes might be just 600 to 800 square feet, but because of this community and the people we have up here in the garden, it feels much much bigger."

The formality of structured events has composted into community soil, where people know each other well enough for get-togethers to spring up spontaneously. "It's been really exciting, and we have tons of gratitude for what these Vancouver Foundation grants have done for our community," says Hui. "We couldn't have done the things we have done without them, for sure." He adds that residents' intent is to become a fully self-sustaining model. This year residents didn't apply for a garden grant because they feel "pretty well-established and knew there were other garden groups that probably need the money."

Word about the tremendous results has reached nearby buildings and beyond. Several groups have visited the James patio to learn from the model. "There's a lot of pride and sense of community here, so much so that it's known in this area," says Cooke. "They tailored their gardens after this model, so they also have collaborative gardens now."

Both Cooke and Hui hope that the garden's success will influence future buildings. "I want to show that something like this can exist and can work, even in our 'city of glass' with high-rises and limited connection to agriculture and greenspace," says Cooke. "My hope is it will influence policy, where a shared amenity with garden space is part of what is expected."

They've already been interviewed by staff at Cressey, the developers who built James. "They're looking to leverage this model and replicate a lot of the wins here, because it's been so successful," says Hui. "It's interesting to think that what we've done in this little garden is in essence shaping the way that Vancouver is building." ∞

Find out if there's a Neighbourhood Small Grants program in your area at vancouverfoundation.ca/nsg. You can also help support Neighbourhood Small Grants with a donation. Call Calvin in Donor Services at 604.629.5357 for more information.



Tuning In



The founders of Roundhouse Radio aimed to create a meeting place where people could share perspectives—and give listeners a sense of connection

By JACOB PARRY

Every weekday at 10 a.m., Minelle Mahtani sits down at the mic in Roundhouse Radio’s East Vancouver studio. One afternoon in July 2016 her guest was Kemal Hadzic, a TransLink bus driver who makes unique efforts to connect with his passengers every day—including making balloon animals. She says her show, *Sense of Place*, is an exercise in connecting disparate voices, through which she hopes to create understanding of our differences through conversation.

It’s that type of programming that Don Shafer, the Co-founder and President of Roundhouse Radio (98.3 FM in Vancouver), hopes will draw a large number of listeners—but also realize a more noble ambition. “We’re getting people to be more aware, more acquainted with things in their community—things they haven’t been exposed to or don’t know about,” says Shafer. Roundhouse Radio, which took to the airwaves in November 2015, is a business, not a non-profit community station. But with revenues that allow for a full-time staff of 15 including experienced producers, and “an NPR-like sound,” Shafer believes he can build a sense of community by putting unique and often unheard voices like Kemal Hadzic on the air.

Shafer, a 40-year veteran broadcaster with experience launching such stations as Rock 101 and CFOX, was born and raised in the U.S., and moved to Montreal in 1975. He worked in radio stations in Toronto, Winnipeg and finally, Vancouver, which had an indelible impact on him. “There’s really no city like it, in terms of its tolerance, its diversity and definitely its beauty,” he says.

It was with that affection for the city that Shafer first kicked around an idea for a new talk radio station. Together with Barb Snelgrove, a long-time LGBTQ activist and veteran of Vancouver’s commercial radio scene, he first discussed the idea for PrideFM—a station that would target Vancouver’s LGBTQ community. But in 2012, Vancouver Foundation published its *Connections* and

Engagement report, which contained a survey showing that the number one concern for people in metro Vancouver was a growing sense of social isolation.

At the time, much media attention was focused on the topic of urban loneliness, and Shafer and Snelgrove decided to broaden their mandate. They talked about creating a dynamic, relevant, and inclusive local meeting place to share ideas and opinions on lifestyle, art, theatre, food, history, science, and music. “Initially we thought the station would be LGBTQ, but as friends pointed out, that would be exclusive, not inclusive,” says Shafer. “I thought a non-traditional talk station with a local focus would work, and so urban isolation fit prominently into our application.”

Roundhouse Radio was named after the community centre in Yaletown, but the name has wider significance as well. “Every city has some kind of roundhouse where the trains come together,” he says, “I thought that it would be a great name for a radio station. We could be a place where community comes together.” After almost a year on the air, the model is showing traction—Shafer says around 10,000 listeners a week tune in online and a much larger number over the radio.

Moreover, Shafer feels like he’s achieved his goal in creating a place where voices, often disparate and in tension, can hear each other out. “Some stations choose to aggravate discussion, and while that can draw attention, I didn’t want to do that,” says Shafer, “If I shout at you, it may not have an impact. If I engage you, then I think we’ll have made a difference.” ☺

For more information about Roundhouse Radio visit roundhouseradio.com. To support projects that help connect and engage people in your community, call Kristin in Donor Services at 604.629.5186 or visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give.

Recycle, Recover,

With the help of the Bidders' Project, Michael Leland has gained security—and learned to see the value in his work

BY TYEE BRIDGE | PHOTOS ROBERT KARPA

Every Monday, Michael Leland cycles to the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, towing a bike trailer. The trailer sports his own modifications: its load capacity has been expanded thanks to a freezer rack. Sometimes accompanied by a fellow member of the Bidders' Project, he pulls bottles and cans from a weekend of garbage, then bags and loads them—carefully—onto his trailer. “Centering the load is a skill,” he says with a laugh. “You can only put so much on a trailer before the wheels give out.”

Then he bikes to the United We Can depot on Industrial Avenue. “It’s a heavy load, around 150 pounds. It’s like doubling somebody all the way,” he says. On one trip to the yacht club in the summer, he figures he might recycle 2,500 bottles and cans.

Thanks to arrangements made by the Bidders' Project, Leland has many other weekly stops, from PureBread bakery to the head offices of Earl’s. He joined the program in May of 2015. Since then it has helped set him up with recycling gigs, such as collecting bottles and cans at the Kitsilano Festival—or even the 2015 FIFA Women’s World Cup games that drew 50,000 people to BC Place. “We had up to seven guys at each outing. We were making \$200 a day on that one,” says Leland. “It was incredible.”

Welcome to the life of a self-employed recycler. It’s tough work. Leland, a team leader with the Bidders' Project, knows this well. He’s been a “bidder” for 14 years. Now in his 60s, Leland works eight to 10 hours a day, six or seven days a week in the summer. In winter he’s able to get that down to five. “I’ve never found a way to get under a five-day week,” he says with a smile.

He’s no stranger to hard work. For most of his career Leland was a commercial fisherman in the herring, halibut and salmon fisheries, among others. But following the death of his wife and a heart attack—and while fighting addiction—he ended up homeless in the Downtown Eastside in the early 2000s. “I had no benefits from fishing, and when I first got down here, I was a little lost and I lived outside for a while,” he recalls. “I was walking down an alley and I found \$18 worth of beer cans in one spot. So I started pushing a cart around. That was 14 years ago and I’ve been at it ever since.”

Bidders endure 52 weeks a year of uncertain work in all kinds of weather. Often treated as outcasts, most lead solitary lives as they push shopping carts or tow bike trailers across the city. The Bidders' Project was started in 2014 by Ken Lyotier, the founder and former Executive Director of United We Can, to improve the lives of independent recyclers on multiple fronts. It is now run by Executive Director Anna Godefroy, who volunteered with Ken since the inception.

“These are people that work really hard,” says Godefroy. “They get up every morning and take their carts all over the city. They want financial autonomy, and they are proactive and resilient. I find that really inspiring.”

The Bidders' Project engages about 300 urban recyclers annually in workshops, meetings, and events like the Coffee Cup Revolution, in which recyclers pick up coffee cups all over the Lower Mainland for a five-cent refund. The project has three main

Rebuild





“**When I finally realized I was making a difference, that made a difference to me. I can see a little glimmer of light and I can thank the Binners’ Project for that.**”

goals: to decrease the stigma associated with binning; to boost economic opportunities for inner-city recyclers; and to create social networks, both between the recyclers themselves and with organizations already in place in the Downtown Eastside. About this last goal, Godefroy notes that there are many services in the DTES that marginalized people don’t know about and don’t use.

“This is not only social justice work,” she says, “but economic development work. We want to help binners gain access to valuable recyclables, and help make their lives safer. We also want to inform the public about what they do, and why it is of value to society.”

Taking Leland’s Monday yacht club pick-ups alone, a reasonable estimate would be 100,000 recyclables saved from the landfill each year. Multiply that by metro Vancouver’s hundreds of binners working five days a week, and the environmental impact starts to become clear. United We Can’s single location on Industrial Avenue recycles close to 22 million bottles and cans a year, most collected by binners.

Leland is proud of his work and what he has been able to do in assisting the global effort to trash less. “I didn’t use to see myself as a recycler, but I do now,” he says. “When I finally realized I was making a difference, that made a difference to me. I can see a little glimmer of light and I can thank the Binners’ Project for that. Until Anna came along I never saw any real value in what I was doing.” He adds that without independent recyclers like him, Vancouver will fall short of its Greenest City goals. “If they’re going to make their 2020 prediction, they’re going to need some help. So we’re all going to have to get on board.”

In November 2015, the Binners’ Project received a two-year, \$50,000-per-year grant from Vancouver Foundation. It was a “pivotal” moment, says Godefroy. “When we applied we were only two volunteers, and we were at the end of the road. We had gotten other small grants, but if we didn’t get that funding I don’t think we could have gone further. It was a real affirmation that what we were doing made sense and that we were on the right path.”

Thanks in part to the Binners’ Project, Leland’s life is safer and more secure. “It took me nine years but I’m in an apartment now on West Pender, and I’ve got my little claws dug right into the plaster,” he laughs. “There’s no one getting me out of there.”

His work with the project has expanded beyond his own recycling. As team leader he helps oversee cleanups at big events, and he acts as an outreach liaison to the binner community, inviting new members to attend meetings and get involved. At some events—like this year’s PNE—he and other members help educate attendees on separating garbage from recycling.

“The project has been nothing but good for the binners,” says Leland. “It’s a win-win. For all my years I just pushed my cart around. Now the enthusiasm is terrific. People aren’t scowling down at you or looking at you like you’re a pariah. People see you recycling and say, ‘Right on. Good for you.’” ☺



For more information about the Binners’ Project visit binnersproject.org. To support innovative community projects like this, call Calvin in Donor Services at 604.629.5357, or visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give.

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For more information, visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give or call our Donor Services department at 604.688.2204

Where did you go, girl?

A chamber opera called *Missing* tells the story of one woman who disappears, humanizing the profound loss behind the grim statistics

By ROBERTA STALEY

Ava, a 22-year-old UBC law student, motors along Highway 16 just west of Prince George in the pouring rain. As the car headlights illuminate the outline of an Aboriginal girl hitchhiking by the side of the road, Ava wavers. Should she stop and pick her up? But the moment is gone, and she continues down the two-lane road known as the Highway of Tears—so named for the litany of women who have disappeared hitchhiking along its winding expanse. Then—disaster. Ava's vehicle careens out of control on the slippery asphalt and is catapulted into a tree.

Many months later, Ava, still recovering from her injuries, returns to law school. However, she is haunted by flashbacks of the 16-year-old girl thumbing a ride, who has gone missing. But the image that comes most often to her mind's eye is the girl's corpse lying under trees in the dark. Somehow, in the dual act of violence—a horrendous car crash and a murder—the two women become entwined in a spiritual and metaphorical odyssey that exposes the deeply entrenched, systematic racism and gender violence perpetrated against Aboriginal women—at least 1,200 murdered and missing in Canada since 1980.

Such is the dramatic opening of *Missing*, a two-act chamber opera co-produced by City Opera Vancouver and Pacific Opera Victoria that is set to premiere in November 2017. The moving and haunting libretto for the opera was written by Marie Clements, a Vancouver-based Metis writer, playwright, director, producer and co-artistic director of Red Diva Projects. Vancouver Foundation contributed a grant of \$127,000 to



Marie Clements

support the creation of the opera, which has since brought on board renowned composer Brian Current of Toronto and dramaturge Paula Danckert of Montreal. “Vancouver Foundation is supporting artistic process and engagement with community. I think it’s extraordinary,” says Clements.

The opera nurtures an empathetic viewpoint of the missing women that humanizes and elevates them above grim statistics.

Rather than simply being “missing,” they are profoundly *missed*—mourned—by their families and communities. As Charles Barber, Conductor and Artistic Director of City Opera Vancouver says, the opera is written from the perspective of a woman whom no one remembers. “This is the paradox and the purpose,” Barber says. “It is a painful and necessary story.”

A chamber opera is smaller and more intimate than a grand opera, featuring about half a dozen musicians, rather than dozens. It also has fewer actors; in the case of *Missing*, there are seven, four of whom are Aboriginal. As with grand operas, which are mostly written in Italian and feature subtitles for English audiences, *Missing* will also have subtitles to translate Gitksan, a First Nations language spoken in northwestern B.C., that peppers the script. “It’s intimate,” says Current. “The singers can sing quietly and almost whisper in your ear. Chamber opera is not only about telling a story but casting a spell.” Current won a Juno in 2015 for Classical Composition of the Year for his chamber opera *Airline Icarus*, which uses the myth of Icarus to explore themes of hubris mixed with technology. He will be working on the music for *Missing* this fall.

In *Missing*, Ava strives to overcome the ongoing physical effects of the accident, and eventually bears a baby with fellow law student Devon—an infant who is inexplicably inconsolable much of her waking hours. In one scene, shot with brushstrokes of magic realism, the Aboriginal girl appears in a mirror in Ava’s home, and begs to hold her child. Such a small but intimate act of human connection illuminates the sorrow embedded in the relentless predation of Aboriginal women—of lives that should have been lived well and long, filled with happiness, love and children. As Angus, the Aboriginal girl’s grieving 25-year-old brother, tells an RCMP officer: “She was going to graduate, she was going to go to law school.” Her mother’s final, keening lament is “Where did you go, girl?”

“**Chamber opera is not only about telling a story but casting a spell.**”

—Brian Current



Although Clements had never written a chamber opera before, she says that the clean dialogue suited her poetic style of writing. “Librettos are written very sparsely compared to play writing,” she says. “There’s an economy of words that has to represent emotion and dramatic drive and ideas all at once. When the words and the music come together, you have a full picture.”

Clements is cautiously optimistic about the ability of *Missing* to bring about societal change. “It is one way to get to know each other’s stories, and generate the empathy needed to connect. There is an awakening. We are at a really exciting time in history that potentially can really effect change.”

Missing will have a private premiere on November 1, 2017, to which only the families of the murdered and missing women will be invited to attend. It will then be staged by City Opera for five nights at the York Theatre in Vancouver and an additional five nights at Pacific Opera Victoria. ∞

For more information about City Opera Vancouver visit cityoperavancouver.com. To support innovative community projects like this, call Kristin in Donor Services at 604.629.5186 or visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give.

Act of Faith

Shazia Suleman and her Muslim friends decided to talk to their neighbours about the hijab—and they were overwhelmed by the response

By SUZANNE MORPHET | PHOTO NIK WEST

One day soon after the November 2015 terrorist attack in Paris, Shazia Suleman was walking home from a neighbourhood park with her two young children when a man started yelling at her. “Go back to your country! Go back to your country!”

“He’s right behind us and yelling,” she says, recalling how she and her children hurried to cross a street in Victoria’s Hillside Quadra neighbourhood. “I was feeling really scared. I was afraid for my children. For the first time in my life I felt unsafe because of the way I dressed.”

Suleman was wearing a hijab, the head covering that many Muslim women wear. But instead of retreating in fear or getting angry that no one else on the street that day intervened on her behalf, Suleman decided that she should do something to make a difference. Acknowledging that non-Muslims can find women dressed in hijab intimidating, she says matter-of-factly, “We can’t blame the people if we’re not doing anything about it.”

Around the same time, another member of Suleman’s Muslim community saw a poster advertising Neighbourhood Small Grants, a program offered by Vancouver Foundation in partnership with the Victoria Community Foundation. “I told myself, ‘this could be it,’” Suleman recalls. “This could be our way of expressing ourselves. We were so excited about it.”

Suleman’s idea, developed with other local Muslim women, was to organize an event that would educate their non-Muslim neighbours about the hijab and why women wear it. She applied for and received a Neighbourhood Small Grant for \$500.

Hijab Awareness Day was the result. Prior to the event, Suleman’s group put up posters around the neighbourhood, alerted media and created a short film from interviews in which they asked people on the street what they knew about the hijab. The event itself, held in January 2016, was everything they hoped for. “Oh my goodness, it was over 200 attendees. Over 200,” she says.

When people arrived at the local community centre that day they were given a hijab and invited to visit 10 stations where local Muslim women from countries as diverse as Bangladesh and Turkey explained how and why they wear it.

“By the end of the 10 stations, they realized all the women wear it for the same reason,” says Suleman, explaining that it is a

way to show their faith. “The only difference is how they wear it.” Later that afternoon, 30 Muslim girls and young women modeled hijab fashions on a runway for a female-only audience.

“For me it is a way to express myself as a Muslim woman,” says Suleman, who emigrated to Canada from Taiwan five years ago after completing a degree in chemical engineering. “I don’t have to—if I’m uncomfortable in a situation—explain myself over and over.”

Hijab Awareness Day is notable for another reason. It’s the first time Vancouver Foundation has partnered with an organization outside metro Vancouver, in this case the Victoria Foundation, to co-fund a Neighbourhood Small Grants project and the first time the partner has contributed half the budget.

“It’s an exciting milestone,” says Lidia Kemeny, Director of Grants and Community Initiatives for Vancouver Foundation, of the new co-funding model. “By engaging partners to co-fund their Neighbourhood Small Grants programs, we’ll be able to expand to more communities across BC. This partnership is the beginning of a grant-making movement across the province.”

Neighbourhood Small Grants was created in 1999 to address specific needs in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and has grown organically since then, with people in other communities wanting to see their own neighbourhoods more engaged and strengthened from the ground up. In 2015, Vancouver Foundation received over a thousand applications and 974 projects were supported in partnership with 18 community organizations.

With Hijab Awareness Day behind them, Suleman and her group are keen to engage more with their non-Muslim neighbours. They’ve already applied for and received approval for another Neighbourhood Small Grant, this one to help organize an event for youth called Unity in Diversity. “It’s open to all youth from every single background,” she explains, as enthusiastic as ever. ∞

Find out if there’s a Neighbourhood Small Grants program in your area at vancouverfoundation.ca/nsg. You can also help support Neighbourhood Small Grants with a donation. Call Calvin in Donor Services at 604.629.5357 for more information.



A Guiding Hand

Vancouver Foundation works with hundreds of charities, offering a secure funding model and expertise to help them achieve their goals

Vancouver Foundation manages endowment funds on behalf of more than 400 charitable agencies across B.C. A charitable agency endowment fund provides for prudent capital growth coupled with a predictable source of income, which is very helpful in years where

donations are down or government funding is reduced. Last year, more than 1,300 income distributions were made to help these charities support their operations and fulfill their missions. Here are three charitable organizations that work with Vancouver Foundation.

Girl Guides of Canada

Leslie Bush, Provincial Commissioner

With over 15,000 members in B.C.—including Sparks, Brownies and Girl Guides—the Girl Guides of Canada works with the mandate to help girls from age five to 18 become confident, courageous and resourceful leaders and to make a difference in the world.

Why did you establish a fund at Vancouver Foundation?

Our fund was established in 1956, when Mrs. A. VanDusen donated \$11,100 to the B.C. Provincial Council with the condition that we establish a fund at Vancouver Foundation. The income from this was to be paid to B.C. Provincial Council to further their work.

How does the fund help you achieve your goals?

The money we get from our fund at Vancouver Foundation provides our organization with a steady income at the provincial level. Adult training, events, provincial camps and international trips are all examples of where the funds may be spent, as well as maintaining our provincial office. B.C. Girl Guides' other sources of income are from our membership fees, and Girl Guide cookie sales. The income from the fund helps us to keep our membership fees as low as possible, and to keep the provincial portion of cookie sales profit closer to the girl members at the area, district and unit level.



What benefits have you realized from working with Vancouver Foundation?

We've benefited from a stable and secure income source from our core fund. We also do not have to maintain the expertise to process donations to our fund or to manage the administrative side. This is provided by Vancouver Foundation, which is a saving to our bottom line.



B.C. Therapeutic Riding Association

Kelly Lee Parry, President and Director

Based in Langley, the B.C. Therapeutic Riding Association (BCTRA) provides horseback riding as therapy for people with disabilities, working with nearly 30 riding groups, government agencies and disability sport organizations across the province.

Why did you establish a fund at Vancouver Foundation?

In 2015 we received notification of a bequest naming BCTRA as a recipient of almost \$1.5 million from the estate of Maggie Jean Carpenter. We needed to find a way to secure these funds for the future needs of our members. So our small volunteer board of directors researched our options and ultimately chose Vancouver Foundation to help us maximize the potential of these new funds.

How does the fund help you achieve your goals?

The fund is really new for us but it does provide the security of long-term planning and the promise of generating revenue to pass on to our members in the future. Prior to this our annual budget ranged from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per year, so this presented a major new set of opportunities. Securing the fund helps us have some time to assess our members' needs, build our plans and create valuable resources for members.

What benefits have you realized from working with Vancouver Foundation?

Having the opportunity to work with Nicole Jeschelnik, Manager, Donor Services, gave us a great understanding of the options and benefits of partnering with Vancouver Foundation. We quickly realized that access to that level of professional advice was exactly what we needed to guide us. Vancouver Foundation also helped us set up a way to do additional fundraising without having to hire staff.

The Dance Centre

Mirna Zagar, Executive Director

The Dance Centre is dedicated to the development of the art of dance in B.C. in all its expressions and forms. The organization provides resources and programs supporting the professional development of dance creators, and produces public performances and events. The Scotiabank Dance Centre in downtown Vancouver is regarded as Canada's flagship dance facility.

Why did you establish a fund at Vancouver Foundation?

We already had a smaller endowment fund administered by Vancouver Foundation established at the suggestion of one of our donors. Once the federal government's arts and culture matching program was established, it made sense following a major fundraising campaign to make use of this program and focus on growing our endowment, which currently sits at over \$1 million.

How does the fund help you achieve your goals?

We now have a fund which provides significant return, assisting with our annual operations, specifically supporting the building infrastructure needs of Scotiabank Dance Centre along with support to its multilayered program dedicated to professional development of dance artists. ∞



Find out how Vancouver Foundation can help your charity to realize its mission. Call Calvin in Donor Services at 604.629.5357 for more information.

Write the FUTURE

WITH YOUTH AGING OUT
OF FOSTER CARE

By TYEE BRIDGE

For the past three years, Vancouver Foundation's Fostering Change initiative has been working to improve the lives of youth who have "aged out" of foster care after reaching age 19. Unlike 92 per cent of children in B.C. who receive financial, social and emotional support throughout their 20s, youth emerging from public care are often left out in the cold—figuratively and sometimes literally.

The most recent phase of Fostering Change's campaign was a wildly successful petition drive called Write the Future. The petition called for more financial support, relationships with caring adults, and doorways to giving back to the community through cultural, artistic and volunteer activities. Write the Future's online efforts and on-the-ground outreach—in which youth volunteers canvassed at events like Car-Free Day, Italian Day, and the Richmond Night Market—gathered a whopping 18,000 signatures from B.C. residents in only eight weeks.

Meredith Graham, 28, is an advisor to the Fostering Change project who had experience with the foster care system as a teenager. "A lot of the general public doesn't know about our experiences in care and transitioning out of care," she says. "They don't know that as of age 19, everything ends."

But the massive response to the petition was the positive flip side. "When people learned the truth, it was just as surprising how quickly and how strongly they wanted to make things different for young people who journey through that system. So seeing those lightbulbs flicker and then go on, and having such a visible, visceral change in people's attitudes has been super rad."

Research shows that over 70 per cent of British Columbians believe government and communities are not doing enough to support aged-out foster youth. Seventy-one per cent favour the provincial government supporting them with a living-expense stipend—to help cover housing, food, education and health care costs—until they turn 25.

A significant factor that made the Write The Future project a great success was the inclusive way in which it was created, says Kris Archie, Fostering Change's Manager, Youth Engagement. "We were able to engage community partners, grantees, and young people in spreading the word about it," she says. "People took the time to send personal messages to their networks, asking them to learn more and support the work."

A broad network of youth service and advocacy organizations helped shape the message of the campaign, including Aunt Leah's Place, First Call BC (the BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition), and the Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks. The co-operative approach showed up in the results, says Archie. "There's a clear sense of support for young people exiting foster care in our province and that feels really good."

Graham agrees that Write The Future's roots in community and youth input set it apart. "The Fostering Change initiative believes in the principle of 'nothing for us, without us,'" she says. "They consulted with young people the entire way, even asking things like 'What do you think about these colours for the advertising?' They actually had us at the table to converse with politicians and community leaders. I hadn't really understood that principle before or seen it in action, and being part of that was great."

Mark Gifford, Director of Grants and Community Initiatives at Vancouver Foundation, says he had hoped to get around 10,000 signatures. Almost doubling that number was a pleasant surprise. "The three ingredients of the petition—financial, rela-



tional and community support—are critical to youth in their 20s," he says. "We all get through our 20s with support from families and friends on these fronts. It's the most normal thing in the world. And people get it. It's a no-brainer."

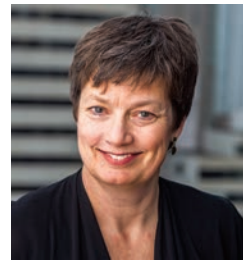
Results of the petition have been presented to provincial and municipal governments, and also with community and business leaders. But Gifford says the most valuable outcome of the project so far has been to identify an audience willing to engage with Vancouver Foundation in advocating for increased financial, relational, and community supports.

"What we've done is build an audience of 18,000 people. We want to bring their support and build on it, pushing for change legislatively as well as on a local community level." ∞

For more information about how you can support youth aging out of care in British Columbia, call Kristin in Donor Services at 604.629.5186 or visit vancouverfoundation.ca/give.

Community Foundation or Private Foundation: What's the Best Choice for You and Your Family?

By MARGARET H. MASON | PARTNER, BULL, HOUSSER & TUPPER LLP



I meet frequently with individuals and families who are bringing thoughtful consideration to their philanthropy and are contemplating whether a private family foundation would be the most appropriate vehicle to achieve their objectives. Invariably I find myself encouraging them to also consider a Donor Advised Fund or other form of fund held within a community foundation.

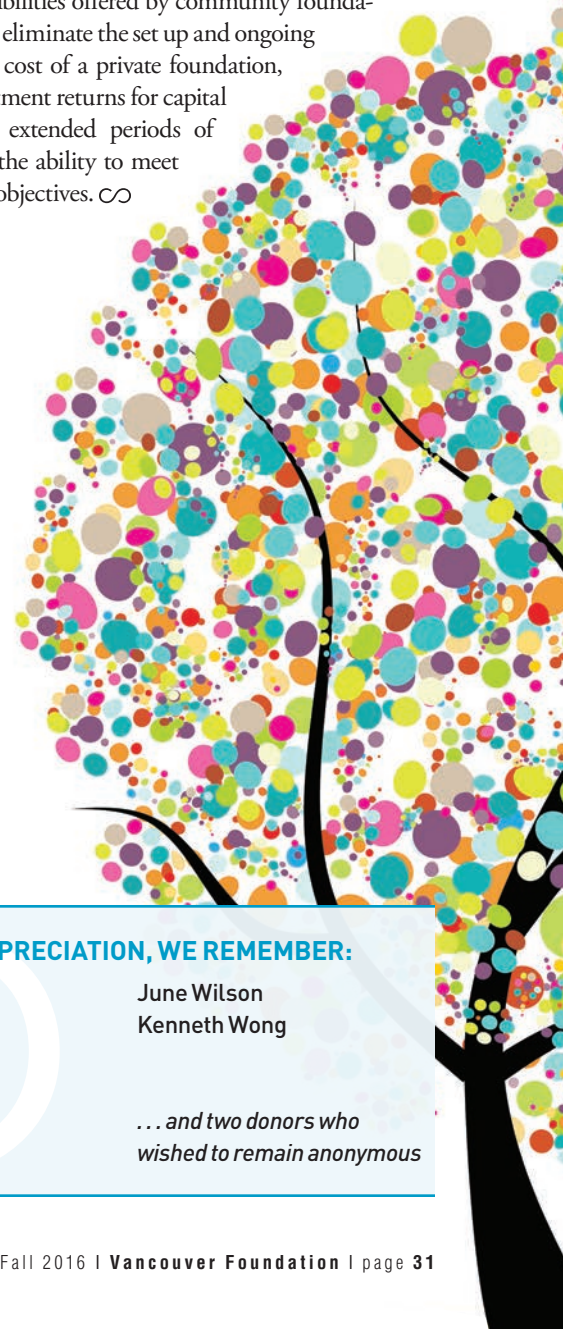
A private foundation certainly has the advantage of control, in that the property donated, although owned by the foundation, remains subject to the decision-making power of the directors or trustees of the foundation who are generally the significant donors. The board of the private foundation has the pleasure and privilege of deciding on the grants to be made, the timing of such grants, and to whom grants will be made. The board also decides on the investment of the property held within the foundation.

However, the board of the foundation also has the “pleasure” of ensuring that the books and records of the foundation are properly maintained, that any donation tax receipts are issued in accordance with the technical requirements of the Income Tax Act, that all required corporate filings are made with the Registrar, that reasonably regular board meetings are held and documented, that the preparation and approval of financial statements is undertaken, and that the T3010 Registered Charity Information Return is accurately prepared and filed. Many families underestimate the complexity of the set-up and ongoing administrative requirements (and costs) of a private family foundation and eventually find them burdensome.

Enter the Donor Advised Fund within a community foundation. In many ways a fund within a community foundation is the best of all possible worlds—it provides the ability to pursue philanthropic goals without the responsibility for the technical administration of a registered charity. A properly structured Donor Advised Fund agreement, while not providing a donor with control over the fund, will give a donor (or family) the ongoing ability to make recommendations for grants to be made from the fund and such recommendations can change over

time. Such recommendations can be for specific purposes, for specific charities or for specific community funds established by the community foundation.

The donor and/or the donor's family may also maintain the ability to name successor individuals to make recommendations regarding grants to be made from the fund. By utilizing a Donor Advised Fund within a community foundation, or by considering the other fund possibilities offered by community foundations, the donor can eliminate the set up and ongoing administration and cost of a private foundation, achieve better investment returns for capital funds invested for extended periods of time and still have the ability to meet their philanthropic objectives. ∞



LASTING LEGACIES

We are honoured to acknowledge donors who include Vancouver Foundation as a beneficiary of their estate, RRIF, RRSP or life insurance policy. In 2015, these individuals left a lasting legacy for the community through Vancouver Foundation.

WITH GREAT APPRECIATION, WE REMEMBER:

Joyce Borrie
Elsie Campbell
Brian Graves
Noreene Johnson
Thomas Kinloch
Grant Strate

June Wilson
Kenneth Wong

... and two donors who wished to remain anonymous

“I see a streamside restoration that protects fish habitat.”

“I see a vibrant arts & culture scene.”

“I SEE A *“I see a place where teens can hang out and have fun – safely.”*

NEIGHBOURHOOD

FESTIVAL THAT

BRINGS DIFFERENT

CULTURES TOGETHER.”

“I see a summer camp where grieving families can go to heal.”

“I SEE A COMMUNITY GARDEN IN EVERY NEIGHBOURHOOD.”

“I see a dance class that helps seniors connect.”

Whatever your vision, you should know about us.

Find out more at vancouverfoundation.ca/give

or call Calvin at 604.629.5357

To find a community foundation near you, visit communityfoundations.ca

vancouver
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COMMUNITY INSPIRED