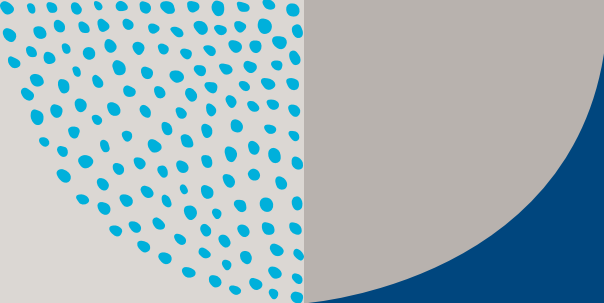


# vancouver foundation

STORIES OF MODERN  
PHILANTHROPY

## 2018



**CULTURAL CONNECTIONS**  
Keeping Haida First Nation traditions alive

**OPIOID CRISIS**  
Bringing impactful change to the addiction system of care

**CELEBRATING 75 YEARS**  
Continuing to support community projects across B.C.



**MIRANDA LAM**

CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS,  
VANCOUVER FOUNDATION



**KEVIN MCCORT**

PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
VANCOUVER FOUNDATION



## Community Inspired

75 years of ingenuity and compassion. 75 years of convening, connecting neighbours, selfless acts and street festivals that make all of us shine. Adventure clubs and summer camps that include everyone. Soup kitchens, wildlife rescues, and big movements like our work with reconciliation.

At Vancouver Foundation, we are inspired by you - from the big-thinkers who started all this, to everyone who shows up today with heart and energy to spare. We have celebrated, grown, and rallied together through war, peace, hard times, and economic booms. We don't just believe in what B.C. is made of; we've seen it.

75 years in and we are still community inspired.

All across this great province, you'll see everything that makes up our community: families, artists, brave newcomers, and activists. This place is built on the efforts of those who have committed to making life better for more people. And as we learn, we try new things - and we learn more. And we try again.

Over the years, our very definition of community - from whom we take our inspiration and draw our leaders - has expanded and we are led, informed by, and listen to women, youth, refugees, disabled, and Indigenous people in ways we never used to.

Upon the 75th year of Vancouver Foundation, we're considering the "us" as a collective, and the "us" of each individual. How might we invite more people to our community table? How might we connect people to each other for more sharing and new ideas? How might we rally kindness and bright lights, and deploy them to where they're most needed?

Since our Second World War-era beginnings, we've always been inspired by how our community comes together to share more vitality and more welcoming spaces. This organization was built to amplify those ideas ... following your lead. The better-making of our

social fabric comes from you, from little neighbourhood delights to big, long-game efforts. We convene, connect, and rally together.

Since 1943, you've directed us towards 1,800 diverse endowments to share more than \$1 billion, to create healthy, vibrant, and livable communities. In this issue, we celebrate our community inspiration over the years and explore how the Foundation's reach has expanded around the province through the decades. We also learn about the unlikely collaborators - a giant of industry and a retired secretary - who lit the first spark of perpetual giving, and we make the case for unrestricted generosity - the best way to ensure your contributions are relevant and always community inspired - through the ages.

Let's keep dreaming, little and big. ∞

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*Vancouver Foundation is situated on the traditional and unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.*

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# Projects Vancouver Foundation and our donors recently supported



## Art Adrift Outpost

**Art stimulates the mind** and the senses, imparts a sense of well-being and even excitement, and has the power to bring together friends and strangers alike in an appreciation of beauty.

This was very much on the minds of social worker Becky Hynes and school teacher Kathryn Best when they recently opened the Art Drift Outpost on the corner of Argyle Street and E. 35th Avenue in Vancouver. Supported by a \$350 Neighbourhood Small Grant from Vancouver Foundation, the Outpost consists of a five-by-four-foot case filled with paintings, prints, and photos, along with a sign stating "free art."

Hynes says, "We thought a free art exchange would provide locals with an accessible and affordable art collection, and serve as a place to create community connections and conversations – a social hub."

The Outpost was initially stocked with art from Best's private collection, but Best notes that locals were initially baffled by the sight of the street corner case – and left money instead of rummaging through the contents. Now, however, the case is replenished weekly. "The feedback is very enthusiastic, and we hope to follow the journey of the art and enhance community connections by encouraging patrons to chat online through #VanArtADrift," says Best.

FREE ART EXCHANGE HELPING TO CONNECT THE COMMUNITY

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

**The City of Surrey** welcomes 1,000 new residents every month, 50 percent of whom are under 24 years of age. Given this, the Surrey Art Gallery is responding to the needs of young people with initiatives to strengthen their voices through art.

Supported by a three-year Vancouver Foundation grant of \$225,000, the Surrey Art Gallery is building on two years of research and pilot projects to implement its Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) Program, intended to empower young people to learn and make art with artists and art educators.

This is taking many forms: Art Together sees young people working shoulder-to-shoulder with mentoring artists to create do-it-together

art projects. A teaching/training program that not only develops the knowledge of art for the youth involved, but also hones their communication skills and confidence as they learn to lead activities. "We support more newcomer tours and workshops, in-school art workshops, pop-up art booths, and youth digital art screenings at the Gallery's award-winning UrbanScreen," says Alison Rajah, the Gallery's Curator of Education and Engagement.

Rajah adds that the youth-initiated and -led programming has benefits that go beyond developing creative, cognitive, and social skills. "It's about building a sense of belonging in more connected and growing communities," she says.





FACILITATING  
WHEELCHAIR  
ACCESSIBLE HOUSING  
FROM DISABILITY  
ALLIANCE BC

## THE RIGHT FIT PILOT PROJECT

### Wheelchair users

looking for affordable and accessible housing face daunting challenges in Metro Vancouver. Many are in unsuitable homes, unable to use basic amenities for bathing or cooking; others face homelessness.

After years of exploring underlying challenges, Disability Alliance BC (DABC) is leading a partnership to test systemic changes that help wheelchair users, housing, and service providers close this gap.

The Right Fit Pilot Project (RFPP) is seeking to streamline approvals, incentives,

consistent accessibility standards, and a centralized accessible housing registry.

Supported by a \$223,538 grant from Vancouver Foundation, the three-year pilot is also testing a case management model to help wheelchair users navigate complex pathways to securing the right mix of subsidized housing and independent living supports to fit their needs.

"We're confident that we'll know what's needed to help people who use wheelchairs find appropriate housing," says Jane Dyson, DABC Executive Director.

## Share Songs and Culture

**As Indigenous people** move back to Vancouver's Chinatown neighbourhood, it's becoming increasingly clear that although the two cultures share many commonalities, formal opportunities to bond and share their experiences are long overdue.

To foster the relationship between the people of Indigenous and Chinese heritage, the Ray-Cam Co-Operative Centre recently adopted a Thanksgiving event. Organized by Lorelei Hawkins, Community Elder who is of Cherokee, Shuswap – Okanagan descent, and with a \$500 Neighbourhood Small Grant from Vancouver Foundation, the event saw indigenous elders and youth along with Chinese Canadian seniors learn about one another's culture through drum making, bead crafting, and sharing folklore and songs.

Ray-Cam facilitator Bob Wong notes that local seniors – many of whom are in their 80s and 90s – were very much the driving force behind the project and, guided by Hawkins, the activities (which were staged to commemorate the Lunar New Year) amounted to much more than fun and entertainment. "It became clear that the Chinese and the Indigenous communities are an extended family, just like cousins," he says.

Hawkins, who hopes that more events will be staged, adds, "Discovering the many traditional values we share makes us stronger as a community. And together, we seniors and elders can pass on our wisdom to the younger generation so that it isn't just lost in time."





# Totems in the Forest

Honour: Health to Hand – keeping Haida First Nation traditions alive

BY ROBIN BRUNET

**E**ngaging at-risk youth has been a long-time concern of the Haida First Nation. So when the Old Massett Village Council (OMVC) and the Tluu Xaada Naay Society approached Vancouver Foundation in 2016 with an application titled “Honour: Health to Hand,” it was to support a program that would teach youths skills and disciplines based on Haida art and culture, using carving and design as the principal medium.

This culminated in eight Haida youths earning certificates from NorthWest Community College and acquiring traditional woodworking skills from Haida master carvers, in a project called Totems in the Forest.

Supported by a \$75,000 grant from Vancouver Foundation, the project also saw the raising of Haida Gwaii’s newest monumental pole on Taaw Hill by the east bank of the Hiellen River on June 21, 2017. The ceremony drew over 1,300 locals and visitors.

In addition to empowering at-risk youth and engaging the greater community, the 51-foot cedar totem pole (a stunning interpretation of a totem that stood at Hiellen village from the early 1800s until 1945) helped encourage repatriation and reconciliation among a people who no longer live where Hiellen is located.

“It was an unforgettable, joyous, and emotional day for everyone to watch the first totem raised in this area in almost 200 years,” says master carver Kiltgualans Christian White.

Paul Biron, one of the youths who worked on the totem, says, “This has opened up so many doors for me. I now have skills I can use to successfully apply to art college - and hopefully kick-start a thriving career.”

Strictly as a work of art, Totems in the Forest would see master carvers Chief 7idansuu, Jim Hart (who holds the original pole and endorsed the project), and White preside over a new interpretation of the historic heritage Hliialang’inagee gyaa’ang Totem by Sqiltcange.

However, the deeper purpose of the project came in the form of eight Haida youth: an equal split of males and females from age 19 to 29, who would help craft the totem under a 27-week cultural training/skill development initiative.

“We commenced work in the winter of 2016 by stripping off the bark of a big red cedar that had been carefully sourced, flattening the back of it, then hollowing it out,” says White, who was aided by his son Vernon and brother Derrek.

Project partner Northwest Community College provided safety and training courses as well as entrepreneurial instruction that resulted in the apprentices’ designing and selling t-shirts commemorating Totems in the Forest. “The college really helped them build up their portfolios and give them transferable skills,” says White.

The youth each received a set of carving tools and other supplies to assist them in the program, while a local toolmaker explained how to use and maintain them. As the carvers worked in the Tluu Xaada Naay Society longhouse and carving shed, the Old Massett Culinary Arts Program provided them with food. “It was a remarkable community effort,” White adds.



Left: Youth were taught carving and design skills during the 27-week program. Below: The raising of Haida Gwaii’s newest 51-foot cedar monumental pole.

The carvers also had the opportunity to experience a heritage artifact firsthand by taking rubbings off the original Hliialang’inagee gyaa’ang Totem, sections of which lay in storage sheds. This pole strongly influenced the design of the new totem, which was inspired by the Grizzly Bear hunter story, as well as raven and eagle stories, and includes three watchmen. Upon completion, the totem was transported by truck to Taaw Hill, and the carvers arrived at the raising ceremony by canoe.

Now that Hiellen Longhouse Village has a direct connection to one of the more iconic Haida Gwaii artifacts of the past, White is excited about the lasting benefits of the Totems in the Forest project, which was named The Solstice Pole. “Many of my apprentices have since gone on to work with other artists and are taking courses to further prepare them for careers,” he says.

Glenys SnowDymond, who works with the Old Massett Village Council and was the project proposal writer, is especially happy that four young women were part of the carving team: “That’s a real success, as



is the fact one of the carvers was someone with a disability,” she says. “The project gave everyone an equal footing and prepared them for entrepreneurship roles.”

Biron, now 30, concludes, “This is exactly the sort of initiative that helps get our young people working again. Providing skills training in combination with honouring Haida tradition is vital to us, and I only hope that more projects will follow.” To which SnowDymond adds, “Our government-funded pole project is reflective of our need for our Aboriginal culture to be honoured and respected, without condition, and in perpetuity.” ☺

To support inspirational Indigenous projects like this, call Calvin at 604.629.5357 or visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](http://vancouverfoundation.ca/give)



The

# Culinary Cathedral

Maundy Café turns the idea of the classic food charity model on its head

BY ROBIN BRUNET | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER MORRIS





Church Dean Peter Elliott (left) welcomes patrons. Volunteers (right) help nourish those in need in a comfortable and friendly eating environment.



**R**estaurants may be a risky proposition in as competitive a place as Vancouver, but Maundy Café in the heart of the city's business district is unique in both intent and execution - and as a result, it has seen a steady influx of patrons since opening in September of 2017.

Typically, the unassuming eatery is filled to capacity. The atmosphere is peaceful, the food is fresh and delicious, and staff members are friendly and accommodating - to the point where they routinely take time out to converse with the guests.

As with any successful café, Maundy Café attracts a specific demographic, and this is what distinguishes it from all other food venues. As part of Christ Church Cathedral and supported by a \$225,000 grant from Vancouver Foundation, Maundy Café was created for, and caters to, vulnerable populations. "Our intent was to get away from the soup kitchen concept and create a place of hospitality and connection for one and all," says Dean Peter Elliott. "But more than that, it's to undermine the typical power dynamics at play in charity food programs - including our own."

The Cathedral has always used food to nourish its communities in ways that cultivate connection and community resiliency, and Maundy Café's genesis began when church members made sandwiches at home and distributed them to those in need. "They did this for 10 years until the early 2000s, when we modified our kitchen to prepare and distribute the sandwiches," recalls Elliott.

The idea for a café came one rainy day when Elliott observed the usual lineup of people outside and decided to open the church's dining room every Thursday for them. "Considering we receive anywhere from 30 to 120 people daily, the idea caught on, and Maundy Café took further shape when we kept the dining facility open five days a week," he says.

But providing a comfortable eating environment was only one

step toward making the café different from the classic charity model. "We did research to determine ways we could further diminish social isolation and break down the barriers amongst all who come to the table," says Elliott.

As a result, the café is becoming a place where guests can enjoy a hot meal and a warm welcome five days a week. "We encourage our volunteers to sit down with our guests, to share food, and chat with them, breaking down the distinction between server and served," says Elliott. And it's working: regularly, guests remark on the transformation. While the new café space is physically smaller, many indicate that it feels more airy and spacious, and the space is abuzz with new and lively conversation.

Moreover, the Cathedral partnered with the Greater Vancouver Food Bank to host a Downtown Community Food Hub across the hall from Monday's Maundy Café. Essentially, all available food is set out in the hall, including perishables, and guests can come in and shop - the idea being that Food Bank members are afforded more choice and dignity in what they consume for sustenance.

Maundy Café is a paradigm shift from an arm's-length charity to a justice-based approach to helping the disadvantaged, and Elliott believes it can be replicated elsewhere. The Cathedral's mandate for the future is to work with other faith groups to bring more dignity, connection, and justice to the way in which they distribute food. The Cathedral will continue to improve its own model in response to guests' needs, while walking alongside other groups ready to take the next steps on the journey toward a more just food system in the city. ∞

To support great initiatives like this contact Calvin at 604.629.5357 or visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](http://vancouverfoundation.ca/give)

# OPIOID CRISIS

BY **ROBIN BRUNET** | PHOTOGRAPH BY **BRIAN SMITH/PHC MEDIA SERVICES**

**N**o matter how much media attention it receives, the opioid crisis is still too frequently perceived as a problem plaguing the disadvantaged.

The British Columbia Centre on Substance Use (BCCSU) is trying to combat this dangerous misconception as it pursues its mission to support the development of an addiction system of care - the absence of which is contributing to the ongoing opioid overdose crisis.

“The system of addiction treatment in B.C. isn’t broken, because there is no system,” says BCCSU Director Dr. Evan Wood. “At least, not one that is effective and equally accessible to all.”

This is compounded by the stigma associated with substance use. Marshall Smith, a senior advisor for the BCCSU working alongside Dr. Wood, explains why the stigmatizing perception of substance users is so persistent: “At one end of the spectrum you do indeed have those who are on the streets because they’ve reached rock bottom; and at the other end you have people wealthy enough to get the best treatment for their addictions.

“But 95 percent of the substance-using population consists of people in the middle: working professionals with careers and families. They can’t afford top-drawer treatment, and they don’t qualify for the public care those at the bottom receive - until they become so sick they lose everything.”

As the huge gulf between the perception of people addicted to opioids and the reality implies, considerable community engagement must happen in order to bring about real change - which is why grants of \$1 million and \$224,000 from Vancouver Foundation to St. Paul’s Foundation (the fundraising arm of St. Paul’s Hospital, of which the BCCSU is a unit) were recently given for Dr. Wood’s organization to support not only drug checking and clinical trials, but also engagement with those who have first-hand experience with addiction and the treatment system.



“ We’ve finally  
come up with  
a blueprint  
that will  
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community  
responds to this  
problem.”

*—Dr. Evan Wood*

BCCSU Director  
Dr. Evan Wood leads  
the efforts in the area of  
addiction prevention.



“95 percent of the substance using population consists of people in the middle: working professionals with careers and families.”

—Marshall Smith, Senior Advisor, BCCSU

Specifically, the BCCSU hired three people to engage with three groups: peers and patients (people who use drugs); families and caregivers affected by addiction; and the recovery community. Smith is one of those leads. A former B.C. government bureaucrat, Smith became addicted to cocaine, eventually leaving him unemployed and living in a shipping container. Following recovery, he built a career in the addiction treatment field and engaged provincial and federal governments on addiction issues.

Another lead is Dean Wilson, a former substance user who became a high-profile street-level harm reduction activist. The third lead is Leslie McBain, who in 2014 lost her only child, Jordan Miller, when he was just 25 years old, to an accidental opioid overdose. McBain joined with a group of similarly bereaved mothers to work for harm reduction changes to drug policies at all levels of government.

Under the BCCSU banner, these three leads have met with provincial officials to identify priorities and develop recommendations to address gaps in the addiction system of care. “Previously, people with addiction haven’t been well represented at the policy table, but we firmly believe a big part of the solution lies in listening to people who use drugs and their families,” says Dr. Wood.

Fortunately, the BCCSU’s efforts are starting to pay off big time. Dr. Wood says, “Just recently we released

a guideline for treatment of opioid addiction. We’ve finally come up with a blueprint that will have national ramifications in the way the medical community responds to this problem.”

Key recommendations in the guideline include avoiding practices such as rapid withdrawal, “because this results in an 80 percent chance of relapse, along with an increased tolerance for the drug that compels the patient to consume even higher levels,” explains Dr. Wood. The guidelines also call for the use of buprenorphine-naloxone as the preferred first-line treatment over methadone, in part because it comes with a lower risk of overdose and milder side effects.

The BCCSU has also made considerable headway training health-care providers in addiction medicine, including leading the largest addiction medicine fellowship program in the country. “About 180 medical students annually go through our program,” says Dr. Wood. “However, we view this only as a good start - there’s still a huge amount of work ahead, plus we need much more investment in addiction recovery facilities.”

Nonetheless, the trajectory is upward, and the three knowledge holder groups will also be releasing reports with their recommendations. “We will soon initiate significant conversations about systems change,” Smith concludes. “We’re optimistic that this time out, policy-makers will listen.” ∞

## THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY

Vancouver Foundation takes its role in identifying urgent community needs very seriously and, as a community foundation, has a responsibility to take action. Since 2014, our foundation has granted nearly \$2 million to assist with the opioid crisis. Our financial support has landed in five main areas including: public engagement, knowledge exchange, drug checking services, clinical trials, and assisting frontline agencies.

Through our community granting programs, we’ve provided funding to major public health institutions including St. Paul’s Hospital and the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use. We’ve directed support to leading charities including the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) BC Division, Public Health Association of BC, and the Community Action Initiative. We’ve also provided funding to major academic institutions including the University of Victoria’s Centre for Addictions Research.

None of this work would be possible without the generous support of our donors, several of whom have also made significant grants (through their Donor Advised Funds) in support of this important issue.

You can help support causes like this by contacting Kristin at 604.629.5186 or visiting [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](https://vancouverfoundation.ca/give)



# Investing in Perpetuity

## How good intentions grow legs: the power of endowment

**W**hen he established Vancouver Foundation, Whitford VanDusen was already adept at orchestrating charitable giving on a large scale. But he wanted more than to pass money from one hand to another. He wanted to stretch, grow, and deploy every dollar as widely as he could. What model might multiply the charitable impact of donors? Could he serve as more than a go-between for the good (often ebbing and flowing) intentions of donors?

A financially savvy lumber magnate, VanDusen had already been contemplating the idea of a permanent endowment. But when Alice MacKay, a retired secretary, made a \$1,000 bequest, the concept was cemented. MacKay had specified that her bequest be invested intact and that the income be used to support women in poverty. This is how the endowment model at Vancouver Foundation was struck: two unlikely visionaries who shared the same goal of sustained giving to the community.

In 1944, interest rates hovered at around three percent, leaving the Foundation with \$30 for charitable action in MacKay's name. VanDusen

contemplated \$30 from MacKay's \$1,000. What if that \$1,000 were \$101,000? And what if that \$101,000 continued to grow? VanDusen saw the potential of a base of funding that grows impact by growing itself. He added his own \$10,000 to the pot, and challenged a circle of influential peers to do the same.



Whitford VanDusen

By 1948, Vancouver Foundation held \$101,000 in trust.

The idea resonated with the community and an ever-increasing number of donors began establishing their legacies at Vancouver Foundation. By 1960, holdings of almost \$3 million generated \$219,000 in income, which was granted

to dozens of charities involved in all aspects of our community.

By 1989, Vancouver Foundation's total assets of \$230 million funded 408 charitable efforts, making it

the largest community foundation in Canada. Today, Vancouver Foundation's assets have topped \$1.2 billion. It distributes upwards of \$50 million per year to thousands of charities across the province.

This is investing in perpetuity: using financial savvy to give charities the gift of steady income to support their missions. In many cases, the amount of income a fund has generated and shared throughout the community has far surpassed the original capital of the fund itself - The Arthritis Society BC & Yukon Division, which established its first of four funds in 1951 with an initial contribution of \$4,000, has received over \$2.5 million in distributed income - far exceeding the fund's current capital value.

When charities have a steady stream of income, they can focus



Alice MacKay (holding book)

on what they do best: a constant and heartfelt contemplation of the people they serve and the ways they can best offer help. Thanks to MacKay's particular bequest - and VanDusen's being so inspired by it - generations of caring people have been given the license to envision and build a better community. ∞

**While attending a high school graduation in 1961, Helen Pitt noticed that there were no awards given for an arts student. After learning about Vancouver Foundation, she created the Helen Pitt Fund for Fine Arts to help creative students launch their chosen career. Since then, the fund has granted hundreds of awards to students enrolled in arts schools across B.C., distributing almost four times the amount of money that it started with in 1961. Pitt's fund demonstrates the true power of endowment and creating a legacy of generosity and love of the arts that continues to this day.**



# Vancouver Foundation – Community Inspired from the very beginning ...

## 1940s

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Vancouver businessperson and philanthropist Whitford VanDusen dreams of establishing an enduring charitable support structure for British Columbians who have emerged from an era of scarcity and loss. Retiree Alice MacKay cares about women in need in her community and wants to give her savings to help. These two individuals connect at the start of something special - Vancouver Foundation - created to support the Vancouver Welfare Federation's Community Chest in perpetuity.

## 1950s

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It was a boom time - babies, big cars, big hearts, and knowing your neighbours - and Greater Vancouver citizens wanted to do more, give more, share more with those in need. Vancouver Foundation too expanded its mandate to support a huge increase in demand from Vancouver donors to support the needy across a wider spectrum of charitable interests.

## 1960s

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British Columbians began to see more complex issues arise in neighbourhoods across the province, as Indigenous communities were displaced, disparities among wealthy and poor grew, and youth began to carve new pathways in careers and education. Solutions weren't always obvious. The root causes of social issues were poorly understood, and while many early research and programming efforts may seem clumsy by modern standards, it was in this era that donors and charities began to ask bigger questions about the world around them, and advocate loudly for learning, study and research, in search of answers.

## 1970s

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All things change, including the leadership of Vancouver Foundation. Our Chair, VanDusen, steps down from service in 1977 after 34 years. Another change at Vancouver Foundation sees community volunteers - all experts in their field - invited to support grantmaking decisions as members of specialized advisory groups. New Fields of Interest grants emerge to collectively address issues like child poverty, equal rights, cultural development, and more. B.C. charities responded with more complex projects and programs across a spectrum of issues that now included rape prevention, Indigenous language research, youth rehabilitation, and immigrant support.

## 1980s

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Expo 86 brought worldwide attention to B.C. celebrating innovation and global awareness. Our donors were inspired too. This hopeful technological age invigorated donor interest in supporting advancements in health and medical research, investments in education, the welfare of youth, and the development of public spaces for communities to connect. The 80s brought many newcomers to B.C., and Vancouver Foundation responded by funding programs designed to welcome those who stayed.

## 1990s

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B.C. faced many uncertainties in the 1990s. Emerging crises such as growing addiction rates, an AIDS epidemic, de-institutionalization of mental health facilities, and emerging (and urgent) needs of displaced and vulnerable citizens in the Downtown Eastside seemed overwhelming. Vancouver's "world-class city" status seemed to pair with social issues that also grew in scale. Donors and charities marshalled their resources and advocated more aggressively for underserved communities among us, as our advisory committees rolled up their sleeves and invested heavily in education as a mechanism to support problem-solving.

## 2000s

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Hard lessons about unsustainable wealth creation and a global economic crash severely impacted B.C.'s philanthropic sector. Combined with significant government cuts for the arts and youth programs, funding sources for charities dwindled, placing fragile communities and province-wide programs at risk. Vancouver Foundation responded responsibly - and with heart. Following on the heels of our own research projects, we spearheaded small grants programs and conducted research across the charitable sector designed to learn from and survive the effects of economic impacts like the crash of 2008.

## 2010s

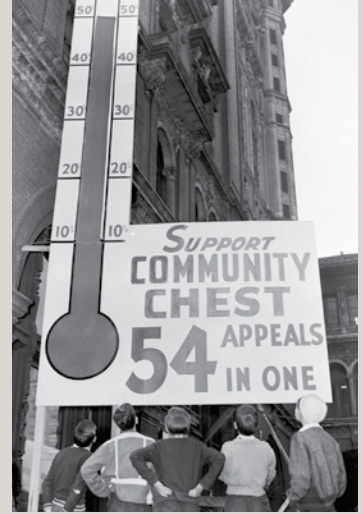
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Even though the benefits of living in an information-based society offer us new ways to connect, engage, and learn from each other, Vancouver Foundation continues to recognize the value of stepping in to support communities. We do this by directing resources to help youth in foster care as well as immigrant and refugee youth. We also turned our focus to addressing the root causes of issues. Learning to effectively scale and harness community expertise, ideas, and innovation remain at the core of our work - even as we cross a threshold of over \$1 billion in grantmaking over our entire history.

## The future ...

As we approach a new era, now aged 75, we have redoubled our energies towards providing our donors with advanced support and options for their giving, and towards listening and responding to the needs of our charitable sector and advisors. There is a lot to be done right here, and we carry this intention as we work towards a brighter future.

# Unrestricted GIVING



## How a Community Fund mindset keeps your generosity fluid

It's natural to donate to a cause that has personal meaning. The owners of a beloved dog or cat might feel good to direct their donations to animal welfare. A family that's been going to the folk festival for years would feel great to contribute to scholarships for young musicians. Those of us who have experienced a mental health issue know the value of a well-funded support network - this connection is what drives us to donate.

But since a fund at Vancouver Foundation lasts forever, our best intentions can attach a shelf life to long-standing generosity. The societal issues of one decade may recede in the next. We can eradicate diseases, intervene to turn a neighbourhood around, and evolve into a social or legislative maturity that sets what was once a critical shortfall onto a much-improved path. And sometimes, the most urgent concerns of yesterday are overshadowed by the crises of today.

Unrestricted giving to our Community Fund is broad generosity. It is a vote of confidence in Vancouver Foundation to continue looking to the community to adjust our funding focus. In the 1940s the term "community chest" was coined to celebrate this very notion: in family terms, it's the cushion for a rainy day.

In charitable terms, this is how we stay community inspired. We watch for pressing issues as we grow - homelessness, arts and culture, children and families, health,



For 75 years Vancouver Foundation has helped build better communities thanks to the generosity of our donors.

education, environment, social services - and turn the ship to respond where our response is most needed.

Donor Advised Funds that direct grants as individuals request, bolster specific interventions or movements. They fund a breadth of important services. But imagine someone generations ago who specifically donated to support polio treatment. They did not foresee the eradication of the disease. The Community Fund gives us the freedom to respond to contemporary challenges, when



urgent action is needed on any number of environmental, social, medical, or economic fronts.

With unrestricted giving, your donations find the shortest path to the greatest possible impact. ∞

Through our unrestricted Community Fund, our volunteer advisors - all experts in their respective fields - evaluate hundreds of grant applications annually on your behalf. The Charles E. and Laura E. Thompson Fund of 1982 was established as an unrestricted fund to support the community's most pressing needs and, over the years, it has supported environmental movements such as the Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia, Langley Environmental Partners Society, Salt Spring Island Conservancy, Get Bear Smart Society, BC Naturalists' Foundation, and the Quu'as West Coast Trail Group. The Fund has also supported the Coastal Jazz & Blues Society, Vancouver Youth Theatre, and the YWCA Metro Vancouver.



# H I G H L I G H T S

# 2017

## Influencing Meaningful Change

Vancouver Foundation makes meaningful and lasting impacts in communities through a range of activities including granting, convening, research, advocacy, and building strong partnerships across the charitable sector. In 2017 we influenced significant change across the province, thanks to the generosity of our donors, the hard work of our grantees, and expertise of our volunteer granting committees.



# 4,800

### GRANTS & DISTRIBUTIONS

Made through our donor advised, designated and charity endowment funds with the help of our volunteer granting committees and fund advisors.

# \$54M

### DISBURSED

To charities working in arts and culture, environment, health and social development, education, medical research and more.

# 1,700

### ORGANIZATIONS


Supported throughout B.C. and Canada. That number shows the incredible range of organizations that our donors support.

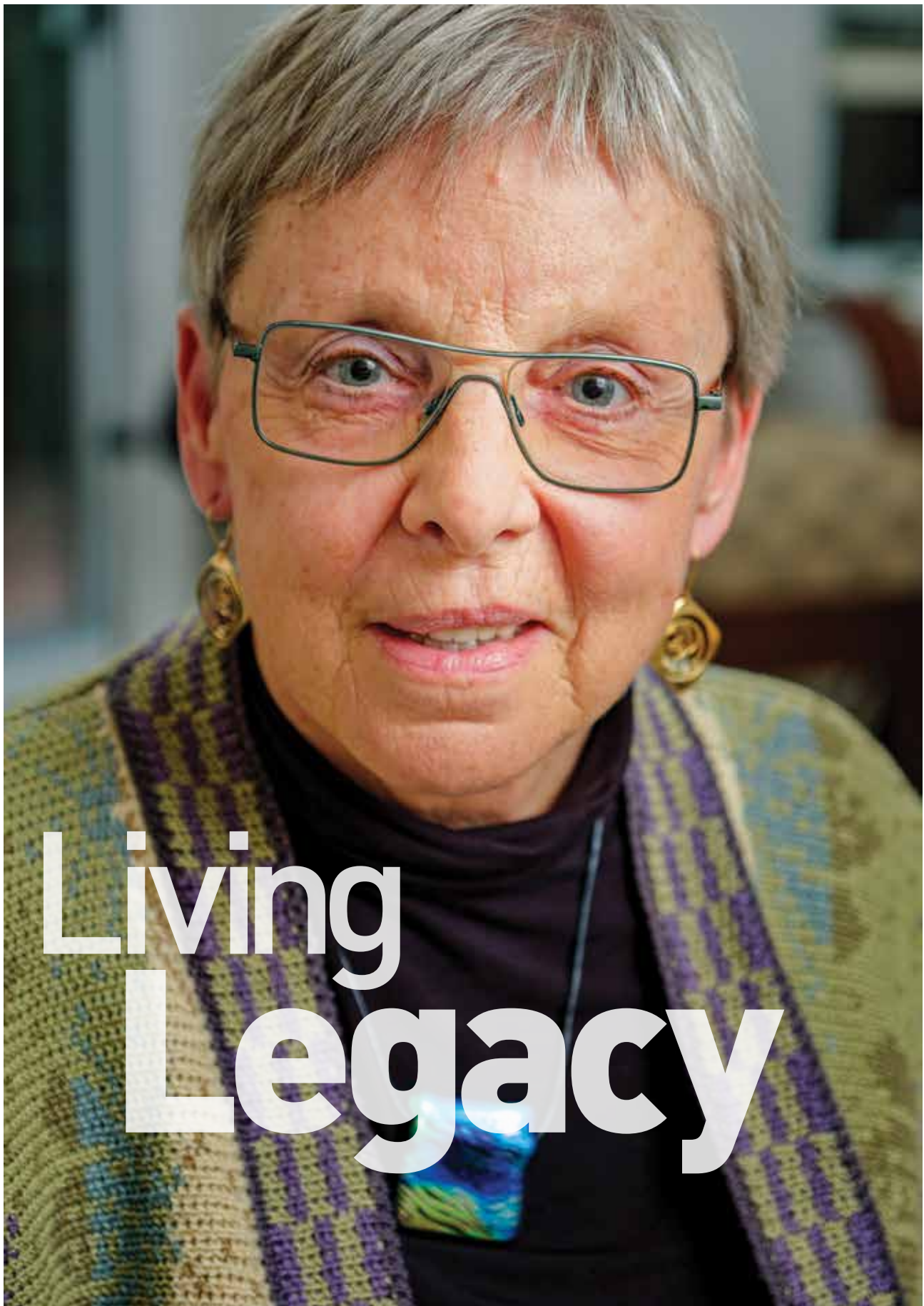


# Countless

### LIVES IMPROVED IN B.C. AND BEYOND

Since 1943, Vancouver Foundation, in partnership with our donors, has distributed more than \$1 billion to thousands of charities and projects. Imagine the lives this has changed. That's the true power of endowment at work.





# Living Legacy

# Clasina van Bommel's Compassion in Action Fund was created to perpetually support vulnerable women and children

BY NATALIE BRUCKNER-MENCHELLI | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT KARPA

**Y**ou never know what's possible until you go beyond it to the impossible." Those words were on a sign that hung in Clasina van Bommel's office for many years, acting as inspiration. More than that, the statement encompasses her life philosophy and has eventually taken her down the path to setting up the Compassion in Action Fund at Vancouver Foundation, supporting the most vulnerable women and children from urban centres in B.C.

This is far from the first cause of this kind that van Bommel has supported, but for this vibrant 73-year-old, the Fund, which will operate in perpetuity to provide support beyond her lifetime, is the final step of what has been a challenging, often painful, often fun-filled and fascinating life. "The Fund is about me using my own experiences to provide others with the help to meet life's basic needs," she says.

Van Bommel speaks from experience. Her own history, which involves a heartbreaking tale of child abuse, is what made her into a fighter - at one time for herself, and now for other women in need who are fleeing domestic abuse and violence, are impoverished, suffering from elder abuse, and are incarcerated or transitioning from prison. "In these situations you either fight and come out the other side, or you become a victim of circumstance. But how can you even start to fight without having the basics like food, safety, and shelter?"

At the age of 16, van Bommel escaped from her abusive family life in the Netherlands and moved to England to become a nanny. "What I didn't realize until much later was that looking after these children was a way of re-nurturing myself. It also gave me the building blocks to be able to nurture others."

Despite having left school at Grade 7, van Bommel was always determined to make something of herself. "I decided I was going to learn four languages, so I did. I worked as a nanny in England, Germany, Switzerland, and eventually France, which is where I was given the opportunity to work for Club Med as a tour guide."

With a wealth of life and work experience in her pocket, she moved to Vancouver in 1975 and nine years later started a tour company that would eventually evolve into The Vancouver Trolley Company. "Initially I only had an old orange economy car that I used as a down payment for my first 11-seat passenger van," laughs van Bommel. "Trust me, I can be very persistent!"

This persistence has paid off on numerous occasions. There was the time van Bommel wanted to place trolley stops across the city, and visited City Hall every day until they finally conceded. She has fought in court on multiple occasions for what's fair, and has twisted the arms of high-level city and government officials to "do the right thing," which oftentimes included educating people to causes that are close to her heart.

Throughout her life journey van Bommel has never forgotten where she came from and what led her on her own road to recovery. She has supported numerous charities all over the world, including the Elizabeth Fry Society of Greater Vancouver and the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (both recipients of funds from the Compassion in Action Fund and organizations she has supported for some time), all the while listening to what is required and having the flexibility to adapt accordingly.

For van Bommel, it's now time to take more of a backseat, "so that when I am gone the Fund can branch out to continue to assist the needs of women, whatever those needs may be."



Today, with the continued support from her life partner, Toni Stovel, van Bommel reflects on life and how grateful she is; for the life she was given, the experiences she has had, the opportunities she seized, and for never giving up. "It made me who I am today. Having those experiences made me fearless, they allowed me to empathize with others in a similar situation and hopefully provide them with the tools to succeed." ∞

A Donor Advised Fund at Vancouver Foundation is a great way to support your favourite charities and help future generations. For more information call Calvin at 604-629-5357 or visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](http://vancouverfoundation.ca/give)



# Health Society

**BEYOND THE MARGINS**

# Finding healthy and safe solutions for sex work communities

BY NATALIE BRUCKNER-MENCHELLI

**H**ealth and safety are basic human rights; no matter what your race, sex, religion, or occupation.

Imagine then visiting a doctor with a suspected sprained ankle only to be told you will need to have an STI test. This example is common among sex workers, and an issue that the Living In Community (LIC) initiative is working to overcome.

“Sex workers are among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in the world. They are often denied their most fundamental human rights. In essence they are considered throw-away people. You can have a moral debate about it, but at LIC our goal is to be more pragmatic and to respond to today’s needs through systems and policy change,” explains Lisa Gibson, Director of Community Development at LIC.

Since it started 15 years ago - following the tragedy of the missing and murdered women from Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside - LIC and its steering committee have managed to shape policy at both a local and national level to improve the health and safety of not just sex workers, but the communities in which they work.

“Collaboration was key to change; so resident groups, neighbourhood houses, business improvement associations, community policing centres, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and sex workers came together under the understanding that immediate changes were required for the safety of everyone,” explains Gibson.

While there was conflict at the beginning, through education, an openness to different perspectives, and trust, great changes started happening, and continue to happen.

In 2007 the *Living in Community Action Plan* was released following an extensive community consultation process. The plan’s 27 broad-based recommendations to make communities healthier and safer through

prevention/education, harm reduction/intervention, existing services, and legal responses were implemented in a project in the Renfrew-Collingwood neighbourhood of Vancouver.

“For the two-year demonstration project we undertook a number of public education and street outreach events where people could talk about their concerns. Most often people are operating out of ignorance, and what people don’t understand, they tend to fear. At the beginning of the project there were almost 100 complaints a year to the local community policing centre about sex work. In the final year that was down to two,” explains Kerry Porth, Community Developer at LIC and former sex worker.

In 2009, LIC started working with Vancouver City Council and two years later the City of Vancouver passed a report called *Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Protecting Vulnerable Adults & Neighbourhoods Affected by Sex Work: A Comprehensive Approach and Action Plan*. The following year this plan was put into action.

“Other communities were encouraged to implement a similar strategy, and in 2014 we updated the plan and began working with other neighbourhoods and cities not just in Vancouver but Surrey, Prince George, Nanaimo, and St. John’s, NL, as well as at the provincial level,” says Gibson.

Funding from organizations, including a \$150,000 grant from Vancouver Foundation has helped LIC continue with its mission to create communities that are healthier and safer for everyone in relation to sex work.

“We have a responsibility as a society to care for those people who are most marginalized. Sex workers are mothers, fathers, sisters, sons... they are human beings who have got into the profession for a variety of reasons. Sex work isn’t their entire identity,” says Gibson. ∞

**77 percent of sex workers identify as women; 17 percent as men; and six percent as other genders.**

**In Canada, approximately five to 20 percent of sex work takes place on the street.**

**The experience of sex workers varies widely due to circumstances such as poverty, homelessness, illicit substance use, and the location of work.**

**Sex work involves individuals who consent to an exchange of sexual services for money.**

To support important projects like this, call Calvin in Donor Services at 604.629.5357 or visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](http://vancouverfoundation.ca/give)

# Connect & Engage

BY LAURA WALKER

In its continued pursuit to address Metro Vancouver's diminishing level of community participation and to foster stronger personal connections, Vancouver Foundation has released its *2017 Connect & Engage* report. Residents were surveyed to identify ways to celebrate and improve the local community.

"Through the *Connect & Engage* report we dig deeper into the positive elements that exist within the community, as well as some of the challenges that people are facing," explains Tom Shepansky, Board Member and Chair of Vancouver Foundation's Partnerships Committee.

The report, which was released in late November, is an update of the first *Connections & Engagement* report released in 2012 and delves deeper into who may be experiencing stronger or weaker social connections, and why. "With this information we can look further into initiatives that we can support to help address some of the challenges," says Shepansky.

Last year's *Connect & Engage* report found that roughly one-quarter of the 3,785 Metro Vancouver respondents experience feelings of isolation, and that there has been a major decline in participation in community life over the past five years.

Still, encouragingly, nine out of every 10 say they have someone they can depend on, while four out of every five respondents know at least one neighbour well enough to ask for assistance.

The report demonstrates that neighbours want to get to know each other better, especially those who have resided in Metro Vancouver for shorter periods of time.

Further, despite technology now permeating nearly every aspect of people's lives, the report indicates that residents of all age groups still prefer to connect in person.

The *2017 Connect & Engage* report demonstrates that some groups - specifically young adults and people in low-income households - have more difficulty engaging in the community, but would like to expand their local social circle, and have clear ideas about how they would like to do so.



"The report identifies issues that people face that make it tougher to have a strong community, especially when you have people who are isolated, not engaged, or not involved," explains Shepansky.

"I think it's indicative of how people at all different stages of life are in terms of commitments. They often don't have time to be more involved in the community because they are struggling to make ends meet."

Beyond assessing barriers to the development of stronger personal connections, the report helps to identify opportunities to catalyze action in order to address identified challenges. As a result, *Connect & Engage* provides support for Vancouver Foundation's grassroots community-building activities, better informing community dialogues, grassroots granting, and partnerships.

In response to the report's findings, Vancouver Foundation is working to further strengthen its Neighbourhood Small Grants program, which is intended to help build community through projects that connect and engage residents, such as community gardens, workshops, book exchanges, or street parties.

Above all, Vancouver Foundation hopes that findings presented in the report prompt discussion around the importance of connectivity and the development of supporting strategies.

"Vibrant communities are critical, and obviously as a foundation we believe that as citizens of our communities, we should believe that too. Our takeaway from the report is that there are endless opportunities for us to enhance or improve communities all across Metro Vancouver," concludes Shepansky. ∞

To view the full report and find ways to get involved in strengthening communities in Metro Vancouver and across the province, visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/connectandengage](http://vancouverfoundation.ca/connectandengage)

# CREATE Your Own Fund

## 4 EASY STEPS TO LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY

1

### CONSIDER YOUR CHARITABLE INTERESTS

What are you passionate about? Arts and culture? Helping children? Medical research? When you establish a Donor Advised Fund at Vancouver Foundation, you will have the flexibility to support the charities and causes you care about the most.



2

### ESTABLISH YOUR FUND

With a gift of \$10,000 (or \$1,000 to start), a Donor Advised Fund can be set up at Vancouver Foundation in just a day or two. The fund's capital is endowed and only the income is granted out, so the fund keeps on giving, year after year.



3

### GRANT FROM YOUR FUND

With a Donor Advised Fund, you can have as little or as much involvement as you want. You can support any registered Canadian charity, or you can focus on a charitable cause and leave the decision-making to our volunteer advisors who will evaluate hundreds of projects on your behalf.



4

### PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Your Donor Advised Fund is a lasting legacy that will continue to support the community for generations, so planning for the future is important. You can appoint a trusted friend or family member as your successor fund advisor, or ask Vancouver Foundation to carry out your wishes in perpetuity. You will also have flexibility and ease if you are planning a charitable estate gift.



vancouver  
foundation

For more information, visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](http://vancouverfoundation.ca/give) or call our Donor Services department at 604.688.2204.

# Good Food

Meal Exchange is helping to create campus food systems that are sustainable, socially just, humane, and healthy

BY STACEY MCLACHLAN

**T**wenty million dollars: that's the amount that B.C. universities spend collectively each year on food for their campuses.

But that figure has an impact far beyond the administrations' budget - these institutional purchases often wind up coming from corporate suppliers whose production practices may contribute to climate change, pollution, and sometimes the destruction of wildlife. Not exactly an appetizing picture.

To people like Rawel Sidhu, UBC Meal Exchange Chapter President, it seems like this purchasing power could be an incredible opportunity for positive change.

"Fundamentally, food is not just something

that fills you up; it's a relationship with our community, with producers, with the planet," says the science student and food-security activist. Sidhu and the other volunteers at Meal Exchange - a national non-profit connecting campus, community, and industry to drive demand for eco-positive agricultural practices - are pressuring campuses to make a conscious decision to support producers that have a positive impact on B.C.'s ecosystem.

It's why the group has taken on its latest project: the Good Food Challenge, a nationwide pilot overseen by Good Food Challenge

Co-ordinator Celia White and inspired by a successful and similar project in the U.S. The ultimate goal? To have Canada's university presidents sign the Good Food Campus Commitment - a pledge to ensure that by 2025, at least 20 percent of campus food will meet or exceed Good Food standards.

Good Food is a holistic, catch-all term for foodstuffs that are nutritious and sustainable, affordable, and culturally appropriate. To choose Good Food is to embrace not just food





# Challenge



**Fostering student pride in their campuses and celebrating transparency in the food supply chain.**

of each product (with explanations of how it's community-based, fairly produced, ecologically sound, and humane) and offering a purchase-tracking system for institutions.

Meal Exchange is currently collecting signatures that will be presented to university presidents across B.C., urging them to take the Campus Commitment, and the network of information that the Good Food Calculator is building is empowering all interested citizens to



take action in their own choices, both on and off campus.

“Food sustainability isn’t something you would expect a place like Canada to suffer from, but the reality is it’s a very real issue for a lot of people, and campuses especially can be a great catalyst for change,” says Sidhu. “Students are a body of society that are engaged and have the power to affect the way we progress, and I think Vancouverites in general really pride themselves on being stewards of the environment. We can spearhead change that ripples across Canada. We can really change the conversation.” ☺

that nourishes your body, but the producers, consumers, and communities who are affected by its production and sale “from seed to plate.” It’s produce and products that treat humans, animals, and the earth with equal respect.

“We live on a planet that’s constantly being mired with environmental damage and degradation. I think that at this

moment, concepts like sustainability and food security are being shown on a public stage,” says Sidhu.

“These conversations aren’t just happening in classrooms, they’re being thought about every day.” Meal Exchange hopes that

with a framework like the Good Food Challenge, an

actual tangible infrastructure will be able to turn that universal concern into action.

Vancouver Foundation’s grants totalling \$273,000 enabled Sidhu and the other volunteers working on the Good Food Challenge to create materials to educate and to advocate. A publicly accessible tool called the Good Food Calculator was developed to help everyone - from the university president to a first-year arts student - assess the ethics of ingredients.

Essentially, it’s an auditing tool that goes far beyond supermarket labels, providing in-depth definitions

To support innovative, game-changing projects like this, contact Kristin in Donor Services at 604.629.5186 or visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](http://vancouverfoundation.ca/give)



# Silence NO MORE

BY STACEY MCLACHLAN

Children of God tells the story of an Indigenous family torn apart by Canada's residential schools.



Corey Payette

**D**irector/writer Corey Payette was in the audience, watching an early showing of his musical *Children of God*, when he noticed the elderly man next to him, weeping.

Payette reached over to express sympathy, and encouraged the man to take a break. It wasn't necessarily surprising to him that this audience member was upset. Payette's critically acclaimed production jumps between two decades to tell the story of an Indigenous family torn apart by Canada's residential schools, a deeply emotional and triggering issue. In fact at each show emotional support workers were waiting in the wings specifically to help comfort and console anyone who needed it.

But the man refused to leave, even as his body heaved with sobs. "He just looked at me and said, 'I never thought that anyone would care enough to hear my story, so I'm going to sit here and watch it all,'" Payette recalls.

It was a moment that validated all that Payette, artistic director of Vancouver's Urban Ink Productions, had been working toward over seven years of development on *Children of God*. "Growing up in Northern Ontario, residential schools weren't something we talked about with my family, it wasn't taught in schools," explains Payette, who is of Oji-Cree heritage.

Frustrated with the silence, he made a decision to bring these stories to the stage. "There are traumas we don't talk about because it's painful - but even if it's hard, we are better for it," he says.

Payette interviewed dozens of residential school survivors to piece together a haunting look into Canada's history that tore apart Indigenous families and destroyed so many lives.

But while *Children of God* is about loss, it's also about strength. "Survivors would talk to me about how they

had to move forward and how they were able to rebuild lives and families,"

says Payette. "No one knows about the strength that it takes to forgive, and to pick up your culture and language; these parts were beaten out of you."

Vancouver Foundation's support for Indigenous voices in the arts and its \$25,000 grant were pivotal in bringing this project from its initial concept to the stage. "Vancouver Foundation's early support for any artist is really important to knowing you can do your best work," says Payette.

Though at first glance musical theatre might be a surprising genre for such a serious topic, one can't forget the powerful role music has always played in Indigenous culture. "You can't tell a story without a song and that song having a dance," says Payette. "It's a part of how we share our history."

That culture of storytelling extended beyond the script: after every performance the cast would engage the audience in a dialogue about the residential school experience and reconciliation. Survivors would speak to the audience, often through tears and in their Indigenous language; one Ojibway woman, taken from her family in the Sixties Scoop (the mass removal of Indigenous children from their families) and raised by a white family, shared that the performance was the first time in her life that she'd heard the Ojibway language spoken.

Beyond the rave reviews, it's these sorts of experiences that Payette counts as markers of the show's success. "The work I had a chance to do is because of these survivors who sang the songs in secret; who whispered the language when it was illegal," Payette says. "What I'm most proud of in this whole process is that I could create a space to allow survivors to be heard." ∞

To support important projects like this, call Calvin in Donor Services at 604.629.5357 or visit [vancouverfoundation.ca/give](https://vancouverfoundation.ca/give)



# A Private Foundation need not end with its creators

**M**any prominent families in Canada have independently managed private charitable foundations, with some still being run by first-generation founders. When you work with a great advisory team - including a wealth advisor, a lawyer, and an accountant - you'll want to consider planning for the foundation to continue beyond your lifetime.

This can be achieved by involving your children or even grandchildren in the operation and grant-making of your private foundation. But we know that not only does it take years of work to grow great leaders but also that, despite best efforts, sometimes the next generation is not interested or able to step into your shoes and take over the operation of the foundation.

Consider a recent example of a family that established a private foundation several years

ago when two siblings received an inheritance and wanted to honour their parents by giving back to their community. While things are currently running smoothly and both siblings work with their advisory team to enhance their charitable impact, they are thinking further into the future.

The current challenge they are facing is a health issue that one of the siblings is dealing with. They are worried about who will take over in the event of a family tragedy, such as disability or premature death.

The long-term challenge is they have no family to pass the reins to, but a strong desire to see their foundation be a part of Vancouver's community for many years to come. Therefore they've established a relationship with Vancouver Foundation to help with their long-term vision.

Unexpected life events may derail the operation

of a private foundation, so estate planning with a catastrophe provision is important. This should be reviewed proactively by those managing the foundation to ensure a contingency plan is in place that provides peace of mind for the current directors of the foundation.

One option is to use an established organization such as Vancouver Foundation to carry on the charitable goals of the private foundation through a Donor Advised Fund. With the instructions from the private foundation, Vancouver Foundation can operate the new Donor Advised Fund in a manner that supports the family's long-term charitable vision.

By designating a family member as a successor fund advisor, there is always the opportunity to have family members involved, without having to burden them with

day-to-day administration or constant decision making. Rather, they can use the infrastructure that is already in place at Vancouver Foundation.

Taking some time now to plan for the future of your privately managed foundation is worthwhile, and a Donor Advised Fund can ensure your charitable intentions are honoured for generations to come. ∞



*Ksenia Kovarsky is a Financial Planner at the Legacy Family Office of Assante Financial Management Ltd. in Vancouver.*

## 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 2017, these individuals left a lasting legacy for the community through Vancouver Foundation.

**Richard Berg  
Cecilia and Bruce Carter  
Penny Ehmann  
Gail Hause  
David Ker**

**Audrey Mason  
Richard Rennie  
Genevieve Rouse  
Winifred Searle**



# Green tea, poké & buying local.

## What's on your table?

On September 13th, join others across BC and host an event to share some food and talk about what matters most to you.

Be a host or a guest at [onthetablebc.com](https://onthetablebc.com)

Vancouver Foundation invites everyone across BC to come together and connect to increase the well-being of our communities and potential for positive action and change.

**on the table.**

AN INVITATION FROM **vancouver**  
foundation