



Changing Lives & Helping Youth Achieve What's Important in Their Lives

It takes a village to raise a child, and no one knows it better than those who work with youth directly in supporting them through their challenges.

Recognizing that youth have different needs than adults, Pacific Community Resources Society (PCRS) opened two new youth support recovery homes in Vancouver in 2018, with help from Coast Capital Savings.

“We tried to create a space youth could call home, be cared for in a family environment, feel safe and thrive,” says Devika Ramkhelawan, Manager, PCRS.

The two homes, named Alder House and Sequoia House, provide two five-bedroom, substance-free recovery homes for youth struggling with substance use issues and mental

health challenges. House parents provide 24-7 guidance and support, empowering youth on their journey to recovery and independence.

These homes allow vulnerable youth between the ages of 16 and 24 to address their substance use issues in a safe environment with access to clinical counselling, in-home group work, and links to medical and community services. Vancouver Coastal Health clinical counselors and addiction specialists will help these youth create a comprehensive treatment plan, including aftercare that better prepares them to cope with the ups and downs in life.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without this place,” says Lisa, a youth graduating from the program. “It’s helped me dramatically in getting clean. Just the environment being all homey and the staff always being there to support you – there’s such a nice vibe to it. It feels comforting.”

Coast Capital Savings has been a champion in supporting youth-focused initiatives that break down many of the barriers to independence young people can face, helping vulnerable youth achieve what’s important in their lives.

“For every young person you help, there’s a ripple effect,” says Maureen Young, Director, Community Leadership at Coast Capital Savings. “The impact affects not only the youth and those immediately around them, but also our whole community.”

Coast Capital Savings’ contribution aided in renovating the two homes

“For every young person you help, there’s a ripple effect.”

to create the supportive, comforting home environment Lisa felt helped her succeed. She is now transitioning from Sequoia House to independent living while attending college to study psychology.

“I’ve been through some things, and I would eventually like to work with youth to prevent them from going down a similar path,” says Lisa. “It’s pretty simple – youth need someone they can go to, someone they can trust and who won’t judge them in any way.”

in this issue...

- > Changing Lives and Building Better Futures with Coast Capital Savings
- > A Newfound Confidence, Alex’s Story
- > Q&A with Streetohome Board member Lara Dauphinee
- > A Message from Our CEO



A Newfound Confidence

Walking in with a backpack full with notes and textbooks, Alex exudes confidence. He just finished one of his psychology classes, and will be going to study later in the day, prepping for his exams.

However, it was only a year ago that he couldn't realistically take care of himself, he says. He was 50 years old, and pursuing recovery.

Alex spent half his life in Ontario, before making his way to BC. While his parents split while he was young, he says he's had a comfortable, middle class, privileged upbringing. Instead of focusing on school while he was younger – he didn't perform well in university and his priorities were anything but school, Alex spent most of his life pursuing adventure and fun. He lived and worked in Whistler, and made a living on cruise ships for 15 years.

Yet, nothing seemed to fulfill him. He felt there was no intellectual challenge with these odd jobs, and no impact on the world around him.

As he became increasingly unfulfilled, his substance use slowly developed and increased over the decades.

"I was caught off guard," Alex says. "I found myself in my late 40s and struggling with substance use."

"It was immensely satisfying and everyday I would wake up feeling more confident in what I wanted to do."

It was life-changing for Alex to stumble upon **WorkWithUs**, a charitable staffing agency seed-funded by Streetohome. **WorkWithUs** matches individuals with barriers to employment with employer workforce needs, and offers these individuals support in achieving their employment goals.

The agency connects socially minded employers with employees, and, as Alex says, "it really clicked."

"[Kate] came in one day and found me," he recalls. "I was sober, but I was overwhelmed. Realistically, I wasn't capable of going to work for anybody."

Despite this, Alex says Kate Perkins, Operations Manager at **WorkWithUs**, saw that he could do things that even he didn't know or think were possible. She saw what he could be.

Kate would reach out to Alex every few weeks to see how he was doing with his work assignment, and make sure that if he had any problems, he could feel comfortable in calling her.

His life was so shattered that he needed complete support in starting his new employment assignment, but a year later, Alex was confident in managing the workplace.

"I could tell jokes and make people laugh. It was immensely satisfying and everyday I would wake up feeling more confident in what I wanted to do."

This newfound confidence can be seen in Alex moving along his preferred life path – going back to university to pursue a new degree in counselling and psychology.

"**WorkWithUs** helped to create the bridge between not being confident in myself, to being able to help others take care of themselves," Alex said.

One-on-one with Lara Dauphinee



Lara Dauphinee is the managing director of the Fiore Group – a private firm managing a broad portfolio of private equity investments and companies. In addition to Streetohome Foundation, she serves as director of Pure Freedom YOGA Wellness Inc., The Great Ontario Food Company, The Giustra Foundation, VGH + UBC Hospital Foundation, CKNW Kids' Fund and sits on an executive committee at the International Crisis Group. She is actively involved in Forum for Women Entrepreneurs and co-chairs the annual Pitch for the Purse Competition. Prior to the Fiore Group, Lara served from 2001 to 2011 as Deputy Chief of Staff to the Premier of British Columbia. Lara has been recognized as BC's most influential women (2016) and BC's 100 Women of Influence (2010), and has been awarded the Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012). Lara is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario.

Why did you join the Streetohome Board?

I think the Streetohome Foundation is an example of an extraordinary model – a private-public partnership, where key players are able to come together and provide creative entrepreneurial solutions to challenges we face as a society – homelessness, addiction and unemployment. Each partner brings their expertise and resources to the table. We're able to implement promising practices that fill gaps in the homelessness service system in a timely fashion, and can truly measure the impact we are having and the contribution we are making to building

“Our social issues are no longer just ‘government problems’, they are ours to solve together.”

better futures. They say: if you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

You've served on multiple boards - Where and when did your interest in community and homelessness come about?

It's disheartening knowing that there are so many people living on the streets here in Vancouver. I'm honoured to help find solutions and make a difference in their lives, one by one. I've had the unique privilege of getting to know Streetohome Foundation since its inception in 2008 when I was serving as the Deputy Chief of Staff to the

Premier. At that time, private citizens like John McLernon, Jake Kerr, Frank Giustra, Ken Dobell and John Mackay were determined that they could make a difference in helping to solve homelessness and proposed to partner with the government. They became the founding members of Streetohome, and since then, it is remarkable what they have accomplished. As a board director, I am part of a dedicated leadership team that will continue that progress.

Why do you think it's important for the private sector to be involved in social issues and invest in initiatives to support vulnerable individuals?

Traditionally we expect governments to solve our problems, but we are learning quickly that we need more than just the government to resolve some of our most crucial generational challenges. The private sector brings a different perspective and expertise to solving social problems – we like to call it entrepreneurial philanthropy. Our social issues are no longer just “government problems”, they are ours to solve together.

What gets you up in the morning?

My alarm clock! Okay, it's actually my to-do list. It's never-ending, but that's a good thing.

If you could write a single sentence to sum up your life so far, what would it say?

There is so much to do – and I'm only half way through.



A Message from Rob Turnbull

Streetohome has signed grant agreements for the new UGM Women and Families Centre, and the redevelopment of Salvation Army's Vancouver Harbour Light

Homelessness prevention is a strong focus for Streetohome and our current efforts are directed at filling gaps in the homelessness service system with sustainable solutions.

As we forge ahead with our projects in 2019, we are pleased to announce that we have started fundraising for two new Addiction Recovery Community Housing (ARCH) projects – the Union Gospel Mission Women and Families Centre; and the redevelopment of Salvation Army's Vancouver Harbour Light, which will include a Recovery Community Centre, the first of its kind in Canada.

As the current addiction recovery system stands, many individuals fall through the cracks in between detox and recovery, and may find themselves lost during their transitions between the stages of recovery that may include: withdrawal management, live-in/outpatient treatment, recovery housing and continuing self-care.

The Addiction Recovery Community Housing (ARCH) model addresses these gaps by providing a one-stop shop for a full continuum of care, including: Early

Recovery Housing, Addiction Treatment Housing, Recovery Supportive Housing and a Recovery Community Centre. It aims to provide recovery pathways that address the housing, health and employment goals of the individual; while optimizing the use of limited and expensive health care resources; and improving access and navigation through the system. Please contact us if you would like to get a copy of the ARCH business case.

As always, our work would not be possible without the solid collaboration of our partners – BC Housing, the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health – and the amazing generosity of our donors. I hope you've enjoyed reading this issue.



Rob Turnbull
President & CEO



Vancouver Harbour Light

26 new addiction treatment housing beds for the Salvation Army's Homestead Women's Addiction Treatment program, as well as a Recovery Community Centre to bring transformation and hope to the Downtown Eastside.

Our funding commitment: \$520,000
Help us fundraise: \$520,000



Women and Families Centre

36 self-contained housing units that will provide the opportunity for vulnerable women and mothers with children to break free from the devastating cycles of addiction, poverty, homelessness and the sex trade.

Our funding commitment: \$720,000
Help us fundraise: \$720,000

Please contact Tracey Harvey for all fundraising inquiries: 604-629-2711 x 101.

about us

Streetohome is changing lives and building better futures by working with the private sector to broker and leverage new funding, innovative ideas, and opportunities for collaboration between public and nonprofit sectors to implement sustainable solutions to homelessness in Vancouver. Through these collaborations, individuals are able to realize their housing, health, legal, education and employment goals, empowering those at-risk or with lived experience of homelessness to move along their preferred life path.

Homelessness is a community challenge. Join us and be a part of the solution.

Contact: 604.629.2711, x 101

e-mail: info@streetohome.org

www.streetohome.org

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