

Seeing is Believing

HOST: PACIFIC NEWSPAPER GROUP BUSINESS ACTION ON HOMELESSNESS

JUNE 26, 2008

LEADERS:

Geoff Plant, Commissioner, Project Civil City
Kevin Bent, President & Publisher, Pacific
Newspaper Group

DELEGATES:

A-in-chut, **Shawn Atleo**, Regional Chief,
BCAFN
Lloyd Craig, President & CEO, Coast Capital
Savings
Lorne Segal, President, Kingswood Capital
Carlo De Mello, Partner, KPMG, LLP
Jake Kerr, Managing Partner, Lignum Forest
Products LLP
Gary Powroznik, Incorporated Partner,
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Graham MacLachlan, Regional President,
BC, Royal Bank of Canada
Robert McFarlane, EVP & CFO, TELUS
Paul McElligott, President & CEO,
TimberWest
Henry Lee, President, Tom Lee Music
David Green, Professor of Economics, UBC
Faye Wightman, President & CEO,
Vancouver Foundation

Homelessness in Metro Vancouver has risen 19 percent in the past three years leaving 2,592 people in the area without homes. This tour examined the issues of homelessness by visiting community organizations who address the issue through social enterprise, supportive housing, and employment and skills training.

The tour began at **Potluck Café**, a social enterprise in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) where catering revenues subsidize employment programs and meals for local area residents. At Potluck Café, tour delegates discussed issues of food accessibility and employment training opportunities for residents living homeless in the DTES.

The tour continued to **United We Can**, a self-sustaining social enterprise that creates jobs for inner city residents. Delegates spoke with employees about their transition from unemployment and addiction to their work at United We Can and the contributions the organization makes to the local economy.

Next delegates spoke with clients at **Coast Mental Health**, an organization that offers practical and pragmatic health to people living with mental illness. Delegates discussed the personal challenges in maintaining housing and employment because of stigmas associated with mental illness.

Lastly, delegates visited **Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA)**, an organization that supports Native youth in an urban setting. At UNYA, delegates heard from staff who create supportive job training opportunities for youth within the construction industry, and from a previously homeless client who have been empowered by UNYA's mentorship program.

*Tour leader Geoff Plant
addresses delegates in a
Downtown Eastside alley.*



CBSR recognizes Coast Capital Savings and Vancouver Foundation for their contribution to the Seeing is Believing program.