



June 15, 2010

**REV. TOM OSHIRO TO GIVE LEADERSHIP VICTORIA'S GRADUATION ADDRESS**

***Celebration for 2010 graduating class who have developed four dynamic community action projects that leave lasting environmental, entrepreneurial and artistic legacies for all Greater Victorians.***

VICTORIA - Leadership Victoria's class of 2010 is celebrating the culmination of a year of intense learning and impressive achievements for the benefit of Greater Victoria's diverse communities at their annual graduation ceremony. Held on Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at the University Club at the University of Victoria, the ceremony marks the successful completion of Leadership Victoria's challenging, life-enriching, community-based leadership action study program. Media and members of the public are welcome to attend and a reception will follow the formal agenda.

This year's keynote speaker is the Reverend Tom Oshiro, Director of the Victoria Mustard Seed Street Church and Food Bank and 2010 Recipient of the Victoria Leadership Award (VLA) for Lifetime Achievement. A copy of his bio is available at: <http://communications.uvic.ca/releases/release.php?display=release&id=1101>

The twenty new graduates will present the results of their Community Action Projects (CAPs) and receive their well-earned Graduation Certificates.

From ideas to implementation the twenty new graduates worked for the past year on four community project teams that tackled such diverse issues as:

- An innovative approach to community micro lending and financial mentoring
- A unique volunteer trail ambassador program and launch of "Trail Day" throughout the CRD
- A dynamic cultural event designed around visual and performing arts, festivals and the art of giving to promote Greater Victoria's arts communities in partnership with local First Nations.
- A sustainable pilot project on leadership in communal gardens in partnership with Woodwynn Farms and the Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society

Jack Shore, Leadership Victoria's Executive Director said: "I congratulate our new graduates not only for their significant personal achievements, but also for the collective

impact of their teamwork and action projects. Our graduates have proven themselves time and again over the course of this challenging program. They have greatly impressed me with their dedication and ingenuity, while working diligently to turn good ideas into improved reality for the benefit of Greater Victoria's many communities."

The four team projects are as follows:

### **Team M\$cro Solution - Victoria Community Micro Lending Society Mentoring Program**

The project aims to provide mentorship and support to borrowers in the start up of their small businesses for a minimum of one year. Team M\$cro Solution partnered with the micro lending initiative by creating its unique mentorship program. A mentorship component is vital to the success of micro lending initiatives as research shows that mentoring and support for micro loan borrowers is critical to building long-term successful ventures and to timely loan repayments.

### **Team W – The Art of Re-Gifting**

A dynamic cultural event designed around visual arts, performing arts, festivals and the art of giving, Team W created this project with the goal of: raising awareness of the local arts community, encouraging consumers of the arts to become supporters of the arts, and to publicly acknowledge sponsors and funders. Team W collaborated with partner organizations and First Nations artists to create a cabaret style evening of performances followed by an exclusive Indigenous Arts Auction. The original vision of the art exchange came from a Coast Salish inspired sentiment stemming from the traditional potlatch ceremony.

### **Team Trail Mix – Trail Ambassador Program**

Team Trail Mix worked on the development of the volunteer Trail Ambassador Program and the "Friend of the Regional Trails" pledge, as well as the planning and launch of Trail Day. The project was achieved through a partnership between Team Trail Mix and the Capital Regional District (CRD) Parks department. Team Trail Mix envisioned creating a project that would connect all of the communities of Greater Victoria. The regional trail system is seen as the "common thread" found in all communities.

### **Team Green Acres – Community Leadership on Local Food**

The Green Acres team envisioned a project that would grow community relationships, leadership and food. The community partners were Woodwynn Farms and Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society (PTB). The Power To Be Society provides outdoor recreation programs that enrich the lives of disadvantaged children and youth and their families. Woodwynn Farms is a new therapeutic community for the homeless, offering opportunities to change their lives. The project aimed to develop leadership skills, foster community partnerships and support Woodwynn in a pilot project to develop

communal garden space.

Founded in 2000, Leadership Victoria is a community-based, voluntary organization committed to developing, supporting, recognizing and honouring outstanding community leaders. Over the last decade, it has become the “go to” organization for community leadership in Greater Victoria, graduating more than 200 leaders from diverse backgrounds who continue to work to improve their community and completing nearly 40 community action projects that span a wide range of themes, issues and partnerships.

We are currently accepting applications for our next cohort, beginning in September 2010. Application forms can be accessed on our website at: <http://www.leadershipvictoria.ca/apply.html>. The deadline to apply is end of day, June 30<sup>th</sup>.

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