

The Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood  
House Society Presents:  
The 2018 Annual General Meeting



October 10<sup>th</sup> 2018, 6pm  
573 East Hastings Street

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Dear members,

We recognize that our House is on traditional Coast Salish Territory and extend our gratitude to its people. We offer a warm welcome to everyone attending this year's AGM of the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House Society.

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) community trusts the DTESNH for our grassroots work and right-to-food-advocacy for nutritional food promotion. Last year, through our combined programs, we offered over 40,000 meals to those in our community. Like all neighbourhood houses, people are our greatest asset and the impact of our safe and welcoming space cannot be truly quantified by numbers.

This year we met extreme challenges, but we persevered and found rewarding outcomes. The DTES is the epicenter of the current fentanyl crisis. We have lost neighbours and friends. We have lent aid to those in loss and grief. Our staff, volunteers, and partner organizations have rallied many times and many ways in the last 12 months. One small example is the Alley Health Fair, which was at risk of collapsing during its reorganization. It was resolutely picked up by the DTESNH in 2017. The outcome of this year's 2018 event was once again extraordinary: it gathered over 3,000 attendees and hosted 45 organizations, offering on-the-spot services, such as Naloxone use training, Hepatitis-C testing, and eye tests.

As further outlined in this year's report, we have championed new projects and initiatives, and strengthened the projects our volunteers and staff already carry out so well. Following the recommendations from the *Needs Assessment for Social and Recreational Programming* report provided by Alice Sundberg Consulting, we have worked to mitigate challenges from gentrification. With added funding by the City and Vancouver Foundation we are training local leaders in Board governance through our new *Let's Speak Up* project.

Highlights from last year include the third successful execution of our unique Christmas Gift Basket fundraiser. It was a great success thanks to the extraordinary work of our Board and fundraising committee members, as well as our many neighbours. Funding from Face the World as well as the City of Vancouver along with storage accommodation from RainCity Housing made it a success.

Early this year, Carol White resigned and we are happy to transition Rory Sutherland into the role of Executive Director. Rory had been working as our Manager of Operations for 3 years and previous to this role, a volunteer and research student who assisted in creating a report summary of the impact our House has in our Neighbourhood. We are very honored and fortunate to have Rory working in the capacity as our Executive director. Shortly after Rory assumed his new role, there was a huge staffing change. Needless to say, Rory has worked very hard over the past months to recruit, hire and train a

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whole new staff team along with all the daily challenges of an executive director. The DTES Neighbourhood House is fortunate to have his leadership.

Our new staff team include: Maria Gaudin, our Manager of Operations, Kim McGauley our Family Program Coordinator, Maleeha Sohail our Volunteer Coordinator and Lucia Woolgar our Let's Speak Up Coordinator. We are happy to see these new staff settling into their new positions and doing a great job with their programs.

We are also very thankful to have Mason, Arlette, Krista, Simone and Simin continue to help us especially through the staffing change transition.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Staff, Board, students, and volunteers, as well as our funders, donors, and the foundations that make our good work possible. Our success this year would not be possible without their talent and commitment. Their dedication and effort keep us optimistic for the DTESNH's future.

We wish to thank the UBC Ethnography program, UBC Land and Food Systems, UBC School of Social Work, UBC Faculty of Education, VCC nursing, and Douglas College Therapeutic Recreation students for their expertise in helping us develop program improvement strategies. Their work has greatly increased our capacity.

A special thanks to the Board members who continue to help the organization grow. Their long hours and effort enable us to improve the quality of life for our neighbours in a respectful, hospitable, people-focused community space. Their work lead to the revision of our By Laws to be compliant with the relatively new Society Act, the strategic planning to look at short and long term goals and the continuation of investigating possibilities for a new house, starting with a functional plan in process.

Our community partners and partner groups who work with us also deserve recognition. These include: Raise the Rates, the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, the Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Network, Watari, the Vancouver Food Bank, Potluck Café society, the Network of Inner City Community Services Society, the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, Strathcona Community Centre, Carnegie Community Centre, the UBC Learning Exchange and the many organizations who contributed to the Alley Health Fair, Summer Connect, the Family Fair, and Home Ground. We also thank our sister neighbourhood houses and are thankful for the opportunity to celebrate our volunteers at the Good Neighbour Awards.

We are excited to work with you in the upcoming year and look forward our continuing successes.

Regards,

Benita Ho  
President

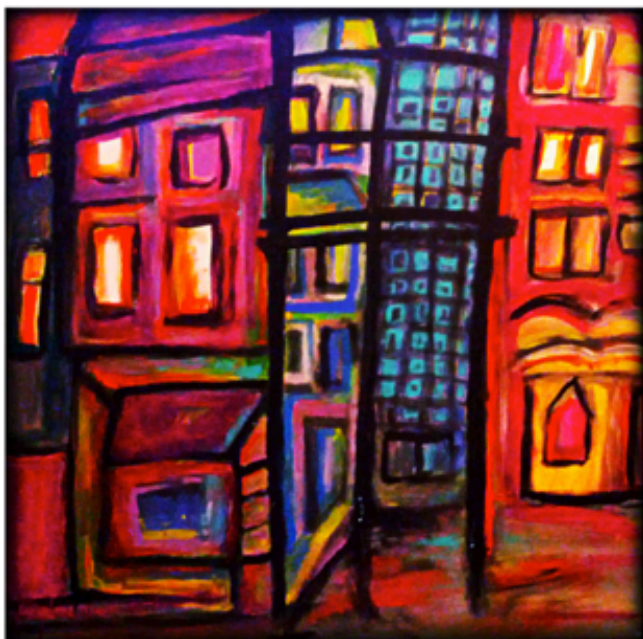
Rory Sutherland  
Executive Director



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Providing Programs, Education,  
Leadership, Social and  
Recreational Opportunities to  
Residents of Vancouver's  
Downtown Eastside



573 East Hastings St.  
Vancouver, BC  
604-215-2030  
<http://dteshouse.ca>

### **Board of Directors**

Benita Ho- President  
Opal Levis- Secretary  
Josephine Martyn- Treasurer  
Elizabeth Ballantyne- Director  
Hendrik Beune- Director  
Seynabou Diak- Director  
Lisa Hung- Director  
Andy Ngae- Fundraising

### **Staff Members**

Rory Sutherland- Executive Director  
Maria Gaudin- Manager of Operations  
Kim McGauley- Family Program Coordinator  
Maleeha Sohail- Volunteer Coordinator  
Lucia Woolgar- Lets Speak Up Coordinator  
Christa Grona- Kids Kitchen Facilitator  
Simin Sun- Seniors Program Facilitator  
Mason Chiu- Summer Work Student  
Arlette Akayezu- Summer Work Student  
Simone Goldberg- Summer Work Student

## **Community Programs**

### **Community Drop In**

The Community Drop In program continues to be our most attended program, with roughly 15,000 delicious meals being served over the past year. We are proud to be serving organic, locally sourced, nutritious meals to any individual who resides in the downtown eastside community.

Every Monday we serve a hearty breakfast of oatmeal to many longtime residents who show up every week. We remain vigilant to ensure that there is no added sugar in our oatmeal; instead we offer healthy alternatives such as cinnamon, vanilla, honey, and fresh fruit to be added on top. Haircuts are also provided for those in need of a trim.

Our Tuesday Night Prep group volunteers are the unsung heroes of community drop in. Every Tuesday evening they skillfully prepare boxes of donated produce into delectable, nutrition-packed meals for our Wednesday community drop in. Prep night volunteers bring thoughtfulness, and creativity to the dishes they prepare which are raved about and sought after by many residents in the community.

Wednesday community drop in continues to see increased participation, as we are fully packed for the entire duration of the program. The space is abuzz with activity, individuals have the chance to interact with fellow community members, and the Right to Food Zine meeting is open to anyone with an interest in food justice. Our community drop in volunteer team is a mix of local residents, practicum students, and those with an interest in food equality; they share the common goal of supporting one another during the busiest time of the week. We could not do what we do without their wholehearted effort!

### **Community Drop-In Expansion through Let's Speak Up!**

The expansion of the Community Drop-in now includes breakfast on Tuesday mornings followed by a discussion group thanks to funding for our Let's Speak Up Program. With this new additional service, there is an increased demand for our breakfasts, serving up to 70 meals per week and growing.

Part of our success includes targeted engagement with residents, inviting them to participate in small discussion groups that consider topics such as civic engagement, urban development, the history of the neighbourhood and increasing socio-economic diversity on the Boards of community-serving service providers. Summer student staff has also played a valuable role as they have widened their own experiential learning.

## **Banana Beat**

Banana Beat continues to make an impact on the health of our downtown eastside residents by serving over 12,000 individuals fresh bananas in the early morning hours on cheque day. This significant impact represents far reaching benefits; including, bringing nutritional wealth (in the form of potassium and other nutrients) as well as dignity and the reminder of inherent deservedness to hundreds of our neighbours who line up in the pre-dawn hours, awaiting the opening of offices to access their Social Assistance payments. We also distribute bananas to local housing projects to accommodate some of our more isolated neighbours. Our community members have come to rely on the DTES NH for our grassroots work, care and nutritional food promotion. Thanks to our staff for their continued hard work again this past year, distributing over 2 tons (roughly 4000 pounds) of Bananas!

## **Mobile Smoothie**

Our Mobile Smoothie Project continues to foster community development and to attract those of our neighbours who might never attend our more traditional Community Kitchens. The Mobile Smoothie Project visits 7 partner organizations for approximately 30 minutes, the day before cheque day. This critical component provides high nutritional value to those who often have run out of money and experience barriers to healthy food. Aside from the trusty Vitamix blenders that go along on our regular smoothie program, the neighbourhood house also has a Blender Bike!

This year's Neighbourhood Blender Bike events have been the Alley Health Fair, HomeGround Festival, UGM Summer Connect, and the Summer Family Fair. As people mingle and socialize around this low-tech activity, the humble blender delivers both a concise nutritional lesson and delicious smoothies to all.



## **Family Programs**

### **Family Drop In**

The Family Drop In Program continues to see an increase in participation each Tuesday and Thursday. Families who drop in get the chance to participate in engaging activities and are provided with a nutritious snack and delicious dinner. Lots of fun has been had in the past year including events such as gardening at our community garden, summer out-trips, birthday celebrations for the children, story time with Alex from the library, Djembe Drum and Dance, and much more. For the upcoming year, families can look forward to workshop presentations about healthy eating, grocery shopping on a budget, vaccination health for families, and many more. The program wouldn't be able to run without the amazing help of our committed volunteers who actively engage with the children and families. With all their help we have created a safe, comfortable, homey place which families say, "Feels like their own living room".



### **Kids Kitchen**

Kids Kitchen is very popular for children aged 8-12 years of age. The goal is to introduce cooking skills over a 12-week cycle on Sunday afternoons, where kids learn to plan and prepare healthy recipes and engage in nutrition-related activities. The Culinary Passport program is a hit, where we cook our way through recipes from around the world. This valuable life skill introduces participants to new types of recipes and cuisine. Kids also learn important kitchen skills such as kitchen safety, knife skills, ingredient measurement, and how to follow recipes. Each 12-week cycle ends with a parent/care-giver dinner at the Neighbourhood House. Kids help to select the dishes to prepare for their parents, and assist in cooking and serving food to their families at the dinner. We continue to see a record number of kids in all registration slots quickly fill up. Our cook-off competition, is a fantastic way to end the program where our young chefs work in groups to create a dish from given ingredients.

### **Drawing and Painting With Arts Umbrella**

We are very excited to announce our new partnership with Arts Umbrella. Starting October 17<sup>th</sup>, registered children will be taught by an Arts Umbrella instructor on different visual arts activities weekly. We look forward to watching the children expand their horizons and explore their creativity within this program.

## **Community Initiative Programs**

### **Lets Speak Up!**



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Let's Speak Up! is a project that seeks to support residents and community-serving organizations in the downtown eastside who want to include more community members on their Board of Directors and committees. This project aims to prepare residents and organizations for effective and relevant representation to advocate for the downtown eastside community in a time of flux. Project activities include: creating a personalized access program by reducing the barriers for individual community members that are interested in serving on boards; support and offer resources to board and community members who have committed to including more DTES residents in their governance structure; develop a charter for inclusive governance signed by participating organizations; instigate a public dialogue around the benefits of equity and socio-economic diversity in social service governance and their impacts on community resilience. This program will be developed and run over the next year and a half with the collaboration of local organizations and individuals. This project is also working closely with the Community Action Network.

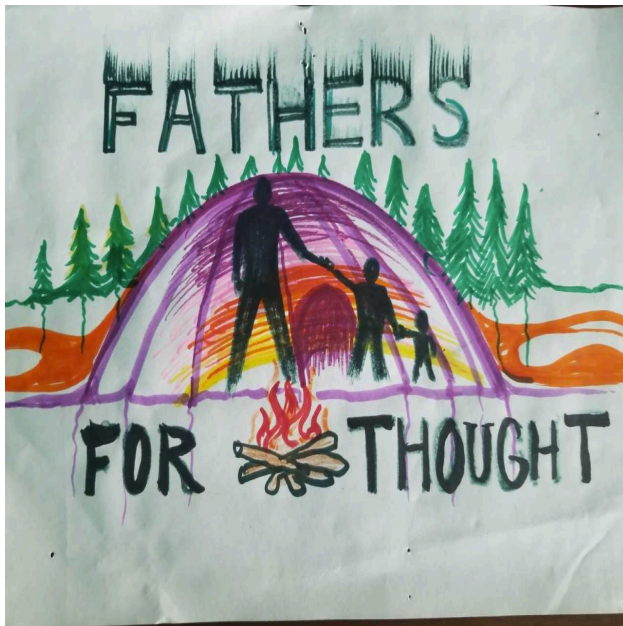


### **Fathers for Thought**

Fathers For Thought has been in operation for over five years now and has established itself as a strong resource for fathers living in the Downtown Eastside. Community interest got this program going and it draws heavily on fathers in the community lending their knowledge, skills and hard work to the group. In this program, group members come together to cook a meal and clean up afterwards, while giving dads a safe place to share resources, discuss their experiences and support one another. In addition to formal workshops on wellness-related topics, individual dads take turns facilitating sessions on topics of personal interest.

### **Right to Food Zine**

The Right to Food Zine continues into its sixth year of publication in affiliation with the DTES Neighbourhood House in 2018. Over the past year, publication issues addressed important topics including; poverty reduction, food security, and housing/homelessness, the fentanyl crisis, how drug use affects people living with aids, and an evolved approach to food and drug policies. It also featured a poster and information about the Wild Salmon Caravan, as well as articles about the life of soil, our pantry of the future, and people in Strathcona who roll up their sleeves to work hard.



## Senior Programs

### Chinese Seniors Program

This summer, the Neighbourhood House created a new seniors program called Chinese Seniors Community Garden in partnership with Carnegie Center and Wing Wing Sausage Co.Ltd. The garden is located on the corner of Hastings and Jackson, inside the parking lot of Wing Wing Sausage Co.Ltd. This is an innovative outdoor program that provides seniors with access to inner city green space and to meet their interests of gardening and farming.

Every Friday morning there is a weekly gardening session where seniors gather together to plant seeds, weed, water and harvest the vegetables. The seniors take turns watering the plants two to three times per week, ensuring healthy, vibrant growth in this little garden space. As a community program, the seniors work together and share food together. They are taking the lead at the garden, and decide what to plant and how to manage the work. The seniors proved to be experienced, skilled gardeners and took a great deal of pride as their effort paid off and the garden flourished. It turns out that the garden not only functions as a physical space for seniors to practice their gardening skills,



but also as a learning zone where lots of intercultural and inter-generational learning happens every day.

With a grant application submitted early this summer, we're hoping to obtain funding for next year to continue the garden and to organize more cultural and educational events with our seniors.



## **Community Events**

### **Alley Health Fair**

The Annual Alley Health Fair is a street festival that brings together organizations and service providers in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to promote health and wellness, and educate participants about local services available to them. The event includes music, lunch, haircuts, massage, health testing, bicycle and wheelchair repair, among many other features.

This year the Neighbourhood House oversaw the administration of the event with huge support from our sister agencies in the community. Caroline Brunt and a host of committed staff from over 35 agencies all pitched in to make this a remarkable event. The fair is a City of Vancouver "Homeless Connect" event. We are grateful for their financial support along with VCH and the Phuoc Lac Charity Society. This year the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Shane Simpson, stopped by the Alley Health fair to take a tour, and hop on our mobile smoothie bike!



## **Summer Family Picnic**

This year our family fair was held at the end of August, and after a long dry summer filled with smoky air, we managed to pull off an amazing event on the first rainy day of the summer! Our summer students Arlette, Simone, and Mason organized a fun day full of activities and delicious food.

Families had the opportunity to climb up an awesome mobile climbing wall from Climb Base 5, pet bunnies with Cinemazoo, play games in the field with the Red Fox Society, make buttons with Arts Umbrella, learn about the library with Alex from Vancouver Public Library, and weave cedar bracelets with Todd. Our volunteers served up a delicious lunch of salmon, chicken, veggie and beef burgers, potato salad, green salad, and hummus graciously donated from Holy Hummus. Our always-fun smoothie bike also made an appearance!

A big shout out to our volunteers who prepped all the food for the event! They worked hard for over 5 hours the night before the fair, cutting, slicing, and dicing. Another shout out to all the amazing families who came out, despite the very rainy day, we had over 140 people show up and enjoy the day with us!

## **Our Volunteers!**

We had a very exciting year at the neighbourhood house, and none of it could have been accomplished without the help of our amazing volunteers! We had volunteers join us from the downtown eastside community, all across the lower mainland, some from other provinces, and even



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a couple from other countries. We also had wonderful practicum students from Vancouver Community College, Langara College, Simon Fraser University, and the University of British Columbia who enthusiastically helped out across all our programs during their practicum stay at the neighbourhood house. Over the year we have had a steady growth in volunteers, from individuals volunteering for the minimum three months, to some of our volunteers consistently showing up for over two years! Leading the charge in all things volunteer is our amazing coordinator Maleeha who successfully recruits volunteers through online postings and word of mouth. We offer our volunteers monthly training sessions about the neighbourhood house, and also on special topics such as first aid, naloxone administration, and food and kitchen safety. Our volunteers are the backbone to what we do at the neighbourhood house, we are so grateful to each and every one of our volunteers who has supported us and given us their time over the past year!



## **Our Sponsors and Funders**

Alexandra Foundation  
 Central City Foundation  
 City of Vancouver  
 Choices Market  
 Ethical Bean  
 Face the World Foundation  
 Greater Vancouver Food Bank  
 Pro-Organics Marketing  
 Province of British Columbia  
 Service Canada  
 Telus  
 United Way  
 Vancouver Foundation  
 Whole Foods  
 Superior tofu

## **Our Partners**

Anita Lau from the **Women's Drop In Centre**  
 Emily Sobool from **VPL Strathcona**  
 Bobby from **UGM**  
 Carol Brunt at **VCC**  
 Ivan Arlantino at Vancouver Infections  
 Diseases Centre  
 Kerry Greer from **UBC Land and Food Systems**  
 The Strathcona Community Centre's  
**Backpack Program**  
 40 plus DTES Agencies who worked on the  
**Alley Health Fair**  
 Terry Hunter and Savannah Walling from  
**Vancouver Moving Theatre**  
**The many artists, organizers, performer &**  
**health practitioners**  
 All of our neighbours and community friends