



Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House

2021 Annual General Meeting

September 22 2021, 5:00pm PST
573 E Hastings Street



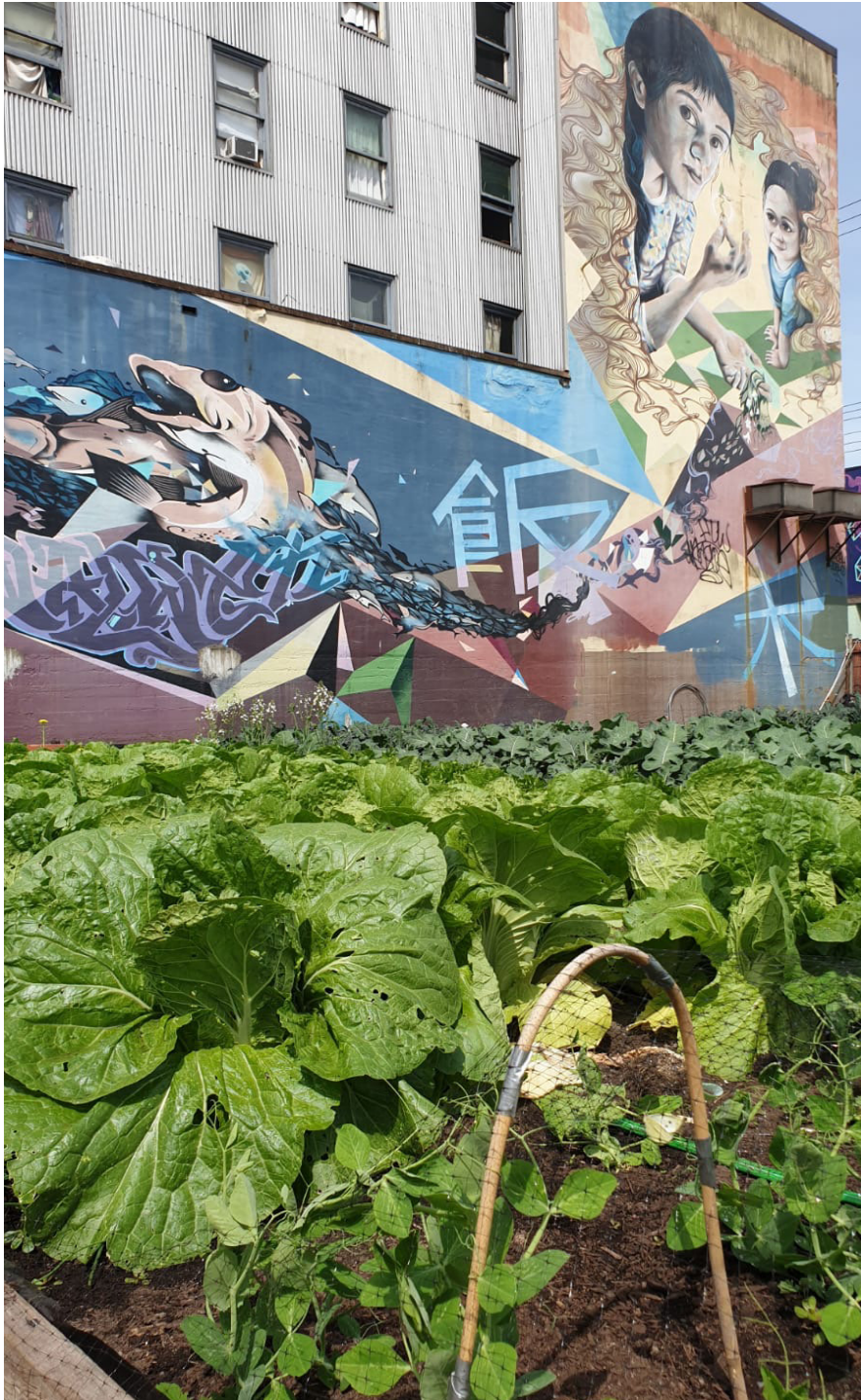


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Opening Message

Dear members,

We recognize that our House is on unceded traditional Coast Salish Territory, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ/ Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, 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 continues to trust the DTESNH for our grassroots, right-to-food-advocacy and our deeply inclusive community development approach. COVID-19 brought extreme adversity to the community, but with support from dedicated staff, volunteers, neighbours, and partners, we not only continued our service without interruption but increased our outputs by over 50%.

Lack of food programs emerged as one of the most critical issues of the pandemic and we immediately shifted our service model to meet the needs of the most vulnerable community members. This was done through the launch of our hot, takeaway meal and grocery hamper programs. In another innovative program, we partnered with organizations to deliver hot meals to various locations throughout the community to serve those that were not otherwise able to access our service. Social isolation surfaced as a major challenge for DTES community members, many of whom do not have phone or internet access. Additionally, our food outreach programming served to create points of connection and enhance support networks.

Work has been underway to secure funding and

a suitable temporary location for the upcoming renovation of the current DTESNH facility as we will be temporarily relocating this year. There is no doubt the project will be challenging but we are confident that it will be a huge success and are excited for this new opportunity.

Program highlights since the last AGM include hiring a project manager for our Urban Farm. Devorah Tradburks has taken on our "urban farmer" role and the project has flourished under her leadership. In this time of uncertainty, we are extremely grateful for our core staff team. They have remained committed and stepped up to these challenges with skill, creativity, and determination. Our Operations Manager, Maria Gaudin, continues to lead the kitchen team to make meals for the community that have the right to food at their heart, as well as ensuring that our facility is in good shape for all programs to make use of. Long-time NH staff member Arlette Akayezu has taken on the Family Program Coordinator role and is skillfully engaging families in the neighbourhood. We were approved for three additional years of funding for our leadership development work and Tintin Yang was hired on as the new Let's Speak Up Coordinator and we are grateful to have her join the team! Program leads Kim McGauley and Lucia Woolgar have moved on to different adventures and we thank them for their service. Their dedication and enthusiasm will be missed. The Board is also very thankful for our steadfast Executive Director, Rory Sutherland, who continues with diligence and heart as he manages various aspects of the House from maintaining financial health to supporting volunteers and staff, plus everything in between.

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. Furthermore, we wish to extend a special thank you to Patrick Moore. Pat is the driving force behind our Urban Farm – the project would not be possible without him and his passion for growing food and supporting community. Our community partners and partner groups who work with us also deserve recognition. These include: The SRO Collaborative, WePress, the Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Network, Watari, the Vancouver Food Bank, the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, Strathcona Community Centre, Carnegie Community Centre, Ray-Cam Centre, Playwriters Theatre Centre, Yarrow Society, VPL Strathcona the UBC Learning Exchange and the many organizations, Elders, and Community Knowledge Holders who contributed to the Urban Farm space. We also thank our sister neighbourhood houses and are thankful for the support and collaboration. We are excited to work with you in the upcoming year and look forward to our continuing successes.

Sincerely,

Rory Sutherland (ED) and Benita Ho (Board Chair)



Board of Directors

Benita Ho, Board Chair
Lisa Hung, Vice President
Peggy Alca, Treasurer
Jastina Aujla, Secretary
Elizabeth Ballantyne, Director
Senyabou Diack, Director
Andy Ngae, Director
Julie Robinson, Director
William Weir, Director

Board of Directors and Staff

Staff

Shaista Alami, Children's Program Lead
Arlette Akayezu, Family Program Coordinator
Bill Beauregarde, COVID Response Coordinator
Brittany Garuk, Volunteer Coordinator
Maria Gaudin, Community Drop In Coordinator
Simin Sun, Chinese Seniors Outreach Worker
Rory Sutherland, Executive Director
Devorah Tradburks, Urban Farm Coordinator
Tintin Yang, Leadership Development Coordinator



Community Programs

Community Drop In

In the Fall/Winter of 2020/2021, we were still offering CDI Oatmeal 5 days a week, and 2 lunches. Since April 2021, CDI resumed its 3 days of Oatmeal, and its Wednesday lunch. A small lunch was served on Mondays for July & August, for about 50-60 people weekly. In the past year, the CDI program served approximately 34,000 people. From fall 2020 - spring 2021, 100 meals were prepared and delivered each Saturday to KT Tent City/Camp H.O.P.E.S. at Strathcona Park. From June 2021 and ongoing, we are sending 25-45 meals folks camping at Crab Park.

We celebrated one of our notable community meals, Mid Winter Fest this year on January 27th. During our annual Turkey Dinner, we served 200 turkey meals to the community. We had turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, mixed steamed veg, gravy, cranberry sauce and an apple cinnamon loaf.

To feed our community, we are largely dependwnt on support from donations. Thank you to our donors! This year, a majority of our food donations came from: Pro-Organics, Greater Vancouver Food Bank, Food Runners, Virtuous Pie/TMRW Foods & Choices. During the summer months our meals were substantially made from our Urban Farm harvests.

Friday Free Farmers Market

During the fall of 2020, we served 70-90 people weekly with fresh produce at our Friday Markets. Most of the produce was harvested at our Urban Farm. During summer 2021, we served 40-50 people weekly with fresh produce at our Friday Markets. Most of the produce was harvested at our Urban Farm alongside donations from the Food Bank and other donors.



Nutritional Outreach

In October 2020 during Income Assistance Week we were able to restart our Mobile Smoothie Program, which is run on the Tuesday before check day. Unfortunately with the need to social distance we have not able to go out with the smoothie carts to our partner organizations (United Way, Oppenheimer Park, The Lookout, The Women's Centre, Insite or Second Mile), but have served smoothies from the DTESNH door from 11am-12pm after oatmeal. We use fresh bananas, a variety of frozen fruits, frozen greens, water and milk (when we have it). We serve approx. 75 smoothies from the door every month. We have not been able to run Banana Beat since the beginning of the pandemic, but are planning to restart in October 2021.

We said good bye to one of our long-time volunteers, Smoothie Rick, who passed away in this past spring.



Family programs

Family Drop In

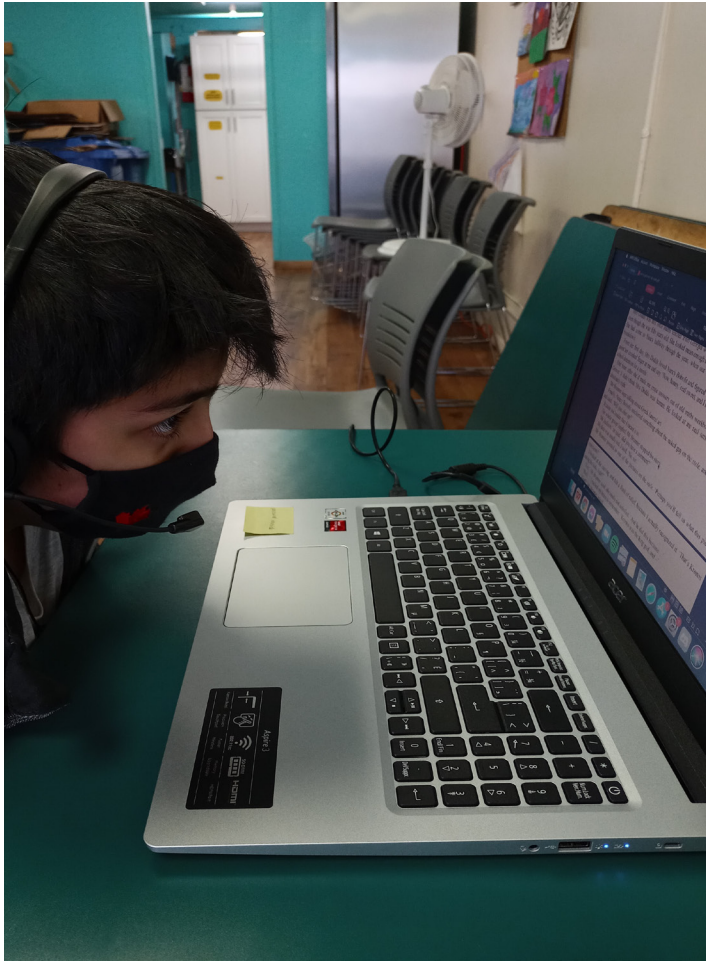
In light of the ongoing situation with COVID-19, the Family Drop In (FDI) Program has looked quite different over the last year. Nevertheless, the program has continued to serve families in a variety of ways: the provision of produce hampers, family dinners, and produce harvests at the DTES Urban Farm. Every Thursday for the past year, families have been able to pick up a bag of assorted produce from the Neighbourhood House. And on Fridays, families have come together at the Urban Farm for dinner, farm harvests, and children's activities. As we look towards returning to regular programming, we are excited to welcome families back into the House and to welcoming community partners back again through workshops and other partnership opportunities. As always, we are excited to continue engaging with families over healthy and delicious meals and fun activities.

Kids Kitchen

Kids Kitchen is a well-attended program for children aged 6-12. We introduce cooking skills over a 12-week cycle, where kids learn to plan and prepare healthy recipes and engage in nutrition-related activities. Kids also learn important skills like kitchen safety, knife skills, ingredient measurements, and how to follow recipes. We provide recipe books for the kids so they can practice the same recipe at home with their families each week. During the 12-cycle we plan field trips too. This summer we had two field trips. Kids had their first field trip to Astoria Urban Farm where they were able to learn about planting and were able to harvest some veggies to take home and share with their families. Our second field trip was to Granville Island. We used a small ferry for transportation. The kids had a lot of fun and food, and we ended each cycle with a parent/care-giver dinner and a Cook-Off Competition at the Neighborhood House. Kids help select the dishes to prepare for their parents and assist in cooking and serving food to their families at dinner. The Cook-Off Competition is a fun way to end the program where our young chefs work in groups to create a dish from given ingredients. Unfortunately, this year due to the COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to do our Cook-Off competition.

We continue to see a growing number of kids interested in the program, and registration slots fill up quickly.





Kids' Tutoring Program

The goal of the tutoring program is to provide additional educational support to children living in the Downtown Eastside. The tutoring program supports a wide range of subjects in which children can receive assistance, including English, Science, Math, French, and Social Studies.

The program runs every Monday from 3:30pm to 6:30pm. We have a total of 35 to 40 students. 8 kids regularly attend our in-facility sessions at the Downtown Eastside Neighborhood House. Children are assigned one-hour tutoring slots, in which they can receive support with schoolwork. At the Neighborhood House, they also have another hour for snacks and working on worksheets. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, our tutoring program also occurs online through Zoom. The program lead and the program assistant are responsible for setting up the laptops. The staff also provide the children with snacks and extra help. Children have the option of receiving tutoring at home through their own electronic devices or receiving tutoring through laptops provided at the Downtown Eastside Neighborhood House.

Tutors are undergraduate students from the University of British Columbia. There are up to six tutors available each session. Tutors provide one-on-one schoolwork help, that focuses on the specific schoolwork areas that the students need help in. Each tutor is assigned to a student for one to two sessions per week. The tutor and student pairing changes bi-weekly to allow students the opportunity to work with tutors in from different academic backgrounds. Undergraduate tutors share their knowledge in their fields with the children. We have had successful sessions in French, English, Math and Science. Each child's session is based on their interests and where they need help most as well as finishing the session playing fun games.

This program is important for children growing up in the Downtown Eastside because can offer them extra support in their studies and a fun space to spend time with their friends. Extra-curricular tutoring can help students to have a deeper understanding of concepts taught in school. This program works to create a space where any question can be asked directly to someone who is also going through the education system. The CUBS tutoring program is where reciprocal relationships with elementary and undergraduate students are made and cherished.

Urban Farm Programs

The second growing season of the Neighborhood House Urban Farm has been robust with plants and programming. The Urban Farm's presence has various layers of impact in the neighborhood, among them growing food to address food security, providing a special space for programming and partnerships in the neighborhood, adding a slice of green space full of pollinators to the Downtown Eastside, and showcasing the sustainable food-growing potential of a vacant lot.

The amount of food production coming in from the garden beds has been substantial. 600 lbs of onions were harvested! Fresh produce is creatively incorporated into meals in the neighborhood house kitchen as well as other community kitchens. Surplus produce is offered to the community at a popular Friday market.

The farm space is shared with other organizations who each steward their own garden beds. Hives for Humanity, DEWC womens' shelter and the Dudes club each have beds, a focal point for their programming. Sharing space has been fertile ground for us all to collaborate around common goals as needs and opportunities arise. The Farm is active throughout the week as the NH and others use the space for programming and events. Children and their parents enjoy a meal in the garden and harvest vegetables to take home at the Friday Family Program. Lets Speak Up! uses the space to gather for weekly meetings. A crew through SRO Collaborative receive honorarium for their valuable help with the harvest once a week. Wednesday afternoons are 'Community Day' with weekly workshops, refreshments, and a chance for community to drop in and get to know the garden. And what a lovely space to host a summer BBQs, the farm has added fresh lettuce and tomatoes to many hamburgers this season!

Patrick Moore who founded the farm last season continues to be the lead volunteer and the visionary behind the project, leading with a passion for sharing knowledge about growing good food. Around 60 other volunteers have offered hands at the farm this year. The farm depends on volunteers, there's always work to be done and the fruits of the labour are tangible and tasty!



Seniors Programs

Chinese Elders Garden

After a pandemic related hiatus, the Chinese Elders returned to their garden space at Jackson and Hastings with full force for the second half of the summer. The garden had been established and maintained in the first portion of the summer with help from the UBC ethnography student volunteers, with uncertain optimistic hope that the seniors would get double vaxxed and be able to return to the garden this season. Their first day back was a grand kickoff, the garlic was perfectly ready to be harvested and the crew exclaimed with glee each time a bulb was pulled from the ground. They braided the garlic to hang it to dry. Around 10 seniors show up each Monday morning enthusiastic to get to work, led by Doris Chow from Carnegie and Simin Sunemi. What great energy, it is wonderful to have them back.



Community Initiative Programs

Let's Speak Up!

Let's Speak Up! returned to regular meetings in September 2020, after a 6-month hiatus due to COVID-19. LSU! is now in its second grant cycle with funding from the Vancouver Foundation with a new focus on civic engagement as its central theme. Since then, LSU! has continued work on the community survey project, has taken on taking a role as a Community Navigator project along with 8 other Neighbourhood Houses in Metro Vancouver for the Vancouver Plan consultation process, and has opened up the Monday lunch CDI program. This year, we have worked on developing relationships with other organizations who are focused on civic engagement, advocacy, and activism as well as building leadership and outreach skills amongst LSU! group members.

We are continuing to work on completing our survey project with data collected from 2020. We are creating a poster/zine document that will capture the findings from the survey into a written and visual format. With this project, we hope to share our findings with the community and inspire community-based research to be done by, for, and with the community. In analyzing the findings, we hired a biostatistician who works at the BCSSU to support our research. We would like to continue doing research and improving our advocacy and organizing skills. This year we have also connected with the SRO Collaborative to support their SRO Tenant meal programs as well as engaging with some of their tenant outreach projects by facilitating tenant surveys and door-knocking to engage with tenants. These community-based initiatives are our current priorities.

In October 2020 – March 2021, LSU! participated in the City of Vancouver Community Navigator pilot project, where Neighbourhood Houses across Vancouver to engage with the local community in consultation with the Vancouver Plan. We found that the questions formed by the City of Vancouver were occasionally inapplicable or inappropriate for the DTES community, we instead asked our neighbours questions that focused on health, housing, and technology as issues that we found to be especially important to tackle during the pandemic. LSU! wrote a report detailing our findings to the City of Vancouver's Vancouver Plan department.

Going forward, we are hoping to continue working with community organizations, our neighbours, and building relationships that encourage civic engagement and literacy. We hope to retain our core group while also making more accessible and open programming for community members who are interested in getting involved and learning more about LSU! Due to the pandemic, we have not been able to host open LSU! meetings, but hope to do so again once it is safe.

Our Volunteers

A tremendous thank you to all of our volunteers this year, without whom none of the work at the DTES Neighbourhood House would be possible. We want to extend our deepest thanks and gratitude to volunteers who have spent hours serving breakfast to our neighbours, harvesting vegetables, or cooking in our kitchen. We've had volunteers join us from the DTES community, from all across the lower mainland, and practicum students from Vancouver Community College, University of British Columbia, and Simon Fraser University who have enthusiastically supported our programming. Despite the challenges presented with the pandemic, Brittany is finding and recruiting dedicated volunteers through word of mouth, posters, and online postings.



Sister Organizations/ Partners

Aboriginal Front Door
Arts Umbrella
Carnegie Community Centre
Community Impact Real Estate
CUBS UBC
Downtown Eastside Women's Center
Dudes Club
Environmental Youth Alliance
First United Church
Good Food Organizations
Greater Vancouver Food Bank
Heart of the City Festival
Hessey
Hives For Humanity
Insite
Lookout Society
Oppenheimer Park
Our Place
Playwrites Theater Centre
Potluck Cafe
Raincity Housing
Raise the Rates
Ray-Cam Centre
SRO Collaborative
Strathcona Community Centre
UBC Learning Exchange
UGM
University of British Columbia
Vancouver Moving Theatre
Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks
Vancouver Public Library
Vancouver Second Mile Society
VANDU
Watari

WePress
WISH
Yarrow Society

Funders/Donors/ Supporters

Alca Consulting
Alexandra Foundation
At The Kitchen Table Foundation
BC Farmer's Markets
BC Gaming
Bocci Design & Manufacturing
Boughton Law
Brooks Corning
Cadillac Fairview
Charitable Impact Foundation
Choices Market
City of Vancouver
CLICK
Community Food Centres Canada
DTES Response
Ethical Bean
Face the World Foundation
First Nations Health Authority
GMR Foundation
Government of Canada
Greater Vancouver Community Assistance
Foundation
Jane Buxton Medical Consulting
Microsoft
Ministry of Children and Family Development
Orbis Investments
OXD
Pro Organics
Raymond James Canada Foundation

Reaching Home
Rogers Foundation
Royal Bank of Canada
SRO Collaborative
Thought Farmer
UGM
United Way
University of British Columbia
Vancity Community Foundation
Vancity Savings Credit Union
Vancouver Food Bank
Vancouver Foundation
Wassena Insurance
WePress
Whole Foods
Yen Bros Food Service
YourCause
YVR Airport

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