



Richmond Youth Service Agency Annual Report 2008/09



Richmond
Youth Service
Agency

Connecting children, youth and community since 1974.

President's Remarks



Richmond Youth Service Agency continues to work with our community to meet the needs of children, youth and families through programs, activities, resources and building relationships with individuals, groups and our community. Every year we hear from the people that are impacted through your support. Whether it is a child that is now having fun at school and not feeling discouraged because they are more confident with math, a youth that feel like they belong and have a place they can be themselves, a young person who has a career direction or a parent who is able to connect with activities and resources that help their child be more active, meet new friends and have fun. This past year we have seen the power of communities and individuals connecting. These stories would not be heard without the wonderful team at RYSA, the contributions of volunteers and donors, and the community support we have within Richmond.

This past year has been filled with many wonderful stories of change, impact and meaning. It has also brought the loss of one of our long time supporters, volunteers, leaders and friends. John Santos-Ocampo has been a board member for over 7 years with the agency. As a devoted father, husband, brother, son and community leader he gave of his time to better his community and improve the lives of children and youth. As an organization we would

like to sincerely thank him and his family for his work, commitment and the impact he made. He will be truly missed and always remembered. In honour of John, the agency will be setting up an Alumni Bursary Fund to recognize the contributions of key volunteers and supporters. The funds will be used to help youth in our community achieve their dreams of working in the community service sector. We know John would appreciate this and we believe this is a small way of saying thank you and continuing his legacy and passion for improving the lives of children and youth in our community. We hope that you will join us in our continued work to support the children, youth and families of today by getting involved, giving of your time and remembering that even small moments can result in big changes.

Sincerely,

Craig McLeod

Our Team

Marshall Thompson	Executive Director
Cathy Arrigo	Manager of Youth Programs
Frank Peng	Manager of Finance & Administration
Janet Woo	Manager of Resource Development
Jane Reed	Richmond School Program
Sean Georges	Richmond School Program
Vincent Shyong	Station Stretch
Jelica Shaw	Pathways Aboriginal Centre
Rhiannon Bennett	Pathways Aboriginal Centre
Daniel Suen	Connections Youth Resource Centre
Mark Corbeil	Connections Youth Resource Centre
Angela Chan	Richmond Youth Centre

Our Board

Craig McLeod	President
Leon van der Poel	Vice President
John Santos-Ocampo	Treasurer
Anita Irani	Secretary
Christine Vukusic	Director
Laurie Kinsman	Director
Peter Lee	Director
Jag Madan	Director
Tony Scott	Director

Our Goal

We will work towards a better tomorrow by connecting our community and supporting our children, youth and families to thrive and reach for their dreams.

***In memory of John Santos-Ocampo
"Each one of us can make a difference"***



Summary of Activities for 2008/2009

Richmond Youth Centre

Volunteer and Leadership

This year we were able to collaborate to provide programs, activities and supports in our community. Without the help of other organizations providing space, volunteers their time, donors their support and the hard work of our staff we wouldn't have achieved what we did. The youth center offers a number of programs and activities, each with their own individual successes and stories. One of those projects is the U-Connect project. This project is about youth leadership, engagement and increasing community connections. U-Connect had many successes this year including: publishing an online magazine for youth in Richmond, raising over 19,000 dollars to support activities for the centre, training over 35 tutors to provide homework support, providing summer activities and programs for over 40 kids and organizing a community resource and career fair that had over 18,000 people attend!

Generations Homework Club

One of the other programs the centre runs is the Generation Homework Club (GHC). This program trains tutors and mentors to provide



Youth are 20% of the population, and 100% of our future!

help with homework and skill building support for elementary aged kids. The high school students provide the help with homework and the older youth and adults support the tutors in their roles. Kids attending the program need extra help with school work, participate in skill building activities and are provided with healthy snacks. The program is free and many of the kids would be unsupervised or left on their own without the club. With the support of key funders, and partners the program provided over 2000 hours of after school support and tutoring to over 35 kids during the school year at the two locations. Over 90% of the Kids in the program reported increased confidence with school work, and increased positive outlook towards school. The program goes beyond tutoring

and provides opportunities for youth to develop skills, self-confidence, positive relationships, teamwork, explore potential careers and most of all, the GHC fosters a sense of commitment to themselves and their community. The GHC partners with three elementary schools, several local high schools and two community centres where the program is delivered. This program is truly an example of how we can leverage community assets and make a big impact on the children and youth in our community.

Intergenerational programs

The centre believes that intergenerational activities benefit everyone involved. As a result of a lot of hard work by seniors and youth volunteers the centre obtained funding to purchase equipment and supplies to develop our Generations Movie Night. The event continues to grow with our most successful night to date having 20 seniors and 15 youth coming out to share a movie, talk about current events and get to know each other.

The centre continues to grow because of community commitment, partnerships, volunteer contributions and the funding received from a variety of key partners. We have seen success towards our goals of increasing community connections, developing leadership skills, providing opportunities for youth to make a difference and engaging and supporting younger kids towards increased physical activity, learning and improved health and wellness. Every person can improve our community's future by simply taking the time to get involved in the life of a child or young person today.

Richmond School Program

The Richmond School Program (RSP) is a program that supports elementary students to overcome social, emotional and behavioural challenges that impact their ability to succeed in a regular classroom. Each class has a maximum of six students and they receive support from educational staff, therapists, counsellors and two child and family workers from RYSA. The team works on goals developed with the students, their families and their home schools. Strategies are developed for each child that support their success at home, at school and in the community. The program is supported by a speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist and two psychiatrists that can provide support with assessments and medications.



Generations learning together

The program is run out of Blundell School and along with regular school subjects the students work with staff on their goals in smaller groups and one to one. Some of the current challenges faced by students include anxiety disorders, ADHD, anger management, depression, family problems, self esteem, under developed social skills, economic challenges and spectrum disorders. The two RYSA staff work within the classroom, provide one to one support on strategies to help the kids get through tough times, organize family nights, link kids and families to community resources, provide some after school activity in the community and support kids as they transition back to their home school. The program is collaborative and works with the community, team members, school staff, other service providers, parents and health to support each student towards success.

This past year the program was at capacity with 12 students in the program and three from the previous year being supported at their home schools. This year there were three family nights with 75 family members in attendance. We also worked with other kids participating in social skill modelling workshops. The RYSA staff worked with over 30 kids, 15 school based teams, and numerous community professionals. The program provides outreach support to students not in the program and overall the program supported over 95 students, their families, and schools during the past year.



Cooking up some great smiles!

Summary of Activities for 2008/2009

Station Stretch Program

Station Stretch is a district alternate school that enrolls approximately 70 youth (ages 14-17) over the course of a year. The student population is on average 60% male and 40% female. The students that are referred to the program often have academic troubles, social/emotional issues, attendance problems, poor outlook towards education and fear or anxiety about school or being at school. Students in the program are reviewed in three areas: academic achievement; attendance and punctuality; and their attitude and conduct. Students work towards completing their Grade 10 during their time at station stretch and then they are supported to reintegrate into the community high schools. The program works to provide an environment where youth can gain confidence, overcome challenges, develop key skills and attitudes and continue towards their education, career and life goals.

RYSA works with the Richmond School District and provides one Youth and Family Worker (YFW) to support the participants and program. The objectives of this position are to identify youth at risk in the school, improve their social/

emotional well being, reduce family conflict by means of mediation, and make referrals for clients and their families to suitable community resources. Each student receives some level of service ranging from brief consultation to intensive ongoing one to one support. The most prevalent issues include: family conflicts, drug and alcohol misuse, relationships/peer issues, self esteem and grief and loss. These key issues are usually at the root of any attendance or behavioural challenges that have surfaced at school. With the right approach and supports, students demonstrate significant progress both at school and in their personal lives. During the 2008/09 school year, the YFC and Station Stretch provided service to over 63 students. Of those students, 87% of them met the attendance expectations of the program while 89% of them met the behavioural expectations of the program. These high numbers are a result of the support of the approach, the team, the YFW and hard work of students. During the last year over half of the students successfully graduated and moved on to a Grade 11 program in a community school. The remaining students continued their studies at Stretch with

"I can always talk to him about anything, and he would never judge you, and he has been a big part in my success."

the goal of completing their Grade 10. Of those who graduated, about 8 students continued to receive support from the YFC even though they are no longer attending the program. The YFC visited students in their new placements with the objectives of encouraging success, providing transitional support, continued work towards their goals, developing links to resources at their new school, identifying community supports and ensuring that their placements are stable and successful.



Connections Youth Resource Centre

Connections officially opened on May 5th, 2008. The intent of the centre was to meet the needs of youth through linking them to community resources, helping them find a career path, developing their skills, supporting access to training and helping them overcome barriers to succeed in the labour market. Whether it is career counselling, skill building workshops, resume assistance, drop in job search resources, hiring fairs, access to training or other supports – the centre works to help youth to make the connection. The first year was very busy launching and setting up a new centre. We developed posters, flyers, ads and messaging with the help of local youth! We reached out using print, radio and television. Advertisements were placed in various local and lower mainland newspapers and staff spoke on Chinese employment talk shows with local radio stations. In all staff gave over 43 presentations to local community resource agencies and to 10 local high schools. We immediately saw the results and have been working hard to help youth find work they love!

While there are many successes one of the key events this past year was the 2 Day Hiring Extravaganza. Over 40 local companies came out to hire and 1600 job seekers were there looking for work. Feedback from both employers and job seekers was exceptional including comments such as "very well organized," "helpful staff," and "great turnout". After the event we heard back that over 300 people found employment from this event alone.

Connections has made a difference on several levels. At an individual client level, over 125 clients that received case management found employment, in addition we also helped over another 370 people to find employment through the drop in resources and other supports. We had over 4000 visits to the centre during the year and we provided resume, cover letter and transferable skills workshops to over 750 local youth. At a community level we provided information and support to over 18,000 people who attended our annual U-Connect Career and Community

Connections Highlights

- 4600 visits the Centre
- 382 needs assessments
- 495 employed

Fair. Some of the other details about our clients included that 50% of them had high school or less education and 30% had a university education or above. Over 60% of our clients were male, and our largest cultural demographic was Asian, with 70% of our clients listing this as their cultural background/ethnicity.

Overall, the clients who have been case managed by Connections Youth Resource Centre have been very satisfied with the services provided by our team. Many of the clients gained meaningful employment within a week, and most within a month. Our staff have made a difference in the lives of many youth, young parents, and families throughout

the year. From supporting recently immigrated youth to find meaningful work here in Canada, to helping many develop the skills, tools and attitude towards success.

Pathways Aboriginal Centre

Pathways Aboriginal Centre (PAC) has been open for three years. Support for programs, resources and activities through the centre is provided by a variety of funders including: the Government of Canada, the UMAC, GVAUS, the government of BC, Vancouver Coastal health, the Richmond School District and several other grants and donors. The centre continues to build on successes to develop and deliver culturally based supports, resources and activities that promote health and wellness, skill development, leadership and school participation within the Aboriginal community of Richmond.

Many of the Aboriginal children, youth and families living in Richmond have limited or no connection to their culture, may be facing family or personal challenges, are living off-reserve or living as a child in-care. Pathways Aboriginal Centre strives to support Urban Aboriginal people to explore their culture and to bring culturally based resources to Richmond. We work to provide support at the centre, in the community, and within schools across Richmond. Whether it is information and referral, one-one support, group activities, workshops or helping other service providers, we try to ensure that each person obtains the support they need.

We know that everyone we work with has light inside of them that can be grown to support themselves, and others to find and travel their path. Involving our community is critical towards success and with the support of key funders, our community volunteers, the staff, and the help of many other hands we have been able to impact over 90 youth, 42 children, and 60 families. An additional 1100 people have been supported to explore Aboriginal culture through workshops, special events, and celebrations such as National Aboriginal Day. Some of the highlights of this year included: traditional wood carving classes, the making and designing of a pow wow drum for the centre and celebrations, traditional cooking classes with Chef Maluh, Ancient Aboriginal games with Mike James, leadership training through the RALLY project and with Pinnacle Pursuits, traditional ceremonies and elder teachings, nature walks, a trip to the Kelowna Aboriginal Youth Conference, regular drop-ins, family nights and a weekend leadership and life skill retreats.

Pathways Aboriginal Centre houses a number of unique programs and projects. We have shared

some of the achievements for each this past year.

OSKAYAK Youth Program

The youth program at the centre has a vibrant Youth Advisory called the OSKAYAK Youth Council with 9 standing members. These 9 youth advise youth programming, help prioritize services, and have provided mentorship to younger council members – using their experience and leadership training. The Council leads and focuses programming at the centre, helping staff plan and deliver activities and even raise funds for outings. The council hosted a youth driven Christmas Party and led a community celebration where they showed younger kids and parents how to play traditional games – over a 100 community members came out! The Council was also recognized for a second year in a row with a U-Roc Award presented by the city of Richmond. The council attended and represented RYSA and the centre at a 5 day Gathering our Voices conference in Kelowna BC. In addition, the program provides regular drop in activities for youth, cultural outings such as sweats, and works with local elders to pass on the teachings and learning to our youth. Many of the youth have become leaders in the program leading ceremonies and passing on their knowledge to new participants, younger children during art workshops, and helping organize and deliver special events and celebrations such as National Aboriginal Day. This past year we were able to support activities during the summer for many younger kids through summer camps, where some of the older youth again volunteered their time.

RALLY Project

Pathways Aboriginal Centre was also pleased to offer the Richmond Aboriginal Life skills and Leadership for Youth project (RALLY) for



Building a drum with elders

the second year in a row. The RALLY project promoted cultural awareness, self confidence, empowerment, life skills, career exploration and leadership for Aboriginal youth. This project provided opportunities for 18 youth to learn



Traditions and culture passed on

more about their culture, heritage and help prepare them for their future through individual support, group skill building, outdoor activities, involvement in the design and construction of a pow wow drum and participation in a volunteer project. The project was a huge success and allowed many youth opportunities to explore places they would never be able to go, learn so much about their culture and history and truly find themselves. As a result of the project we were able to provide an internship to one of the youth graduates, several other youth defined their career paths, two obtained employment and several others have stayed active at the centre and are passing on their experience to new participants.

National Aboriginal Day

National Aboriginal Day Celebrations were held for the second year in a row here in Richmond. This year had over 700 people in attendance. The day was made possible thanks to dozens of volunteers, the support of the OSKAYAK Youth Council, the Pathways Advisory Council, the Presbyterian Church, the Government of Canada, the BC Government, Vancouver Coastal Health and the City of Richmond. Over 20 artists and entertainers showcased Aboriginal culture and talents, several informational booths were set up for visitors and we were also able to develop a digital storytelling project about the day and what it means to be Aboriginal from a youth perspective. This project was completed and will be used at next years celebrations, on our website and as part of our ongoing community development work.

School Outreach Program

Our school based Aboriginal worker provided support to over 50 children, and youth in the past year. This position works in partnership with the centre and the First Nations Resource Teachers to support the cultural and support needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families in Richmond. This includes one to one sessions, group work, cultural workshops, advocacy, community referrals, housing search support and helping many of the youth



Exploring our history together

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are critical to our success and we truly want to thank each and every one of you! Whether you helped out at a community event, volunteered as a tutor/mentor, supported recreational activities or gave of your time to help with a committee or fundraising - each of you has made a difference!

"One of the things I have to offer is time. I have to say that I think I got the better end of the deal! Working with the youth really inspired me and it is a great way to keep young!"

to overcome barriers to succeeding at school or at home. This past year we offered several culturally based workshops with Aboriginal artists such as George Littlechild, outings to harvest cedar, worked with a number of youth and parents to build drums and supported many clients to link to needed resources in our community. During the past year over 50 clients received support, we helped over 35 different families and participated in events that reached out to over 1100 people and service providers. The graduation rate for youth we worked with was over 90%!

Here is what a few of you had to say:



Big smiles... Big Plans!



Youth helping the community

With the hard work of all of the staff, participants, volunteers, and new and old community supporters we look forward to another year working alongside our vibrant community.

"I learned so much more than what I was expecting, different ways to interact and how to really engage the kids. There are quiet times and challenging ones, but we can learn so much that is related to the real world, it's an amazing education."

"I started volunteering, well because we had to for school. I have to say though I have continued because I really like it! I have made new friends, learned so much and really feel like I am helping."

Thank you for your dedication, time, passion and most of all for making a difference in your community!

Financial Report

Assets	2009	2008
Current Assets:		
Cash	\$ 245,036	\$ 59,108
Accounts receivable	43,120	67,897
Securities	124,603	195,366
Prepaid expenses	8,232	7,910
Capital assets (Note 3)	460,626	464,921
Total current assets	\$ 881,617	\$ 795,202
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 35,863	\$ 32,395
Deposits	25,200	-
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	181,603	92,017
Total current liabilities	242,666	124,412
Deferred Capital Contributions (Note 5)	212,858	213,394
Total liabilities	\$ 455,524	\$ 337,806
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	\$ 178,059	\$ 205,868
Investment in capital assets	248,034	251,528
Total net assets	\$ 881,617	\$ 795,202



The rewards of volunteering



Learning today for tomorrow

Our Stories

“Before I came to Stretch, I was always skipping school, and not doing any homework. I always skipped my first and last blocks of the day. For my B and C classes, if I did my homework, I just copied other people’s work during our 15-minute breaks. My teachers gave me so many chances, and they tried to help me pass, but I didn’t care ... I still skipped and didn’t do the work that they gave me a second chance on. I had a problem with the vice principal at my school, because it seemed like if anything happened, it had something to do with me. Now, I’ve learned to respect my teachers, because the teachers at Stretch are way easier to get along with. They don’t yell at you for not being at school, or not doing our work. They put our responsibility into our own hands. Now, I don’t skip school, and I finish my work on time and put effort into it.”

“With your help I was able to figure out what I wanted to do and with the training I got through the centre I am working now and enjoying my job.”



“As a parent I don’t always have the money to get my kids into fun stuff after school and during the summer. I was so thankful for your help and what you did for my kids.”

“I like homework club very much because it helps me a lot at school and at my homework that I have to do. What I like best about homework club is playing with the tutors... I am enjoying the extra time spent here ... I am also making a lot more friends. I am learning a lot more things at Homework Club...”



“It was because I came and practiced interview skills that I got this job. They asked me some of the same questions we practiced. I was able to answer them with confidence and they gave me the job.”



Finding work we love!

“Your workshop was great! I didn’t think that employment and career stuff could be interesting.”

“I was really down when I came to the centre. I had just been let go from work, didn’t know how I was going to pay my bills or what to do. I felt lucky when I got your help. Right away you focussed on what my needs were and helped me see that I could find work and might be able to get help from the government. Well within two weeks I had another job and my landlord as you suggested gave me a bit of a break. Thank you!”

Our Funding Partners



Our Funders and Supporters

Community Leader (\$10,000 and above)

Business Objects Foundation	Estate	School District #38 Employees	Vancouver Coastal Health
BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres	Helping Hands of WorkSafe BC	Service Canada	Coast Capital Savings
Children's Aid Foundation	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	Government of BC	Richmond School Board
City of Richmond	Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness Canada	Trade Secret	Richmond Sunset Rotary
Coast Capital Savings		United Way of the Lower Mainland	Royal Bank Community Foundation
Edith Janet Strangroom			

Mentorship Level (\$5,000 and above)

Centre for Sustainability	Honda Canada Inc	Richmond Community Foundation
Dennison Chevrolet	Kids Up Front Foundation	Richmond Health Services
Enterprising Non-Profits	Mr. Marcus Lai	Rona Inc
Hudson's Bay Co	Mr. Peter Lee	

Coach Level (\$2,500 and above)

C-Link	MDSI	S&T Stereo Printers
Crush Champagne Lounge	Panasonic Canada	School District #38 Employees
Canadian Heritage	Pro Claim Restoration	Vancouver Foundation

Friends of RYSA (\$250 and above)

Friends of RYSA	Mr. Colin McDouall	Ms. Melanie Tremblay
Abbacadabra	Mr. Chris Benning	Office Depot Foundation
Art Home Studio	Mr. Craig McLeod	Perfect Lies
Boys & Girls Club	Mr. Dave Kustra	Presbyterian Church of Canada
Dash BC	Mr. Derik Yih	Richmond Auto Mall Association
Geopacific Consultants Ltd.	Mr. Frank Peng	Richmond Holdings
Greig Sheppard, CGA	Mr. Grante Goodwyn	Provincial Employees Community Services Fund
Harmony Airways	Mr. James Brown	Rogers Wireless
Hudson Bay Company	Mr. James Suk	S&T Stereo Printers
Intrawest Corporation	Ms. Leona Kustra	Swing Fitted Custom Golf Clubs
The Fairmont Royal York	Mr. Leon van der Poel	The Tapestry Church
The Fairmont Vancouver Airport	Mr. Nimunter Jehman	Urban Impact Recycling
Langara College	Mr. Marshall Thompson	Que Pasa Mexican Foods
Mr. Aaron Broomfield	Mr. Scott Wittenberg	WCB Employees
Mr. Alex Bell	Mr. Thomas Moffatt	
Mr. Brian Tatam	Mr. Tony Pringle	
Ms. Carmelita Domingo	Ms. Anita Irani	

Get Involved!

Richmond Youth Service Agency has been providing programs, services and support for children, youth and families in our community for over 35 years. We believe everyone can make a difference in our community and our future, by taking the time to change the life of a child or young person. Find out about how you can get involved and make a difference today!

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