

Media Release

Educational program sponsored by Coastal Community will support budding entrepreneurs

December 2, 2011: Local students will offer a convenient alternative for holiday shoppers this year through PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs®. This hands-on educational program, which is sponsored by Coastal Community Credit Union, empowers youth in grades 4 through 8 to develop their own business ventures. Over the past two months, students from 12 classrooms in Nanaimo, Campbell River and Courtenay have honed their creative, organizational and problem-solving skills while designing products, completing market research and calculating start-up costs. They will soon see the response of real customers at showcase events being held at their schools.

“Coastal Community Credit Union is proud to sponsor PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs®,” says Allyson Prescesky, Manager of Community Experience and Communications. “It is part of our commitment to contribute to the wellbeing of the communities we serve.” Over the past nine years the program has proven to be highly engaging for local students. “It’s really, really awesome. They love it. It’s very meaningful for them,” reports Nanaimo teacher Cheryl Garrett regarding the enthusiasm of the grade 6/7 students at Georgia Avenue Community School. “The business project makes learning real and allows students to have their own personalized learning experiences,” explains Prescesky. “They take charge by setting their own goals and creating their own solutions.”

Presenting learning outcomes as tools to help young entrepreneurs achieve their goals makes core subjects such as mathematics more relevant and fun. Nanaimo teacher Sara Craven has been showing her students at Rock City Elementary how to use addition, subtraction and decimals to make change and calculate profit and loss. Similarly, Sam Ogrodnik’s grade 5/6 class at École Willow Point in Campbell River has been learning about surveying by completing market research in the school playground. They used technology to graph their survey results and then interpreted the data to finalize their product designs.

Huband Park Elementary teacher Catherine Manson in Courtenay is very impressed with the creativity of her class. She reports that many of the young entrepreneurs have focused their designs on the giving season. “It is such an experience doing it at Christmas,” she remarks. “I am amazed with the prototypes that my students have developed.” PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs® also supports the spirit of giving in that the young entrepreneurs donate a portion of their profits to a charity of their choice. For example, some members of Cheryl Garrett’s class have decided to support a school in Uganda.

Participating teachers report that the enterprising students are finalizing their business plans and preparing to sell their handcrafted gift items at this season’s series of showcase events. Featured products include wooden bird houses and pine cone feeders, “make your own” model boat sets, felt pillows with Aboriginal designs, 3D Christmas trees of coat hangers and felt, and joke sacks of genuine coal chipped from a nearby coal face. A student of Colombian heritage has created a line of traditional jewelry with glue and coloured embroidery thread. Another girl is using her ingenuity to upcycle scraps of wood from her father’s workshop into festive Christmas tree ornaments.

To find out more about PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs™, visit www.cccu.ca or www.powerplay4success.com, or contact PowerPlay Strategies at 1-888-880-0816.

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Schedule for Upcoming Showcase Events

Nanaimo:

Georgia Avenue Community School	625 Georgia Avenue	Thursday, December 8 th	11:00 – 12:15, 1:00 – 2:00
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Campbell River:

Penfield Elementary	525 Hilchey Road	Tuesday, December 6 th	9:30 – 2:00
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Quadra Elementary	678 Heriot Bay Road	Wednesday, December 7 th	10:30 – 2:00
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École Willow Point	250 Larwood Road	Thursday, December 15 th	10:30 – 2:30
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Comox Valley:

Huband Park Elementary	5120 Mottishaw Road	Tuesday, December 13 th	1:00 – 3:00
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