



TOGETHER, LET'S DO GREAT THINGS

## **Coastal Community grant helps Victoria Event Centre launch non-profit café**

**Monday, July 30, 2018 — Vancouver Island & the Gulf Islands:** Thanks to a \$20,000 Building Healthier Communities Fund grant from Coastal Community Credit Union, Victoria residents will soon have a free downtown space for meeting and networking. The Victoria Multicultural Society received the funds to help its social enterprise, the Victoria Event Centre (VEC), launch a non-profit café and workspace pilot at the VEC.

The Victoria Event Centre Café Pilot Program will use the space to complement VEC's existing evening programming, guided by three main objectives:

- To create a free and open work and social space during the day in downtown Victoria with no obligation to spend money at the café;
- To sell affordable coffee, tea and snacks that will support the VEC and its programming; and
- To provide a place for meetings of non-profit and grassroots initiatives.

"The VEC is already an important hub for grassroots organizers and activists, so testing the support for a free meeting place felt like a natural step," said Eric Nordal, a VEC employee and Retail Action Network (RAN) organizer. RAN and other groups will be partnering with the VEC to host meetings, workshops and other daytime programming as part of the Café space, Nordal explained.

The VEC will use the funds to renovate and equip the café space, train staff, and promote the program, followed by an evaluation of the success and sustainability of the enterprise. They will also reach out to local sustainable suppliers for the café menu. The organization's emphasis on serving grassroots communities while strengthening the social economy made it a natural fit for the Building Healthier Communities Fund, according to Allyson Prescesky, Senior Manager, Community and Communications, with Coastal Community.

"We're excited to fund a project that supports local social and economic development," she said. "Coastal Community is looking forward to working with the VEC on future financial literacy opportunities in the new space."

Since 2014, BHCF has given hundreds of thousands of dollars in seed money to help dozens of local organizations fund long-term initiatives that contribute to building healthier Island communities. BHCF looks for projects that support a broad range of people, are sustainable and make a difference to a local community.

For more information on our Building Healthier Communities fund, please visit [www.cccu.ca](http://www.cccu.ca).

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### CONTACT:

Gerry Weaver, Communications Specialist  
gerry.weaver@cccu.ca | toll-free: 1.888.741.1010



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About

COASTAL COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

***Improving financial health, enriching lives, and building healthier communities...*** These are at the core of who we are and what we do at Coastal Community Credit Union (CCCU). With these as our focus areas, we continue to grow our position as the largest financial services organization based on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, while remaining among the largest credit unions in British Columbia.

In order to help our members and clients improve their financial health, CCCU's family of companies offers a wide range of products, services and expertise in personal, business and commercial banking, general and commercial insurance\* and wealth management\*\*. Across the Islands, we operate 24 branches, 16 insurance offices, four regional business centres, one centralized contact centre (1.888.741.1010) with extended service hours, plus a team of mobile experts and a full range of online and mobile services. CCCU was the first to bring cutting-edge Interactive Teller Machine technology to the Island and continues to add new innovations to simplify finances—and life. By really listening and understanding, and then providing meaningful solutions, Coastal Community's 600-person-strong team is able to help our members and clients achieve their financial and life goals.

As a 100% Island-based business, we're committed to making meaningful differences in the places we call home. CCCU continues to help build healthier communities in part through donations, sponsorships, scholarship and fundraising efforts totaling over half-a-million dollars each year.

Want to learn more? Visit [cccu.ca](http://cccu.ca) or join us on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

\*References to "insurance" in this article refer to the insurance services provided through Coastal Community Insurance Services (2007) Ltd., which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Coastal Community Credit Union

\*\*References to "wealth management" in this article refer to the financial planning and investment services provided through Coastal Community Private Wealth Group, a division of Coastal Community Financial Management, Inc. which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Coastal Community Credit Union