Panel Presentation

Suggestions from Panel Members:
• Don’t rely on phone or email to make contact with 1st Nations, pay a personal visit... if you don’t get an answer the first time, keep knocking on the door!
• Recognize the long-term effects that colonialism and Residential Schools have had on Aboriginal peoples and that racism and negative stereotypes still abound in our society. Because of this history, be aware that organizations must earn the trust of 1st Nations.
• Recognize that we in the mainstream carry much privilege, and some of that has come at the expense of Aboriginal peoples.
• Be prepared to look inside ourselves to examine the stereotypes and biases we may carry
• A good ice-breaker when you meet a 1st Nations person is to ask “Where are you from?” This provides an opportunity for people to tell their story.
• Leave room for 1st Nations people to tell their stories – remember that their history is an oral, rather than written one.
• In Greater Victoria, when acknowledging that we are on 1st Nations Coast Salish territory, the correct term to use is the traditional territory of the Lekwungen people.
• Check out the First Voices website (http://www.firstvoices.com/) to learn about Aboriginal languages

Global Cafe Notes

1. What efforts or interactions has your organization done in the past to build relationships with 1st Nations communities?
• Many organizations begin meetings and events by respectfully acknowledging they are on the traditional territory of 1st Nations people
• Funding West Coast Challenge Youth Engagement
• Attended event at UVic to better understand 1st Nations challenges
• Royal Roads has full-time 1st Nations Liaison person
• Job Fair recruiting targeting 1st Nations
• Connecting with Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC)
• Connecting 1st Nations to volunteer program
• Provided workshop on volunteering, helped start relationship
• Partnering with 1st Nations to create a sustainable business model for medical marijuana
• Bringing Canadians For Compassion to Victoria
• Partnering with 1st Nations communities to develop health resources & education
• Participation in Idle No More to show support for those who are oppressed
• Becon Support Services has Welcome Signs in Group Homes in traditional languages
Global Cafe Notes: continued...

1. What efforts or interactions has your organization done in the past to build relationships with 1st Nations communities?
   - Royal Roads - full-time 1st Nations Liaison person
   - Literacy Victoria:
     • Worked on the ALES program
     • Partnership with the VNFC CEER dept.
     • Participated in cultural awareness workshop at VNFC for LV volunteers
   - Kardel Consulting
     • Has 1st Nations clients
     • Assisting 1st Nations to support people with disabilities
     • Working to hire 1st Nations employees
   - Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL):
     • School outreach
     • Partnered to develop library at VNFC
     • Craigflower school & kindergarten visit & welcome
     • Partnered with Boys & Girls Club to offer anti-bullying workshop to adolescent girls & provide library cards
     • Displayed graphics/posters/books representing 1st Nations
     • Removed financial barrier for Aboriginal people to obtain a library card
     • Hoping to create and display plaque acknowledging library on traditional territory
     • Offers 1st Nations books and other resources for all age groups
   - Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee
     • reaching out to other partners, possible 1st Nations membership
   - Saanich PD
     • Drumming Workshop
     • “The Spirit Has No Colour” DVD
   - Victoria PD
     • Rebuilding 1st Nations relationships by learning their needs and attempting to get to root of problems
     • Part of new Outreach Team to Aboriginal clients (713 Outreach)
   - Dedicated Songhees & Esquimalt 1st Nations liaison officer (RCMP) with a satellite office in the Songhees Wellness Centre
   • Workshop to help people develop strategies to address biased comments
Global Cafe Notes

1. What efforts or interactions has your organization done in the past to build relationships with 1st Nations communities?

- Belfry Theatre:
  - offered programs by 1st Nations artists,
  - working to expand its diversity both in terms of performances, performers and audience

- Red Cross:
  - Hired 1st Nations individual in the role of Aboriginal Community Development
  - Walking the Prevention Circle
  - Facilitation to over 100 people discussing challenges and strengths and historic legacy of Residential Schools
  - Opening up dialogues on bullying
  - 5 day workshop on developing healthy relationships
  - Working with Aboriginal groups across the country
  - Building productive relationships by planning with 1st Nations and focusing on needs
    - E.g. First Aid for youth/elders and Preparedness Planning

- Vancity:
  - partnered with Songhees to finance the Welcome Centre
  - partnered with Shoreline Middle School to plant Camas
  - funded “Feasting For Change”
  - providing financial literacy – “Aboriginal Best program”
  - proactively seeking to hire members of the Aboriginal community
  - supported the Reconciliation Walk
  - developed very inclusive policies around working with diversity

- Greater Victoria School Districts:
  - Inform newcomer families about 1st Nations and coordinate meetups
  - Offer programs to educate about Aboriginal culture

- Indigenous Perspectives Society:
  - Partnering with Prov. Govt & ensuring true engagement of community members
  - Educating the mainstream public
Global Cafe Notes - continued

1. What efforts or interactions has your organization done in the past to build relationships with 1st Nations communities?
   • Community Living Victoria:
     • Family support program
     • Supporting some 1st Nations initiatives, but funding an issue as they are prevented from offering services to people living on Reserves
   • UVic Child & Youth Care Program has learning about & working with indigenous people as part of the curriculum
   • VIHA
     • Spend ½ day each week on Saanich Peninsula to meet with 1st Nations
     • 1st Nations people part of VIHA workforce
     • Learn from current 1st Nations clients to help provide better service to others
   • Communica
     • Teaches kids a creative toolkit for cultural competency and conflict engagement skills
     • Connects with Youth & Family counselors at Craigflower school and other key 1st Nations community members
     • Makes direct connection with 1st Nations for guidance
   • Municipality of Saanich:
     • Built relationship with 1st Nations as part of Craigflower Bridge reconstruction
     • Working with Craigflower School to develop archives and a potential arts collaboration
     • Works with schools & VNFC to develop a Youth Strategy
   • ICA:
     • Coordinating seminars such as this one
     • Dedicated to being an ally and helping to build bridges between communities
     • Coordinated an arts project focused on 1st Nations reconciliation
   • City of Victoria
     • 1st Nations part of Official Community Plan
     • Has Protocols Officer
     • Formal relationship between local Chiefs and Mayor
     • Housing Program
     • Creating and displaying cultural markers (Signs of Lekwungen)
     • Has engaged a “Remains Sites” consultant
   • The CRD is working to build relationships with 1st Nations – going to their “homes” and learning protocols
Global Cafe Notes

2. **Going forward, how can your organization build relationships and/or become an ally with 1st Nations communities?**
   - Respectfully acknowledging territory
   - Knocking on their doors to invite participation/partnering
   - Provide information to public on 1st Nations events
     - Make distribution lists available to notify public
   - Accept offers to participate in events
   - Check out First Voices website & app
   - Provide plant knowledge cards (and link to distribution list)
   - Back to school picnic
   - Partner with VNFC
   - Display maps of 1st Nations territory and languages
   - Collaborate and share resources
   - Develop more awareness of traditions and diversity of 1st nations
   - Attend events as a participant, not as a spectator
   - Create an Educational Council and build relationships
   - Approach with gifts and food
   - Ensure the partnership is in 1st Nations best interest & not “your way”
   - Asking open-ended questions
   - Assist with language revitalization
   - Approach with a “spirit of giving”
   - Knock on doors, be curious, ask questions
   - Examine our own stereotypes and prejudices
   - We’re going to try to break down walls and look for opportunities for true communication – look to build alliances by searching out common interests
   - Invite 1st Nations to participate in our story-telling groups
   - Look for the possibility of creating a Transformation Theatre project involving 1st Nations communities
   - The rhythm and cadence of our speech and thoughts is different from that of 1st Nations – I’m going to try to fit mine more to theirs when communicating
   - Watch, listen, think and be aware that you’re in someone else’s home!
Global Cafe Notes- continued

2. Going forward, how can your organization build relationships and/or become an ally with 1st Nations communities?
   • Be genuine – authentically curious!
   • Be brave, humble, respectful and honest and willing to learn from our mistakes
   • Spirit to Spirit connection to help build trust
   • Educate ourselves about the impact of colonization, Residential Schools and Indian Act
   • Listen, show up and bear witness
   • Take steps to understand 1st Nations protocols and to learn who to connect with and the best method
     • Try to ensure not offending anyone or stepping on their toes
     • Learn what it means to be an ally
   • Create initiatives to build “Block Watch”, resident organizations, “get to know your neighbour” opportunities
   • Goal to engage 1st Nations in developing business programs
   • Seek out funding (grants, govt, private) that will support organizations working with 1st Nations
   • Work with service providers on effective harm reduction programs