

THE ^{Big} SCOOP

What's happening at United Community Services Co-op

#21 – February 23, 2007

At a recent Directors' meeting Tim Beachy noted there are currently nine consultants working with the Co-op on a range of interesting initiatives, and adding up, in the past few months, to 3.7 FTEs not counting Tim. More is merrier! Be in touch: info@ucscoop.com 604-718-8292

→ Social Economy: "Charting the Right Course"

What do we mean by "social economy"? What are the merits of different definitions? How can we learn from the diversity of perspectives, and also speak with a united voice to policy makers?

These sorts of questions formed the backdrop for the recent highly successful Pan Canadian Conference on Social Enterprise. (Over 500 delegates from across Canada gathered in Vancouver January 28-31; the target was 300-400, and the numbers of young people participating was particularly heartening. Kudos to David Lepage and the Enterprising NonProfit Program for their excellent work convening the event.)

In preparation for the Conference, BC Social Economy Roundtable (including the Co-op's Tim Beachy) created a discussion paper called "**Charting the Right Course**". The paper focuses on where there is general agreement and identifies twelve ways forward under the following four headings:

- Fostering the best financing continuum
- Growing the market place for social economy products and services
- Enabling entrepreneurial activity in the nonprofit/community sector, and
- Protecting and investing in social capital.

Tim Beachy chaired a dialogue session on the paper that was so well attended they had to move to a bigger space. Tim was also a resource person for two other sessions: chairing a panel on fee paying clients, and presenting on Social enterprise and the co-operative model.

The Co-op continues to be highly committed to furthering dialogue and action in support of social economy activity, both locally and nationally.

→ Help Build Cohesion

If you are a stakeholder in community-based health care (staff, volunteer, director) you're invited to a March 16 roundtable discussion to develop a provincial action plan for community health. Using the findings ([click here](#)) from the **Building Cohesion in Health Care Project**, we'll explore how to use the \$100M *Innovation in Health Care Fund* to meet our common needs and build a stronger sector.

If you have questions or to register, please contact [Jan Taylor](#) or (604) 939-2613.

→ Talk IS cheap – New deal

The Co-op is in the final stages of renewing our bulk purchasing agreement with TELUS, and the draft contract has a new long distance rate of just three cents per minute.

This could be a welcome source of savings, especially for members not already in the pool: Based on a USCS survey conducted last Spring, such members pay, on average, over 10 cents a minute for long distance calls.

Coupled with average savings of \$10/month on phone line fees, we estimate pool members will save \$1M in the next five years!

There are currently 1,150 phone lines in the bulk purchasing pool (which was first launched in 1999). For more info or to take the simple steps for joining, contact the [Annie White](#).

Innovations Expo, April 19

All are invited to this trade show format event profiling innovative projects and programs of 30 agencies serving people with disabilities.

Themes include employment development, affordable housing, and social enterprise; and there'll be special presentations by Michael Kendrick and Denis Harkens. For more info, click [here](#), and to register, click [here](#).