

For immediate release – Central and South Okanagan

Local charities get boost from new Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund

October 3, 2018 – Today, United Way Central and South Okanagan/Similkameen (CSO), in partnership with Interior Savings Credit Union, is pleased to announce the recipients of the inaugural investments from the Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund. In Penticton, the Okanagan School of the Arts and in Kelowna, Elevation Outdoors secured funding designed to help them build long-term sustainable revenue for their social enterprise programs. Both organizations will receive 15 months of mentorship through Purppl’s Social Enterprise Acceleration program.

Okanagan School of the Arts’ Shatford Centre is a beautiful heritage building in the heart of Penticton. Currently the Centre provides event and program space but sees huge potential to create an innovative hub for creative community events and connections for social services, non-profit, business and arts organizations.



Figure 1: From L to R: Andrew Greer (Purppl Community Catalyst), Alyssa Farr (Purppl Entrepreneur-in-Residence), Pat Field (President, Okanagan School of the Arts), Reanne Holden-Amadio (Community Investment Manager) and Helen Jackman (Executive Director) with United Way CSO

“The mentorship provided will help the Shatford Centre realize its full potential,” says President Pat Field. “It will enable us to evolve our existing business model and take it to new heights, generating income while building a regionally-significant creativity and innovation centre for economic and social well-being of our community.”



Figure 2: L to R: Tori Hanson (Founder, Elevation Outdoors), Sue Manzuik (Community Engagement Specialist, Interior Savings Credit Union), Reanne Holden-Amadio (United Way), Jessica Bodrug (Program Coordinator, Elevation Outdoors), Mike Greer (Executive Director, Elevation Outdoors)

Elevation Outdoors' social enterprise project has two components; the Intro to Adventure Summer Camp and the Elevation Bus and Bike Rental programs. The Intro to Adventure Summer Camp is a fee-for-service program that assists young people to gain access to outdoor recreation opportunities and the Rental Program utilizes existing assets for rental to other local organizations and companies.

"This investment will enable Elevation Outdoors to leverage the skills and equipment we already hold to increase our reach and become a more sustainable organization," says Elevation Outdoors Founder Tori Hanson. "Our summer camps aim to get more young people into the outdoors, contributing to their mental and physical well-being, while generating income to subsidize our programs for at risk youth. The rental of our bike fleet and bus will help offset yearly operating costs."

Purppl's program teams social enterprises with a pair of experienced "Entrepreneurs in Residence" to help them refine and scale their business model. Two such Entrepreneurs in Residence are Alyssa Farr and Fraser Campbell. Alyssa cofounded a social enterprise commercial, industrial, and residential, repair contracting company. She also helped to initiate three social enterprises with Metro Community. Fraser is a serial entrepreneur who grew fencing and pallet companies across Canada, among other startups. He is also director with the Kelowna Food Bank and contributed significantly to their new building project. Entrepreneurs in Residence bring a balance of experience and coaching while also helping to hold each social enterprise accountable to moving forward.



“For United Way and Interior Savings Credit Union this collaborative fund is about supporting the capacity and long term sustainability of charities in our region,” says Helen Jackman, Executive Director of United Way CSO. “The fund is ground breaking in our region and something we hope to repeat in future years as we learn how this kind of smart investment can spark new social businesses.”

To apply, charities needed a well-formed social enterprise idea - one that, with the right support, could grow to deliver both economic and social outcomes. Applicant charities submitted their proposals at the end of May and were invited to present their social enterprise at a Dragon’s Den style pitch night to an independent selection panel that scrutinized potential social impact, sustainability, ability to scale, and leadership.

More information on the Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund available online at:

<http://unitedwaycso.com/social-enterprise-accelerator-fund/>

PARTNERS:

About Interior Savings

Interior Savings is a member-owned, democratically-controlled credit union dedicated to creating local money while helping to build vibrant communities. The Credit Union offers personal and commercial banking and a full range of insurance and wealth management services to more than 70,000 members across 14 communities. In the last 15 years, Interior Savings has returned over \$58 million to members through its Member Rewards Program and invested nearly \$8 million in local community initiatives. See www.interiorsavings.com

About Purppl

Purppl is a social enterprise accelerator that provides structured mentorship, training, and tools to help implement and scale entrepreneurial revenue models. Purppl’s Social Enterprise Acceleration Program is for social entrepreneurs who need support to grow and scale sustainable business models to help solve tough community, social, and environmental challenges. Purppl is incorporated as a Community Contribution Company (CCC) which is BC’s unique incorporation model for social enterprises. See www.purppl.com

About United Way CSO:

For over 65 years, the United Way of the Central and South Okanagan/Similkameen has served the region from Lake Country in the North, to Osoyoos and Princeton in the South. Our mission is to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action. The United Way invests in three focus areas that support all that kids can be, move people from poverty to possibility and builds strong communities. We also invest resources in local capacity building and community initiatives that support our mission. See www.unitedwaycso.com or call 1-855-232-1321.

Media contacts:

- ✚ Helen Jackman, Executive Director, **United Way CSO**
T: 250-860-2356 C: 250 215 6029 E: helen@unitedwaycso.com
- ✚ Amanda Loewen, Community Lead, **Purppl**
C: 250-462-3102 E: amanda@purppl.com