

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release



DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER WINS BCRPA 2021 PROGRAM EXCELLENCE AWARD

Vancouver (May 5, 2021) - The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) presented its Program Excellence Award for members with a population of over 15,000 to the District of West Vancouver today for its Feed the Need program. The award recognizes a creative, successful, and innovative program which may serve as a model for other recreation and parks agencies to enhance their services.

Feed the Need is a volunteer-driven program that provides nutritious meals to vulnerable seniors in West Vancouver. The program operates out of the community's Seniors' Activity Centre (SAC) and began in March 2020 after the COVID-19 pandemic uncovered chronic food security issues for vulnerable citizens who lacked the means to access regular meals. To identify each individual at-risk citizen, volunteers conducted wellness assessments by placing phone calls to over 6,700 seniors in the community.

Feed the Need now delivers three meals a week to 366 vulnerable seniors living in low-income subsidized housing in West Vancouver. At the end of 2020, the program had delivered more than 26,000 free meals. Feed the Need recently raised over \$400,000 in donations to support an additional 20 months of meals, allowing volunteers to fulfill their intention to continue the program for the duration of the pandemic, and beyond.

"The District of West Vancouver's Feed the Need program is a highly deserving recipient of the BCRPA Program Excellence Award. This innovative food security program meets a direct need within the community of West Vancouver and supports a continuum of support services needed to address physical, mental and social well-being," said Rebecca Tunnacliffe, CEO of the BC Recreation and Parks Association.

The Program Excellence Award is one of four provincial awards presented virtually by BCRPA on behalf of over 3,700 recreation and parks sector members from across BC, each working to enhance the physical and mental health, wellness, connectedness and quality of life of their communities.

Runners up for the 2021 Program Excellence Award include the District of Saanich for the HeArts Together Community Art program, and the City of New Westminster for the Remembrance Day Re-imagined program.

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BACKGROUND

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) is the voice of public recreation and parks, and champions the sector's development of healthy people and connected communities. Representing over 95% of the provinces' local governments, we play a central role in supporting the enrichment and improvement of the quality of life of British Columbians. Our work as a not-for-profit organization focuses on creating community connectedness and well-being based on the knowledge and recognition that recreation and active living, as well as access to parks and the natural environment, have significant impacts on our physical and mental health.

Since 1958, the BCRPA has provided leadership, training and support, fostering the principles of accessibility and inclusiveness, to help its members meet provincial and local mental health and physical activity priorities.

www.bcrpa.bc.ca/about-us/