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CHEAKAMUS FOUNDATION RECEIVES \$10,000 FROM VANCOUVER FOUNDATION

Brackendale, BC - The Cheakamus Foundation for Environmental Learning is proud to announce a contribution in the amount of \$10,000 from the Vancouver Foundation. This funding will provide for the start of a new program to strengthen understanding of indigenous knowledges and identify ways to move forward together at this historic point in Canada's development.

The *Strengthening Futures Together* initiative will enable local youth, elders, and community experts to identify needs and share ideas for future growth as part of the Truth & Reconciliation activities at Cheakamus Centre. Activities related to this project will include: Ch'yákmesh indigenous cultural professional development opportunities, community feedback sessions and program planning input from partners. Results from this first phase will be shared at Cheakamus Centre's Annual Open House on May 6, 2018. Hosted in the Cheakamus Centre longhouse, project contributors will showcase concepts with the general public during a participatory workshop.

"The Vancouver Foundation support for this social innovation initiative is part of a larger campus renewal project rolling out over the next few years. The process will enable us to strengthen relationships with current partners and develop new relationships with those who share a similar vision and values. Activities such as these are springboard for action and provide opportunities for enriched understanding." shares Cathy Jenkins, project manager for campus renewal.

Now in its 49th year, Cheakamus Centre is an environmental and indigenous cultural education organization located on the traditional territories of the Ch'yákmesh people in Paradise Valley, just north of Squamish, British Columbia. Unique features of the 420-acre ecological reserve include a traditional teaching longhouse, salmon hatchery and a network of restored spawning channels that wind through ancient cedars. Cheakamus Centre is home to a large congregation of wintering bald eagles, five species of Pacific salmon, and an array of wildlife, plants, farm animals, and honeybees that live in this rich diversity of habitats and ecosystems.

Formerly named and fondly remembered by many as the "North Vancouver Outdoor School", the Centre is a well-loved tradition dating back to 1969. Cheakamus Centre serves over 15,000 visitors annually from the Sea to Sky Corridor, Lower Mainland and beyond. Students, even as adults, frequently talk about this overnight learning experience as a highlight of their school years.

Cheakamus Centre also hosts visitors from around the world for special events, workshops, conferences, meetings, and retreats. The Centre has received numerous provincial, national, and international awards recognizing our work as leaders in place-based education.

The campus renewal initiative includes new and upgraded facilities, enhanced programming, and public events and learning offerings associated with the Friends of Cheakamus.

<http://www.cheakamuscentre.ca/donate/friends-of-cheakamus>.

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