

WISH
Drop-In Centre Society

WISH NEWS

Spring 2016

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26th Annual Women's Memorial March

The 26th Annual Women's Memorial March is held on Valentine's Day to honour the memory of all women from the Downtown Eastside who have died due to physical, mental, emotional and spiritual violence.

Now in its 26th year, the March brings courage and commitment to end the violence that vulnerable women in the Downtown Eastside face on a daily basis.

According to WISH Executive Director, Mebrat Beyene:

"Despite the rain, so many showed up to remember, show love, and highlight the issue of Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls. It was an honour for WISH to continue to be part of the Women's Memorial March planning committee and to see the community come out and show solidarity."



(Photo Credit: Doug Baines UBCIC)

The February 14th Women's Memorial March is an opportunity to come together to grieve the loss of our beloved sisters, remember the women who are still missing, and to dedicate ourselves to justice.

Change in Our Backyard

Change in Our Backyard is a community based research and advocacy project at WISH.

We engaged sex-working women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to develop a resource booklet for their peers.

The booklet offers sex workers' insights into aspects of life as diverse as self-care, addiction, health, housing, tenant and patient rights, family, children and working on the streets.



It was made possible by a very generous grant from the Catherine Donnelly Foundation for which we are truly grateful. These booklets were published and then distributed to women in the WISH community.

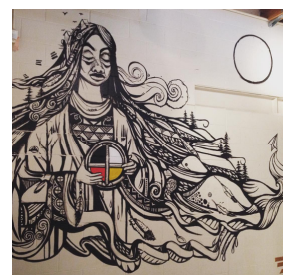
We are very thankful to all the women who participated in this ground breaking project and to Nora, Adriana, Nathan & Betsy; the WISH staff who coordinated it.

New Mural!



(K!mmortal in front of Mural in WISH Drop-In Centre) Photo Credit: <http://www.cbc.ca/beta/arts/exhibitionists/k-immortal-is-creating-her-own-universe-out-of-art-music-and-filipino-tradition-1.3492981>

In January, Vancouver artist K!mmortal donated her time, vision, and talent to WISH by painting an amazing mural in our Drop-In Centre. Participants in the Drop-In Centre have called the mural peaceful, powerful, traditional and some said it makes them think of freedom. Thanks K!mmortal.



(The finished Mural in WISH Drop-In Centre)



We asked and our donors answered!

Our 2015 annual holiday campaign raised more than \$50,000 in support of the programs and services at WISH Drop-in Centre. Many thanks to our very generous anonymous donor who matched all donations over \$250. Thank you!

Some of WISH's Key recommendations for the inquiry are:

- The inquiry must be led by Indigenous women;
- The inquiry should come to neighbourhoods like the DTES and hear from residents in accessible locations and formats;
- The inquiry must hear from women who are directly impacted by gendered violence;
- The inquiry must have a multi-jurisdictional approach;
- The inquiry must look at sex work and the impact that Canada's current, problematic Prostitution laws is having on street-based, survival sex workers;
- Finally, we strongly encourage the inquiry to consult with those women-led, women-serving front-line organizations and service providers working with the women and issues mentioned above.

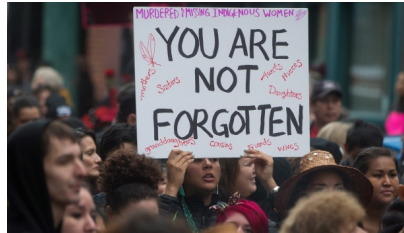
Visit our website:
www.wish-vancouver.net
for WISH's full submission to the pre-inquiry consultation process.

Message From the Executive Director:

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

After decades of heart-breaking calls for accountability, answers, and action by family members, fellow survivors, women's Organizations, like WISH and its partners, and from women's movements like the February 14th Women's Memorial March Committee, Canada is finally responding to the worst ongoing and systemic violence against women we've ever seen in this country.

Once the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was officially called, the Ministers of Indigenous Affairs, Justice, and Status of Women began a pre-inquiry consultation process of collecting input and feedback into what form the national inquiry should take, its scope, who should lead it, and who



should be part of it. WISH participated heavily in the Vancouver sessions as well as in meetings with Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett.

We are cautiously optimistic at this moment in time that family members, fellow survivors, women's organizations, like WISH and its partners, and women's movements like the February 14th Women's Memorial March Committee will be heard.

As an immigrant woman of African descent, I can't help but see the universality of our struggles. The pain and frustration of witnessing repeated evidence that your life (and those that look like

you) is seen as less valuable can be overwhelming and demoralizing.

It's well beyond time for all of us to explicitly and collectively acknowledge the injustice and shameful, violent treatment of Indigenous women and girls in Canada.

The national inquiry is but one way to begin to examine the injustice and violence resulting from multiple, multi-jurisdictional issues.

Women's safety and women's lives hang in the balance.


Mebrat Beyene
Executive Director

Run...or walk for WISH in the 2016 Scotiabank Charity Challenge on Sunday, June 26!

Go the extra mile (or 5) to support Women in your Community!

Register to Run or Walk and don't forget to use our discount charity pin code 16VWISH

Create a team and encourage your friends and community to join you to raise funds for WISH.
Hint: register more than one runner at a time and get an additional 10% off



"Register to Run or Walk at <http://www.canadarunningseries.com/svhm/>"

SAVE THE DATE!
Maclean Park
10:00 - 3:00
MAY 28th

WISH GARAGE SALE

WE NEED YOUR STUFF!

Please help support WISH in raising money by dropping off items in good, used condition at the WISH office on 334 Alexander Street

For more information please contact us 604.689.9474

PLEASE NOTE NO FURNITURE

Welcome Erin!

After a lengthy search, we are so pleased to introduce our new Director of Development & Communications: **Erin McNeill**.



Erin is a seasoned fundraising and communications professional with more than 15 years of experience with non-profit communications, major gifts, planned giving, donor relations, grants and events with organizations such as The Canadian Red Cross, BC/Yukon Division, The Rick Hansen Foundation and McLaren Housing Society. In 2012 Erin

stepped out of the workforce to raise her child and, while away, started her Bachelors of Social Work (online) at the University of Victoria. Erin has chosen to step back into the workforce full time to work with WISH.

In Memory of Liz James

The staff, board and volunteers of WISH were saddened to learn of **Liz James'** sudden passing on January 10, 2016.



Liz was the founding Street Nurse in the BCCDC Outreach program, and her lifetime vocation was providing healthcare and dignity to Vancouver's most vulnerable people. Her work

paved the way for many others to follow.

We were humbled to learn that Liz' family asked people to honour her memory with donations to WISH. We wish the friends and family of Liz James much peace and healing.

~ Love WISH

Volunteer Profile : Anna

Tell me about yourself.

I am 50 years old, born and raised in the Lower Mainland but spent 23 years in the north where I raised 2 children and participated in the lives of 6 step children from 3 different marriages. I am a hair stylist and a certified Hatha and Kundalini yoga instructor. As well as Wish, I am working part time at the front desk of Yoga West and teaching a regular Kundalini yoga class there. I am also involved in a yoga and addictions program. I am in the process of creating a mobile hair business.

What brought you to WISH?

I relocated to Vancouver from the small town of Quesnel where I have participated in other volunteer work. I wanted to build community and connect with other women in a meaningful way. I have had my own struggles with addiction, depression and spent some time on the street in the early 80's. I am grateful to be in recovery and want to give back to others.

What do you like best about volunteering at WISH?

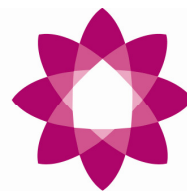
I especially enjoy our makeover nights and providing hair services to the ladies. I enjoy the connection with the diverse group of women and making them smile. I am super happy to have found WISH and I love the women, staff, volunteers and participants!



Interested in volunteering at WISH?

Please contact Sandra at : **Wishvolunteers@shaw.ca** for more information and to see how you can make a difference in someone's life.

DONATION FORM



WISH

Drop-In Centre Society

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ Prov _____ Postal Code _____

Phone: _____ Email _____

Option 1: DONATE MONTHLY

I would like to make a **monthly** gift of ☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 Other _____

I would like my monthly gifts to be deducted from my: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Name on Card _____

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____ / _____

Exp. Date ____ / ____ Signature _____

Option 2: ONE-TIME DONATION

I would like to make a **one-time** donation of: ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 Other _____

I am paying by: ☐ Cheque ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Name on Card _____

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____ / _____

Exp. Date ____ / ____ Signature _____

Option 3: DONATE ONLINE

www.wish-vancouver.net

We respect your privacy and will not share, rent, trade or sell your personal information.

**Charitable Registration No.
87047 5563 RR0001**

I would like my donation to be ANONYMOUS ☐

I would like information on naming WISH in my WILL ☐

I would like information about DONATING SECURITIES ☐

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