

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Hungry Hearts shines bright for Our Place**

***Unique fundraiser raises over \$145,000 to help Victoria's most vulnerable***

**VICTORIA, B.C.** – The vibrant business and philanthropic community came together for the fifth anniversary of Hungry Hearts, a unique fundraiser aimed at raising both awareness and funds for Our Place to serve the most vulnerable of Greater Victoria.

Five top local chefs used their culinary expertise and imagination in a fierce competition to see who could create the most popular, sea-inspired savory bite.

“We are overwhelmed by the generosity of the community,” said Don Evans, executive director of Our Place, “This strong support will enable us to continue with many of our life-transforming programs and services to assist people in crisis.”

Guests were invited to “vote with their heart” in crowning their favourite dish. In a finger-licking finish, Chef Castro Boateng of House of Boateng catering took home the Hungry Hearts Top Chef trophy for the third time by creating a gourmet twist on African Fish and Chips.

“Once people learn of all the wonderful ways Our Place helps the impoverished in our community, they really step up to help,” said Lori Angelini, director of development. “That couldn’t have been made more clear when the philanthropic and business community truly came together in a fun and unique way to help make our signature fundraiser a great success.”

The sold-out event, presented by PwC Canada and hosted at the Inn at Laurel Point, raised over \$145,000. This generosity couldn’t have come at a better time as Our Place continues to bring hope and belonging to people experiencing homelessness, poverty, mental health, and addiction issues.

The other competing top chefs were: Tyler Paquette of Fish Hook, Austin Lu of Inn at Laurel Point, Nicholas Waters of Toque Catering, and Kevin Macneil of Whole Foods. Plus two Our Place chefs, Cassie and Erica, created a special vegetarian dish, and Cakes Etc brought wonderfully decadent desserts.

Along with fabulous food, the event was MC’d by the delightful Terry Farmer, and musical entertainment was provided by local singer-songwriter Lola Parks.

Renowned local philanthropist Eric Charman conducted the live auction of amazing prize packages. His light-hearted humour charmed the bidders and inspired a

generosity among the crowd. The silent auction – conducted by a great crew of volunteers – was also busy with competitive bidding on fabulous items.

Our Place is a unique inner-city community centre serving Greater Victoria's most vulnerable: working poor, impoverished elderly, mentally and physically challenged, addicted and the homeless. Individuals and businesses provide the majority of financial support for its programs and services. Our Place provides over 1,800 meals per day, hot showers, education, job skills, free clothing, counseling and outreach services; plus 135 transitional housing units and 60 overnight shelter mats. Most importantly, it provides a sense of hope and belonging to our neighbours in need.

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