

artsREACH

an Arts Umbrella Partnership

Media Release

October 19, 2006

Community Council recognizes the artsREACH program with 2006 Quality of Life Award in the Community Arts category.

Victoria, BC - At a fundraising dinner held tonight, the **artsREACH** program was presented with the 2006 Quality of Life Award in the Community Arts Category.

Susan Stoval, Chair of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE Steering Working Group, presented the award and acknowledged **artsREACH** for its innovative work in reaching out to children through visual and theatre arts.

“The Octa Collective Society is thrilled to be receiving this award for its **artsREACH** program”, said Marilyn Sing, Board President of the Octa Collective Society. “All children deserve to have the opportunity to develop creativity, independent thinking, talent and personal growth through experience and exposure to the arts, but children who come from low-income families do not have access to arts education outside of public school.”

artsREACH delivers high-quality visual and performing arts training to young people in the Capital Region, regardless of their financial means. Since its official launch in January 2006, artsREACH has delivered 55 workshops in Greater Victoria public elementary schools, focusing on schools with a high population of children from low-income families. As a result over 1,200 children have participated in free drawing, painting and theatre workshops delivered by local professional artists and actors.

Although Arts Umbrella, the City of Victoria and the Retired Teachers of Ontario (Victoria Chapter) have all committed funds to support workshops throughout the region for the 2006/07 school year, the Octa Collective Society still needs to raise more funds to reach its goal of delivering 100 workshops over the next school year. Funds are raised through grants, private donations, sponsorships and fundraising events.

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