



North Vancouver Recreation Commission

## MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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### Northvanrec wins provincial award for newcomers health & wellness project

**North Vancouver** – North Vancouver Recreation Commission has won a provincial Award of Excellence from the BC Recreation and Parks Association. The Program Excellence Award was presented to the Commission for its *Health and Wellness Project for Newcomers* in recognition of outstanding achievement in public recreation services programming. The award recognizes creative, successful, and innovative programs that may serve as models for other Recreation & Parks agencies to enhance their services.

The Commission's Health & Wellness Project for Newcomers was launched in 2009 with the goal to welcome and engage newcomers to North Vancouver by providing information, services and programs that support their health and participation in recreation. Created in consultation with local newcomer groups and using research on health and community engagement best practices, the project targets all newcomers to North Vancouver Recreation Commission programs and facilities.

The project was funded through a \$25,000 grant from the Union of BC Municipalities' (UBCM) Community Health Promotion Fund and focussed on North Vancouver's four largest newcomer communities: Persian, Korean, Chinese, and Filipino. Outreach activities were created based on the unique nature of each cultural community and delivered in their native language. Newcomers were introduced to the Recreation Commission's programs and facilities through orientation tours, volunteer hosts from each target cultural community, and translated promotional and reference material. Volunteer hosts and project staff also went out into the community attending and presenting at various cultural events.

"This culturally tailored program helps residents overcome barriers to recreation and participate in programs that promote and support healthy active lifestyles," said Linette Smith, Coordinator of Access Services with the North Vancouver Recreation Commission.

Also as part of the project, a new *Welcome to northvanrec!* video was produced to introduce Northvanrec programs and services to newcomers in a variety of languages. This six minute video is available for viewing on the Recreation Commission's website at [www.northvanrec.com](http://www.northvanrec.com) in English, Farsi, Korean, Mandarin and Tagalog. Residents can also download a copy of the Commission's *Easy Guide to Recreation* which is available in six languages.

The project's volunteer host program continues at the Harry Jerome Community Recreation Centre with volunteer who speak Farsi, Korea, Mandarin and Cantonese available at select times during the week to assist newcomers with language support and facility tours. Please call (604) 983-6402 to check on the availability of hosts.

Groups can also book a translated facility tour with our Volunteer Hosts at Harry Jerome Community Recreation Centre by calling Meh Najak at 604-983-6417.

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