



Case Study:

Blenz Coffee - HOpe Centre



Blenz HOpe Centre Manager Jo-Anne MacDougall & Barista Matt Mazzei.

“When Vancouver Coastal Health and the Canadian Mental Health Association, North and West Vancouver Branch, needed a consultant to help them through the process of developing a social enterprise coffee shop, the person we turned to was Bob Prenovost from Propellor. He kept us on track when our work schedules threatened to get in the way, he taught us what is needed to run a business and he provided us with the tools and skills needed to become a franchisee. It would not have opened without the guidance of Propellor.”

Sandra Severs,
Executive Director, Canadian
Mental Health Association, North
and West Vancouver Branch



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Client

The **Canadian Mental Health Association** (North & West Vancouver Branch) and **Vancouver Coastal Health** are actively engaged in delivering mental health services and education to the public on the North Shore.

Challenge

CMHA and VCH realized that with the development of the new **Greta & Robert H.N. HO Centre for Psychiatry & Education**, there was a unique opportunity for a social enterprise café within the HOpe Centre that would provide employment for people with lived experience with mental illness. They needed a feasibility study and an action plan to provide direction for the development of this unique social enterprise, and expert advice to bring together partners from the private, non profit and healthcare sectors in order to make it happen.

Approach

Propellor engaged with CMHA, VCH and Blenz Coffee to:

- Assess the market potential for the café
- Provide a comprehensive feasibility study, including pro forma financial projections and a risk assessment
- Advise the partners on the framework and negotiations for the multi-party agreements including the lease and franchising of the Blenz concept for the café
- Develop a framework for a supported employment model
- Outline an Action Plan for the development and opening of the cafe

Result

CMHA and VCH successfully opened the Blenz Coffee social enterprise café in the HOpe Centre, providing ongoing employment for persons with lived experience with mental illness. The café also serves as a community meeting place for HOpe centre staff, patients and residents of the North Shore. The café serves as model of how bringing together partners from diverse sectors can create successful enterprises that deliver positive social and financial outcomes.