



Hot job market brings unexpected benefit to Big Brothers

Exclusive story idea for *The Bill Good Show*

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(Vancouver, BC) – Leading businesses in Canada are quickly recognizing that fostering employee volunteerism is good for the community and the bottom line. Two local Big Brothers received national recognition from their employers in 2006 and Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver (BBGV) received two significant donations as a result.

“The prevalence of employer-supported volunteerism in Canada has resulted in a surge of volunteers from a largely untapped market,” says BBGV Executive Director Mark Ely. “An increasing number of companies are open to the idea of allowing employees flex time to volunteer, and that translates into healthier communities across the country.”

Vancouver Big Brother Roy Millen was recently presented with a Volunteer of Distinction Award for 2006. The Award is a new initiative from Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP that recognizes outstanding community service or charitable work by any member of the Firm. Roy became a Big Brother in 2001 and has since enjoyed a meaningful friendship with his Little Brother Brandon. In addition to his role as a mentor, Roy has committed time and talent to various other local charities, including YMCA and Better Environmentally Sound Transportation. The Volunteer of Distinction Award includes a \$10,000 donation to be split between the charitable causes supported by the Award recipient.

“The contributions of our award recipients and all of the nominees in our Firm’s Volunteer of Distinction Awards, is testament to the hard work, dedication and commitment of many people throughout Blakes. It is something of which we can, and should, all be very proud!” said Julie Bean, Chief Administrative Officer of Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP.

Also in 2006, West Vancouver resident Scott Fitzsimmons received the National Volunteer of the Year Award from PriceWaterhouseCoopers Canada for more than 22 years of service to BBGV. Scott first joined the organization as a mentor and after ten years as a Big Brother, he became a Board member and then served as Board Chair. In addition to his work with BBGV, Scott is a director on three other not-for-profit boards including The Potluck Café, BBGV Foundation and the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society. The National Volunteer of the Year Award included a \$10,000 donation to BBGV.

These are two examples of a movement called employer-supported volunteerism. In 2005 Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada worked with Northstar Research Partners to quantify the link between corporate volunteerism and employee productivity and morale. According to the study, benefits to employers include improved retention of employees and better employee job performance. Benefits to employees who volunteer include enhanced morale and better job satisfaction.



Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver (BBGV) promotes the healthy development of boys and girls through a variety of high-quality, prevention-based mentoring programs. The agency, which served more than 730 children last year, is celebrating its 50th anniversary.