

JUSTWORK

economic initiative

OCTOBER 2006



A STORY OF HOPE

Dope (DO-Pay) has found it difficult to enter into the labour market while also balancing care for her two young children, attending ESL classes, and working within the schedule of her husband – who is blind and also attends school. She began working with JustGarden in the spring of 2006 and quickly proved to be a good worker and a regular in the JustGarden workforce. Having grown up farming in her native Togo, Dope quickly and accurately recognized various weeds and plants.

Dope had been looking for work as a nanny but was finding it difficult to make the necessary connections to parents in need of help. As English is her third language, this presented a significant barrier to work. However, her experience with JustGarden provided her with a strong reference to a local family looking for a nanny. In August, she began caring for the children of a physician and a full-time graduate student. Her new employers could not be happier with her work. They interviewed many people for the position and Dope emerged as the strongest candidate.

JustGarden provided Dope with enjoyable, meaningful, and flexible employment as well as a good reference for her new employers. Because of Dope's success, her new employers have now hired JustGarden for work in their yard.

JustWork fosters dignified, positive work opportunities for people facing multiple barriers to the traditional workforce.

For more information on JustWork or to find out how you can be involved:

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JUST STORIES

The life and times of social enterprise development



JustGarden: Our yard and garden social enterprise is nearing the completion of its first season of operation. We started in February with a host of questions, the primary one being this: would we still exist after a couple of months? Thankfully, we have survived the first season and are looking for ways to expand operations in 2007. The JustGarden team has been working 2-3 days per week; along with our project coordinator, Michael Burdge, ten different people have benefited from employment. One of our primary workers, a new immigrant to Canada, has used the part-time employment to gain a full-time position elsewhere. So, we consider our first season a success! As we begin looking ahead to next year, we will benefit from the support of the Enterprising Non-Profits Program (ENP). We received a grant to develop a

business plan for JustGarden's expansion. For more information about ENP, go to www.enterprisingnonprofits.ca. Thanks to the funders of ENP for their support.

Pottery in the Making: Over the past few months JustWork has supported a pottery product development project. The products (ranging from crosses to sushi dishes) will combine human creativity with the structure of moulds. The goal of the project is to provide employment options for people who visit the drop-in times hosted by the pottery studio in the basement of Grandview Calvary Baptist Church. Many of these guests are new to the craft or have yet to develop advanced skills. Through this project potters such as these will be able to continue learning even as they are paid for the work that they do. This means pottery-making will become for some a form of part-time employment (not only a hobby). With this needed employment will come crucial income and increased levels of self-worth. We plan to market the product line in various retail outlets in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland.

World Vision Partnership: In August we received news from World Vision Canada that JustWork had

been accepted as a partner in their *Partners To End Child Poverty Program*. Through this partnership, JustWork will receive support over the next year from World Vision staff to help us develop with issues of organisational development. Then in October of 2007 we will be eligible to receive the first instalment of a three-year grant. The funds will go towards the core work of our organisation—social enterprise development. We are excited by the potential of this partnership! The funding along with the support and experience of the World Vision staff will be a tremendous boost as we move forward with our focus on social enterprise development.

