

ALTERNA SAVINGS AND THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION – PARTNERING FOR THE EDUCATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNITIES

Toronto, ON, February 2, 2012 Alterna Savings and the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) kicked-off an exciting new partnership focused on turning challenges into solutions for the improvement of our communities. On January 26th at CSI Spadina, local innovators, respected entrepreneurs and the world of finance joined forces for a night of sharing ideas and a vision for what CAN be achieved.

A dynamic panel of local innovators and thinkers like Hussain Amarshi, President and Founder of Mongrel media, Lynn Daly, Executive Director of Christie Ossington Neighbourhood Centre and Tonya Surman, Founding Executive Director of the Centre for Social Innovation lent their know-how and shared their personal experiences in entrepreneurship and the life changing impact something as simple as a great idea can have on our local communities.

The crowd was energetic as Alterna's President and CEO John Lahey talked about their long standing tradition of investing in local communities, and bridging the gap between dreaming big and achieving big with the help of the right financial tools and support. It's through partnerships with organizations like CSI, leaders of social innovation and positive change, that Alterna can expand their entrepreneurial reach and make even bigger investments in the communities where people and their ideas can have the greatest impact.

Sharing information, building on great ideas and learning from each other are central themes to this partnership. Alterna conducted a focus group to understand how best to meet CSI's unique learning needs and by incorporating Alterna's financial tools and resources, with the support of dedicated Alterna Community Account Managers like Janet Shim, four annual learning sessions will be hosted for all CSI tenants. With over 450 active small businesses, non-profits, and social enterprises, the possibilities to help socially minded entrepreneurs, thinkers and doers achieve their goals seem not only achievable, but well within reach.

"We are really looking forward to seeing what can be accomplished through this partnership over the next few years. I anticipate great things, and I can tell you that Alterna is thrilled to continue learning from the accomplished social innovators and entrepreneurs in this community," said Alterna's President and CEO John Lahey. "We are confident that Alterna can in turn provide the support and financial expertise necessary for to help CSI realize their vision."

About Alterna

Alterna Savings is a full-service, member-focused, and community-based credit union that operates in the National Capital Region and the Greater Toronto Area. Guided by the values of people first, excellence, and integrity, employees Alterna Savings offers a wide range of financial products and services to nearly 115,000 members through 22 branches, ABMs, online banking, and more. Learn about the Alterna Savings difference at alterna.ca.

About the Centre for Social Innovation

The Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto creates community workspaces, nurtures emerging enterprises, and fosters an environment that develops new models and methods with world-changing potential. For more information please visit www.socialinnovation.ca

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