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New CEO at Garth Homer Society aims to build on innovation

Geoffrey Ewert looks forward to continuing to help adults with developmental disabilities thrive

Saanich – Geoffrey Ewert is looking forward to building even stronger community connections to keep moving forward on the Garth Homer Society’s mission of building better lives for adults with developmental disabilities.

Ewert became CEO of the Society this month after six years with the Saanich-based organization, including his most recent role as the Director of Learning and Employment Services.

“The work the Garth Homer Society is doing in education and in harnessing the power of innovation has already been creating a model for the rest of the world to use,” Ewert said. “We explored new ways to deliver programs and learned a lot during the pandemic. It showed what is important to the people we serve and their families. Now that we are moving out of the pandemic, we’re looking at a fresh start and we plan on being forward-looking in delivering our much-needed programs.”

The Society’s LifeStreams Learning is a world-leading program developed right here in Saanich and it is the innovative heart of all the services offered. LifeStreams has become the approach that informs and enhances all 11 programs offered by the Society. The approach is based on five pillars of learning – academics, body and health, community, purpose, and self.

“The approach built into the DNA of LifeStreams Learning helps foster adaptability and independent-minded individuals able to handle new and changing circumstances, like the social isolation of a pandemic. We were so proud to be able to bring a version on-line during the pandemic – and we are aiming to go further,” Ewert added. “I am looking forward to working with the incredible team at the Garth Homer Society to build on our four decades of dedicated work to help the people we serve be everything they can be.”

Ewert is also aiming to further develop strong relationships with families, funders, donors, community partners and other stakeholders who make the work of the Garth Homer Society possible.

“We reached a place of real strength in helping adults with developmental disabilities to lead fulfilling, fully realized lives thanks to more than a decade of dedicated service by retiring CEO Mitchell Temkin leading our team,” said Board Chair Chris Lovelace. “We’re excited to have Geoffrey in place and bringing with him a dedication to improving lives and a firm focus on an innovative and exciting future.”

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For more information:

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Backgrounder

Geoffrey Ewert Biography

Throughout his career, Geoffrey Ewert has used the arts to engage people with developmental disabilities.

This work began when he was an artist in residence operating in schools around Alberta at the beginning of his career. Geoff advocated for, and facilitated, the inclusion of students with developmental disabilities in residency programs, and this experience greatly influenced the focus of his career moving forward.

After he and his wife completed graduate school in England, they moved to Victoria in 2012. He started with GHS in 2015. In 2017 Geoff became the Manager of the LifeStreams Learning program, and then in 2018 was promoted to become the Director of Learning and Employment Services. Geoff has provided strong leadership in Garth Homer's learning and employment-focused services and has become an important part of the senior management team.

Prior to joining GHS, Geoff enjoyed a 20-year career in theatre, film, television, and radio. In addition to his own work in the performing arts, he has worked with several organizations to develop and integrate arts-based strategies and pedagogies in schools, art centres, theatre companies, and other community-based organizations such as the Calgary Centre for the Arts – currently known as Arts Commons (Director of Education and Community Engagement), Sage Theatre (Artistic Associate/Festival Director), and Renfrew Educational Services (Consultant, Arts-Learning strategies), along with several post-secondary teaching positions.