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Statements

(Standing Order 25B)

BLENZ CAFÉ SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
AT HOPE CENTRE

Ralph Sultan, MLA, West Vancouver–Capilano

Statements
(Standing Order 25B)

BLENZ CAFÉ SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
AT HOPE CENTRE

R. Sultan: What does the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and freshly baked croissants have to do with mental health? On the North Shore, we say: “Quite a lot.” Our new HOpe Centre for mental health and addictions is a striking architectural triumph, providing 26 beds for critical care and facilities for outpatient and community care, research and students from UBC medical school.

It was funded by Greta and Robert Ho, Dr. Djavad Mowafaghian, gifts from North Shore residents, land donated by the city and funding from the province. In the wonderful foyer, coffee and croissants are provided by Blenz Coffee, which provides meaningful employment for people recovering their mental health, including the manager who runs the place.

Blenz at HOpe is a social enterprise with a mission. The result is great coffee served by wonderful baristas, employed by a partnership between Blenz, the Canadian Mental Health Association and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.

As reported in the *Georgia Straight* recently, medical director Dr. Burgmann said: “The thing I love more than anything is that it’s open to the public, and people from the neighbourhood are coming in and grabbing a cup of coffee. Very quickly, it begins to erode the stigma of mental illness.” HOpe Centre’s reputation has grown quickly, and we are very proud. Don’t underestimate the power of coffee and croissants.