

Working to Solve Homelessness:

EWMA: Enterprising Women Making Art



EWMA's goals:

- *Empower the artisans, their local production and help to create a fair connection between producer and consumer.*
- *Improve socio-economic conditions;*
- *Promote recognition of the strengths and capacities of the DTES low income community;*
- *Promote community cohesion by creating opportunities for diverse groups to work together;*
- *Increase individual self-sufficiency.*

EWMA was launched in 2003 as a development initiative of Atira Women's Resource Society. It has focused on supporting women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to work together to develop an alternative form of business or employment that is grounded in their needs and realities.

The program is a self employment initiative for women impacted by violence who face significant barriers to traditional employment and who seek safe, income-generating opportunities free from exploitation, abuse or other vulnerabilities.

Blending art, community and social entrepreneurship, EWMA works with emerging women artists and artisans in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to participate in a democratic and equitable social enterprise that coordinates the pooling of resources to produce and market women's visual art and handmade products, as well as focuses on building women's capacities and knowledge, and increasing their access to lucrative markets and sales.

This project will strengthen and foster women's full and equal participation in the community and economy. EWMA is a community-based initiative that works with and celebrates the talents of its participants, contributes to their community, and supports their personal and economic empowerment.

The program is inclusive of all women in Vancouver's downtown eastside who have been affected by violence (including aboriginal, immigrant, visible minorities, senior women and women with physical or mental disabilities) and operates from a harm reduction, low threshold, and anti-oppressive framework with the goal to offer immediate income-generating alternatives.

EWMA participants are active in the design, planning, marketing and production of their products. The handmade products are: Semi Precious Jewelry; Hand Knit Garments; Cards/ Paper Arts; Ceramics; Fine Arts Photography; Textiles.

From: <http://www.ewma.info/>

Homelessness, together we can solve it.

Visit: stophomelessness.ca

