



LANGLEY'S

INTERNATIONAL

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For IMMEDIATE Release

MULTI-CULTURAL SOCCER TEAMS AND DREAMS HIT TOWN

LANGLEY, BC – JULY 11, 2009 The 2nd Annual International Soccer Tournament hits Langley July 11th at the Langley Events Centre Willoughby Soccer Fields. Langley's International Festival Society (LIFS) will host this event from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Adults from across the Lower Mainland and Metro Vancouver areas are representing more than 18 countries. They will play in this competition to celebrate their culture in the Langley community as part of the festival fanfare. Some of the players playing in the tournament will celebrate their ethnic heritage from countries such as: Peru, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, India, Afghanistan, Ireland, Africa, Spain, Germany, England, Ecuador, Luxemburg, Burma and Canada.

LIFS Soccer Tournament Coordinator Jose Ingunza, who has played soccer since age ten in his home country of Peru, says that he's always had a passion for the sport. Jose Ingunza's family moved to Canada over 15 years ago. At that time, like many new immigrants, Jose was unable to speak English and was having difficulty finding work due to the language barrier. Today the situation is very different; in spite the economic downturn, Jose is employed and even finds spare time to indulge in his favourite hobby – soccer!

Jose reminds us that sports alleviate our worries from the economic downturns of life. As we celebrate diversity, respect and multi-culturalism in soccer, it helps build our community spirit bypassing the negativity of our economics. Besides being an active member with Vancouver's "Incas 33" soccer club, Jose volunteers his time as a coordinator for LIFS Soccer Tournament. When he was first approached by Carlos Trujillo, President of LIFS Board of Directors, he took his International Soccer Tournament suggestion to his friends at the club, and they jumped at the idea right away.

Most people find moving to a new country and learning a new language a great challenge. Jose chose to overcome these challenges with the opportunity to play the sport that he enjoys the most. He found it easy to get people to sign up for the tournament as people love the social aspects of it. "This year we have a cash prize, so that makes the whole thing even more fun" says Ingunza. For the most part, it would appear that for a lot of newcomers, the integration into the Canadian society can be hard unless there is a vehicle for meeting people and sharing common interests, and the soccer community and Langley's International Festival do exactly that.

"We have many soccer fans in Peru where I come from. It is exciting to bring a mini tournament to Langley for people to enjoy. We've worked very hard for the past couple of months to bring the players together. The soccer tournament will be professional with uniforms, standard rules, referees and a trophy donated by the Irish Heritage Society. It's my hope that we can include a children's tournament in the festival next year. It's important that we appreciate and recognize where we all originated from as well as enjoying the sport" says Ingunza.

Shar Dubas, Executive Director for LIFS, says that the mini-soccer tournament ties in nicely with the goals of the festival, supported by Langley's Anti-Racism and Multiculturalism Task Force. Its mandate is to focus on ways to create ongoing multiculturalism dialogue, awareness and education. Dubas says that support for this year's event has been tremendous.

Some sponsors for this year's festival include: SHAW Multicultural Channel, Langley Times, Campbell, Burton & McMullan LLP, Township of Langley, Super Save Group, Affordable Display Products, Qualitime Printing, RJ1200, JRFM, Coffee News, Hampton Inn, Kiwanis, Investor Group Abbotsford, City of Langley, Prospera Credit Union, Envision Financial, APEX Animal Hospital, Langley Community Services Society, Conservative Party, Wagner Hills Ministries, eVision Media, Spirit of BC, and Tourism Langley. Partial net proceeds of the event will go to the Meals on Wheels.

For more information, visit the festival website at www.internationalfestival.ca or contact Coordinator Jose Ingunza at 604-882-8858.