

Tuesday, 27 November 2007
11:00 am WST

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INSPIRING LOCAL HEROES

Western Australian Community Foundation, in partnership with Lotterywest, is hosting an eminent international speaker on philanthropy and building community foundations from 26 to 29 November 2007.

From 1989 to 2007 Mr Peter deCourcy Hero was the President and Chief Executive Officer of Community Foundation Silicon Valley. During his tenure, Community Foundation Silicon Valley grew from a small foundation with less than \$10 million in assets and only three staff to a regional centre for philanthropy, with current assets of \$1 billion and annual grants exceeding \$100 million.

Western Australian Community Foundation promotes and facilitates charitable giving in WA with the aim of building sustainable community capacity. Only four years old, the Foundation has attracted giving from over 30 community groups, businesses and corporations and has over three million dollars in assets.

The home grown Foundation was given life by of a group of local energetic, passionate and visionary business leaders.

"I am thrilled that we have the opportunity to introduce the Perth business community to Peter Hero who has successfully created a mindset of giving in the Silicon Valley. His visionary approach is about creating community connections so that individuals and organisations can make a positive and lasting impact in the community in which they live and do business," said Tonia Swetman, Western Australian Community Foundation Chief Executive Officer.

"Now is the time to invoke a sense of enthusiasm for community investment, given the current economic boom being experienced locally, so that all Western Australians derive long lasting benefits, now and into the future."

Peter Hero's week long itinerary includes a breakfast address and seminar for local business leaders, community and business forum, and a visit to the South West where he will engage with community groups, local entrepreneurs and business people.

"Internationally community foundations exist partly to make philanthropy easy, avoiding the burden of administration and governance. They are a perfect vehicle for people to witness the social return on investment in their local community," said Peter deCourcy Hero.

"I am amazed at the growth of Western Australian Community Foundation, an organisation that is proving to be a leading voice and a catalyst for innovative and sustainable solutions."

"Working with the Foundation and community, I hope to help increase awareness, understanding and involvement in a viable and sustainable community investment model that will inspire philanthropy in WA."

Western Australian Community Foundation

The first of its kind in the state, Western Australian Community Foundation provides a unique opportunity for communities to establish long-term sustainability. The Foundation is an independent charitable organisation created to build stronger, sustainable communities. It does this by offering a structure that WA communities can utilise to invest in their community for the long term.

As Trustee, the Foundation is the umbrella organisation for WA communities to benefit from philanthropy without the burden of administration and governance responsibilities. Donations (gifts) are accepted and managed for a particular community to earn annual income then used to provide a reliable and regular source of funds (for future generations) with the objective of self reliance and sustainability, building a stronger community over time.

The Foundation exists to create and nurture philanthropic partnerships between those living and working within Western Australia. It achieves this by helping to build, grow and distribute endowed funds for Western Australian communities, encouraging the sharing of knowledge, to meet emerging needs.

Mr Peter deCourcy Hero

Prior to Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Peter was President of the Maine College of Art, a four year college of art and design. He holds an MBA from Stanford University School of Business, an MA (With Distinction) in Art History from Williams College, and (Honorary) Doctor of Laws from the Maine College of Art.

In 1991, Peter was appointed by President George Bush to a six year term on the National Council for the Arts. In 2002, President George W Bush appointed Peter to the National Museum Services Board. Both appointments were confirmed by the US Senate. Other recent recognition includes the John Gardner Leadership Award (given by The American Leadership Forum), Lifetime Achievement in the Arts (by Arts Council Silicon Valley), and, in state-wide recognition by the California Arts Council, Exemplary Contributions to the Arts.

Currently Peter is the founding Chairman of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) Foundation and on the Board of Directors of the Skoll Foundation, eBay Foundation, PBS, Stanford University's Haas Centre for Public Service, the American India Foundation, and in 2004, he was appointed a Synergos Foundation Global Fellow. Peter was a founding Director of The Entrepreneur's Foundation and is a past Board member of the Council on Foundations where he chaired the National Committee on Community Foundations. He chairs the World Bank Advisory Committee on global community foundation development. Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel appointed him to the 2002 NATO Summit Council of Advisors in Prague.

Peter is a lecturer at Stanford Graduate Business School (which has written a case study on CFSV) and his writing has been published in the United States and Europe.

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