

For Immediate Release
April 24, 2009

Urbana Raises Over \$17,500 for Options Bytown

Ottawa, Ontario –The fifth annual URBANA gave Options Bytown a great fundraising boost and heightened awareness.

Organized by Dharma Developments and held on April 16, 2009 at St. Brigids Centre for Humanities and Art, the fundraising event raised \$17,500 for Options Bytown.

This year's gala event featured Artistic Director and media artist extraordinaire Ryan Stec of Artengine who kicked off a stellar party and mesmerized guests with funky urban beats and live visual art. Internationally-renowned photographer Tony Fohse challenged guests thinking with his raw imagery, and Dharma Arts Photographer Ben Welland's unique perspective on supportive housing inspired many to do more in Ottawa. The event also featured a first ever Rick Mercer feature.

While the importance of cause took centre stage, guests were rewarded for their support with a truly enjoyable evening – mingling to the urban beats while their taste buds enjoyed hors d'oeuvres from Culinary Conspiracy. Prizes won included: two round trip tickets courtesy of WestJet; a Mont Tremblant Golf Weekend Getaway; tutored wine tastings and dinner hosted by Groovy Grapes and the Dutch Embassy; Ottawa Senators and more!

The event was supported by community sponsors Gowlings, WestJet and Uniglobe Travel; Ace Sponsors included Emond Harnden, Copperskies and Enbridge; media sponsors included, Metro News, Trader and Ottawa Region Media Group; other partners involved were Artengine, Groovy Grapes, DharmaArts and Xpresso. Dharma Developments hosts URBANA every year as an opportunity to bring friends and colleagues together to support families less fortunate with their housing needs.

About Options Bytown

Options Bytown is a non-profit organization Options Bytown: Cumberland that provides HousingPlus services in Ottawa, combining affordable housing with on-site counselling, training and other services for people who need help to live independently. We help people who face social isolation and other complex challenges – individuals who may have very low incomes, a history of homelessness or special needs that may relate to mental illness, HIV/AIDS or substance use.

About Urbana

In its fifth year, Urbana is an annual party that showcases outstanding local artists and provides support to families in Ottawa in their struggle to find decent, safe, affordable housing. Dharma Developments owners Akash and Katy Sinha have been hosting Urbana every year since their company's launch in 2005, as a means to give back to the community in which they have been supported. Since then, Urbana has raised \$65,000.

For more information about the event, Options Bytown and Urbana, visit www.dharmadevelopments.com.

Media contact:

Wendy Bissonnette, 613-482-2800 ext 112