



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2009

**AWARD WINNER'S DRAMATIC STORY
FEATURED AT PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENING**

Tina Tomashiro, winner of the Coast Mental Health 2009 Courage to Come Back Award in the Mental Health category, will tell the inspiring story of her battle with serious mental illness and addiction, and her road to recovery, at an upcoming NSSS Public Education Evening. Tina will speak about her experience at Lions Gate Hospital on **Wednesday, September 30 at 7:30 p.m.**, in the auditorium. The talk, entitled "Recovery: A True Story," is part of the North Shore Schizophrenia Society's long-running lecture series on mental illness and related subjects. There is no charge to attend and members of the public are welcome.

Over the past four years, Tina Tomashiro has turned her life around. Before a suicide attempt put her in hospital in 2005, Tina had been self-medicating her untreated schizophrenia and depression with street drugs. That attempt was the turning point – the point at which she met a doctor whom she could trust and who worked with her to find the right medications to treat her illnesses. After six months on medication, she quit using cocaine, crack, and heroin – no easy feat for a resident of the Downtown Eastside where drug use is rampant. After a long journey and much hard work, Tina is well on her way to recovery, working for Pivot Legal Society and helping others in her community.

Tina has done more than just turn her own life around, she has also taken on the role of community volunteer leader. She reaches out to Downtown Eastside residents with projects such as an annual photography contest and the creation of a community garden. While she didn't set out to become a role model, her hard work, integrity, and willingness to help anyone in need has turned her into just that.

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FOR PRE-TALK PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS OR FOR EVENT COVERAGE, PLEASE CONTACT:

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