

A family that plays together stays together

Federal government employee's volunteering in local performing arts a 25-year love affair

By Sarah Poirier

Sept. 7, 2006 – Ottawa, ON –Dr. Alan Viau, a manager at Health Canada, says he finds the time to volunteer because it brings his family together, contributes to a better community and promotes a healthier, balanced lifestyle.

Dr. Viau's 25 years of volunteering started when his children took part in a school play, and help was needed to build the sets. From there, he's gone on to acting, directing, building sets and taking care of lighting and sound with several local performing arts groups in Ottawa, including GOYA Theatre Productions, Baobab Tree Drum Dance Community, and Suzart Productions.

Although he has been a soccer coach and has volunteered for other school activities, his real passion is local performing arts.

“As a local arts organization, Baobab Tree Drum Dance Community depends on support and expertise from talented volunteers in the community such as Alan Viau,” said Kathy Armstrong, Baobab Tree's artistic director. “His contributions in staging and lighting have greatly enhanced our productions.”

Dr. Viau's family hasn't had a television for about 15 years. Instead of watching 21 hours of television a week like the average Canadian, Dr. Viau volunteers for 10 hours weekly, most of it spent with his wife and three children at rehearsals.

Dr. Viau is one example of Government of Canada employees making a difference in their communities. Along with their regular volunteering, thousands of public servants participate in the annual Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC), the largest workplace charitable project in Canada. In 2005, federal public servants contributed more than \$29.5 million to GCWCC in 113 communities nation-wide. GCWCC 2006 kicks off on September 7 and will run until November 22.



Alan and daughter Alaina Viau during the show 'Seussical: The Musical' with Suzart Productions.

For more information, please contact:

Mary O'Meara

T: 613-941-4705

E: mary.omeara@cra-arc.gc.ca