

Calgary Foundation summer 2021

# spur



## Essential Supports

Removing barriers to  
improve mental health

## Pivot 101

Embracing flexibility and  
ingenuity during COVID-19

## Creativity Leads to Innovation

Transforming minds and  
lives through art

# Bringing Power to Truth

Jared Tailfeathers and  
Citizen Artists YYC



# Walk a mile in someone's moccasins



**T**his Indigenous saying formed the basis of the poem *Judge Softly*, written by Mary Lathrap in 1895 that was later re-titled *Walk a Mile in His Moccasins*. Here is an excerpt:

*Pray, don't find fault with the man that limps,  
Or stumbles along the road  
Unless you have worn the moccasins he wears,  
Or stumbled beneath the same load.*

*There may be tears in his soles that hurt  
Though hidden away from view  
The burden he bears placed on your back  
May cause you to stumble and fall, too.*

*Just walk a mile in his moccasins  
Before you abuse, criticize and accuse  
If just for one hour, you could find a way  
To see through his eyes, instead of your own muse.*

*Brother, there but for the grace of God go you and I  
Just for a moment, slip into his mind and traditions  
And see the world through his spirit and eyes  
Before you cast a stone or falsely judge his conditions.*

*Remember to walk a mile in his moccasins  
And remember the lessons of humanity taught  
to you by your elders  
We will be known forever by the tracks we leave  
In other people's lives, our kindnesses and generosity  
Take the time to walk a mile in his moccasins.*

**When you walk in someone's footsteps**, you might think of those who shared the same path as you. When you walk a mile in someone's shoes, you widen your perspective by learning about and understanding someone else's personal experiences and challenges.

You may never experience the feeling of fleeing domestic violence or find yourself suffering from chronic mental illness or struggling with infant loss. Still, you can walk in those shoes and feel empathy.

The pandemic journey we have all shared has underscored the fact that our connection to each other matters deeply. The challenges of the journey can be divisive. But, truth-telling and compassion can unite us.

This issue of *spur* presents stories that invite you to walk in someone else's shoes or moccasins. Initiatives like Bringing Power to Truth bring together community leaders and artists

from diverse communities to confront racism. Places like the Sanctuary Café in Knox United Church connect community regardless of faith and background. And organizations like Theatre Calgary connected people in 24 countries through its presentation of *A Christmas Carol*.

Fittingly, this issue also features a profile on the Arts & Heritage Advisory Committee and several stories of arts organizations that give voice to the human experience with creativity and innovation.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *spur*. ■

Eva Friesen  
President & CEO,  
Calgary Foundation

*In the spirit of reconciliation, the Calgary Foundation acknowledges that we live, work and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda (Stoney Nakoda) Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3) and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.*



## P.13

**The Whyte Museum is building deeper connections with local Indigenous communities.**

### people

**04 Moving Forward by Giving Back**  
Chartered financial analyst and portfolio manager Blaine Lennox brings a wealth of knowledge to his volunteer roles.

**06 Education at the Forefront**  
Dermatologist Dr. John Arlette champions personal development, education and learning.

**08 Heart of the City**  
The Arts & Heritage Grants Advisory Committee helps arts organizations transform minds and lives.

### features

**11 The Art of Progress**  
Exploring Indigenous reconciliation, pandemic sustainability and anti-racism.

**16 Beyond Barriers**  
Challenging root issues to improve mental health and quality of life.

**20 Resilient Resources**  
How local agencies adapted their programming and embraced the virtual world during COVID-19.

**26 Champions of Change**  
Three organizations finding resourceful and ingenious ways to serve their communities.



*This issue is dedicated to the memory of Miles Durrie. As the managing editor of spur magazine, Miles shared his curious nature, enthusiasm for storytelling, love for the city and talents as a writer and editor. He will be deeply missed.*

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Kahanoff Centre  
#1180, 105 12 Avenue S.E.  
Calgary, AB T2G 1A1  
403-802-7700  
calgaryfoundation.org



**CEO**  
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**Contributing writers**  
Elizabeth Chorney-Booth,  
Karen Rudolph Durrie,  
Jennifer Friesen, Nathan  
Kunz, Karin Olafson

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100, 1900 11 St. S.E.  
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Ph: 403-240-9055  
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# Moving Forward by Giving Back

**Blaine Lennox finds joy in helping organizations succeed**

By Nathan Kunz • Photography by Jared Sych

**BLAINE LENNOX** fondly remembers joining the Calgary Foundation's board of directors in June 2018, just as the new Calgary Central Library was nearing completion. This innovative project received support from the Foundation's Major and Signature Grants program, and the city's latest landmark became a symbolic point of pride for Lennox.

"You're exposed to the broader view of how the Foundation operates and the impact that it's having on the community," says Lennox. "It's incredibly impressive when you start to realize all the work that's been done over the years."

Although Lennox lists the library's opening as a favourite memory, his connection to the Calgary Foundation began years earlier when he joined the Foundation's Investment Committee in 2011.

A chartered financial analyst and portfolio manager by trade, Lennox brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership skills to his volunteer roles

as a board member and as the current chair of the Investment Committee.

The Calgary Foundation ensures that an individual's or an organization's contribution to their cause of choice has staying power. The Investment Committee powers the endowment engine by ensuring that a diversified portfolio of secure assets meets the target returns for the Foundation, which enables annual grantmaking and capital preservation for future sustainability.

For example, a gift of \$25,000 in an endowment Fund will grant almost \$24,000 after 20 years, while growing the Fund to \$34,000, greater than the original gift. A donor who is looking to benefit a charitable organization year-over-year can entrust the investment team to ultimately grow value and continue giving for years to come.

A graduate of the University of Lethbridge, Lennox is currently the regional director of private wealth for Western Canada at Jarislowsky Fraser Limited. Throughout his career, he

has found his experience working with foundations, endowment funds and non-profit organizations on their investment portfolios to be very fulfilling; he knows his work helps to positively impact the community.

"You get a real sense of satisfaction in working with organizations and helping them succeed," says Lennox.

Outside of work and volunteering with the Foundation, Lennox says his passions are travelling, enjoying the outdoors — be it through hiking, skiing or cycling — and spending time with his wife and three kids.

As he approaches the end of his term with the Investment Committee, Lennox says he's proud of the work he and his fellow Investment Committee members have been able to support. He's excited to see what comes next as he continues his role on the board of directors.

"It's been great to see the success and growth of the investment team in my time at the Foundation," says Lennox. ■





“You get a real sense of satisfaction in working with organizations and helping them succeed.”

# Education at the Forefront

**Dr. John Arlette is a champion for personal development and learning**

By Karen Durrie • Photography by Jared Sych

**DR. JOHN ARLETTE IS PASSIONATE** about giving back to the community he's practiced in for more than 30 years.

The Calgary-based dermatologist, who is a skin cancer and medical aesthetics specialist, runs a thriving practice and is one of the top professionals in his field. He places great value on education and personal development, which led him to establish the Arlette Education Fund at the Calgary Foundation in 1998.

He counts creating the Fund as one of the most exciting days of his life.

"I remember the day my children were born, and I remember the day I signed the agreement saying I was giving this money to create the Fund, which would continue to grow and support community in perpetuity," Dr. Arlette says.

Initially, the Fund supported skin cancer education. Over the years, its impact has expanded to include funding for wide-reaching educational opportunities. Expert lectures, conferences, events, and seminars related to skin cancer, and helping medical students access education on surgical oncology are all initiatives the Arlette Education Fund has supported.

In 2010, the Fund established a Mohs Micrographic Surgery Fellowship Training program, which teaches a precise, layer-by-layer method of removing skin cancers while sparing healthy tissue.

The Fund is also committed to supporting training at the University of Calgary's department of Surgical Oncology at the Cumming School of Medicine for the next 10 years.

The Fund's purpose and direction have continued to

evolve by supporting other educational activities, including initiatives at the Calgary Academy, where one of Dr. Arlette's sons attended school. These included teacher training sessions and the Arlette Speaker Series for teachers and parents, covering topics such as drugs, bullying, effective parenting, and emotional and executive functioning at different ages.

Dr. Arlette's appreciation for lifelong learning is evident in his own work. In the early '80s, with a newly built clinic and several years of practice under his belt, he went back to school. With three children at home, rather than uproot his family, he commuted from Calgary to the University of British Columbia in Vancouver once a week for a year to complete a fellowship in Mohs Micrographic Surgery in 1981.

Moving forward, Dr. Arlette is considering supporting other educational endeavours. To make the granting decisions, he involves his wife, Ildi, and their three children.

Seeing what the Fund has done over the years, and the fact that it has touched many lives and will continue even after he is gone, is deeply moving to Dr. Arlette.

"You know what you have worked for, and what you've given has the opportunity to support many more people than you will ever meet," he says. "The financial support goes to those who need it, where their contributions will then have downstream effects. This will continue on, whether there are more dinosaurs or meteors or who knows what, the Calgary Foundation will still have the Arlette Education Fund to provide money for education." ■



“ You know what you have worked for, and what you’ve given has the opportunity to support many more people than you will ever meet.”



# HEART of the CITY





## The Arts & Heritage Grants Advisory Committee helps the arts sector thrive

By Jennifer Friesen • Illustrations by Jarett Sitter



### WHEN KEN LIMA-COELHO

first joined the ranks of the Calgary Foundation's Arts & Heritage Grants Advisory Committee, the world was a very different place.

In the early 2000s, many charities were requesting funding to build their first website. Decades later, support for new technology remains a priority, such as a recent grant for a virtual reality program that offers Indigenous youth an interactive tool to explore the stories of their heritage.

"You can see how the needs have changed or evolved. But at the foundation of it, it's about storytelling and transforming minds and lives through art," says Lima-Coelho, who is now committee chair and an incoming board member.

From storytelling workshops for new Canadians to performances created by artists with disabilities, this 13-member committee bi-annually reviews applications for funding through the Calgary Foundation's Community Grants Program.

With a range of requests from grassroots groups to large charitable organizations, Lima-Coelho says every grants cycle is totally different, and some of the proposals are risky.

"Ideas are fresh and people are trying new things or mashing stuff up or piloting and testing – and that's OK. In fact, it's almost encouraged, because how else do we progress as a society?"

Project leaders are invited to face-to-face meetings (currently virtual due to COVID-19) with the committee members to bring their grant application to life.

"Our job is to ask good questions," explains Lima-Coelho.

After discussions on the potential impacts of each proposal, the committee



The Calgary Foundation's Arts & Heritage Grants Advisory Committee is made up of 13 members. Facing page from left to right: Ken Lima-Coelho, Alexi Davis, Nicole Dawe and Sybil Choles; this page from left to right: Anne Green, Kajsa Erickson and Dale Turri.





**“Non-profits, particularly arts and culture organizations, teach us how to think differently. They're the ones that are going to get us out of this mess. I think it's crucial, and this committee is so proud to support them.”** —Ken Lima-Coelho



makes its grant recommendations, which Lima-Coelho presents to the Calgary Foundation's Grants Committee who then determines the final decisions based on the funding dollars available.

The needs of the arts community have drastically changed as artists grapple with the effects of COVID-19. With many performance spaces closed, Calgary artists have adapted by creating new ways to connect with audiences, which is reflected in the funding applications the Arts & Heritage Grants Advisory Committee reviewed in the last year.

Lima-Coelho says Calgary is often described as an "innovation economy," but that innovation goes beyond downtown tech start-ups.

"Innovation's happening all the time in the arts sector," says Lima-Coelho.

"And it's even more important right now when some traditional avenues of creating art or doing social purpose is literally illegal because of the health guidelines.

"What better time to invest in these groups? Non-profits, particularly arts and culture organizations, teach us how to think differently. They're the ones that are going to get us out of this mess. I think it's crucial, and this committee is so proud to support them." ■

Committee members left to right:  
Dean Paddock, Anila Lee Yuen,  
Patty McLeod, Christy Morgan,  
Bob van Wegen and Emiko Muraki.





# The

# art of progress

From grappling with the effects of a global pandemic to ongoing anti-racism protests, the world has changed drastically in the past year. The Calgary Foundation has supported these three artistic initiatives as they explore the concepts of pandemic sustainability, Indigenous reconciliation and anti-racism.

By Jennifer Friesen

## >> Vertigo Mystery Radio

**I**n March 2020, Rose Brow stepped onto the stage of Vertigo Theatre, the set for the world premiere of *Cipher* hanging behind her.

The lights were on, but there were no audience members in the seats and no actors in costume. Instead, Brow, Vertigo's executive producer, stood beside artistic director Craig Hall as they spoke to a camera and told patrons that the lights of Vertigo were going to have to go down for a while.

"I'll never forget that day," Brow says. "Standing on the stage, I said, 'We need to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and follow the health orders implemented by

the Alberta Government. We need to stay home with our families until we can be together again in the theatre.' It was one of those defining moments I'll remember for the rest of my life."

It was the first week of lockdowns in Calgary in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the start of a new normal. With social distancing mandates and mass gathering restrictions in place, theatres could no longer operate in the way they have for centuries.

Vertigo had to cancel the rest of its season and was facing a possible \$500,000 deficit because of lost revenue due to closure. So, the company got creative. It reached out to 6 Degrees Music & Sound, a local music and

>>

Clockwise from right:  
Foley artist Thomas  
Geddes; the recording  
station for actors; a  
poster from Vertigo  
Mystery Radio's April  
2021 production.



**“The theatre is committed to investing in next-generation artists and creating opportunities for artists to be employed in more diverse ways.”** —Rose Brow

➤➤ sound production house. Vertigo and 6 Degrees had discussed collaborating before the pandemic, but COVID-19 relit the fire. That March, the idea for Vertigo Mystery Radio, a podcast exploring the mystery genre, was born.

In September, episode one, *The Voice on the Wire* by Robert Sloane, was available to purchase and stream from

the Vertigo website. The classic 1944 tale was voiced by local actors and had a run-time of 30 minutes. Episode two, a double-bill including *The Hitchhiker* and *The American*, was released in November.

Opening nights of the radio events are live-streamed and come complete with virtual lobbies, where listeners

can virtually mingle before the show and chat with the artists afterwards. The performances can be downloaded either individually or as a package for audiences to enjoy at any time.

"It's really been a lifeline for the company, the artists and the community," says Brow. "For a number of our patrons, it reminds them of when they were younger when they used to listen around the radio with their family. Some turn down the lights in their house, light candles or create a meal to go with it."

As a direct result of the innovation of Vertigo Mystery Radio, the company is currently building a digital recording studio in its theatre space and will soon expand Vertigo Mystery Radio productions to include in-house creation in addition to its partnership with 6 Degrees Music & Sound. The new digital studio will also be available to other members of the artistic community to create digital work. The arts sector is largely contract-based, so giving artists the opportunity to work keeps the community afloat.

"We'll create professional development opportunities for artists to learn how to do voice work and for digital technicians to be able to create," says Brow. "By having access to the studio, they can experiment and explore new techniques. The theatre is committed to investing in next-generation artists and creating opportunities for artists to be employed in more diverse ways."

Over the past year, Vertigo went from 13 full-time staff to five, and Brow estimates it will take 18 to 24 months of recovery to get back to its original operating budget. But regardless of the struggles, as she reflects back on the day she stood on the *Cipher* set, wracked with worries, she says, "It reminds me what we're fighting for."

"It's a year later, and we have had a lot more positive days than we did then because we've come together as a community," she continues. "A new artistic avenue was birthed by this pandemic."



## Building Bridges

Last September, three men gathered inside the archives of the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies in Banff. The trio pored over the vibrant canvases painted by their late-grandfather, Chief Frank Kaquitts Sitting Wind.

The three Stoney Nakoda/Cree artists, Kyle Kaquitts, Jaron Poucette and Chris Morin, were at the museum to work on a temporary mural of their grandfather in the property's backyard alongside Edmonton artist AJA Loudon.

"They were just so happy," recalls Dawn Saunders Dahl, manager of Indigenous Relationships and Programs at the Whyte Museum. "They probably felt close to him, and then they were able to honour him with the mural."

The mural of Sitting Wind, which remained on display in the museum's backyard throughout the fall, was part of an initiative called Building Bridges: Cultural Trade Route. Launched by the museum in March 2019, Building Bridges is focused on developing relationships with local Indigenous communities through artistic and cultural programming.

Saunders Dahl says she plans to keep the initiative going for as long as she can, with an added focus of hiring more Indigenous staff.

"We have a lot of work to do to keep building relationships with Indigenous peoples, especially with the seven groups who traditionally were in the Bow Valley," she says.

The museum's founders, Peter and Catharine Whyte, were artists and philanthropists who had close relationships with the Stoney Nakoda people in the Bow Valley, including Sitting Wind. As a result, the museum has an extensive collection of Indigenous art and artifacts.

"Banff was a major trade route where people gathered to trade



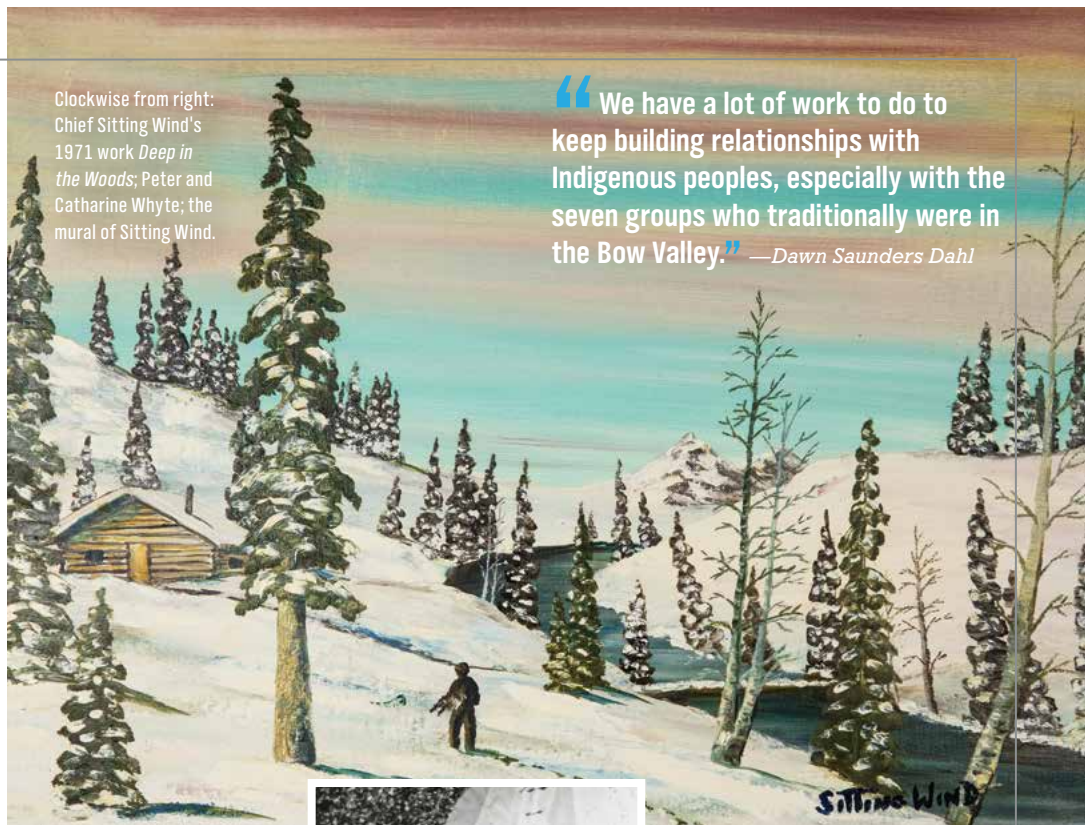
stories, medicine, food and clothing," says Saunders Dahl. "It's an exchange of knowledge, too, and that's what museums should be about."

The Building Bridges initiative is working toward reconciliation through online and socially distanced events and programming that directly engage and involve Elders and Indigenous youth.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Saunders Dahl was organizing community dinners to foster conversation, but with restrictions in place, she's found new ways to keep the project running.

"In my mind, it's about figuring out

Clockwise from right: Chief Sitting Wind's 1971 work *Deep in the Woods*; Peter and Catharine Whyte; the mural of Sitting Wind.



"We have a lot of work to do to keep building relationships with Indigenous peoples, especially with the seven groups who traditionally were in the Bow Valley." —Dawn Saunders Dahl



Besides the museum space, the Whyte Museum properties include the original Whyte home as well as the home of art collectors Pearl and Philip Moore. Both houses are filled with Indigenous objects that were gifted to or bought by the couples, and Saunders Dahl is creating Indigenous-led home tours of these spaces that will launch this summer.

"It's an opportunity to talk about the objects in those homes and that relationship, from an Indigenous perspective," she says. "I think there needs to be more opportunities for Indigenous people to see these artifacts because they are theirs. We're just holding it."

Building Bridges is also partnering with the Stoney Nakoda Youth AV Club to record an oral history of the Stoney Nakoda people, which will eventually be shared online so people can listen from anywhere. The goal is to collect stories from all Treaty 7 First Nations in the Bow Valley.

"We want to keep the conversation going until we can meet again," says Saunders Dahl.

how to put action into reconciliation and find safe and brave spaces for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to develop those relationships again," she says. "It's about having these spaces where people can talk."

Saunders Dahl is also organizing a series of seasonal walks and alfresco teas with Métis and Stoney Nakoda Elders, where visitors can learn about Bow Valley history from the people whose families have lived there for centuries. COVID-19 restrictions permitting, these events will begin this summer and continue for every season.

## »» Bringing Power to Truth

In the deep cold of the Antarctic, penguins huddle together to survive. Gathering closely in a spiral, a colony of penguins will move to spin and exchange the coldest and most vulnerable inwards to the centre to warm up.

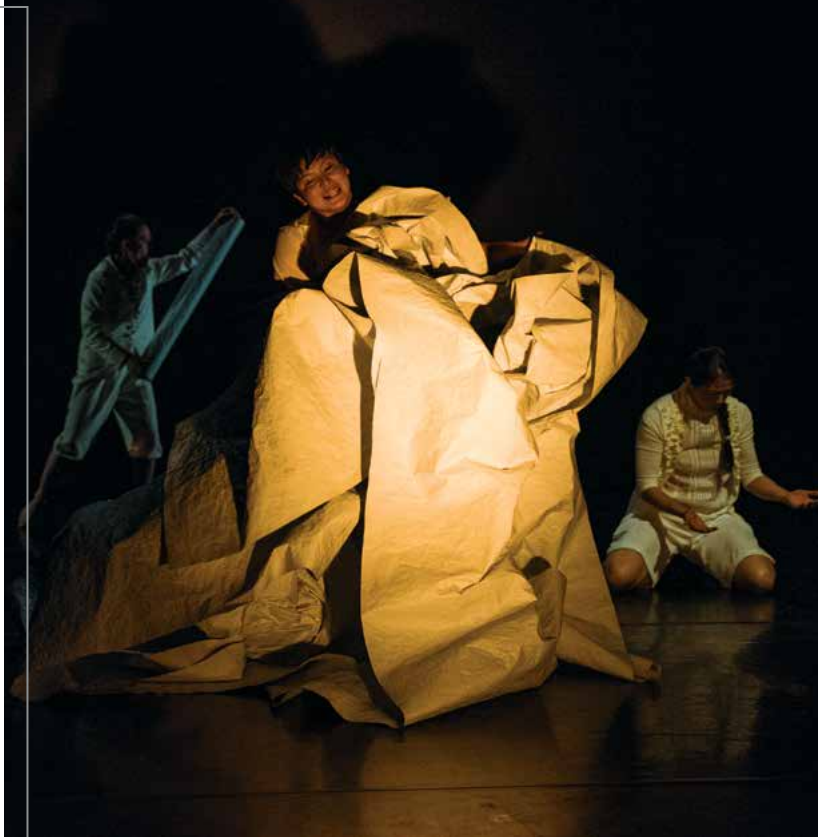
Janaya Future Khan, co-founder of Black Lives Matter Canada, described this system in a weekly post for their Instagram series, Sunday Sermons. It became the inspiration for a grassroots arts project here in Calgary.

"We asked, how can we organize ourselves as people in society to care for one another?" explains Pam Tzeng, a Calgary choreographer and 'artist.' "How can we care for those who experience the depths of systemic racism, what is historically rooted in stolen land, stolen lives, stolen labour and excluded communities?"

The Bringing Power to Truth: Citizen Artists Harnessing the Spiral for an Anti-Racist Calgary project was spawned by the specific question: What does an anti-racist future for Calgary look like? Tzeng says the initiative will see Indigenous, Black and people of colour artists come together to creatively disrupt and respond to systemic racism through artistic research, creative expression, community-led acts of care and relationship renewal.

The project, which models the movement of penguins, has a spiral framework, centring three distinct "spiral" components: an Indigenous-led spiral, a Black-led spiral, and a non-Indigenous, non-Black, racialized-led spiral. Each spiral is focusing on the experiences and unique needs of their communities. The initiative will culminate in a final

**"It's about using the power of art to catalyze dialogue and collaboration towards an anti-racist future for Calgary."** —Pam Tzeng



event called "The Grappling," which will be shared with the community in 2022.

As a Canadian-born Taiwanese woman, Tzeng is a part of the non-Indigenous, non-Black racialized spiral. She says that by organizing the groups as spirals inspired by the penguins, they hope to instigate conversation and share learning around emergent strategies for more equitable movement-building and social change.

"We aim to help build community capacity for understanding, trust, reconciliation, solidarity and commitment to change," Tzeng says. "It's about using

the power of art to catalyze dialogue and collaboration towards an anti-racist future for Calgary."

The initiative came into being through a grassroots initiative called Citizen Artists YYC, which started last June as a place for artists to discuss the impacts of the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement. The conversations led to partnerships with organizations, including TRUCK Contemporary Art and ActionDignity. Work on the initiative began in November 2020.

For the Black-led spiral, Nigerian-born dancer, choreographer, instructor and



**“We want to break down the barriers to ensure that these artists can get into arts organizations to be able to tell their stories through their own eyes.” —Wunmi Idowu**



Facing page: dancers left to right: Jamie Tognazzini, Su-Lin Tseng, Pam Tzeng. Above: The 2018 production of *UNGANISHA* choreographed by Wunmi Idowu, who can be seen in the back right. Right: Jared Tailfeathers in his studio surrounded by his artwork.



**“Through these projects, we can really look at our neighbours as equals and understand that every voice should be heard.”**

—Jared Tailfeathers

producer Wunmi Idowu says Citizen Artists is focusing on creating more opportunities for local Black artists to share stories from their perspective. As the founder and director of Woezo Africa Music & Dance Theatre Inc., Idowu has noticed a lack of diverse actors and scriptwriters, and she's working to help Black artists break through systemic barriers.

"At the end of the day, our plan is to develop better programming and work

with arts organizations in Calgary to disrupt racism," she says. "We want to break down the barriers to ensure that these artists can get into arts organizations to tell their stories through their own eyes and be able to act and be employable in the arts sector."

Blackfoot artist Jared Tailfeathers is a member of the Indigenous-led spiral, which he says is focusing on the concept of "what treaty is, and what treaty means to the members of Treaty 7."

Tailfeathers says the group is incorporating Indigenous artists from various disciplines to create a showcase focusing on the Indigenous history of this land and the importance of coming together. "Through these projects, we can really look at our neighbours as equals and understand that every voice should be heard because that collaboration and that ability to empathize with each other is ultimately what changes the world." ■

# Beyond

**With the support of the Calgary Foundation, these three organizations are improving people's mental health and well-being**

By Karen Durrie

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**1**

## Potential Place

Mental illness doesn't discriminate. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, one in three Canadians, or more than nine million people, will experience a mental health illness in their lifetime. Every year, one in seven Canadians will access health services supports to address it.

Calgary's Potential Place (PP) offers people who have chronic mental illnesses access to various supports, like a structured work-ordered day, care, an employment program, housing, social opportunities, training, education and employment. The psychosocial-based rehabilitation organization is one of 314 Clubhouses worldwide. The Clubhouse model was developed in the 1950s when a New York State-based psychiatric hospital closed its doors, and the deinstitutionalization of people with mental illnesses began. Many former patients would gather to meet and decided they needed a dedicated place to socialize and work.

Today, these accredited Clubhouses are places where members work side-by-side with professionals in the operations of all Clubhouses.

"It's not a typical clinical model

where patients are pathologized, and there is an unequal power structure. It's evidence-based recovery, and the World Health Organization has looked at the model and outcomes in terms of hospitalizations, reintegration into the

community and real jobs, moving from homelessness to housing, and so on," says Frank Kelton, executive director.

Potential Place is the official name of Calgary's Clubhouse. It has been in the city for 25 years and is the only accred-





# Barriers



(1) Joelle and Enitan keep things fun. (2) Summer in the café creates healthy meals for the Clubhouse. (3) Pam C. helps maintain the apartment gardens. (4) Colleagues in the café (Frank, Summer, Doug and Nancey) make fresh and affordable smoothies. (5) Kevin on the job at a Staples work placement program.



**“Working is very empowering and an important part of recovery. It gets their mojo up, and it’s just fabulous to see.”**

—Frank Kelton

ited Clubhouse in Alberta. About 70 per cent of the member clients come to Potential Place via Alberta Health referrals. It hosts day programs for young adults and adults, some of whom need more fulsome support.

Other PP programs offer access to employment, affordable housing (PP

owns two apartment buildings and connects with other housing organizations and advocates for the housing needs of all its members), schooling and addiction resources.

The Clubhouse has three units — clerical, marketing and communications — and a café-bistro where members

prepare food for point-of-purchase sale. Volunteers who work in the Clubhouse develop relationships with members and staff, which can boost self-esteem and motivation, foster job skills and instill an increased sense of purpose.

“It’s known having a purpose, job and structure reduce hospitalizations. We looked at every member that participated for two years, and their hospitalization rates dropped by 50 per cent after becoming members at Potential Place. The savings to the health-care system, the social return on investment is ginormous. We saved \$11 million a year for those particular 681 people in avoided hospitalizations in subsequent years,” Kelton says. Potential Place currently has more than 2,500 members.

The organization has also struck up relationships with employers, such as local Staples franchises, a prominent local law firm and more, to arrange part-time jobs for members. PP staff members will personally train in these jobs to understand which members might be a good fit. This also allows staff to step in if a member is unable to work a shift.

“Working is very empowering and an important part of recovery. It gets their mojo up, and it’s just fabulous to see,” Kelton says.



# V V 2

## Pregnancy & Infant Loss Support Centre

When former social worker Aditi Loveridge experienced pregnancy loss, she felt a distinct lack of mental health and community support in the city, especially as a racialized person.

"My first experience with pregnancy was one of death and loss. I was taken aback by how it impacted me and how little support there was, and how it later impacted my parenting journey. Society was, 'It's just a miscarriage, you're very healthy.' It was very dismissive messaging," Loveridge says.

Later, when she did become pregnant again, her previous experience impacted her immensely. She struggled with anxiety during the pregnancy, felt disconnected while expecting, and was overwhelmed with anxiety and postpartum depression in her son's first year.

All of this inspired Loveridge to help others in similar situations. She began training in 2013 to become a postpartum doula, a life coach and a mindfulness meditation teacher. While supporting families who had live births after previous loss, she realized she didn't want to go back to social work. Instead, she started a coaching business supporting people who had experienced miscarriage and stillbirth. Through her one-on-one work, she saw people wanted more community connection, so she began to offer a social group.

"What I saw was parents at every stage of loss wanted to be connected to community," she says.

Loveridge reached out to obstetrician Dr. Stephanie Cooper and proposed the idea for creating a charitable organization. Cooper agreed it would fill a huge gap in services and, in December 2018, Loveridge began a grassroots organization called the Pregnancy & Infant Loss Support Centre (PILSC). The centre,

which Cooper is the medical advisor of, offers programming to address the mental health of people who experience pregnancy and infant loss. Its Journey Through Grief program provides free mental health and grief support to reduce the implications of PTSD, anxiety and depression to those impacted by miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal death or sudden infant death syndrome. It also offers services to those navigating fertility challenges, loss through adoption and/or surrogacy. The Sunalta-based centre started with personal donations from those close to the cause.

In June 2020, the Journey Through Grief program received pivotal funding from the Calgary Foundation, which al-

lowed it to offer no-fee services and also helped the centre launch a crisis hotline during the pandemic. The centre saw a 300 per cent increase in access to supports in 2020, with people experiencing more acute mental health crises after giving birth or experiencing loss within the new and restrictive environment.

The centre offers coaching, counselling, peer support and formal grief therapy sessions to people at any stage in their loss journey, from TTC (trying to conceive) to pregnancy and parenting after loss, no matter when it occurred. It supports anyone who is impacted by loss, such as the birthing person, partners, extended family and more.

Part of the organization's mission is

**“What I saw was parents at every stage of loss wanted to be connected to community.”**

—Aditi Loveridge







Facing page: Aditi Loveridge connects with a client.  
This page from left: Big Hill Haven's Chair Valerie Gilmore and Tara McFadden, the society's fund development officer, in Cochrane.

“It’s a successful story in that we are proud of it, but also a sad story that these services are needed in Cochrane.” —Tara McFadden

to be an affirmative space for racialized and LGBTQ2S+ communities.

“Those that are within the racialized and LGBTQ2S+ communities can have additional complexities of trauma around their experiences of loss,” Loveridge says. “We hold space for these intersections of trauma to exist, be validated, be heard, and be supported.”

**3** **Big Hill Haven** Domestic violence in Alberta has reached crisis proportions. In 2019, the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters reported that rates of domestic abuse were the highest they'd been in 10 years, and more than 23,000 people seeking safety were turned away from shelters. In 2020, between March and September, law enforcement reported domestic violence calls were higher in Alberta than the previous year.

Until recently, women, children and seniors seeking to flee domestic violence in the Cochrane area had to find safety in Calgary, Banff or High River.

To address this, Big Hill Haven was formed in 2016. The society was created after some Cochrane area women began discussing the issue and realized many of them had experienced domestic violence. Two founders, Patti Fisher and Margaret Van Tighem, kicked off a fundraiser, brought together a group to provide outreach services and began working toward their vision to offer greater resources and local shelter.

“Coming into 2020, we knew there was a need for shelter and our services. So we mapped out a five-year plan,” says Tara McFadden, fund development officer for the society.

Big Hill Haven's five-year plan allows immediate needs to be filled while working toward future goals.

“The Calgary Foundation grant we received was absolutely transforma-

tional in our ability to help people,” MacFadden says.

To meet increased demand, the society pivoted to the idea of providing emergency shelter through a unique model of short-stay accommodations in Cochrane and area. It also began operating its first dedicated shelter space, named the Haven.

A housing coordinator was hired, and wraparound program supports were offered to all clients, such as safety plans, court support, case management, risk assessment, emotional support, referrals to resources and more.

The Haven opened last August, and it has been in near-continual use since. And because of the pandemic cohabitation rules, the shelter has needed to lean on alternative housing as well. In the last three months of 2020, 150 nights of housing were provided, and the number of staffing hours has increased from 25 hours of service per week up to 55 hours per week.

Area businesses have also partnered with Big Hill Haven to supply gift certificates for food, gas and clothing.

“There has been a huge support from the community,” McFadden says. “It’s a successful story in that we are proud of it, but also a sad story that these services are needed in Cochrane and area.” ■

# Resilient Resources

Over the last year, local agencies have had to expand their programming to address growing needs in the community while also adapting to provide virtual services to slow the spread of COVID-19. With support from the Calgary Foundation, these three organizations have developed smart solutions for staying safe while maintaining community connections.

by Elizabeth Chorney-Booth

## Closer to Home Community Services

**F**rom isolation to job loss, COVID-19 has been challenging for many. But members of Alberta's Indigenous communities, many of whom have existing intergenerational trauma, are experiencing the pandemic in particularly complex ways.

Closer to Home Community Services is a local organization that helps families achieve healthy, happy futures by giving them the tools they need to stay together. As programming that supports Indigenous families has long been part of Closer to Home's mandate, the agency wanted to ensure it continued to offer vital Indigenous-centred services throughout the pandemic.

Closer to Home's Ee-Des-Spoom-Ooh-Soop (a Blackfoot term that translates to "the environment that gives the opportunity to guide our lives forward in a positive direction") offers culturally specific healing and teaching programs that provide Indigenous individuals the opportunity to gain knowledge to help them along their personal healing journeys. Participants can enroll in healing and teaching and sharing circles, drum circles, and one-on-one supports facilitated by Indigenous Elders and Knowledge-Keepers.

"Our programming focuses on building an understanding of who one is, awareness of self and how historical events and the past can impact people individually and communally," says



Left to right: Knowledge-Keeper Darcy Turning Robe and Elder Frank Turning Robe lead a virtual drum circle.

Arlene Oostenbrink, Closer to Home's director. "With that knowledge, skills can be learned in the present to respond to those impacts. This is also knowledge that provides self-determination and interdependency to continue on a healing journey into the future."





“People are feeling more isolated and need to access the resources and supports. We’re trying to build connection in a way that feels authentic and significant.” —Arlene Oostenbrink

**Kerrie Moore** is an educator, Indigenous psychotherapist, trauma specialist, social worker, ceremonialist and a Cree-Métis Elder. Moore’s expertise means there’s a high demand for her skills, and the staff at Closer to Home value her work in leading its Ee-Des-Spoom-Ooh-Soop healing circles. Moore chose to work with Closer to Home because of its dedication to providing truly Indigenous-led programming that is centred on holistic healing.

Moore says the move to online healing circles hasn’t hindered her ability to connect with participants. In fact, it’s allowed her to connect with people who may not find it convenient to attend circles in person. The format also offers participants the privacy to be vulnerable in their own homes, turning their cameras off if they’re feeling too exposed.

“We don’t have anyone teach any circle unless they are Indigenous and have been trained to provide the cultural pieces,” Moore says. “If you’re working with people, you have to make sure that they really understand the spiritual underpinnings of what you are teaching, or people aren’t going to believe you. Relationships are always the first place to begin.”

COVID-19 has increased the demand for these healing supports even though Pekewe House, the venue where the circles are usually held, has closed its doors to the public. Closer to Home has expanded its programming to provide healing and drumming circles

virtually. Elders and Knowledge-Keepers offer their sessions over video conferencing, and resources like drums can be delivered to participants’ homes.

“People are feeling more isolated and need to access the resources and supports,” Oostenbrink says. “We’re

trying to build connection in a way that feels authentic and significant. We’re continually adapting to be able to build relationships online with additional opportunities for connection.”







Left: For many, pets are like family, including these well-loved cats and dogs.

## Tails of Help

**W**hether it's a newly adopted puppy or an older furry friend, pets have helped many of us cope with feelings of isolation and anxiety as we've stayed home over the last year to comply with COVID-19 restrictions. Few things are as daunting to a pet owner as the prospect of their animal companion becoming seriously sick or hurt, a scenario that becomes all the more heartbreaking when the vet bill far exceeds a family or individual's budget.

Tails of Help is a local organization that helps Albertans in need by paying

for the veterinary treatment of pets that would otherwise have to be euthanized, surrendered to a shelter or suffer without treatment. Unlike some agencies that take care of abused or abandoned pets, Tails of Help works with seniors, Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped recipients and other low-income pet owners to help them keep their much-loved and well-cared-for pets at home.

"For so many people, a pet is a family member," says executive director Mark Patrick. "In many of the cases, that pet is the pet owner's primary companion and the most important continuous companion in their life."

The stress of having to choose

between losing a pet or taking on an impossible financial burden has become even more difficult throughout the pandemic as people rely on their pets for emotional support while also facing increased financial hardship or possible job losses. Tails of Help expanded its program over the summer of 2020, doubling the number of pets that received subsidized veterinary care to 100 in just three months.

"These are important emotional bonds that are being stressed or broken in some cases," Patrick says. "We're helping pets and families to stay together. That's so important for so many of these pet owners and their mental health and emotional well-being."

**“These are important emotional bonds that are being stressed or broken in some cases. We're helping pets and families to stay together.” —Mark Patrick**

**Dr. Phil Buote** is the deputy registrar for the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (ABVMA) and a former practicing veterinarian. He has witnessed his fair share of heartbreak from both pet owners and veterinarians who have seen animals suffer, have to be surrendered or euthanized because of the financial burden of medical

treatment. In addition to his role with the ABVMA, Buote sits on Tails of Help's board because he understands how its financial aid affects everyone on both sides of the equation and benefits animal owners and veterinary professionals.

Buote says that most ABVMA members have found themselves in the difficult position of having

to balance an animal's needs with affordability. Tails of Help honours the bond between owners and their pets, and grants veterinarians and veterinary technologists some peace of mind by allowing them to take care of animals to the best of their abilities.

"Every single time that an animal needs treatment, a veterinarian

has to reconcile giving the very best care with the owner's ability to pay for that care," Buote says. "If the owners qualify for Tails of Help, that provides a tool that gives them the option to be able to provide that essential care."

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This page: Resident teacher Kelsang Khacho leads meditation class. Right: Sheryl Hibbert participates in a virtual meditation class.



# Akshobya Kadampa Buddhist Centre

**I**f there's ever been a time to explore the benefits of meditation, it's been during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the last year, many Calgarians have reached beyond meditation apps to engage in formalized guided meditation classes. The Akshobya Kadampa Buddhist Centre offers weekly meditation classes to all Calgarians. It has seen both existing and newer students using the classes to help calm their minds during these unusually stressful times.

The Centre has been able to continue in-person meditation classes with limited capacity throughout most of the pandemic. Still, many students have wanted to do virtual sessions for added convenience and safety. Earlier on in 2020, the Centre was streaming virtually with the help of a borrowed tech set-up. An assistant would actively communicate with students online during meditation and teachings, but sometimes students practicing at home found it hard to hear, while students in class at the Centre were often distracted by the camera and Zoom communication device.

"When you're meditating, you want a nice clear, crisp audio. If you're grasping to hear the class, it just creates more stress," says Kelsang Khacho, Akshobya Kadampa's resident teacher. "We really want to try to make the tech

experience as perfect as possible, so the students can deal with what they're there for."

To offer peaceful classes online and in person, Akshobya Kadampa purchased new audio-visual equipment. The equipment allows the Centre to offer Calgarians more opportunities to use guided meditation to manage their mental well-being, even if they can't physically attend weekly sessions.

"The great thing about Buddhism is you can come to classes, and you learn a technique or a way of viewing things differently," she says. "But we do need that constant connection because it's so easy to get lost in the distraction again. Now people can check in and stay on track."

**“We do need that constant connection because it's so easy to get lost in the distraction again. Now people can check in and stay on track.” —Kelsang Khacho**



**Sheryl Hibbert** started attending meditation classes at the Akshobya Kadampa Buddhist Centre seven years ago after experiencing a personal loss. Fast forward to 2021, and the skills she's cultivated through meditation have proven extremely valuable to deal with current challenges.

"I wanted to learn to meditate, to deal with the stress and the grief that I was feeling," she says. "Although I came to it a long time ago, I can definitely see that people would find it helpful during the pandemic to learn these skills."

The option of virtual classes has allowed Hibbert to stay on top of her meditation practice and remain connected to her teachers and other students. Hibbert says the virtual class option means she's attended even more classes than she otherwise would have. It has also allowed her to spend more time outside of the city in the mountains, particularly in Canmore, without having to rush into Calgary for her classes, which has further contributed to her emotional well-being.

"Meditation is about training the mind and not getting so wrapped up in all of our emotions," Hibbert says. "Without my training, I probably would have gotten more swept up and gotten more anxious instead of being able to choose how to respond to this pandemic in a calmer way." ■

# Champions

**Having received support through the Calgary Foundation's Impact Investment program prior to the pandemic, these three organizations perfectly pivoted their projects to serve community with ingenuity, adaptability, resiliency and resourcefulness**

By Karin Olafson

## The show must go on

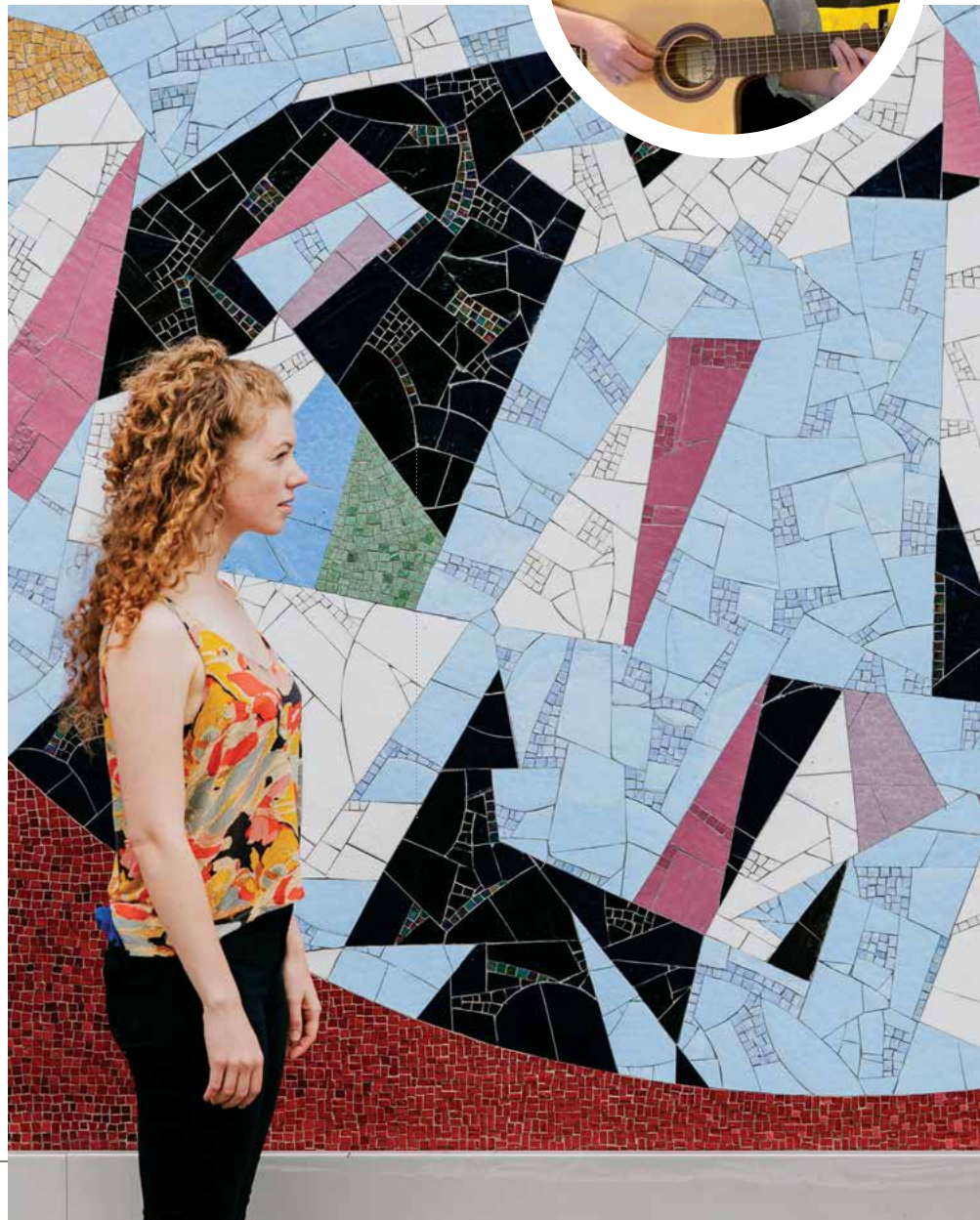
**FOR MANY CALGARIANS**, seeing Theatre Calgary's *A Christmas Carol* is a holiday tradition. The show has run for more than three decades, and, to provide a refresh to the production, Theatre Calgary borrowed \$800,000 through the Calgary Foundation's Impact

Investment program to stage a new adaptation by local playwright Geoffrey Simon Brown in December 2019.

"The 2019 show was a spectacle of grandeur," says Maya Choldin, executive director at Theatre Calgary. "The funds were used to redesign the set and the costumes for the revamped version of *A Christmas Carol* and to put some automation on the Max Bell stage."

Theatre Calgary also used the loan to rebuild its website. Fast forward to 2020, and this investment turned out to be essential as the company adapted to the pandemic.

"We've now turned heavily into the digital age," says Choldin, explaining that Theatre Calgary had to drastically rethink how to bring its offerings to a community of theatre-lovers. To provide access to the arts, the company live-streamed its 2020 Shakespeare by the Bow performances of *Romeo & Juliet*, in association with The Shakespeare Company and Hit + Myth Productions, online. Plus, it began uploading short



Right: Anna Dalgleish and Zach Running Coyote in Shakespeare by the Bow's *Romeo & Juliet*. Top left: Allison Lynch performs for TC Takeout. Top right: Stephen Hair in *A Christmas Carol*.



# of Change

CALGARY



videos of music, dancing and theatrical reflections — called TC Takeout — to YouTube and its website.

The website rebuild project finished before the pandemic began, but having it in place meant Theatre Calgary was able to pivot quickly and still present its beloved holiday show.

The 2020 production of *A Christmas Carol* was a modern, dialled-back version of the play that featured a pared-down cast of three actors from the original 25. The updated website acted as a theatre venue and digital stage: patrons logged onto the Theatre Calgary site to view the performance from their homes. The new website also improved the online ticket-buying experience, making it easy for theatre-lovers to purchase their \$25 tickets.

The digital offering was a success. Theatre Calgary sold more than 10,000 access passes to the show in more than 20 countries, and the production was screened in 300 classrooms.

"The Impact Investment loan has allowed Theatre Calgary to continue to produce shows for this community," says Choldin. "I think, now more than ever, we need this art."

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## Impact Investing 101



Calgary Foundation's Impact Investment program provides loans that support the unique, individual needs of charities and non-profits.



Flexible repayment schedules can bridge funding cycles, providing short-term cash while waiting on grants or donations.

### AN IMPACT INVESTMENT CAN:

1. be an option for those who are unable to access traditional financing.
2. boost a bank loan that enables an organization to take its mission farther, faster.

## >> A safe space for all

### REVEREND DR. GREG

**GLATZ**, minister at Knox United Church, had known for a while that the 108-year-old church needed some structural upgrades. In 2019, the church borrowed \$1 million from the Calgary Foundation's Impact Investment program to help finance the upgrades to the building's facade. About 25 per cent of the loan was allocated to restoring the stonework on the building's bell tower.

"The Calgary Foundation's support was extremely valuable in terms of getting that done in a timely manner," says Glatz, explaining that construction took place in 2019 and into 2020. "The two sides of the tower were posing significant safety issues — the stonework crashing off the tower onto the sidewalk would cause a shutdown or complete barricade. We were able to get in there quickly and remove the danger areas."

As well as being essential from a safety perspective, this project was meaningful to all who appreciate the unique heritage building in downtown Calgary.

"We see ourselves as having an architectural and historic responsibility to contribute to downtown Calgary and to Calgary's history," says Glatz. "But it wasn't just about trying to preserve a building. A building in good shape allows us to do the kind of community work that we want to do."


In addition to serving its congregation, Knox United Church is a place for the entire Calgary community. Glatz says the Calgary Foundation loan was "designed to pivot us to become an even more effective community space."

Before the pandemic, the church launched Sanctuary Coffee, an in-church coffee shop and placemaking pilot project. When the pandemic forced Knox to close its doors in March 2020, its long-term rental agreements with music groups, arts groups and social service groups were also paused. As such, hav-

ing the remainder of the loan to support its placemaking projects couldn't have come at a better time: these projects offer a revenue stream but are also an opportunity to form relationships with members of the community.

During its COVID-19 closure, the church used the Impact Investment funding to construct a permanent space

for Sanctuary Coffee. The café features a full order counter and comfortable seating and opened in September 2020. The funding will also support additional placemaking initiatives that are planned to open by 2022, a community bakery to support Sanctuary Coffee and a co-working space, Abbey Co-Working, that will further engage community.



**“But it wasn't just about trying to preserve a building. A building in good shape allows us to do the kind of community work that we want to do.”** —Rev. Dr. Greg Glatz



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"The café takes a space that's unused during the week and turns it into a place where the community meets," says Glatz. He adds that the Foundation's support for these projects was especially meaningful during the pandemic, when the problems of social

isolation were really brought to the forefront.

"If we're going to do anything that's community-facing and community-building, it's going to be to address social isolation and create a safe place for people to gather and grow," says Glatz.



**“With this café you still have a sanctuary, both figuratively and literally.”** —Jennifer Young

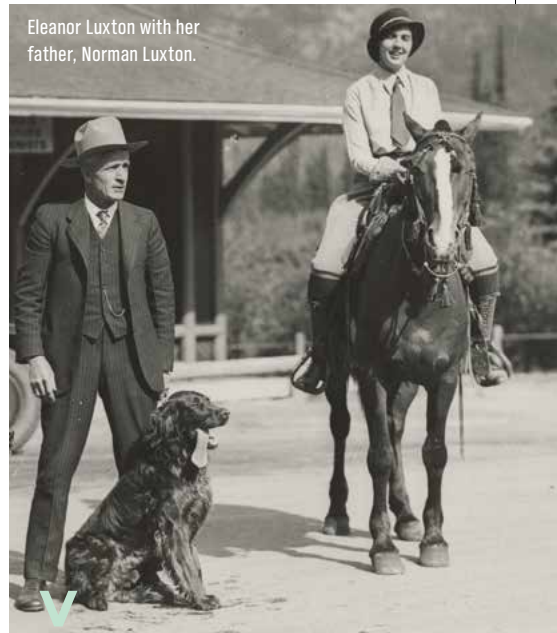
**B**orn and raised in Calgary, Jennifer Young, the coffee-loving barista team lead at Sanctuary Coffee, hadn't heard of Knox United Church before accepting her current position. While serving high-quality coffee in a historic church is a huge part of the café's appeal, she says what

makes it particularly special is its welcoming, inviting feel.

"I didn't realize that there is an intimidation factor for many to enter a church building. When people visiting the café told me that, I was so honoured to be part of a project that made a space that was maybe daunting, become welcoming," says Young.

She adds: "With the pandemic, where we have a lot of our social ties barred from us, it's even more important that people still have community. That in this ever-changing world, there's still something that's a constant — with this café you still have a sanctuary, both figuratively and literally."

Eleanor Luxton with her father, Norman Luxton.



## Where home and history meet

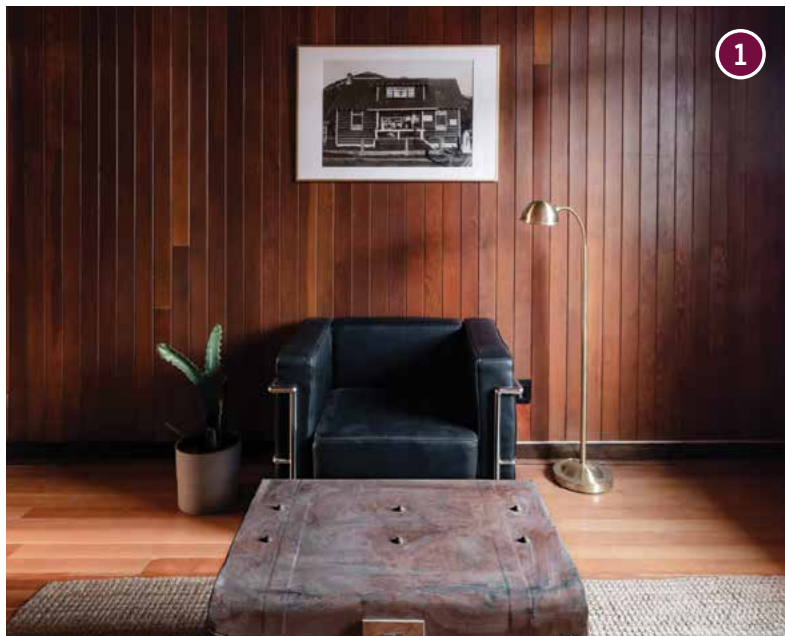
**ELEANOR LUXTON**, the daughter of Bow Valley pioneers, established the Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation (ELHF) in 1995 to protect and preserve the history, culture and ecology of Banff and the Bow Valley.

But with Banff being an increasingly popular tourist destination, and with housing prices skyrocketing, the preservation of heritage buildings isn't always a priority.

"In many tourist towns — and particularly one that's as popular and well-visited as Banff — a great number of the heritage properties from the early days of Banff have disappeared," says Bill Luxton, president of the ELHF. "They've been replaced by hotels and other luxury properties."

A second challenge facing the Banff community is the limited availability of rental housing. Data released in 2019 shows the rental housing vacancy rate in Banff is 1.1 per cent, yet according to a report from the Banff Community Housing Strategy, a healthy vacancy rate is between three and five per cent.

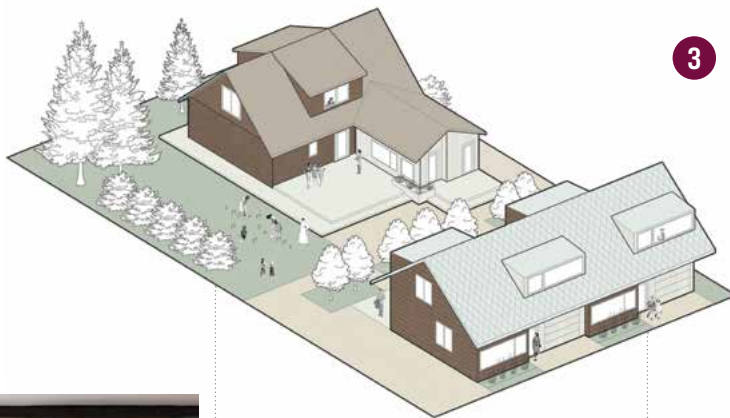
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(1) The renovated living room features a historic image of Beaver Lodge on the wall.



(2) The updated kitchen is a beautiful and functional space.



(3) Drawings of the proposed project.

(4) Another interior shot of the renovated Beaver Lodge.

(5) The laneway housing under construction.



In January 2020, the ELHF borrowed \$500,000 from the Calgary Foundation's Impact Investment program for phase one of its Beaver Street streetscape project. Phase one involved the maintenance and renovation of Beaver Lodge, a historic building ELHF manages, and the creation of two new laneway homes on Banff's Beaver Street.

ELHF worked with Studio North, an award-winning design company in Calgary, on the structural and maintenance-related repairs of Beaver

Lodge, which is located at 212 Beaver Street. The building also underwent a major renovation, resulting in a spacious three-bedroom apartment with a new kitchen and a main floor area for board meetings and small community events. This renovation increased Beaver Lodge's rental capacity from one tenant to two.

To create the new living spaces, ELHF collaborated with Studio North; the result was two 850-square-foot laneway housing units at the back of Bea-

ver Lodge. The construction is finished, and already, the foundation has rented the new properties at market rates.

"We now have two tenants in Beaver Lodge, and we have tenants in both the semi-detached laneway homes," says Luxton.

The Calgary Foundation's support enabled a new development model — one that preserves history while also adding critical housing and financial stability for the ELHF during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The loan also enhanced the ELHF's resiliency during a tough year. Its museum closed its doors in March 2020 and is still closed due to COVID-19. Yet additional rentals provide a sustainable source of revenue to support ELHF's regular heritage programming. ■





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