

# SPUR

Calgary Foundation / Fall 2017



# 3

**ways Calgary organizations  
are joining forces**

## Life Lessons

**Supporting early  
childhood development**

## Cultural Programs

**New initiatives  
empowering Indigenous  
communities**

## Paying It Forward

**Alice Lam is committed  
to helping new Canadians**



## Listening to, and learning from, our community

AS A COMMUNITY leader, the Calgary Foundation recognizes that impactful, lasting change requires the participation and wisdom of many.

This issue of *Spur* showcases the people, partners and nonprofits who share our passion and vision for building flourishing communities.

Donors like Frank Hall and Marcy Field who are creating lasting legacies for future generations.

People like Alice Lam and Barbara Camponi who generously share their knowledge on our Grants Advisory Committees. And leaders like Bob Gibson who expanded his volunteer role with the Foundation as our new Board Chair.

We know that the vision we collectively hold for our country is best achieved in collaboration, by listening to and learning from the insights of those closest to the challenges.

Canada's sesquicentennial has been an opportunity to support many diverse citizen-led initiatives like Soul of the City and Canada 150 that celebrate community and imagine the country we want to have.

And organizations like Pathways Community Services Association that strengthen our relationship with Indigenous communities by promoting Truth & Reconciliation.

In this issue, you will learn about our renewed focus on youth, demonstrated by our support for Bow Valley College, Calgary Reads, Strathcona-Tweedsmuir and Piitoyais Family School—and the people who are helping students to thrive.

Together, we're focusing on our shared values to shift communities and shape lives—making a difference that matters—for everyone. ■



We know that the vision we collectively hold for our country is best achieved in collaboration.

**Eva Friesen**  
President & CEO,  
Calgary Foundation



# P.22

At Piitoyais Family School, a special program bridges the gap between public education and Indigenous families.

## SPUR

Calgary Foundation  
Fall 2017

**Editor:** Taylor Barrie  
**Associate Editor:** Janice Francey

**Calgary Foundation Board of Directors:**

**Robert (Bob) Gibson**  
*Chair*  
**Elizabeth Peters**  
*Vice Chair*  
**Catherine (Kay) Best**  
**Ali A. Bhojani**  
**Jim Brownlee**  
**Sunny Delaney-Clark**  
**John Fischer**  
**Murray Laverty**  
**Gregory Lohnes**  
**Sián M. Matthews**  
**Melanie McDonald**

**Wes Peters**  
**Patti Pon**  
**Phil Scherman**

**Eva Friesen**  
President & CEO  
Calgary Foundation



Kahanoff Centre  
#1180, 105 12 Avenue SE  
T2G 1A1  
Ph: 403-802-7700  
calgaryfoundation.org



Published by RedPoint Media & Marketing Solutions

**President and CEO:** Pete Graves  
**Associate Publisher:** Pritha Kalar  
**Client Relations Manager:** Sandra Jenks  
**Managing Editor:** Jill Foran  
**Art Director:** David Willcoome  
**Production Manager:** Mike Matovich  
**Audience Development/Reader Services Manager:** Rob Kelly  
**Staff Photographer:** Jared Sych  
**Contributing writers:** Elizabeth Chorney-Booth, Mike Fisher, Paula Trotter, Julia Williams

Statements, opinions and viewpoints expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the publisher. Copyright 2017 by RedPoint Media Group Inc. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the express written consent of the publisher.

**REDPOINT**  
Media & Marketing Solutions

100, 1900 11 St. S.E.  
Calgary, AB T2G 3G2  
Ph: 403-240-9055  
redpointmedia.ca

Canadian Publications  
Mail Product Agreement No.  
PM 40030911



# Contents

## FEATURES

### **LIFE LESSONS** P12

Two organizations are working to improve early childhood development and build solid foundations for successful futures.

### **WORKING TOGETHER** P16

Through collaboration and creative thinking, three very different initiatives are making positive impacts in Calgary and beyond.

### **CIRCLES OF SELF, FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE** P22

Organizations and programs that support the healing and empowerment of Indigenous communities.

### **STUDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE** P26

How a grade six project has inspired a new generation of philanthropists.

## DEPARTMENTS

### **BOARD MEMBER PROFILE** P4

With a distinguished career in finance to draw upon, new Chair Bob Gibson is committed to investing in projects that do social good.

### **INSPIRING DONORS** P6

Marcy Field and Frank Hall see Future Funds as a way to provide key support to those in need.

### **GRASSROOTS GRANTS** P8

The Community Fund for Canada's 150th has fostered a greater sense of understanding, inclusion and celebration across the country.

### **VOLUNTEERS** P10

Dedicating time to helping others is second nature to Alice Lam and Barbara Camponi.

### **SOUL OF THE CITY** P20

This year's Soul of the City Neighbour Grants have helped to fund a variety of community projects throughout the city.

# Investing in Calgary

**Calgary Foundation's new board chair is finding more ways to contribute.**

By Julia Williams • Photography by Erin Brooke Burns

**BOB GIBSON** became chair of the Calgary Foundation's Board of Directors on July 1, 2017, but this two-year commitment isn't his only role: he's also the chair of the Impact Investment Committee, playing a leadership role in its development and evolution since joining the Foundation in 2006. The Impact Investment Committee is responsible for a \$20 million impact investment fund, contributed by an anonymous donor to invest in projects that do social good.

Now retired, Gibson is the former managing director of Rothschild Canada and co-head of Rothschild Canada's Calgary office. His distinguished career in finance, combined with his determination to give back to Calgary, fuels his passion for impact investments, leading him to treat his role on the committee like a part-time job. He believes it's important for the community to use and recycle the Calgary Foundation's impact investment fund to help further social and environmental projects.

"We have to be able to turn this money over and use it on as many projects as we can," Gibson says.

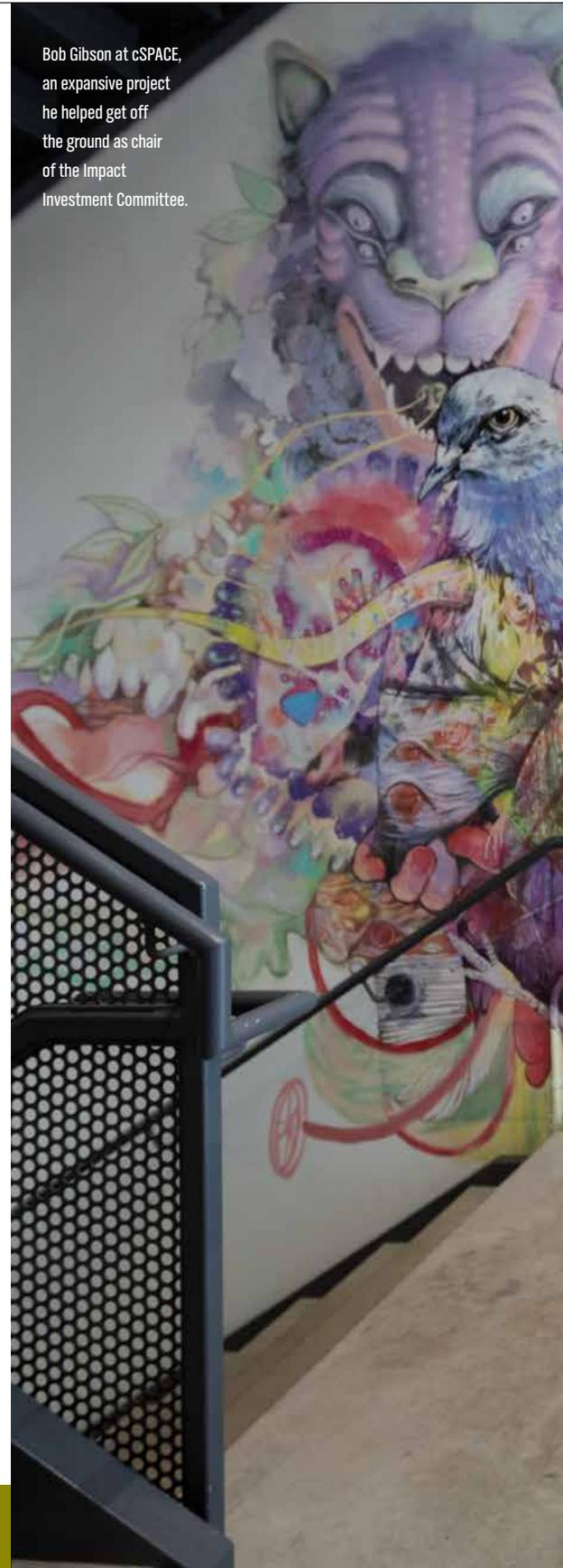
The committee's first project was to join forces with Calgary Arts Devel-

opment to purchase the King Edward School in South Calgary in 2012. It was the first time the Calgary Foundation provided capital investment to get a project off the ground. The site has since been master-planned, and has been transformed into cSPACE, a 47,000-square-foot creative incubator development. The project, which Gibson says was "a risk and an experiment," has proven economically viable and is already contributing to the city's cultural vibrancy. "It worked exactly as planned," Gibson says. "So, we said, 'We need to do more of this.'"

The committee has since invested \$5 million in the Kahanoff Centre, \$1.5 million in Inn From the Cold's Journey House II, and \$175,000 in the Autism Aspergers Friendship Society of Calgary to finance an online platform that helps people with autism and their caregivers.

The long-term goal? Gibson would love to turn the \$20 million fund into a \$100 million fund—but he's looking for something more than just a respectable rate of return. "It's the social return that we spend a lot of time thinking about," Gibson says. "It's the good that these things can do." ■

Bob Gibson at cSPACE, an expansive project he helped get off the ground as chair of the Impact Investment Committee.



Want to discuss how Calgary Foundation's impact investment fund can assist your organization?  
Contact our Community Investment Associate, Lauren Frosst: [lfrosst@calgaryfoundation.org](mailto:lfrosst@calgaryfoundation.org)



“

It's the social return that we spend a lot of time thinking about.

”

# Inspiring Donors

Through the creation of a Future Fund with the Calgary Foundation today, **Marcy Field** and **Frank Hall** know they'll have a positive impact on tomorrow. By Paula Trotter • Photography by Jared Sych

**M**ARCY FIELD believes everyone has a gift within them, large or small, that will result in positive societal transformation.

"Not all of us are going to be tsunami waves on the ocean, like Oprah," says Field, owner of the consulting business Mountain Lion Leadership. "But a pebble that skips across the pond impacts and changes how that pond works."

Field, who lives on a farm outside of Carseland, Alta., has been making meaningful community contributions since the 1980s through her work with literacy and hospice organizations as well as the Carseland Public Benefit Club, the longest-running women's public service group in Alberta.

It's through her volunteerism that Field learned how critical sustainable funding is for non-profits, so she decided to set up a Future Endowment Fund through the Calgary Foundation.

"As it grows and builds, that's where we get the value," she says of the Fund. "The more we give like that, the more it creates long-term sustainability for non-profit organizations and takes a whole lot of pressure off of them."

As Field learned, there are many ways to create a significant bequest—you don't have to be a wealthy property owner to do so. Field's Future Fund will be seeded by her life insurance policy. She has discussed this decision with her two adult children, and hopes her family will continue to support her Fund after her passing.

Field is exploring her community investment options. One area close to her heart is supporting single mothers returning to school, as she, too, returned to university later in life.

"This [Fund] is a small way that I can be the change for someone else," she says.

“

When you can see the pressure come off somebody, or an organization, because they don't have to struggle with funding, it's huge.

”



Marcy Field on her farm, just outside of Carseland, Alta.

Frank Hall at  
the Children's  
Wish Foundation.



“ I’m a simple guy who’s happy to help. I just wanted to do something in memory of a wonderful person. ”

**F**RANK HALL is a quiet man, but his dedication to the Children's Wish Foundation speaks volumes about his character.

He first became involved with the Canadian charity—which grants wishes to sick children and their families—through his late wife, Terri. They started volunteering with the organization in the early 1980s, with Terri going on to hold senior roles there.

"It meant a lot to her to help other people, particularly youth, in their time of need," says Hall, who is the founder of Hall's Auction Services Ltd., a full-service auction company in Calgary.

When Terri passed away from cancer in 2005, Hall decided to continue volunteering with the Children's Wish Foundation, and create a Future Fund through the Calgary Foundation.

Through this Fund, Hall is bestowing part of his estate to the Children's Wish Foundation upon his passing.

"I thought it would be nice to honour [Terri] for all of the work she did for the kids," he says. "Setting up the endowment fund is a natural choice for making sure she's never forgotten."

The magic of seeing a sick child experience a dream come true motivates Hall

to continue his support of the Children's Wish Foundation.

He has worked behind the scenes on many wishes, but one of his most memorable experiences took place more than 20 years ago when he helped arrange a trip to London, England, for a 12-year-old girl who wanted to see the Royal Ballet. Much to the delight of the girl and her family, they got to enjoy the ballet sitting just two rows behind the late Princess Diana.

Hall is content knowing his Future Fund will continue to make dreams come true for many more children—all in honour of Terri. ■

#### ◀ CONVERSATION STARTERS

Creating a Future Fund can inspire conversations about family values and meaningful giving.

#### ▲ LASTING LEGACIES

Future Funds establish a commitment for support to a family's philanthropic interest areas.



While the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation has given the country a reason to host a variety of national celebrations this year, it has also provided communities across Canada the opportunity to celebrate at a grassroots level.

By Elizabeth Chomey-Booth

**T**hroughout 2017, the federal Department of Canadian Heritage and Canada's 191 community foundations have been funding community initiatives through their Community Fund for Canada's 150th program—all in celebration of the country's milestone anniversary.

The federal government provided \$10 million in funding for community projects, an amount that has been quadrupled thanks to private donations and matching programs by community foundations, including the Calgary Foundation. Following are just a few of the local grant recipients who have found meaningful ways to celebrate what it means to be Canadian in 2017.



1

## 1 Turban, Eh?

The Sikh community has long been a big part of Canada's cultural makeup, but few non-Sikhs know what it's like to wear a turban. To help remedy that, the Sikh National Archives of Canada received Canada 150 grants for four Canadian cities, including Calgary, to host "Turban, Eh!" events, where volunteers wrapped turbans on the heads of non-Sikh Canadians. The event was originally conceived

in Calgary, and it first took place in 2016. This year's Canada Day "Turban, Eh!" in Calgary saw 110 volunteers wrapping turbans for almost 3,000 guests while explaining why Sikhs choose to wear turbans.

"A lot of people have questions about the turban and the faith in general," says organizer Tejinder Singh Sidhu. "But many people are shy and feel like if they ask questions, they'll offend. So this event was about breaking down those barriers."

Calgary's "Turban Eh!" photo by Janice Francey

## 2 Okotoks Mural Project

The team behind Canada 150 Mosaic is putting together a country-wide project piece by piece—literally.

The organization is facilitating the creation of 150 murals comprised of more than 80,000 individual tiles in communities throughout Canada. Each mural depicts a train car carrying objects specific to its host communi-

ty, and these cars will be linked online to create a virtual train stretching across the country.

The town of Okotoks is one of the Albertan communities participating in the project. This past May, more than 600 of the town's residents painted their individual tiles, which were then pieced together to create an eight- by 12-foot mural featuring the Okotoks Erratic (a.k.a. the "big rock"). The mural will get a permanent home in the newly expanded Pason Centennial Arena upon the building's completion early next year.



## 3 Points of View: A National Human Rights Photography Exhibition

Protecting human rights is a core Canadian value and, for many, a key part of recognizing Canada 150. Calgary's Marda Loop Justice Film Festival (MLJFF) is using its Canada 150th grant to display a portion of a human rights photography exhibit from Winnipeg's Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Calgary from November 17 to 19.

The Points of View photography exhibition is a crowd-sourced collection of 70 photos exploring themes related to human rights. Jurors named the best photos in each of five categories (Reconciliation, Freedom of Expression, Inclusion and Diversity, Human Rights and the Environment, and Youth) this past June, and those five photographs will be on display at the MLJFF. Visitors will also have a chance to vote for the People's Choice winner. The festival is using its grant money to build a structure to display the photographs in the lobby of River Park Church, which hosts many of the event's screenings. ■



# Volunteers

Whenever a Community Grant proposal comes to the Calgary Foundation, it passes through one of many advisory committees made up of volunteers like Alice Lam and Barbara Camponi, both of whom are passionate about serving their communities and seeing them thrive. *By Julia Williams • Photography by Jared Sych*

“  
Now that I'm older  
and bilingual, I can  
help people in so  
many ways.”



## Alice Lam

Alice Lam was born in Calgary, the daughter of Vietnamese refugees of Chinese descent. She didn't learn to speak English until she started kindergarten, and she struggled with the language and cultural barriers her family faced.

Today, at age 29, Lam is grateful for having experienced those early challenges because it helps her understand what new Canadians go through. "Now that I'm older and bilingual, I can help people in so many ways," she says.

When she was in her early twenties, Lam spent three years travelling and volunteering abroad, but she kept thinking about Calgary. "I thought, I really should be making an impact in my home town," Lam says. She wanted to contribute to Calgary's Chinatown, the community that had always made her feel at home when she was growing up.

Upon returning to Calgary, Lam began volunteering for the Calgary Chinese Community Service Association as an interpreter for seniors, and the role opened her eyes to the challenges many older Calgarians face—especially those with limited English skills.

Lam is now involved with several volunteer organizations that address the needs of new Canadians, and she's also a member of the Health and Wellness Grant Advisory Committee for the Calgary Foundation. She's especially proud that the Foundation recently approved a proposal for the Calgary Immigrant Educational Society's Mental Health for Refugees Program. Lam knows the anxiety, depression and fear that living in an unfamiliar culture can generate.

"I can't stress how crucial language-specific mental health support is to the success of a new Canadian," she says.



## Barbara Camponi

**B**uilding communities is Barbara Camponi's passion. Since the 1990s, she's worked with companies to facilitate positive relationships between corporations and the communities they affect.

Having Aboriginal roots, Camponi says the experience of providing on-the-ground engagement with more than 30 Indigenous communities in Alberta, B.C. and the Northwest Territories really resonated with her.

"Access to health care and education are key to building strong communities. You have those foundations and you just see them soar," she says.

Camponi is a long-time volunteer for organizations including the Wild Rose International Association of Public Participation (of which she's a founding member) and the Centre of Excellence for Corporate Social Responsibility. She joined the Calgary Foundation in 2015 to serve on the Children, Youth & Families Grants Advisory Committee.

The nine-member committee works hard to support charities and engage citizens, helping organizations strengthen families and communities, but Camponi says she's gained more than she's given: "It's astounding, the stories I hear. I've learned so much about community needs."

Camponi has travelled and worked in the United States, South America and Europe and feels her travels have given her invaluable perspective.

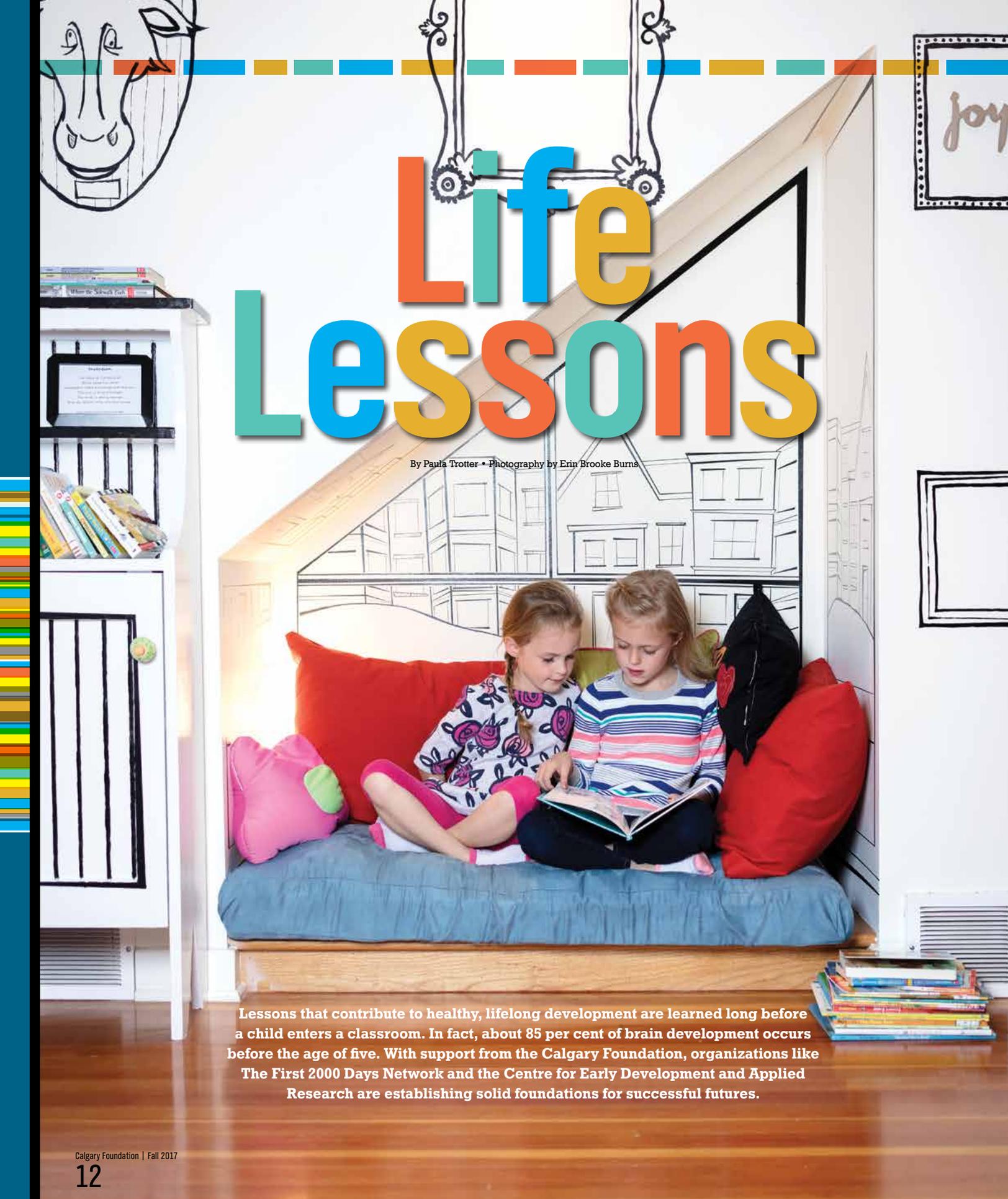
"The core, whether you're moving from culture to culture or country to country, is respect," she says.

Camponi wakes each day with the same mantra: "Make a difference. Do something positive that acknowledges a person. Sometimes all it takes is a smile; other times it's possible to do more." ■

“

Access to health care and education are key to building strong communities. You have those foundations and you just see them soar.

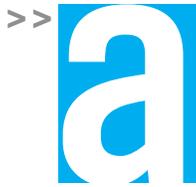
”



# Life Lessons

By Paula Trotter • Photography by Erin Brooke Burns

Lessons that contribute to healthy, lifelong development are learned long before a child enters a classroom. In fact, about 85 per cent of brain development occurs before the age of five. With support from the Calgary Foundation, organizations like The First 2000 Days Network and the Centre for Early Development and Applied Research are establishing solid foundations for successful futures.



## CHILD'S FIRST 2,000 DAYS

set the stage for the rest of his or her life.

Yet provincial statistics have found that only around 46 per cent of kindergarten-aged children in Alberta are progressing appropriately in all five areas of development: social, emotional, cognitive, communication and physical.

"We need a provincial mind-shift so that people come to see the value of young children and realize their brains are being developed in those first 2,000 days," says Steacy Collyer, executive director with Calgary Reads. "If we don't get that right, we pay for it for the rest of their lives."

Collyer explains that a lack in fundamental development in children's early years contributes to higher rates of high school drop-outs and crime later on.

It's this knowledge about the importance of early childhood and brain development that fuelled the creation of the First 2000 Days Network, of which Calgary Reads is a member.

The network is a collection of organizations, professionals and community members who are dedicated to improving early childhood development outcomes in Alberta.

According to Collyer, the network's mandate is to "link, align and leverage" collective efforts in early childhood development, and it aims to provide the groups it engages with

We need a provincial mind-shift so that people come to see the value of young children.

Steacy Collyer



Opposite page: Young readers Martie (left) and Atley (right) settle in with a good book at The Children's Reading Place.

This page: Steacy Collyer (left) and Blythe Butler (right) inside the Children's Reading Room at the Calgary Reads office.

opportunities to think and learn differently in order to implement individual and organizational change.

"It's really about taking [information] that is evidence-based and researched-based, and being able to make those judgments for your own organization, for your own families, to know where improvements need to be made and why," adds Blythe Butler, who has been acting as the Network Weaver, contributing to the

strategy development and implementation for the network for the past four years.

With support from the Calgary Foundation, the network is currently guiding its second cohort through the Strengthening Families Collective Impact Pilot, which is based on the Strengthening Families framework developed out of the Centre for the Study of Social Policy in the United States.

The participating organizations—including the

Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Reads, Carya, Families Matter, WinSport, University of Calgary Childcare and CanLearn—are receiving peer-to-peer learning, mentorship and coaching to explore ways in which they can implement a continuous improvement approach to supporting the well-being of families and children. (For an example of this sort of approach, learn more about The Children's Reading Place on the next page.)





*here once was a heritage house in Inglewood, each room filled with books, one for every visiting boy and girl.*

**This isn't the start of a fairy tale—it's a description of The Children's Reading Place by Calgary Reads.**

**Calgary Reads has traditionally focused on working with school-aged children as an in-school tutoring program. But the organization has expanded into the community to foster a love of reading even earlier in life.**

**The cozy, colourful home houses books geared mainly to babies and children up to the age of eight. Every child leaves with a book to help grow their personal library.**



## Educating the next generation

>> **e**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT** isn't limited to cognitive, language, and fine and gross motor skills. Another key building block to a successful foundation is the development of social-emotional well-being.

"Social-emotional well-being is about supporting children to make strong relationship connections so they know how to act, interact and react in social environments," explains Cheryl Kinzel, director of the Centre for Early Development and Applied Research (CEDAR) with the School of Community Studies at Bow Valley College.

This is critical to overall development because we all must live and function amid a network of people. "If you can engage in healthy, positive interactions with others," says Kinzel, "you're very likely going to have a successful life because you know what to do and how to do it, and you feel good while these things are happening."

The centre is working with college students in the lab and classroom to conduct applied research,

It's our responsibility to gain more knowledge and have a better understanding of what kind of supports are needed.

*Cheryl Kinzel*

develop curriculum and resources, and collaborate with partners to better understand and support children, families and communities in their aim to develop strong, caring and reciprocal relationships.

Kinzel is confident that CEDAR's research-based education of future educators will have a lasting

impact on the communities in which they serve. For example, two of the centre's current research projects are examining how to better address the unique needs of Indigenous and multicultural populations.

"It's our responsibility to gain more knowledge and have a better understanding of what kind of supports

are needed and how to deliver those supports," says Kinzel.

CEDAR has the potential for wide-reaching influence, as Bow Valley College's Early Learning and Child Care Diploma program graduates the largest number of early childhood educators in Alberta each year. ■



Opposite page:  
Perusing the books  
at The Children's  
Reading Place.

This page: Cheryl  
Kinzel in her  
classroom at Bow  
Valley College.





# Working Together

By Mike Fisher

**Often, the capacity of a collaborative partnership far exceeds what one person or one group can achieve alone. Whether it's lending support to a teenager reaching out for help, protecting Alberta's wild places or providing grassroots organizations with the tools they need to thrive, the following organizations show how magic can happen when like-minded people work together.**



## Protecting Alberta's Landscape

**W**henever Danah Duke hikes with her husband and kids along the Livingston Range in southern Alberta, she is taken aback by the beauty of the region.

Duke is one of many people—from various local organizations—who are working together to ensure that specific Alberta lands of high ecological value are safeguarded by a comprehensive plan that identifies conservation priorities, strategies and desired outcomes.

"The Southern Eastern Slopes Collaborative was conceived collectively and designed and implemented as a collaborative," says Duke, who serves as executive director of the Miistakis Institute—one of the lead organizations in the collaboration. Other organizations include the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and Southern Alberta Land Trust Society (SALTS), as well as a variety of smaller non-profits.

Together, as a coordinated group, they are developing a bold, detailed land-use vision for a wide swath of public and private lands extending to the Bow River watershed in the

north, Highway 2 to the east, the United States border to the south and the British Columbia border to the west. It's a vision that will emphasize, first and foremost, landscape protection and management.

"The southern eastern slopes, with their rolling grass hills, forests, and mountains, are core to our identity as Albertans," says Justin Thompson, executive director of SALTS. "Their health is vital to our supplies of clean water and abundant wildlife. The collaborative nature of this project is critical."

This is the first time that such a broad collection of conservation organizations are working together to assess the health of the slopes and develop strategic goals and objectives for their conservation—in the past, these organizations have all tended to respond independently to specific development proposals or government consultations that impact the slopes.

Now, through collaborative workshops and other methods, they are creating the vision, identifying targets and reviewing collective goals and objectives—all with the aim of producing a master plan that other groups and stakeholders can use while developing and carrying out their own mandates. Through this master plan, which will be completed by December 2018, Alberta's southern eastern slopes will see healthier headwaters, more resilient ecosystems, more diverse regional economies and improved wildland recreation opportunities.

“  
The southern eastern slopes, with their rolling grass hills, forests, and mountains, are core to our identity as Albertans.”  
”

*Justin Thompson*

Danah Duke and Justin Thompson at the Quarter Circle X Ranch (location courtesy of the Buckley family).

## Moving In

Last spring, two Calgary organizations, the Children's Legal & Educational Resource Centre (CLERC) and The Alex, formed an agreement that illustrates how creative thinking and shared solutions can help to overcome challenges.

With a roster of both paid and volunteer lawyers, CLERC provides legal advice and representation to vulnerable children and youth in Calgary who need assistance dealing with issues like child custody disputes, teen pregnancy, independent living and employment.

The Alex, meanwhile, is a health and social services agency that offers different kinds of support than CLERC but shares a similar vision of helping vulnerable youth become strong, contributing Calgarians. The Alex provides health, housing and food programs with a main focus on crisis prevention.

Earlier this year, CLERC faced a crisis of its own when it looked like financial challenges might force it to close its doors. In search of ways to save money, the organization sold the building it had been operating out of for nearly 15 years. CLERC originally planned to move into space adjacent to the Calgary Foundation in the Kahanoff Centre but determined it would be better in the long term to take up co-location at The Alex, where many of its clients are served.

"CLERC came to us and explained that it made sense to become part of our organization, in order to drop its overhead," says Shelley Heartwell, CEO of The Alex. "Administrative costs—such as phones, photocopies and staffing—can often sink a smaller organization. So, by moving in, they could have those covered and put that money into their legal services and we

We have a shared commitment to serving the community.

*David Pickersgill*



could provide wrap-around services."

CLERC moved into The Alex on March 5, and Heartwell estimates the move will save CLERC about \$175,000 yearly. She is also happy with the ways in which CLERC's presence on-site provides youth in need with easier access to a broader range of services.

Consider 16-year-old Alicia's story. Alicia (name has been changed) became pregnant and was kicked out of her family home last spring. Facing few options, she went to CLERC for help, because she needed to obtain

her birth certificate before she could get her own bank account. By seeking CLERC's legal assistance, however, the frightened teen also gained access to much-needed health and housing services through The Alex.

"In a case like this, we were able to provide Alicia support with her pregnancy, along with the other range of challenges she faced," says David Pickersgill, a volunteer member on CLERC's board of directors. "We have a shared commitment to serving the community."

Shelley Heartwell of The Alex and David Pickersgill of CLERC, together at The Alex.



“ We provide both physical space, as well as a supportive, inclusive social space rooted in relationships. ”  
Erin McFarlane

## Creating Opportunities

Sanni-Ilona Paljakka (left), a therapist with the Calgary Women's Health Collective, poses with Erin McFarlane on the steps of the CommunityWise Resource Centre.

CommunityWise Resource Centre in downtown Calgary excels when it comes to offering heartfelt help and practical assistance.

Headquartered in the old YWCA building on 12 Ave. S.W. (the oldest purpose-built social service facility in Calgary), the organization enhances the power and reach of smaller non-profit organizations by providing

meeting spaces and other backbone infrastructure—such as shared Internet, office and kitchen equipment, mailboxes and more—as well as collaborative capacity-building and programming supports such as workshops and networking opportunities.

“Our primary connection to capacity-building over the past 38 years has been through the facilitation of space,” says CommunityWise Community and Organizational Development Coordinator Erin McFarlane. “[We provide] both physical space, in the way

of office, meeting and event space, as well as a supportive, inclusive social space rooted in relationships.”

Currently, approximately 95 non-profits are making use of CommunityWise's services. “About 30 of the members are physically co-located within our space as tenants,” explains McFarlane, “and the other 65 are known as associate members who access common spaces or other resources for their meetings, programming and events.”

The Calgary Women's Health Collective has been a non-profit tenant at CommunityWise for 30 years. Low-cost access to central office, meeting and event space—along with office infrastructure support such as access to photocopiers—has enabled the collective to continuously expand its services, from offering affordable counselling on issues including depression and anxiety to organizing workshops with instructors from Calgary and abroad.

Collectively, the non-profits connected to CommunityWise serve tens of thousands of people in Calgary and surrounding areas each year. And the proximity between the member groups has proven to be incredibly beneficial—when someone has expertise in one area and it's needed by someone else who's just steps away, that's a win-win that fosters collaboration and opens the doors to new opportunities.

Thanks to CommunityWise's long history of managing space in the city, hundreds of organizations have been able to undertake their programs with the stability and flexibility necessary for maximum impact. The organization has an inspiring track record for fostering collaboration and helping small charities survive. ■

# Soul of the City Neighbour Grants

By Elizabeth Chomey-Booth

S

ometimes small-scale projects can have a big impact—this is the spirit behind the Soul of the

City Neighbour Grants, presented by the Calgary Foundation in partnership with Calgary Economic Development and the RBC Foundation.

In April of this year, five community groups in Calgary were each awarded \$10,000 to fund projects designed to enhance their respective communities. A committee reviewed eligible applications and selected nine groups to present their projects in front of an audience, which collectively voted for the five winning projects. Here are three of the grant recipients, each of whom have put their projects into motion:

Marjam Majedi, a long-time member of the TOM: Calgary community, puts the finishing touches on the “Home Grown Cyclone,” a specialized tricycle for a Calgarian with limited mobility.



1

## 1 TOM: Calgary 2017 Make-a-thon

In Calgary, engineers often turn their focus to the oil and gas industry, but a global movement called the Tikkun Olam Makers (TOM) has inspired local engineering students to use their skills to help people with disabilities (in Hebrew, Tikkun Olam means “repairing the world”). In late August, local non-profit Kadima Dynamics, in collaboration with TOM, hosted a 72-hour make-a-thon, where 15 teams of engineers, designers, technicians and students partnered with individuals with disabilities (a.k.a. “need-knowers”) to come up with technological solutions for

issues related to each need-knower’s disability.

The need-knowers were positioned as team members rather than clients, giving the technical participants a chance to truly collaborate with their end-users. As a result, the event didn’t just benefit the need-knowers, but also reminded participants (students in particular) that their engineering skills are as valuable to the community at large as they are to big-industry employers. Other community partners for this project included the University of Calgary Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program, Innovate Calgary, IEEE SIGHT - Southern Alberta Section, Neil Squire Society, and Calgary Jewish Federation.



all walks of life feel welcome, while also thanking community members for their efforts to save the pool.

Though the pool won't reopen until spring of 2018, the mural will be installed for all to see this fall.

"The importance of the pool is that it acts as one of those natural meeting places," says Cydney Eloffson, Vice President of the Silver Springs Community Association. "With the mural we're not only saying that this is a place to swim, we're also welcoming everyone in the community because everyone can see themselves in the picture."

### 3 Capitol Hill Geodesic Dome Greenhouse

When the school council at Capitol Hill Elementary School approached the Calgary Board of Education about building a 26-foot geodesic dome greenhouse, the board was hesitant, expressing concern that greenhouses had a tendency to fall into disrepair, and that a greenhouse at Capitol Hill could turn into an ongoing maintenance cost to the school. But members of the council persisted, pointing out that not only was the geodesic design sturdier and more efficient than that of a traditional greenhouse, it would also allow students to grow plants all year round.

After two years of meetings, the Calgary Board of Education approved the proposal. The school plans to use the greenhouse as a "living classroom" where kids can explore everything from soil composition to growing vegetables.

"It will be a learning, inquiry-based space," says project lead Tania Wildman. "As school council we're just building the shell and handing it over to the school and the kids to study what they want to study." ■



### 2 Silver Springs Outdoor Pool Mural

When the City of Calgary floated plans to close the aging outdoor pool in the community of Silver Springs and replace it with a wading pool, local residents rallied to save and renovate the existing pool. To celebrate that success, community members applied for a Soul of the City Neighbour Grant to pay for a mural to beautify the updated facility.

In July, community members got together to paint a mural designed by beloved Calgary artist Dean Stanton, who created a number of panel drawings depicting the energy and diversity that makes up Silver Springs, ranging from young kids and seniors to the area's flora and fauna. The mural is meant to make people from



## Circles of self, family, community and culture

Building strong relationships with Indigenous communities has always been a priority for the Calgary Foundation, but since the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action in 2015, there's been a renewed focus on projects that support Indigenous peoples living in and around Calgary. With an emphasis on youth, self-actualization and the healing powers of Elders and knowledge-holders, the Calgary Foundation is proud to support the following Indigenous-serving agencies and initiatives.

By Elizabeth Chorney-Booth



Gitz, the Family and Community Connector at Piitoayis Family School, drumming with students Garrett and Colin.

BOYS  
AND GIRLS  
CLUBS OF  
CALGARY FAMILY  
CONNECTOR  
PROGRAM

**F**or many Indigenous families, the public school system can be tricky to navigate. Due to the intergenerational trauma that individuals may have experienced as the result of Canada's residential school system—and the outcomes of these experiences—barriers like distrust of school systems and disconnect from resources may exist, which can impact kids' ability to learn.

In an effort to mend that broken trust

and make families feel like a valued part of their children's school communities, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary has partnered with the Calgary Board of Education to employ a Family and Community Connector at two Calgary schools, meant to bridge the gap between public education and Indigenous families.

This liaison role has been in place at the Piitoayis Family School, an Indigenous-serving elementary school in Calgary's southeast, since 2012, and the

role was extended to the new Niitsitapi Learning Centre in Dover as of last year. The concept is simple, but effective: the liaison interacts with children and their families to make sure everyone feels welcome and supported, while recognizing and celebrating their Indigenous culture.

On a typical day, the liaison will be on hand to greet families as they drop kids off at school, to provide teacher supports to ensure culturally sensitive learning, to chat with parents at any meetings and

assemblies, and to help connect families to resources related to housing, legal documents or recreational opportunities, should they need them. The basic goal is to make parents and other family members feel comfortable about their role in the larger school community.

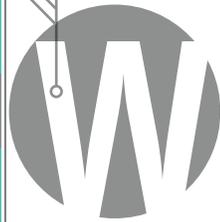
"In the collective memory for Indigenous people, school has not been a positive," says Don Braun, principal at Piitoayis Family School. "But we know from research that parental involvement in school is good for kids. It can also be healing for the adults to see how they can be a part of this community."

The liaison also leads cultural activities that build pride as Indigenous people. Moreover, the liaison approaches programming from the Circle of Courage and Medicine Wheel philosophies—both of which take a holistic, community-minded approach toward mental and physical health. As a result, Piitoayis has seen the engagement of parents and students grow over the last five years.

"One of the biggest impacts is that you see an increase in students' pride and self-esteem in terms of their identity," says Michelle Ranger, former principal at Piitoayis and current principal at Niisitapi Learning Centre. "Students learn more about who they are, and that has a lifelong impact."



PATHWAYS  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICES  
ASSOCIATION:  
Building Capacity  
for Truth and  
Reconciliation

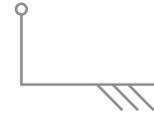


When Kirby Redwood, CEO of the Pathways Community Services Association, started considering how his organization would

help to facilitate the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), he knew bringing healing to Indigenous communities would require something deeper than a set of government directives. Pathways' mandate to support Indigenous children and families in the Calgary area is informed by traditional Indigenous philosophies like the circles of self, family, community and culture, and it is continuing that approach as part of the reconciliation process.

"Historically, in Canada, most family services have been prescriptive, as

At the Mikamaso: Truth and Reconciliation in Family Life conference, participants joined in discussions about how the TRC's recommendations apply to the healing and well-being of families.



'experts' tend to think they know what is best for Indigenous families. We know that the families themselves are the true experts, yet this is so often disregarded, especially at a systemic level," Redwood says. "Justice, children's services and education have made significant strides toward improving their service delivery for Indigenous children and families, but there is always more work to be done."

Pathways is helping family service organizations interpret the TRC's calls to action through a lens that focuses on healing and community rather than quick fixes that may ultimately do Indigenous families more harm than good. For example, rather than remove children from a home if a parent has an addiction problem that stems from intergenerational trauma, Redwood would prefer to see government agencies keep the children in their home with extended family members and work with the parent to come up with a course of treatment to help them heal.

Pathways shared ideas such as these at its Mikamaso: Truth and Reconciliation

## Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary: Youth and Elder Summit

Connecting Indigenous youth with Elders can be challenging in an urban setting. Unlike in rural Indigenous communities that have a central hub where

people can get together and interact on a regular basis, youth may not bump into Elders as much as they need to in a city like Calgary. To address this, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary, with support from the Calgary Foundation, are organizing a series of workshops to bring youth and Elders together.

"Sometimes our youth are afraid to ask questions because they're afraid to offend," says Christy Morgan, Director of Indigenous Initiatives at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary. "It's unfortunate that they're not feeling safe to ask because they don't know how or don't often have the opportunity."

The three Youth and Elder Summit workshops will take place this fall. In the first session, youth will get a chance to ask Elders questions, and the Elders will be able to ask questions of the youth in return when they come together for the second workshop. The final meeting will be a celebratory

feast to honour the Elders and to thank them for their participation.

"It's heartwarming to see the youths' reactions when they're connecting with these knowledge-keepers," Morgan says. "They're learning and engaging, and their families are getting connected to support as well."



Candid moments onstage at the Mikamaso: Truth and Reconciliation in Family Life conference.



in Family Life conference. Miskamaso is Cree for "discover for yourself," and that spirit guided the conference theme of self-discovery and self-representation.

Two hundred participants joined in discussions about how the TRC's recommendations apply to family life. Recognizing that Canada is still largely in the "truth" phase of Truth and Reconciliation, the Elders, service providers and youth in attendance agreed that, at this stage, the most important

thing agencies can do is listen carefully to people's stories.

"Attendees really connected with the importance of listening to families' stories and their truths from the heart, with authenticity and empathy," Redwood says. "Some solutions that arose from the discussions included creating safer spaces, showing and owning our own vulnerabilities when working with families, and practicing ceremony as an integral part of Truth and Reconciliation." ■



## A New Role At Calgary Foundation

In this era of Truth and Reconciliation, the Calgary Foundation takes its commitment to strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities seriously. To demonstrate that commitment, the Foundation hired Tim Fox as its Director of Indigenous Relations. A proud member of the Blackfoot Confederacy from the Blood (Kainai) reserve, Fox has spent his career empowering Indigenous youth while also engaging with Indigenous communities through not-for-profit agencies like the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary.

In his new role, Fox plans to continue to engage with external partners, but for now, he's focusing on how to facilitate a change process that will impact the internal culture within the Calgary Foundation itself. He's currently working closely with staff to help them develop a deeper understanding of how to strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities in a way that is healing rather than prescriptive.

"I want to give [the staff] a strong basis of knowledge so they can talk about why it is so important to increase relationships with Indigenous communities," Fox says.

# Students Making a Difference

**A unique school program inspires kids to support Calgary's vulnerable communities.**

By Mike Fisher

“

When you're young, you don't think you can make much of a difference. It was empowering to learn otherwise.

”

*Aydin Bhojani*

**L**AST FEBRUARY, Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School held an assembly in its theatre to celebrate a successful end to a six-week project that saw grade six students raise money for vulnerable communities in Calgary.

"After the cheque presentations, we asked if anyone wanted to explain what the experience meant to them," recalls James Wick, a grade six teacher at the school.

Eleven-year-old Brodin Bangloy, clad in his formal school uniform—a navy blue blazer, tie, grey pants and shiny patent leather shoes—raised his hand.

Together with around 60 of his classmates, Bangloy had been an active participant in Strathcona-Tweedsmuir's Primary Years Project (PYP) Exhibition. He said the project had been a lot of hard work: researching a charity, going on an

eye-opening site visit, developing a public speaking presentation to gain support for a chosen community. But even though there had been times throughout the year when he'd wished he didn't have to work so hard on the project, he realized it wasn't about him. It was about the people in the vulnerable communities that he and others were trying to help.

It was about making a difference.

When Bangloy finished speaking, a hush fell over the theatre. "And then, there wasn't a dry eye in the place," says Wick, who, much like the other teachers, students, parents and community organization representatives in attendance, had to take a minute to compose himself. "[Brodin's speech] validated, in one moment, all of the work, all of the sharing and cooperation and goodwill, involved in this phenomenal project."



Left to right: Brodin Bangloy, James Wick, and Aydin Bhojani.





Clockwise from top: Middle school mentors at Strathcona-Tweedsmuir meet with grade six students to discuss PYP Exhibition projects; students presenting their pitch for Accessible Housing; students practicing a presentation about Inn from the Cold.



## Getting the Ball Rolling

The Primary Years Project Exhibition has long been a feature of the grade six curriculum at Strathcona-Tweedsmuir. Each year, as part of the PYP Exhibition, students are divided into groups and asked to deliver a presentation on a given topic.

“This was the most authentic learning experience I’ve ever seen provided to students.”

James Wick

During the 2015-2016 school year, “vulnerable populations” was chosen as the PYP Exhibition theme—and that’s when the project took an interesting turn from grade six assignment to something much more meaningful for the school and the community.

One of the students, Aydin Bhojani, realized his father, Ali, a Board-member of the Calgary Foundation since 2009, might have some

guidance to give him about vulnerable groups in the city. The father and son discussion ultimately led to a bigger plan for the PYP Exhibition—one that would see Foundation volunteers and staff serving as judges on presentation day, and the students focusing their speeches on a charity of their choice, explaining how that particular charity worked with vulnerable people, and why it merited support from the Calgary Foundation.

With the plan in place, the students went about researching the charities they wanted to talk about. Sixteen different organizations were chosen, including Legacy Place Society, the Pathways

Community Services Association, the Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth, Autism Calgary, Accessible Housing and the Kerby Centre.

At the Foundation’s suggestion, the students also conducted site visits to the charities they researched, bringing them face-to-face with vulnerable populations.

“It was completely different than something they might learn from a book or a YouTube video,” says Wick, who has been teaching for 18 years. “This was the most authentic learning experience I’ve ever seen provided to students. Everyone was positively impacted—the students, the mentors, the families of the students. We even had a few families volunteer at the organization their child had visited and researched.”

The Calgary Foundation, wanting to acknowledge the time the charities had so willingly given to the students, and to give the students an experience of philanthropy, granted \$5,000 each to the three charities whose groups were selected as the top three of the competition, and smaller grants to the charities that were runners up.

The initial program was such a success that the school ran it a second time in the 2016-17 school year, and plans are underway to keep it moving forward in this next school year. The Calgary Foundation plans to expand the program, too, in order to work with other schools throughout the city in the future.

“It would be great if this could expand to other schools in Calgary,” says Aydin Bhojani, who is now just beginning grade eight at Strathcona-Tweedsmuir. “When you’re young, you don’t think you can make much of a difference. It was empowering to learn otherwise. All my classmates felt the same way.” ■



# Vital Signs Report 2017

As a leader, the Calgary Foundation has been entrusted to listen to and learn from our community. Our role is to use the insights gained from Calgary's Vital Signs to help inspire, and direct resources to, those who will join us in building a vibrant and caring community. For everyone, forever.

**B** Overall quality of life in 2017

## Top 5

Calgarians weighed in on what would improve overall quality of life in Calgary:

**18%**

Improvements to transit/public transportation



**12%**

More affordable housing



**9%**

Improvements to gov. spending/taxpayer money



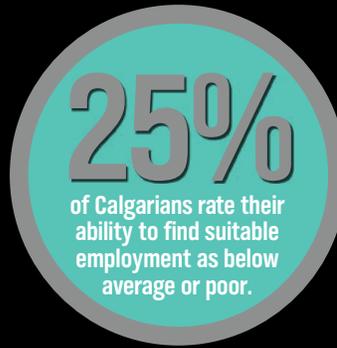
**9%**

Better-planned neighbourhoods

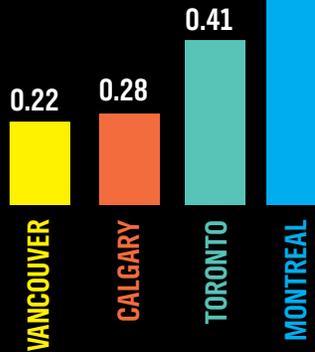


**8%**

Better or more diverse economy



**2016**  
BANKRUPTCY  
RATES  
(per 1,000  
businesses)



While there is a perception that a large number of businesses in our city are failing due to the economy, Calgary's bankruptcy rates are lower than those of other major Canadian cities.

**57%**

of Calgarians feel there should be more opportunities to support cross-cultural education and awareness based on recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

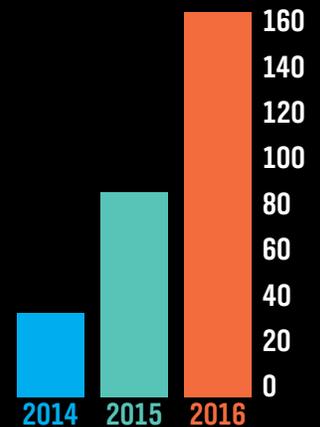
**\$6.50 vs. \$19.36**

Compared to Vancouver's \$19.36, Calgary gets \$6.50 per capita in ongoing grant funding, which puts it among the lowest-ranking cities in Canada when it comes to municipal grants for the arts.

**2/3**

Personal finance stress affects over two-thirds of Calgarians.

**CALGARY:**  
NUMBER OF  
FENTANYL-  
RELATED DRUG  
OVERDOSE  
DEATHS  
(per 100,000  
population)



Calgary has seen a five-fold increase in the number of fentanyl overdose deaths over the last three years. In 2016, 343 people died in Alberta from a fentanyl overdose.

For findings from the report and links to the research sources visit [calgaryvitalsigns.ca](http://calgaryvitalsigns.ca)

# Connecting the dots...

Community Knowledge Centre  
connects donors, community members,  
policy makers and media to the vibrant  
nonprofit sector.

[ckc.calgaryfoundation.org](http://ckc.calgaryfoundation.org)



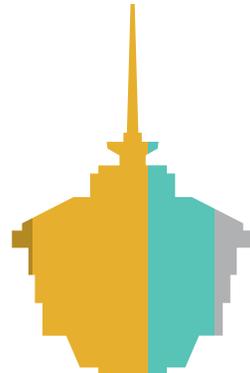
**COMMUNITY  
KNOWLEDGE  
CENTRE**

inspire  
inform  
invest

A Calgary Foundation initiative



**CALGARY  
FOUNDATION**  
FOR COMMUNITY, FOREVER



[calgaryfoundation.org](http://calgaryfoundation.org)

COMMUNITY PARTNER



Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:  
RedPoint Media & Marketing Solutions  
100, 1900 11 St. S.E.  
Calgary, AB  
T2G 3G2

Canadian Publications Mail Agreement #40030911