

# local love

IN A  
GLOBAL CRISIS

2020-2021

## COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



**United Way**  
Lethbridge &  
South Western Alberta





## Our Mission

To organize the capacity of people to care for one another

## Our Vision

Communities where everyone works as a team to:

- Ensure poverty is temporary
- Help individuals and families live healthy lifestyles
- Give children and youth the tools they need to reach their full potential

## Our Values

- Demonstrate trust, integrity, respect, inclusivity and transparency
- Energize and inspire volunteerism and volunteer leadership
- Endorse innovation, partnerships and collective action
- Provide non-partisan leadership
- Embrace diversity

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is Treaty 7 territory, and the traditional territory of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Nakoda (Stoney), and Tsuut'ina (Sarcee) nations. We acknowledge the work done by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and recognize our responsibility in providing respectful, safe communities for all to belong to. At United Way, we prioritize reconciliation in the work we do, and in the decisions we make.

# United in the face of a global pandemic...

On behalf of the board of directors and the staff of United Way of Lethbridge & South Western Alberta, we are pleased to share this Impact Report for 2020.

Oki. We are proud to be part of a network of 77 United Way Centraides working to create positive social change in our local communities. Little did we know that the strength and shared purpose of the local and national United Way Centraide network would be called on in 2020 to help people across the country to navigate one of the most challenging times any of us has ever experienced.

Over the course of the year, **our mission to organize the capacity of people to care for one another** has never been more relevant. We have a small team of just four staff, and we are extremely proud of what has been accomplished thanks to the local love, dedication, and collaboration of our team and our community as we faced COVID-19 together.

As the pandemic grew and we were faced with stay-at-home orders, business closures, transitions to and from at-home learning for students, new groups of vulnerable people emerged, almost overnight. Those already in precarious situations became more so... Our United Way team, along with our colleagues across Canada mobilized quickly to bring people together to address the growing needs with **the Local Love in a Global Crisis fund**. Through this fund, and with the generosity of many individuals and companies, we were able to provide rapid support to community partners to help them maintain, pivot, and expand services to make sure no one was left behind.

In the months that followed, the Government of Canada, recognizing the strength of the network, chose United Way as a partner to invest \$9M from **the New Horizons Seniors Fund** to support local programs providing assistance to seniors. In South Western Alberta, we were proud to support seven programs at six organizations to assist seniors with accessing basic needs, maintaining social connections, transportation and more.

United Way was called on again as one of three national partners to distribute a portion of the Government of Canada's \$350M **Emergency Community Support Fund**. Programs for food access, support for people with disabilities, and children's mental health, among others were stretched thin. In Lethbridge and South Western Alberta, this fund supported 30 programs at local agencies and helped them adapt to keep frontline community services safe and effective for people who needed them most.

Things were changing very quickly, and it was often the case that people didn't know where to turn for help. We were proud to assist with the **nationwide expansion of the 211 phone service** funded by the Government of Canada through the Emergency Community Support Fund...



The 211 service connects callers to community navigators who can help them find the best local services to address their unique situations. The service is available 24/7 in over 150 different languages - ideal for those lacking Internet access or technology skills, seniors, new Canadians and people with disabilities.

In addition, the local love of **United Way donors in Lethbridge and across south western Alberta, helped to support 14 programs at 14 different organizations** in 2020. Each year, United Way-funded programs in the region help thousands of people to improve their lives.

We are deeply appreciative of the collaborative relationships we have with our partner agencies, our United Way Centraide colleagues, and for the continued support of every single donor, volunteer, local workplace, and corporate partner. Your support drives our passion as we work together to build communities where everyone can thrive - before, during, and after a global pandemic.

Thank you, and most sincerely,



**Jaci Zalesak**  
President, Board of Directors



**Janelle Marietta**  
Executive Director





# Showing Local Love in a Global Crisis

The Local Love in a Global Crisis fund helped local organizations respond to provide basic needs, increase capacity for community services, and more.

Donations to the fund at the national level were redistributed to the community of origin, where corporations or foundations directed, or based on a population model. Community organizations were under significant pressure to respond to COVID-19.

Thanks to the generosity of so many, we've kept our communities strong. We are very grateful for the support which has powered a rapid community response to many urgent needs resulting from the pandemic. In 2021, the funding continues to support organizations in returning safely to in-person programs, and addressing the after-effects of Covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of our community.

local love  
IN A  
GLOBAL CRISIS



**\$44,984** invested in five programs in Lethbridge & South Western Alberta helping people to meet basic needs, stay socially connected, support seniors and increase safety and capacity for volunteers.



**547** people supported in accessing basic needs like food, and household items, and COVID-19 safety supplies like masks and hand sanitizer.



**480** phone calls, errands run, and social interactions provided. Organizations and volunteers ensured that seniors had someone to talk to regularly, families had nutritious food, and homeless individuals had access to information and safety supplies.



**226** volunteers were trained and supported in carrying out important tasks safely. Organizations received support to modify volunteer workstations with plexiglass, purchase masks and sanitizer, and provide information on how to carry out duties safely.



## Family Centre of Southern Alberta Interfaith Chinook Country Kitchen

The Interfaith Chinook Country Kitchen addresses both food security needs, and the human need for social interaction. While other in-person programming was put on hold due to COVID-19, Family Centre was able to transform the Interfaith Chinook Country Kitchen cooking classes into a virtual opportunity for social interaction. Parents, caregivers, and families received hampers of ingredients weekly, and logged on to maintain social connections while learning to cook a nutritious meal together.

*"The adult online cooking classes are the one thing I do in the week that's just for me, it's my time and that's so important mentally for me. I feel connected to other adults. It's a great stress-buster to interact with other adults in a non-judgmental environment while we are all cooking the same dish."*

*-Nadia (TICCK Participant)*

# Thank you!

Thank you to the many corporate and individual donors to the Local Love in a Global Crisis Fund who helped us support essential COVID-19 relief programs and projects in 2020.

## Special thanks to:

- Alberta Blue Cross
- ATB Financial
- Bianca Amor's Liquidation Supercentre
- Kimberly Burton-Hughes
- Pamela Caffyn
- Canadian Tire Ltd.
- Mary Anne Christensen
- The Co-Operators
- Debra Courtney
- Kimberlee Davis
- Gaganpreet Dhariwal
- Sheri Durina
- Michele Frick
- Amanda Granby
- Heaven Hill Brands
- Tevi Legge
- London Drugs Inc.
- Max Bell Foundation
- Simon Pritchard
- Charmaine Ross
- Scotiabank
- Candace Stryker
- Darren Tanner
- Wawanesa Insurance



PPE at the United Way office

## Covering up to keep communities safe

How one retailer's actions kept thousands of people safe and well across Western Canada...

By January of 2021, Alberta's COVID-19 case counts were nearing their highest levels. Bianca Amor, the owner of Bianca Amor's Liquidation Supercentre stores across Western Canada, committed to an incredible gift of one million masks (and more) which helped hundreds of organizations, and by extension, thousands of community members to stay safe.

United Way of Lethbridge & South Western Alberta was able to distribute over 60,000 face masks, 1,800 bottles of hand sanitizer and thousands of other PPE items to approximately 80 nonprofit organizations in the region to protect staff, volunteers, and clients from COVID-19.

The items were part of a \$300,000 donation of PPE distributed to communities through several United Ways in Western Canada. We are very thankful to Bianca Amor for this support at a time when funding shortages, program shutdowns were greatly concerning. Supplying PPE helped fill a gap for many organizations, and return to operations in the safest way possible.



*"As someone who has been buying and distributing product for 20 years, I understand the efficiency of distribution. And that's something I really admire about the United Way – their ability to do the work and get things out to the people who need them."*

*-Bianca Amor*

# New Horizons Seniors Program

Funding for critical services helping some of the most vulnerable members of our communities through the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 29, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that \$9M in funding from the **New Horizons Seniors Project** would be distributed using a population distribution model through the United Way network. The goal was to support local organizations providing frontline COVID-19 response services to support vulnerable seniors.

In Lethbridge & South Western Alberta, we were pleased to invest \$50,000 to support seven programs at six different organizations in the region that helped make sure seniors had resources to stay safe and well during the pandemic. These services included support for grocery and prescription delivery, assistance using technology to maintain social connections, transportation to essential medical or legal appointments, and more.

- **1,259** meal, grocery & prescription deliveries
- **1,300** times virtual programs accessed
- **1,300+** face masks distributed

Across Canada, 936 programs supported over 700,000 seniors. Check out the **interactive map** to for the full scope of community investments and impacts, or read more about **local investments** in supports for seniors.



## Claresholm Senior Drop-In Centre

Reducing isolation for local seniors

Many seniors across the region were concerned about Covid-19, and hesitant to go about their usual routines in their communities. The Claresholm Senior Drop-In Centre made sure that those isolating in the Claresholm area were able to access nutritious meals, grocery and prescription delivery, and take part in virtual activities for social interaction and physical activity.

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*"A widower, with no family in the area, was isolated and struggling with going out in the community during quarantine period. He feared for his health, and found himself isolating completely. We were able to provide him with someone to talk to, meals twice a week, delivery of groceries, and face masks, which gave him a sense of security when he needed to venture out into the community."*

*-Lynn (Claresholm Seniors Drop-In Centre)*



# Emergency Community Support Fund

Critical support for community organizations to keep essential services for people and families safe and effective during COVID-19.

The \$350M **Emergency Community Support Fund** was announced by the Government of Canada on April 21, 2020 as a rapid response measure to support community organizations during the pandemic. The distribution of the fund took place in two rounds in May, 2020 and October, 2020, and was overseen by Employment & Social Development Canada in partnership with United Way Centraide Canada, Community Foundations of Canada, and the Canadian Red Cross. The portion of the fund distributed by United Way Centraide Canada reached more than 5,000 communities across the country.

Through both rounds of **Emergency Community Support Fund** applications, United Way of Lethbridge & South Western Alberta received 45 applications from community service organizations in the region, with requests totalling over \$1M - nearly double the amount available to distribute.

Together, with a team of community volunteers, United Way of Lethbridge & South Western Alberta carried out the investment of over \$555,000 in **Emergency Community Support Fund** dollars in the region. Twenty-four different organizations received support to carry out 30 projects and programs for emergency food access, reducing the isolation that seniors and people with disabilities experience, assisting children, parents and caregivers with the

transitions to and from at-home learning, and more. Of the 24 agencies receiving funds, nine were new community partners which did not previously have a relationship with our United Way.

The **Emergency Community Support Fund** was a lifeline for many organizations that worked through the pandemic to support people made vulnerable by the circumstances. It represented a great vote of confidence for the importance of community service organizations, and the role they play in sustaining the quality of life of many Canadians.

We are very thankful for the work these local organizations have taken on during this challenging time to ensure the health and wellbeing of our communities. We also want to express our sincere thanks to all those who have dedicated their time to volunteering during the pandemic to help organizations carry out vital services.

Explore the **interactive map** to see the full scope of investments and see which organizations near you received support.







## BGC Foothills Clubs

### Food Security and Basic Needs Support

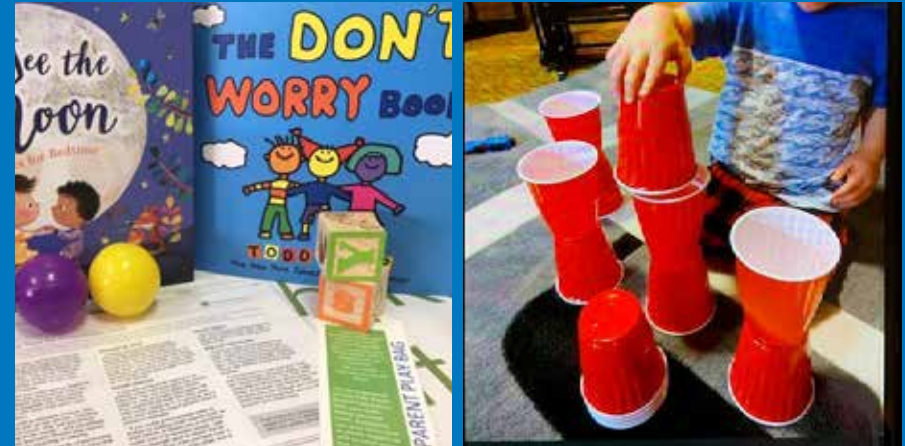
The early days of the pandemic were very scary, and very difficult for many young families with children. Some became jobless overnight and had nowhere to turn for support...

BGC Foothills Clubs in the Crowsnest Pass jumped into action, and with support from the **Emergency Community Support Fund**, created an emergency program to provide basic needs to families in the area. The funding made grocery cards available for food insecure families whose children would normally have accessed Club nutrition programs.

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*"Without this program, I don't know where my family would be. It is very scary to think of how low we were and how lost we felt. Both of us lost our jobs overnight and we had two kids to feed. I was so scared and didn't know what to do. The world turned into a very scary place really quickly. Even with the government support, we still were having to wait and had no idea how we were going to feed ourselves. We needed help and this program offered us the help we needed right when we needed. It felt like an angel was watching over us. I never want to be in that kind of a position again. When we are able to and can afford it we will start to build a nest egg and really try to never be in that position again."*

-Anonymous (BGC Foothills Clubs Parent)



## South Region Parents As Teachers Society

### Parent-Child Interaction & Play

Throughout the pandemic, parents with young children were challenged by stay-at-home orders, day care closures, and transitions to and from at-home learning. With support from the **Emergency Community Support Fund**, South Region Parents As Teachers Society provided concrete resources to engage and support young families in Southern Alberta. Between December 2020 and February 2021 families were experiencing the implementation of additional restrictions, school closures, shorter daylight hours, the financial stress of the holidays, and a cold snap. The materials and books provided are a positive break from stress and starting points to warm, nurturing, communicative interactions between caregivers and children.

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*"Cup stacking is a hit! One mom pulled out the cups and, at first, they did the stacking activity – but then, the child took the lead and the activity morphed into a golf game – then, it changed again the it became a guessing game of 'what's under the cup'. The parent educator shared how exciting it was to watch the caregiver wonder and celebrate with her child. The activity became so much more than simply stacking cups."*

-Rose (Program Manager)

# 211: Help starts here, nationwide.

By the end of 2020, for the first time, ever, anyone living anywhere in Canada could call 211 to find non-emergency help. The nationwide expansion of the 211 service was led by United Way Centraide Canada, with funding from the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund to give Canadians an easy way to access information and services to support them through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

A national 211 phone service has long been awaited. While the service existed with United Way support in many areas of Canada and Alberta, including Calgary and Edmonton, it was not previously available to residents elsewhere, or only available online.

211 is a free, confidential information and referral service. Navigators assist callers in locating and accessing community and government assistance programs best suited to address their unique needs. Calls are answered 24/7 with language interpretation in over 150 different languages.

Other information and referral service tools and apps exist, but not all are available by phone, and not all have service available in languages other than English or French. Service by phone is ideal for many Canadians who do not have access to the Internet, or who don't have the technical knowledge to search online. Searching for help alone can be overwhelming for people with disabilities, seniors, youth, people with low-literacy, or those with limited English language skill. 211 phone service helps address this.

Throughout 2020, it became clear that many Canadians - and many for the first time - needed help to find help. The national 211 call centre reported a 30 per cent increase in total call volume over the previous year. In April of 2020 alone, there were more than nine times as many calls for food-related needs, and more than three times as many calls for financial assistance. As government programs and community services emerged or changed, the need for better information sharing was apparent which led to the launch of the nationwide service in October, 2020.

Over the next months, the next step was to make Canadians aware that help was available. February 11, 2021 was marked as 211 Day across the country. Many local landmarks were lit up in red light, over 3,000 social media posts were generated using the #211DayCanada tag, and postcard delivery campaigns took place. The collaborative promotional efforts led to a 50 per cent increase in awareness of the service.

United Way Centraide Canada, and local United Ways continue to advocate for ongoing support of 211. Community organizations in Lethbridge & South Western Alberta are encouraged to **connect with 211 Alberta** to list their programs so that navigators can direct callers to the most appropriate local services.

**LIFE CAN BE HARD.**  
**FINDING HELP CAN BE EASY.**  
Dial 2-1-1 to find help for all of life's challenges.

EMPLOYMENT  
MENTAL HEALTH  
TRAINING  
FAMILY WELLNESS

211  
HELP STARTS HERE

# United Way's Impact Committee

During the pandemic, it became clear just how valuable local programs are for not only the people who use them, but for the wellbeing of the community as a whole. As the Chair of United Way's Impact Committee, I'm pleased to share the following update on the work of the committee for 2020-2021.

Grants from United Way's Community Fund make it possible for local organizations to keep community programs running effectively and uninterrupted. In 2020, the need for Community Fund support outweighed our capacity to provide it. We received applications requesting support totalling over \$310,000.

Our Impact Committee, together with the Funding Allocations Committee - a team of community volunteers - was challenged to identify the most pressing community needs, and narrow our focus **to invest \$83,000 in 14 programs and services** best equipped to address them.

The Funding Allocations Committee spends a significant amount of time reviewing and evaluating each application for funding United Way receives. We believe that since our support comes from the community, donors and community members ought to be involved in prioritizing United Way funding.

We strive to build committees which represent a wide cross-section of individuals with varied knowledge, life experiences and perspectives to help us make the best investment decisions possible.

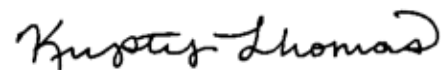
United Way's Impact Committee provides an extra layer of accountability by following up with agency partners over the course of the year, reviewing interim and final reports, and keeping tabs on what is happening in the region. We pay special attention to local issues, statistics, the ever-changing social service needs of our community, and what services are available to address them.

Throughout the pandemic, this committee also took on the task of evaluating all of the funding requests received for the Emergency Community Support Fund, the New Horizons Seniors Fund, and the Local Love in a Global Crisis Fund. In all, **we read and evaluated 100 applications from local organizations**. Our volunteer time on this work totalled upwards of 500 hours collectively.

United Way's Community Fund allocations were a smaller part of our year, funding-wise, yet they remain the most important, simply because they happen each year. We also want organizations to know that whether or not they receive a grant, they can rely on United Way to be there to support them through advocacy, collaboration, knowledge-sharing and more.

I'm proud to support an organization, and lead a committee of people whose work makes a noticeable, impactful difference in our community. I am thankful for the support of each and every Community Fund donor, workplace campaign partner, and committee volunteer we work with. Together, we make the strongest impact. Together, we build a better tomorrow.

Thank you and sincerely,



**Krysty Thomas**  
Chair, Impact Committee





# Thank you to our individual and corporate Leadership donors!

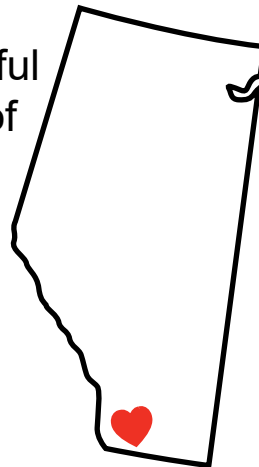
In 2020, gifts to our Community Fund at the Leadership level of \$1,200 or more have fueled our work, and helped to ensure a stable source of funding is available to support essential, community programs.

## THANK YOU!

- Alberta Blue Cross
- ATB Financial
- Mark Brown
- Allan and Fran Caldwell
- Lorne Charlesworth
- CIBC
- Corteva Agriscience
- Costco
- Rose DeClerck-Floate
- Michele Frick

- Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaigns (GCWCC)
- Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaigns Retirees
- Lori Harasem
- Investors Group Wealth Management
- KMPG Foundation
- Dr. André Laroche
- Legacy Plywood Sales Ltd.
- Lethbridge Iron Works Co.
- Lethbridge Toyota
- Melcor Developments Ltd.
- Chris Murray
- Murray Chevrolet Cadillac
- Barbara Puddy
- RBC Foundation
- Tim Schipper
- Scotiabank
- Sun Life Financial Inc.
- Suncor Energy Foundation
- TD Bank Group
- Unifor Local 4050
- Wawanesa Insurance
- Carl Wirzba

We are also grateful for the local love of those Leadership donors who have chosen to remain anonymous!



# POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY

Helping people avoid or move out of poverty, explore employment resources, and access nutritious food

## Crowsnest Pass Family Resource & Crisis Centre

Residents of the Crowsnest Pass area **visited the centre more than 1,200 times** to receive support for domestic violence situations, help with filing taxes, holiday programming for families and seniors, basic needs for new babies and more.

## Interfaith Food Bank

The Baby Bundle Program at Interfaith food bank **helped 90 new parents** by providing monthly hampers of baby food and health and safety supplies. United Way funds assist in purchasing baby food and formula which are less frequently donated, and by regulation, must not be past expiry dates.

## John Howard Society

The John Howard Society's Community Re-Entry program **supported 180 individuals who are making the transition back into the community** from the corrections system. This includes helping them access counselling and treatment, cultural programs, find housing, and meeting basic needs like food and clothing.

## Kidney Foundation of Canada

The Emergency Financial Assistance program gave **help to 168 people in the Lethbridge region** to assist with medication costs, food and housing security, and transportation to kidney treatment appointments.



## The John Howard Society

### Growing Success in Community Re-Entry

The transition back to the community from the corrections system is not an easy one for many people. It can be the case that someone emerges without personal possessions, adequate housing, a job or meaningful activity to return to, or basic needs like food. The John Howard Society works with individuals, both pre and post-release to ensure they are connected to supports for basic needs, counselling, employment, housing, cultural programs, and more. The Temporary Identification component of the program is an important factor in ensuring individuals can open bank accounts, cash government support payments, apply for housing, and access education or training programs. Reducing or eliminating barriers to community resources is critical in reducing the chances of recidivism.

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*"Just prior to the initial Covid shutdown our staff met with an individual due to be discharged from the Lethbridge Correctional Centre. He had mental health issues, and concerns regarding options available to him upon release. Once the lock-down occurred, the client's mother contacted the John Howard Society expressing concerns for her son's welfare. With a team approach, we were able to keep in touch and provide reassurance to both the client and his mother during the lock-down.*

*When the Covid restrictions were lifted, arrangements were made for the client to come into the office for counselling and he was linked with other support services in the community to which he was released and is now doing well. The availability of staff, and the commitment of our long term addictions counsellor were key factors to the success of this case and many others like it.*

*-Amanda (John Howard Society, Executive Director)*

# HEALTHY PEOPLE, STRONG COMMUNITIES

Promoting supportive family relationships, positive mental health, physical wellbeing, inclusion and accessibility

## Inclusion Foothills

**People with pan-disabilities and their family members living in the Claresholm area - 227 altogether** - received support from Inclusion Foothills. Children received support to navigate school-related challenges like bullying. Parents had support to access community and government supports for people with disabilities.

## Inclusion Lethbridge

Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families **received support on 60+ occasions to plan for an inclusive life**, including finding work or volunteer opportunities, social engagement, navigating government programs, and managing budgets. The result is increased safety, higher financial security, and a sense of community belonging for people with disabilities.

## Parkinson Association of Alberta

The pandemic caused stress, fear and isolation for people with Parkinson Disease and their families and caregivers. The Parkinson Association of Alberta **supported 112 people in accessing virtual programs and group activities, and provided over 70 hours of one-on-one support.**

## SAIPA

Programs and **self-advocacy workshops offered by the Southern Alberta Individualized Planning Association were accessed 249 times in 2020.** Workshops included topics like Internet Safety, Personal Relationships, and more. In 2020, most self-advocates attended workshops virtually.

## SASHA House

Regular meaningful activity is an important part of daily life for those with mental illness or addictions, but difficult to achieve during a pandemic. **26 individual residents at Southern Alberta Self-Help Association homes received support to plan indoor and outdoor recreation options, cultural activities, and more.**

## Schizophrenia Society of Alberta

In 2020, **53 individuals with Schizophrenia accessed peer support resources 1,698 times.** Due to Covid-19, groups took place online and were successful in reaching those who have challenges attending sessions in person.

## Schizophrenia Society of Alberta

### Peer Support Program

*"The current programs at the SSA have been very important to me. Connection to the world and programs have been hard during Covid-19, and it has been crucial for my recovery to stay in touch and continue to be part of the peer support program. The phone support groups have been a lifesaver. During Covid, I had a relapse and spent some time in the hospital, but since I have been out, the SSA has been a daily source of hope and inspiration. "*

*-Anonymous (SSA Group Participant)*





# ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE

Supporting school readiness, in and after-school supports, mentoring, healthy development, emergency shelter

## Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lethbridge & District

A total of **161 adult mentors have been matched with children in need of positive, supportive relationships** in their lives. Bigs and Littles spend time together weekly taking part in hobbies, social activities, volunteering and more. Most connections in 2020 took place virtually.

## Frontier College

There were **23 students at St. Paul School in Lethbridge who received support to keep up literacy and numeracy skills** with Frontier College's Summer Literacy Camps. Over three weeks, participants who were mainly Indigenous children, or from low-income families developed routines to prepare for a return to school, were encouraged to explore reading for enjoyment, and took part in activities with a focus on Indigenous culture.

## New West Theatre

Throughout the summer of 2020, **49 children and youth were able to attend New West Theatre's Summer Theatre Camps**, either virtually or in person. Activities helped participants engage socially, express their creativity and emotions through theatre, and develop self-confidence. Although Covid-19 required transitions to and-from virtual programs, camps remained a place to connect.

## Youth One

Staff and volunteers at Youth One **supported 239 individual youth from 16 different schools with tutoring, food access, social interaction, and more.** Many programs and activities were moved online due to Covid-19, however, Youth One was granted special approval for limited in-person programming to reach vulnerable youth in meaningful ways, including emergency shelter, and mental health support.

## Youth One

Supporting youth at home, and in person

To keep youth safe and well during Covid-19, most Youth One programs and services were moved online. Special permission from AHS for limited in-person programs was granted. In addition, home activity kits and care packages were dropped off to youth, online meetings with Youth One leaders were set up, and a text and help line was activated to help youth connect easily for support.

*"Recently, a parent reached out to one of our program leaders and shared some amazing feedback. Their family recently moved to Canada a year or two ago, and have been having a really tough time connecting their child with peers and a positive community. A family friend recommended they check out Youth One. They followed through with this recommendation and their child started to attend regularly. They said it is the best thing that could have ever happened for their child, and it has had a huge impact on their overall health and well being. Wow!"*

*-Jordan (Youth One, President & Founding Partner)*



# United against racism and discrimination.

As someone who has personally experienced racism and discrimination, Evan Wardley, a professional hockey player hailing from Vulcan, Alberta knew he wanted to do something about it. The Unification Project Fund is just the start.

The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, and the reactions and demonstrations that have followed since then have led many of us, as individuals and communities, to begin to challenge ourselves in acknowledging the systemic racism that exists here in Canada, and doing the heavy lifting to address it.

Evan Wardley, a former U of L Pronghorns hockey player who now plays professionally in the U.S., knows firsthand what racism and discrimination feels like, and believes that education is one of the most important steps for communities to begin to address it.

United Way was honoured to help Evan bring his brainchild - **The Unification Project Fund** - to life in December of 2020. The purpose of the fund is to make education programs on the subjects of anti-racism and anti-discrimination available and accessible to help people learn to become better allies in building a stronger, healthier community.

The first funded projects and programs will be announced in the spring of 2022.

**UNIFICATION**  
PROJECT FUND



## Thank you, UPF Core Donors!

- Jennifer Aquila
- Jocelyn Boniec-Mackie
- Jordan Calladine
- Catherine Champagne
- Meg Dyer
- Taylor Fisher
- Girl Gang Kindness
- Brenna Henderson
- Amanda Jensen
- Damien Ketlo
- Bev Knutson-Shaw
- Dave Lawson
- Linda Learn
- Tymmarah Mackie
- Mathew Maione
- Helen Marietta
- Janelle Marietta
- Nelisiwe Mbambo
- Laurie Messner
- Miranda Myndio
- Kurt Paskal
- Cass Schmidt
- David & Jean Sheppard
- Olivia Stephen
- Krysty Thomas
- Zack Torquato
- Nicole Van Langen
- Vincent Varga
- Jana Wager

# Expressions of Reconciliation

Taking place during the City of Lethbridge's Reconciliation Week in September, the Expressions of Reconciliation Art & Media Contest is an opportunity to continue conversations about reconciliation in our community.

Though many events in 2020 were modified or outright cancelled due to Covid-19, the Expressions of Reconciliation Art & Media Contest was one that our team felt was important to move forward with.

The theme of the contest was Indigenous Plants & Medicines to coincide with the United Nations declaration of 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health. Cash prizes were awarded for first, second and third place, and a fourth cash prize was awarded based on the results of a People's Choice vote on social media. Each artist who submitted their work also received a one-year membership to the Southern Alberta Art Gallery.

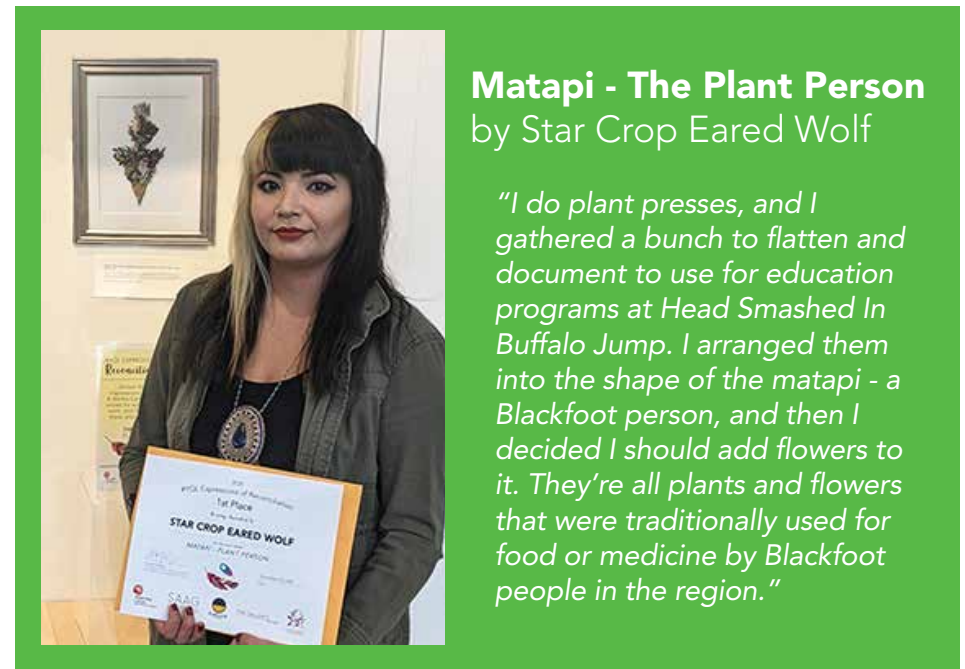
United Way would like to thank Reconciliation Lethbridge, and the Lethbridge Indigenous Sharing Network for co-sponsoring the prize funds, SAAG for donating the memberships, and CASA for arranging space to display all of the entries for public viewing. We also appreciate the support of the jury members who assisted in choosing the winners.

We are especially thankful to each of the artists, whose work has sparked conversations about reconciliation, and has no doubt inspired the creativity of many other artists in our community.

**1st Place and People's Choice** – Star Crop Eared Wolf for the work titled "Matapi" – an arrangement of pressed flowers and plants.

**2nd Place** – Chataya Holy Singer for the work titled "Blackfoot Paradigm" – a pen and ink design.

**3rd Place** – Maura Hanrahan for the work titled "The Scent of Sage" – a creative, non-fiction written piece.





# Chillin' 4 Charity with the DBSA!

Chillin' 4 Charity is a cool event that leaves hearts feeling warm. This year, the U of L Dhillon Business Students' Association took the annual event online to get cold for a cause.

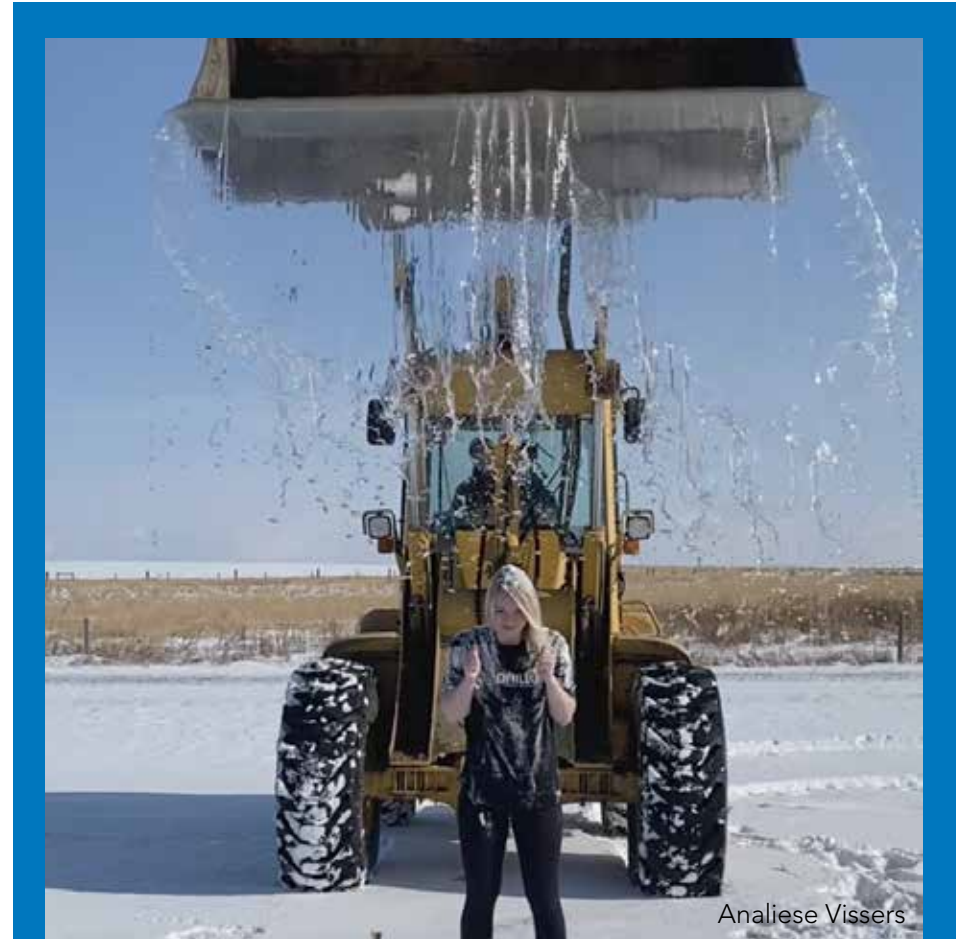
Traditionally, the Chillin' 4 Charity event takes place on the University of Lethbridge campus, and involves an above ground pool, and sub-zero temperatures. It's a polar plunge that, since it's inception, has raised over \$100,000 for United Way of Lethbridge & South Western Alberta.

In 2020, the U of L made the move to transition classes and club activities online to ensure student safety due to Covid-19. This transition didn't stop the DBSA from carrying out the event in a socially distanced way. Instead of the on-campus event, they challenged their team and friends to #ChillAtHome to raise funds to support local United Way-funded programs.

The October weather was perfect for a variety of creative and chilly challenges like slushies to the face, dunks in Henderson Lake, snow angels, and more. Altogether, the virtual event raised a total of \$3,706 for United Way's Community Fund.

We'd like to thank the members of the DBSA for their work in planning, promoting and executing the event in a way for the whole community to get involved. Thank you also, to all who donated funds or prizes in support of the students.

Check out [more of the challenges on social media](#), and find out what happened after the tractor on the right dumped gallons of cold water onto DBSA President, Analiese Vissers!



Analiese Vissers



Callum Hakin

# Access to tech for Alberta students

If the students can't come to class, take the class to the students. When Alberta schools were required to move online due to Covid-19, ATB Financial stepped up to make sure kids had the right tools.

The frequent transitions to and from at-home learning was a challenge for many families. For some, it meant siblings sharing computers so that they could attend their classes. Some kids opted to use their phones to connect to the frequent Zoom calls. Others had to borrow laptops and Chromebooks from their schools to fulfill their tech needs.

In March of 2021, ATB Financial approached the United Way of the Edmonton Capital Region with a donation of \$100,000 to facilitate the purchase and distribution of 412 Chromebook laptops to students at 23 schools across the province.

The Lethbridge School Division identified 66 students who would benefit most from receiving one of the computers to empower them to keep up with their coursework during the pandemic. United Way of Lethbridge & South Western Alberta distributed the laptops to seven different schools including Winston Churchill High School, Wilson Middle School, LCI, Victoria Park High School, Gilbert Paterson Middle School, G.S. Lakie Middle School, and Chinook High School.

We are thankful to ATB Financial for this action to address the education inequality that many Alberta students face, and which has been exacerbated by the pandemic. This gift will last many students well past graduation into post-secondary or as they explore career options.



Wilson Middle School



Gilbert Paterson Middle School

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